

# AFRICA

BY

# MARMOL

WITH TRANSLATION  
by NICOLAS PERROT Lord D'ABLANCOURT

*IN THREE VOLUMES*

*And enriched by Geographic Maps by M. Sanson  
Geographer of the King*

## VOLUME II

PARIS

M. DC. LXVII.

BY ROYAL PERMISSION

LIVRE VI.  
Du Royaume de Tunis.

CHAPITRE XXIX.  
(p528-529)

*D'Esfaque.*

This is a small place of some six hundred [people (lit. "seux"), on the edge of the sea, twenty-six miles from the city of Africa [Mahdia], on the east coast. Some attribute its foundation to the Romans; but more commonly to the natives of the country.

It was formerly highly populated, & there had been much commerce, but it was ruined with the arrival of the followers of Mahomet, & has repopulated itself since. It was formerly named Ruspina [actually, *Ruspina* became Mahdia], which Ptolomée gives at thirty-eight degrees longitude, & thirty-two degrees twenty minutes of latitude.

The inhabitants devote themselves for the most part to ships, or fishing, which is extremely good on this coast. There are some weavers, but there is no wealth among them, although they act extremely proudly. Their ordinary food is barley bread, & a food made from this flour, which comes from the coast of Tunis. Several go hunting along the coast of Christendom in the company of the Turkish Corsairs, Others are merchants, & traffic in Turkey & Egypt. They have been extremely tormented in our time by the Kings of Tunis, & Arabs of the region, because they have revolted several times, & because they give shelter to the Corsairs.

When the naval army of the Emperor took the city of Africa, they did not obey anybody; but on arrival of the twenty galleys, that the Viceroy of Sicily sent to receive the tribute of the Lord of Gelves [Djerba], they are submitted to obey Muley Mahamet, son of the King of Tunis. This was not very durable, because he was driven off at once, & the Turks set up in his place, of which they still remain the masters.

## CHAPTER XXVIII.

### *The Town of Afrique* (pp504-506)

Dragut was from a small castle in Asia facing the island of Rhodes in the province which the Turks today call Mentécha. His fathers were Turks & Mahométans, & as they were poor people of countryside, he served Airadin Barberousse from his childhood, Thereby he served them several years, & became one of the best pilots of the Levant, & so expert in the knowledge of the isles, the ports & roads of the Mediterranean, that Barberousse [Barbarossa] who had since the loss of Tunis become Admiral of the Great Lord, made him Chief of all the Corsairs; As such, with eleven galleys that he gathered, he did great damage in Christendom, & running the coasts of Italy, sacked several places, until the Emperor ordered André Doria to follow him with all the galleys.

He thus sent after him his nephew Iannetin Doria, who made such diligence he caught him in the isle of Corfu at a time when he though himself secure, & sailing against the wind, met him, & bringing thirteen galiotes that it had, held him for four years in chains in the galley of Andrea Doria. This Corsair felt this affront cruelly, & enraged to have been taken by a young man without a beard, he let out with some insulting words that, when they came to the ears of Iannetin, he gave him so many blows & strikes, that without his uncle he would have killed him.

Then Barberoussa arriving at Toulon with the naval army of the Great Lord, sent a message telling André Doria that he had put Dragut up for ransom & that he had been ransomed for three thousand ducats. As soon as Barberossa had freed him, he gave him a galley of twenty-two benches, & made him Admiral of all [505] the Corsairs. The naval army being withdrawn to Constantinople, Dragut assembled fourteen Corsair vessels from Gelves [Djerba] & Esfaques [Sfax], & running the coasts of Christendom, entered the gulf of Naples, took & sacked Castellamare & seized a galley from Rhodes just four miles from Naples in the channel of Milene; but most of those which were inside escaped to land.

