



UvA-DARE (Digital Academic Repository)

Female religious agents in Morocco: Old practices and new perspectives

Ouguir, A.

Publication date
2013

[Link to publication](#)

Citation for published version (APA):

Ouguir, A. (2013). *Female religious agents in Morocco: Old practices and new perspectives*. [Thesis, fully internal, Universiteit van Amsterdam].

General rights

It is not permitted to download or to forward/distribute the text or part of it without the consent of the author(s) and/or copyright holder(s), other than for strictly personal, individual use, unless the work is under an open content license (like Creative Commons).

Disclaimer/Complaints regulations

If you believe that digital publication of certain material infringes any of your rights or (privacy) interests, please let the Library know, stating your reasons. In case of a legitimate complaint, the Library will make the material inaccessible and/or remove it from the website. Please Ask the Library: <https://uba.uva.nl/en/contact>, or a letter to: Library of the University of Amsterdam, Secretariat, Singel 425, 1012 WP Amsterdam, The Netherlands. You will be contacted as soon as possible.

Appendix

The hagiographic works I consulted are Ibn Zayāt al-Tādilī (1997), Marrākushī (1965), Ibn Zaydān (1990), `Umar Kaḥāla (1982), al-Kattānī (1990) `Abd al-Azīz bin Abdallāh (1957), Sūsī (1960, 1984). I also account on oral stories on holy women and saints and on published works to collect stories of women saints such as `Abd al-Hādī al-Tāzī (1993), Kānūnī (1961), Na`īma Chikhaoui (1997) and Mustapha Akhmiss (1984). I put the entries of women saints and Sufis in chronological order.

Umm Hānī (8th century)

Umm Hānī was a woman of Sufism and asceticism. She read a lot the Qur'an, and she was always remembering God.⁵⁷¹

Zaynab al-Shaṭbiya (11th century)

Zaynab was the daughter of `Ibād ibn Sarḥān ibn Muslim ibn Sa`id Anas al-Ma`rifī al-Shaṭbiya. She was one of the women saints. She was always engaged in fasting, dhikr and nightly vigils of prayer.⁵⁷²

Mas`uda bint Abī al-Ḥasan (11th century)

Mas`uda bint Abī al-Ḥasan was the daughter of Abī al-Ḥasan ben Aḥmad bin Khalaf bin Bādis. She was virtuous and pious.⁵⁷³

Umm Muḥammad al-Salāma (12th century)

Umm Muḥammad al-Salāma was originally from Dukkala, she was much respected and powerful woman within her community. Mūsā Bin `Isā said that he heard shaykh Abū Wa`zān (12th century) saying that among the Masmouda tribe there were twenty-seven saints among them fourteen women. Umm Al-salāma was among them⁵⁷⁴. Her servant Abū Bakr said: "I served al-Salāma eight years. Each day, she gives five portions of grains to the poor. One day I told her: I didn't see what rijāl (ideal Sufis) had seen". She answered me: "repent to God and fast". I fast days. In one night

⁵⁷¹ al-Tāzī 1993, 85

⁵⁷² Ibid., 486

⁵⁷³ al-Marākushī 1965, vol. 2, 492

⁵⁷⁴ al-Tādilī 1997, 387-88

she told me: “get and tell me how much left of the night”. I get up from my place and went out to see how much is left from the night. Suddenly I saw something flying in the air like a great ‘al-Ghurnūq (a white bird)’ that landed on her tent. It is her nephew Abū Sajmāt (12th century) who said to her: “I didn’t find who deserve to be your students except me”. She talked to him for hours and then he left.

