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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ وَصَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَى سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلَى آلِهِ وَصَحْبِهِ وَسَلَّمَ تَسْلِيمًا

CHAPTER VI

THE SCHOLARS, PEOPLE OF PIETY AND THE JUDGES WHO RESIDED IN THE CITY OF Djenne'

Allah ta`ala conveyed to live in this blessed metropolis many scholars and righteous people from many diverse tribes and diverse countries. Among them was **Muri Magha Kankoy** whose origin was from Tayi, a village which was located between Bighu and Kukira. He moved from there to the learning center of Kabura in order to acquire learning. From there he traveled to Djenne' in the middle of the ninth century *hijra*¹, and Allah knows best. He was a jurist, a scholar-theologian, a devout servant who possessed a magnificent rank among his peers. In Djenne' there flocked to him many students to learn and gain benefit from his brilliant company. Among his daily practices was that in the middle of the night he would leave his home for the central mosque of Djenne' to teach and diffuse knowledge. Students would sit around him receiving various sciences until the time that the *iqaama*² was called for the *subh* prayer³. After the prayer the students would return to him seeking knowledge until sunrise, during which he would return to his home. Then after the *dhuhr* prayer he would sit and do the same thing until the *asr* prayer⁴. This was his daily custom until one day when he was praying the *subha* prayer with the *Imam*, that he heard a man next to him supplicating Allah while in prostration, saying; "O Allah! verily Muri Magha Kankoy has made the land too straightened for us, so make him go away from us!" When Muri Magha had made his *salaams*⁵ from the prayer, he said; "O my Lord!

¹ This corresponds with the middle of the 14th century.

² *Iqaama* means 'establishing'. It is a well established *sunna* (*sunna mu'akida*) which is said at the commencement of the five daily prayers. Its foundation is from the *sunna* as was related by al-Bukhari on the authority of Anas ibn Malik who said, "Bilal was ordered to double the *adhaan* and say the *iqaama* once." The *mujtahid imams* of jurisprudence are unanimously agreed that both the *adhaan* and the *iqaama* are apart of the legal requirements of the five prayers and the Friday *juma`* prayer. *Imams* Malik, as-Shafi` and Abu Haneefa say that they are *sunna*. *Imam* Ahmad ibn Hanbal says they are collective obligations (*fard kifaaya*) for the people of big cities. *Imam* Dawud says they are two obligations (*waajibaan*), although the prayer is valid if they are left.

³ *Subh* prayer is the dawn prayer wherein two *rak`ats* are prayed. It is obligatory to recite outloud in both *rak`ats* and it is highly recommended to recite long *suras* from the Qur'an after the *Fatiha*.

⁴ The *dhuhr* prayer begins when the sun has descended from its noon zenith until the shadows is the same size as the objects. It includes four *rak`ats* which must be recited silently. These are obligations. It is highly recommended to recite long *suras* during the first and second *rak`ats*. In the last two *rak`ats* only the *Fatiha* is recited. As for the *asr* prayer its time is when the shadows of objects are twice their sizes until sunset (*maghrib*). It performed in the same manner as the *dhuhr* with the exception that the recitations in the first two *rak`ats* after the *Fatiha* should be short.

⁵ The *salaams* is an obligation of the prayer and indicates its completion. It is obligatory to say 'as-Salaam `alaykum. It is *sunna* to add more than that. *Imams* Malik and as-Shafi` say only the first

I did not know that I was being so harmful to the people that they would make supplications against me!" He then moved from Djenne' to a place called Kuna. He settled there until the people of Jenje⁶ heard about his affair. They then sent to him a boat to help him move to their locale. He moved there and lived with them until he died, may Allah be merciful to him and benefit us by his *baraka*. His grave is located there and it is well known and is a place of visitation.