The whole year he ran this coast without finding any obstacle, until the Emperor asked André Doria to try by all means to get him in his power. André Doria assembled the following year, therefore, forty-three royal galleys, & went to seek through all the ports of Barbary, as we have mentioned in the description of Monester [Monastir]. Dragut passed the winter in Gelves, where not being confident [of his security], he chooses to retired to the city of Africa, & only thought of making himself master of it. He was then free, & the inhabitants separated from the allegiance to the King of Tunis, do not want to meet the Lord of Carvan [Kairouan], & had chased away this Corsair who came there to set himself up in the name of the Great Lord, & who began to build a castle in order to seize it. With this resolution, Dragut left Gelves in February with thirty-six vessels with oars, & approaching some towns on this coast, made the inhabitants revolt against the son of the King of Tunis who was there, & drove him out. After having seized the fortresses of these places, it bargained with an inhabitant of the city of Africa who was his friend, so that he would be received there with his vessels, in the hope of

enriching himself by the skins of Christians. This Moor acted so effectively amongst the inhabitants, that he was able to create a division between them, & Dragut who came there to him on the twelfth, & although he could speak to them, all he obtained was to be received as a friend, & assisted in anything that he would need, without having permission to enter, neither him nor any Turk.

He thus withdrew himself to Esfaques, & seeing the little appearance that it had there, to make himself master of the city, he solicited this friend so much, that he promised to provide him entrance some drain-holes of the wall along the edge of the sea, between the south & the east. Three days later, this Moor having put some of its party in the nearby towers, Dragut arrived at Esfaques at daybreak, to reconnoitre the place & disembarked six hundred Turks who went up that way into the city. He followed them with the remainder of his troops, & surprising the inhabitants who did not suspect anything, seized the nearby towers, sounding the trumpets, & taking the artillery of the vessels, advanced with his people as far as the Arsenal.

At this noise the people took weapons, & fought so valiantly for their freedom, that there were about the same number of casualties on each side, but at the end, realizing that they were betrayed, & that the number of the Turks increased every hour, they received Dragut, no longer as citizen, but as Prince. At once he seized the fortress, & after having been there a few days to give order to his new conquest; it left his nephew there with four hundred Turks, & ordered him to kill those had let him in, for fear that this treachery would hatch some new enterprise; & for him, he went with his vessels running the coasts of Christendom, taking along with him some of the principal inhabitants to serve as hostages.

*Bénitéfren & Néfuza.*

These are two large mountains, on the border of Esfaques [Sfax], & Gelves [Djerba], ten miles inland to the South. They are separated from the desert of Numidia, & are high, rough, & extremely cold; remaining so sterile, that only a little barley is collected there. They are inhabited by belligerent Africans & villains, always ready to try anything. They are of the sect \* that Gelves [Djerbans] follow, which is that of Sophi of Persia [Persian *Sufi*], which the Muslim Doctors hold as heretics, because it is the sect of Ali, who condemns that of Abubèquer [Abu Bakr] & Omar.

In the past all the people of Africa followed these doctrines of Ali, until the most learned of the Mahométans established the sect of Abubéquer & Omar: but the inhabitants of Esfaques, Gelves, & these mountains did not want to embrace it, & they are the only ones in Africa who do not accept it. When they go to Tunis, or elsewhere seek to work, because of the poverty of their region, they dare not let it be known which religion they are, because Alfaquis [Sfaxiens?] would be punished harshly. These people are accustomed to live in freedom, & defend themselves by ruggedness of their mountains, when the Kings are not extremely powerful, or there is some division in the country. They do the same today, though sometimes they pay tribute to the Turks, because they traffic in the Isle of Gelves [Djerba] & in other places of the coast, where the Turks are the masters.

CHAPITRE XXXIX.

p536

*Méharaz (Mahares)*

This is a fortified town built recently by the Kings of Tunis at the mouth of the gulf of Capez [Gabes] to guard against Christian pirates who were accustomed to come and devastate all this coast. The inhabitants have neither arable lands nor herds, & are poor fishermen or sailors who go hunting [piracy] with the Turkish vessels; but there are some weavers who make fabric in the Moorish style. They speak the African language of the Berbers, like those of the islands of Gelves [Djerba] which is their principal market & from which they are at a distance of only eighteen miles.

p536-538

CHAPTER XL

*The dwellings of the island of Kerkennah,  
which is beside the mainland on this coast.*