Umm ‘Aṣḥūr Ti‘azzat Bint Ḥusayn al-Hantīfī (12th century)

Umm ‘Aṣḥūr Ti‘azzat Bint Hussain al-Hantīfī was from ribāṭ Maloulassen. She was among the greatest saints. I heard abd `Azīz bin `Abd Allah saying: “Abū Sulaymān Maṣuṣī said: ‘Umm ‘Aṣḥūr said to me: ‘I was badly ill, and I saw Abū Bakr and `Umar bin al-Khaṭāb (the Prophet’s companions) entered my chamber and made me sit. After that I was healed and felt strong’”.⁵⁷⁵

Umm Ma‘far (12th century)

Umm Ma‘far was a muqri’a (Quranic reader). She was appointed herself a reader of the Qur’an following the style of Warsh and Nafi’.⁵⁷⁶

Umm al-‘Izz bint Hadīl (12th century)

Umm al-‘Izz bint Hdīl was the daughter of Aḥmad b. ‘Alī ben Hadīl, one of the Moroccan Sufi Shaykh. She was a very pious woman. She was Umm Ma‘far’s student. Her attendance to Omm Ma‘far’s religious courses helped her to be proficient in reading the Qur’an in the style of Warsh and Nafi’.⁵⁷⁷

Fāṭima bint ‘Atīq (12th century)

Fāṭima bint ‘Atīq was proficient in the recitation and the reading of the Qur’an. She was also very charitable. She died in Marrakesh.⁵⁷⁸

⁵⁷⁵ Ibid., 388

⁵⁷⁶ al-Marākushī 1965, 482

⁵⁷⁷ Ibid., 748

⁵⁷⁸ al- Marākushī 1965, vol. 2, 491

Sārā bint Aḥmad bin ‘Uthmān al-Ḥalabatiyya (12th century)

She was a scholar of Sufism, hadith, poetry and fiqh. In Fez, Shaykh ‘Abd Allah bin ‘Alī bin Salamūn al-Kattānī was her student, and received from her the mantle of initiation into Sufism and ‘ilm. She died and was buried in Marrakesh.⁵⁷⁹

Zaynab al-Balsīniya (12th century)

‘Abd al-Mālik presents Zaynab al-Balsīniya bint Muḥammad ibn al-Zahrī al-Andalusiya as a very pious woman. Her proficiency in piety and preaching promoted her to give courses to males. Her brother ‘Abū Bakr ibn Mahraz and Abū al-ḥusayn ibn Hdīl, one of the greatest Shuyukh, were her students.⁵⁸⁰

Mannāna (12th century)

Mannāna was the daughter of the Walī Allāh Sīdī Muḥammad Kadda. She was the contemporary of Walī Allah Sīdī Mūsā al-Dukkālī, a saint of the old Medina of Salé city (12th Century). Mannāna was called as well by the name Mannāna ‘Uhdāna. She was called ‘Uhdāna because she had a certain charismatic grace which blessed children to be good and well educated. Her charity and piety were very significant. She had constructed the Qaṣba of the Sīdī Bin Mūsā al-Dukkālī’s zāwiya.⁵⁸¹

Umm al-Yumin (13th century)

Umm al-Yumin was from banī Waryaghl, a village in Rifī North region. She was the daughter of a tribal leader. According to the Moroccan historian and hagiographer al-Bādisī, Umm al-Yumin was the mother of the sultan Abū Yūsuf al-Marīnī. He portrayed her as a ṣāliḥa in her own right. She was as well a disciple of the Rifian Sufi order founded by the Shaykh Abū ‘Uthmān al-Waryāghlī. It was she who introduced the organization of three annual meetings in the Ribāṭ of bani Waryāghl.⁵⁸²

⁵⁷⁹ al-Kattānī 1990

⁵⁸⁰ al-Marākushī 1965, vol. 2, 486

⁵⁸¹ Venerator, interview, June 2011

⁵⁸² al-Bādisī 1993

Umm Sharīḥ (13th century)

Umm Sharīḥ studied the recitation of the Qur'an from her husband `Abd Allāh Sharīḥ. When Abū Bakr `iyāḍ bin Baqī was still a child, he learnt from her how to read and recite the Qur'an. He was proud of that, and he always reminded her son who became one of the greatest and proficient muqri'īn of the Qur'an that his father and his mother taught him the reading of the Qur'an.⁵⁸³

`Āyisha bint ibn `Āṣim (13th century)

