

HISTOIRE
DE L'AFRIQUE

SOUS LA DYNASTIE DES AGHLABITES,

ET DE LA SICILE

SOUS LA DOMINATION MUSULMANE.

TEXTE ARABE D'EBN-KHALDOUN,

ACCOMPAGNÉ

D'UNE TRADUCTION FRANÇAISE ET DE NOTES

PAR A. NOEL DES VERGERS.



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HISTORY
OF AFRICA

UNDER THE AGHLABID DYNASTY

AND OF SICILY

UNDER THE RULE OF THE MOSLEMS

ARAB TEXT BY IBN KHALDOUN,

ACCOMPANIED

BY A FRENCH TRANSLATION AND NOTES

BY A. NOEL DES VERGERS

Paris
1841

END OF THE HISTORY OF SICILY
UNDER THE ARAB GOVERNORS
SENT TO THIS ISLAND BY THE OBEYDITES.
(pp157-162)

When Obéid-Allah-el-Mehdi, master of Africa, had been recognized as chief in this country [158] he named the governors in its various dependences, and sent to Sicily El Haçan-Ben-Abi-Khanzir, [159] one of the main leaders of the tribe of Ketamah, who arrived at Mazara in the year 297 of the Hegira. This emir, upon arriving, entrusted the government of Girgente to his brother, and named as cadi of Sicily Isaac Ben-el-Menhal. In 298 he was put at the head of a body of troops, and went to Damnasch where he devastated the region and then returned.

The inhabitants of Sicily, tired of his poor administration, rose against him, and wrote to El-Mehdi to excuse their conduct. This prince having accepted the reasons that they put forward in their favour, sent, to control them, Ali-Ben-Amrou-el-Baloui, who arrived in Sicily at the end of the year 299: he was a weak old man and who did not have the gift of pleasing them; they also soon deposed him to name in his place Ahmed-Ben-Korheb.

This new chief sent to Calabria a body of troops which devastated it, and returned after having taken considerable spoils and many prisoners. In the year 300 he gave the order to his son Ali to seize the new castle de Taormine, for a fortress where he could put his court and his treasures in safety in case of aggression on the part of the inhabitants of [160] Sicily. Ali, obeying the orders of his father, had besieged this castle for six months, when his troops, revolting against him, burned his tents and would have killed him if he had not been defended by the Arabs.

Following this event, Ebn-Korheb put all efforts to win the inhabitants of Sicily to the party of the khalife Moctadar and they responded to him. Consequently, in Khotba he suppressed (175) the followers of Mehdi and sent a fleet to attack the coasts of Africa. He met those of Mehdi there, commanded by El-Haçan-Ben-Abi-Khanzir who was killed in the combat, and whose vessels were burned by the Sicilians. The latter, following this victory, moved towards Safakes (176) which they delivered to plunder, and arrived at Tripoli where they thought of surprising El-Kaïm, the son of Mehdi; they then returned to Sicily.

Ebn-Korheb, who had just received the khilat and the flags on behalf of the khalife Moctadar (177), attacked Calabria with a new naval army: he afflicted all this country, and on his return he sent a second to the coasts of Africa. This time it was overcome and the vessels of Mehdi gained a complete victory. The prestige which had been attached to the victories of Ebn-Korheb having [161] been destroyed by this defeat, the Sicilians started to shake the yoke and the inhabitants of Girgente even wrote to Mehdi to promise him their allegiance: soon all the island being united in the same revolt, Ebn-Korheb was seized and taken prisoner and sent to Mehdi towards the end of the year 300 of the Hegira: this prince had him put to death, along with several of his partisans on the tomb d' Ebn-Abi-Khanzir.

Ibn Khaldoun (1332-1406)