This is a island in front of Esfaques, where there are several hamlets of poor and malicious Berbers. All the surroundings is dry ground, & the current of water is so strong there, that vessels with oars have difficulty approaching. It is a dependency of Gelves [Djerba] and shares the same fortune. Some of these Barbarians make sailors, & are great friends of the Turks, because they are involved in piracy with them. This island & the fortress which is there was for a long time in the power of the Christians, & in the year one thousand five hundred and ten, Count Pedro de Navarre had gone back to Tripoli, since the defeat of Gelves [Djerba] left there with the remainder of the fleet of sixty sails, manned by eight thousand soldiers, with the resolution to do all the harm that he could against the Moors; but he was attacked by a tempest, where many vessels perished, & he himself was about to be lost. Finally he returned to Tripoli, where he rejoined some thirty vessels, & from there with five thousand men he went back to sea with the same intention; but he was surprised by another tempest which removed ten ships and many men, & he suffered a great shortage. Having finally arrived at the isle of Querquènes [Kerkennah] which was deserted, & where there was nothing but some huts of shepherds because they were sent there to pasture all the herds of the region, he wanted to supply his ships. The following day he went ashore, to find a watering place, & after having found three wells of good water, he re-embarked, but on the twenty-fourth of February, one of his Colonels [Vionélo] asked his permission to go to clean these wells, & to make a watering place, which was granted, because of the great need to have some. This Colonel thus took to four hundred and fifty picked men. Going itself straight to the wells, they did so well that after midday they were clean & in good state; in such a way that he drew a great ditch around to prevent them from being attacked by enemies. Over the evening, the Count was to visit them, & with his authority left-there them with its troops to

keep them; but it happened that as the wells were being cleaned, one of his Alfiers having missed the that he had been given, he was not satisfied to insults him; but he exaggerated, & tore off the beard. This irritated man, in the night went to find some Moors who had withdrawn to a corner of the isle, & told them that he wanted to become a Mahométan, & put in their hand all the Christians which were guarding the well. They then came without noise under his direction, & finding the sentinels sleeping, killed them, then they entered the ditch, where the majority slept confidently, & killed them all except three, one of whom was sent to the King of Tunis, the other to the Lord of Gelves, & the third remained among dead wounded by six blows. On these event, twenty men arrived who had gone during the night to fetch supplies from the fleet, & hearing the noise had hid in the bushes. After this carnage, the Moors fired some shots with their arquebus [an early musket] as a sign of rejoicing, which led the troops to come ashore at daybreak, & then following a skirmish, the Moors withdrew themselves, & this poor casualty dragged himself as best as he could towards his fellows, & let them know what had happened. The Count dissimulating this misfortune as well as could, sent a Colonel [Dom Diégo Pachéco] to reconnoitre the wells where his people had been killed, uncontrollable he re-embarked, & the Count after some other misfortunes & some shipwrecks, led back the remains of his army to the isle of Capri, thirty miles from Naples, where it was a few days, while his army completely dissipated.

Volume 2

Book VI

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# L'AFRIQUE

DE

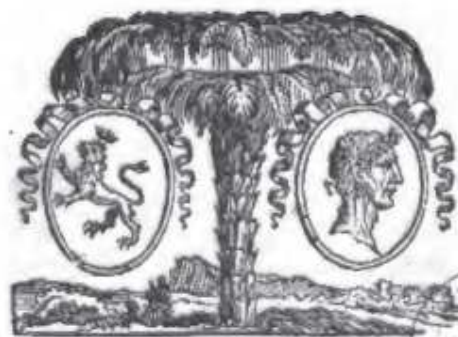
# MARMOL.

DE LA TRADUCTION  
de NICOLAS PERROT sieur D'ABLANSOVRT.

*DIVISEE EN TROIS VOLUMES,*

*Et enrichie des Cartes Geographiques de M. Sanson,  
Geographe ordinaire du Roy.*

TOME II.



A PARIS,

Chez THOMAS IOLLY, en la petite Salle du Palais, à la Palme,  
& aux Armes de Hollande.

M. DC. LXVII.

AVEC PRIVILEGE DV ROY.