`Āyisha bint ibn `Āṣim was the daughter of `Abd Allāh al-Andalusī. Al-Tāzī (1992: 92) spoke of her as one of the great Gnostic and Sufi women of her time. She performed charismatic miracles.⁵⁸⁴

Fāṭima bint Ḥayūn Al-Ṣadafī (13th Century)

Fāṭima bint Ḥayūn Al-Ṣadafī was the daughter of the Shaykh Abū `Alī Ḥusayn ben Muḥammad bin Fira bin Ḥasūn al-Ṣadafī. She had lost her father at a very early age. She was brought up as a pious and Sufi woman. She was proficient in dhikr and Qur'anic recitation.⁵⁸⁵

Umm Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad al-Tilimsānī (14th centry)

Umm Mohammad ibn Aḥmad al-Tilimsānī was one of the greatest Sufi and ascetic women of her time. She was the mother of Shaykh `Abdallāh al-Tilimsānī (14th century). She wrote a number of taqāyid (writings or wurd). She displayed abilities to interpret visions and revelations. It was assumed that her interpretation of visions is similar to that of Muḥammad Ibn Sīrīn (7th century).⁵⁸⁶

Ruqayya al-Ya'qūbiyya (14th century)

Ruqayya al-Ya'qūbiyya was a scholar (`ālima) and a pious woman. Several male and female students learnt from her Malikism, tafsīr and Quranic courses.⁵⁸⁷

⁵⁸³ al-Marākushī 1965, 494

⁵⁸⁴ Ibid., 92

⁵⁸⁵ al-Marākushī 1965, 489

⁵⁸⁶ The Imām Mohammad Ibn Sīrīn is one the greatest Muslim interpreters of visions in the Muslim World.

⁵⁸⁷ Ibid., 207

Umm al-Banīn (14th century)

Umm al-Banīn was the grandmother of Zarrūq, the greatest Shaykh of Moroccan Sufism. She was ‘ābida and ṣāliḥa. She was one of faqīhāt who attended shaykh `Abdūsī’s religious courses.⁵⁸⁸

Umm Hānī bint Muḥammad al-‘Abdūsī (14th century)

Umm Hānī bint Muḥammad al-‘Abdūsī studied fiqh. Her brother shaykh Abd Allah al-Khaṭṭāb bin Mūsā was her teacher. Shaykh Zarrūq rendered that Umm Hānī was a great Shaykha and a saint of her time.⁵⁸⁹

Fāṭima al-‘Abdūsīyya (14th century)

Fāṭima was the sister of the woman Umm Hānī, the woman saint I referred above. She was considered as the greatest ‘ālimāt in legal and jurist affairs.⁵⁹⁰

Khadīja bint al-Hawāt (15th century)

Khadīja bint al-Hawāt was the daughter of the Shaykh `Abdallāh al-Shafshāwunī and the aunt of the historian abī Sūlaymān al-Hawāt. She was a great preacher in zāwiya-t Abū Yūsuf Sīdī Yūsuf bin al-Ḥusayn al-Tādilī which occurred in Ghumāra tribe. In 948H, she died.⁵⁹¹

Maryam bint ‘Abbūd (15th century)

She was a pious woman.⁵⁹²

Sitt Fāṭima (15th century)

Sitt Fāṭima was one of the shaykhat and saints of Marrakesh during the Waṭṭasī dynasty. She was from Aghmāt and the daughter of Shaykh Sīdī ‘Amr. Since her childhood, an overwhelming desire for religion and knowledge rose inside of her and drove her to study the Qur’an,

⁵⁸⁸ al-Tāzī 1993, 95

⁵⁸⁹ Abi Zaydān 1990, vol. 3, 585

⁵⁹⁰ al-Tāzī 1993, 105

⁵⁹¹ Ben Abdallah 1957

⁵⁹² al-Tāzī 1993, 90

hadith and fiqh. The proficient ‘ilm she had promoted her to teach men and women. At a certain age of her life, people of Aghmāt (High Atlas) started to show contempt towards her masculine dress. As a consequence, lalla Sitt Fāṭima moved to Ūrika village (30km from Marrakesh) and settled there. There she gained people’s esteem and respect. She founded her own zāwiya where the poor were comforted and the students were well informed. In her zāwiya as well she met her tribe’s leader to discuss the tribe’s matters. When she died, she was buried in an important cemetery. A shrine was built on her tomb, and an annual meeting was organized for her. A dower in Ourika is called after her name: Douar Sitt Fāṭima (seven kilometres away from Ūrika Marrakech).⁵⁹³

Umm Qāsim al-Ḥasnāwiya (16th century)

She was the mother of Umm Qāsim ibn al-Faqīh. She was a ṣaliḥa and a recitator of the Qur’an.⁵⁹⁴

Tawnū Umm Aḥmad ibn Mūsā (16th century)

Lalla Tawnu was from Sūs region. She was one of the greatest pious women of the south of Morocco and the mother of the Shaykh Sīdī Aḥmad ‘Umūsa al-Tāzirwālī (16th century). Her hagiographer described her as a lightening candle which enlightened scientific and scholarly families.⁵⁹⁵

Amīna bint Abū al-‘Āfiya (16th century)

Amīna bint Abū al-‘Āfiya was one of the greatest saints of her time. She was the daughter of the famous scholar: Ibn al-Qāḍī Abū al-‘Abbās Aḥmad ibn ‘Alī ibn ‘Abd al-Raḥmān ibn Abū al-‘Āfiya al-Miknāsī. She was always in the company of her Shaykh Abū al-Ḥasan ‘Alī al-Ṣanhajī.⁵⁹⁶

⁵⁹³ Venerator, Interviews, Jun 2011

⁵⁹⁴ Ibn Zaydān 1990, vol. 5, 535

⁵⁹⁵ al-Susī 1984

⁵⁹⁶ Ibid., 86

Umm Kalthūm al-Dar‘iya (16th century)

Umm Kalthūm al-Dar‘iya was a great shaykha, preacher and mufassira of her time. Her proficient piety and devotion to Quranic studies gained her and her family popularity. She taught her nephew al-Imām Ḥasan al-Murād al-‘āsaḥ al-Maghribī al-Miṣrī.⁵⁹⁷

-Mas‘ūda lūzkītiya (16th century)

‘Abd al-‘Azīz bin ‘Abdallāh, in his Ma‘lamat al-Taṣawwuf, writes that Mas‘ūda lūzkītiya was known by the name lalla ‘Awda, meaning a female horse. She was born in 1530. Her father was a Shaykh Aḥmad ben Abd Allah al-lūzkīti al-Warzāzi Amīr (governor) Qaṣbat Tawrīt (Moroccan eastern region). Her piety and knowledge urge people of her tribe to seek her advice and guidance. She was married to Shaykh al-Mahdī, king of Sa’dī dynasty (1548). When her son Abū al-‘Abbās Aḥmad al-Manṣūr al-Dahbī succeeded his father, she was called Umm al-Sulṭān. Her fame was reinforced when the Sa’diyin won the battle Wadī al-Makhāzin (1578). Lalla Mas‘ūda lūzkītiya used to be a source of advice for her son the Sultan Aḥmad al-Manṣūr al-Dahbī. She was as well very charitable towards the poor, the widows and the orphans. In 1586, she built a mosque, schools and dormitories in Marrakech.⁵⁹⁸

Ruqayya bint Mu‘īn al-Andalusī (17th Century)

Al-Kattānī states that she was also called Umm al-Banīn. She was proficient scholar in piety, certainty and mysticism. Her contemporary male shaykhs and saints considered her the greatest Sufi shaykha of her time.⁵⁹⁹

-‘Āyisha al-‘Adawiyya al-Miknāsiyya (17th century)

‘Āyisha al-‘Adawiyya al-Miknāsiyya was a saint and a Sufi woman from Meknes city. She was deeply devoted to God. Her immense love

⁵⁹⁷ Ibid., 96

⁵⁹⁸ Ben Abdallah 2003, 165.

⁵⁹⁹ al-Kattānī 1990, vol. 2, 293

to the divine made her to be labelled Rabī`a of her time. Miknāsi people deeply venerate her.⁶⁰⁰

Ta`izza bint Sulaymān al-Karāmīkya (17th century)

Ta`izza bint Sulaymān al-Karāmīkya was from Taddārt, a village in Sūs. She was the mother of the Moroccan great religious scholar Dāwūd bin `Alī bei Muḥammad al-Karāmī, the author of the book: *al-Bishāra*. People, in Taddārt village, continuously spoke of her piety and sainthood. Everyday Ta`izza fasted. Her son accounted that she was so devoted to faith and religion that she saw the prophet in her dreams, and he said to her: ‘be happy! You will be in Heaven as well as all the ones you love’. The prophet also gave her a sip of honey, which she found inside of her mouth each time she fasted. In the following morning, she went out and started preaching people to submit to the prophet’s instructions and retire from wrong deeds. She had karamāt. One of her karamāt was that she revealed to her son the date of her death.⁶⁰¹

Fāṭīma Trīda (17th century)

Her father was a great jurist. He thought her jurisprudence and law. She displayed a proficiency in fiqh and helped her father in the study of judicial cases. She was a ‘ālima.⁶⁰²

Amīna bint Sa`īd al-Ghumārī (18th century)

Amīna was a devoted, pious and ascetic woman. She was always silent. She submitted herself totally to the worshipping of God.⁶⁰³

Mammās bint `Alī (18th century)

Mammās bint `Alī was from Bennāra, a village in Sūs. She worked as a shepherd for her family. While she was alone in the mountains with her cattle, she got involved in meditation and dihr (remembrance). Her deep love to God made her to be called as Rabī`a of her time. She was

⁶⁰⁰ al-Tāzī 1993, 93

⁶⁰¹ al-Sūsī 1960

⁶⁰² al-Tāzī 1993, 119

⁶⁰³ al-Kattānī 1990, vol. 3, 129

always engaged in fasting as well as in daily and nightly prayer.⁶⁰⁴ Mammās bint `Alī has karamāt. She sometimes resided in different Moroccan regions, often journeying from Sūs to different part of the world and back. She said that God gave her the control of the earth. In every part of the earth, she fed the poor, sustained the old and cured the sick. It was said that some people spent the night in the High Atlas Mountains. They were overwhelmed by freezing weather and great hunger. Suddenly, hot food was offered to them. In the morning, they followed the foot traces till they reached the saint's house. She refused to talk to them. She said to her brother that these people were from Tlemcenn and asked him to go and assure them that their families were in a good situation. She died in 1706, and she is venerated till now by people.⁶⁰⁵

Amīna bint al-Ṭayyib al-Šmīlī (18th century)

Amīna was the daughter of Shaykh al-Ṭayyib bin Muḥammad al-Sharqī al-Šmīlī and the sister of the linguist scholar Abū Abdallāh Muḥammad ben al-Ṭayyib al-Shaqī al-Fāsī. She was brought up in environment of knowledge and piety. Her proficiency in Quranic studies promoted her to step up the pulpit to deliver public lectures. Her family forced her to marriage. According to al-Kattānī, her husband contended that her religious status hampered him to consume his marriage. She remained a divorced virgin woman till she died.⁶⁰⁶

Amīna bint Muḥammad al-Ghilān (18th century)

Amīna bint Muḥammad al-Ghilān was the daughter of faqīh Muḥammad al-Ghillān. She was originally from Tetuan city and was known as lalla Ghilana the greatest faqīha of her time.⁶⁰⁷

⁶⁰⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁰⁵ al-Sūsī 1960, 82

⁶⁰⁶ al-Kattānī 1990, vol. 3, 82

⁶⁰⁷ Dāwūd 1659, 93

‘Ashwa bint Abū Nāfi‘ (18th Century)

Ashwa bint Abū Nāfi‘ was shaykh ‘Alī Abū Nāfi‘’s daughter. She used to attend her father’s religious courses including, fiqh, tawhīd and sīra nabawīyya. She also studied preaching, and she started to be considered one of the greatest faqīhāt of her time.⁶⁰⁸

‘Āyisha ‘Aryānat al-Rās (bare head) (18th century)

‘Āyisha ‘Aryānat al-Rās was a saint with karamāt. She was called ‘Aryānat al-Rās because she used to go out unveiled. The sultan Mūlāy ‘Abd Allāh al-‘Alawī exiled her in a wild forest as a punishment for her disobedience. She never got married. Her sanctuary is still erected but ruined in old medina in Salé.⁶⁰⁹

Lalla Shamā (18th century)

In old Medina in Rabat near Mūlāy al-Makki mosque, the shrine of the unmarried woman saint lalla Shamā occurs. It is located in Dār al-Ḍamana. A huge qubba was built on her tomb, which is covered by a green cloth. She was a descendent of the Shaykh Sīdī Nāṣir Muḥammad Tihamī, and she lived under the reign of Sīdī Muḥammad bin ‘Abd al-Raḥmān al-‘Alawī. Her charisma urged people to venerate her and seek her baraka.⁶¹⁰

Khadīja bint Aḥmad al-Ḥamīdī (19th century)

In his book *Riyāḍ al-Janna*, Shaykh ‘Abd al-Hafīz al-Fāsī (19th century) renders the following account of Khadīja bint Aḥmad al-Ḥamīdī. She was the daughter of Aḥmad ibn ‘Azūz al-Ḥamīdī al-Fāsī and was proficient in Quranic recitation. Shaykh ‘Abd ‘Alī al-Ḥasan Janbūr said: “she taught me the methods of Qur’anic recitation, and she entitled me as shaykh”. Shaykh ‘Abd al-Hafīz al-Fāsī said that Khadīja was accounted to be one of the women who entitled men (a`jaza-t ‘al-Rijāl). She died in Fez in 1323H.⁶¹¹

⁶⁰⁸ al-Kattānī 1990, vol. 2, 187

⁶⁰⁹ Chikhaoui 1997, 36

⁶¹⁰ Amīna, Interview, July 2011

⁶¹¹ Kaḥḥāla 1982, 322

`Āyisha bent ibn Rāshid (19th century)

`Āyisha bent ibn Rāshid was one of the greatest faqīhāt of her time. She was licensed as a shaykha by great scholars.⁶¹²

`Āyisha al-Mutawakkiya (19th century)

`Āyisha was the daughter of Ḥāj Mubārak bin Aḥmad Shaykh bin Aḥmad bin Ḥusayn al-Mutawakkī. Nothing was known of her only that she copied and re-wrote by her own hand the holy Qur'an and wrote at the back of the Qur'an her name and that of her father.⁶¹³

Fāṭima bint Zwītin (19th century)

Fāṭima was the daughter of Shaykh al-Badawī bin Aḥmad who was known by the name Zwītin al-Fāsī. The historian Muḥammad bin `Alī al-Dukkālī said of her:” and I saw in al-Qarawiyīn a part of the book ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī re-written in a perfect style, and the name Fāṭima bint al-Badawī was written at the back of this book. I asked the student who was holding this book who was Fāṭima. He answered that she was the daughter of Shaykh Aḥmad Zwītin, the owner of zāwiya Abū Buswiqa in Fes.⁶¹⁴

Lalla Taja (19th century)

In his book *Rites et secrets des marabouts a Casablanca*, Mustapha Akhmiss records what follows. They said that in the late 19th century, there was a woman of piety, charity and chastity called Lalla Taja. She was very helpful and charitable particularly towards the poor and the orphans. Her house was a refuge and a shelter for abandoned children. When she died, she was buried near her house and a shrine was built on her tomb.⁶¹⁵

⁶¹² Kānūn 1961, vol. 1, 202

⁶¹³ al-Tāzī 1993, 120

⁶¹⁴ Ibid.

⁶¹⁵ Akhmiss 1984