Among them was the jurist, **Fodio Muhammad Sanu al-Wangari**. He was a jurist, scholar, devout servant and *waliy*, who lived in Djenne' in the last part of the ninth century *hijra*. He moved from his original home in Bitu because of the turmoil and tribulation which had afflicted that land. He made his way to the metropolis of Djenne'. During the journey he traveled until the sun was near to set. He dismounted and delayed traveling because of the *maghrib* prayer⁷. He then spread out his *burnus* (hooded cloak) and stood upon it to pray. When he had completed the obligatory prayer, he then stood to pray the *nawaafil*⁸. Suddenly, a thief appeared and walked stealthily behind and attempted to gently pull the *burnus* from underneath one of his feet, but his foot prevented that from happening. The thief then attempted to pull the *burnus* from underneath the other foot, but he was prevented from that also. All the time Fodio Muhammad stood firmly in his place continuing to intently do his prayers. As a result the thief became very afraid and returned the *burnus* underneath the *shaykh* in the position it was originally in. After Fodio Muhammad completed his *nawaafil* prayers, the men repented at his hand, turning away from a life of thievery, and Allah knows best. In his travels Fodio Muhammad reached the land of Tuura, which is a village which lies between Djenne' and Shina, just beyond the river. He resided there and would come to Djenne' every Friday, where no one knew him, to perform the *juma`* prayer.⁹ One night one of the notables from the family of the *sultan* of Djenne' saw in his dream a speaker saying, "Verily that man who comes to your city from Tuura for the *juma`* prayer, realize that in whatever land he and his descendents reside, they will be a protection for it against all trials and tribulations. Whichever land his grave is located, whoever would come to those people wit what would frighten them, he would frighten that person with that which was greater." He continued seeing this dream for some three nights. On the third night in the dream the person in question was described to him. The notable then went and informed the *sultan* of all that he had seen. The *sultan* then ordered him to keep his eyes open for him and when he found him to bring him to his presence. When the notables saw Fodio Muhammad and noticed that he fulfilled all the conditions of the dream, he then brought him into the presence of the *sultan* and said to him, "These are the exact descriptions which I saw in my dream." The *sultan* then asked him to settle with them in the metropolis of Djenne'. When Fodio Muhammad settled in Djenne', he enacted a law to demolish the temple for idols where the people used to worship during their

salaam is obligatory to the *imam* and the one praying alone. *Imam* Malik says that the second *salaam* is not *sunna* for the *imam* nor the one praying alone. As for the one following an *imam*, it is highly recommended for him to give the *salaams* to right, left and to the *imam*. *Imam* Ahmad says that the first and second *salaams* are both obligatory. *Imam* Abu Haneefa says that both the first and second *salaams* are *sunna*.

⁶ Jenje' is a town which lies halfway between Jenne' and Gao.

⁷ The *maghrib* prayer begins with the setting of the sun and it is not to be postponed beyond that. It includes three *rak`ats*. In the first two *rak`ats* the recitation must be outloud and the third *rak`at* is silent. It is highly recommended to recite short *suras* after the *Fatiha* in the first two *rak`ats*.

⁸ The *nawaafil* (superogatory) prayers after *maghrib* are either two, four or six *rak`ats*.

⁹ The town Tuura had to be within 48 miles of the vicinity of Jenne' or the *shaykh* would not have obligated to travel their to pray.

jaahiliya period, along with the houses which were left empty inside of it at the same time they accepted *Islam*. The people pledged to give the entire area to him and they honored him and lauded him with the utmost respect and honor. However, after all this he would never sit with them nor take food with them in their homes. This was reported to the *sultan* many times, but he did not respond to this. Then one day a man from among the officials of the *sultan* came to Shaykh Fodio Muhammad desiring him to go with him to save him from the *sultan*, who vowed that he would have him killed. Shaykh Fodio Muhammad said, "It is not my custom to visit the rulers." The man then said, "My life is in your hands! My soul will blame you tomorrow when it is in the presence of Allah ta`ala, if you do not go with me to the *sultan*." When the shaykh went, the *sultan* was amazed that he had come. He gave him permission to enter and the Shaykh informed him of the reason for coming. The *sultan* said, "I will pardon him and his entire tribe of every crime and felony and everything which the authorities demand from him and them until the end of time, on one condition. That is that you take a meal with me in my home." The Shaykh accepted the *sultan's* offer. When they had presented the food before them, the shaykh moved his hand over the food to take some. His hand began swell before touching the food. The shaykh then said, "You have just seen what happened." He then stood up and left with honor and respect. The *sultan* left the man and his tribe alone as he had promised. This is the divine protection of Allah ta`ala which He provides for his righteous *awliyya*. When the *waliy* of Allah, the jurist Sidi Mahmuud ibn Umar ibn Muhammad Aqit traveled to Djenne' he met Fodio Muhammad and was truly amazed at his spiritual attainment. When he returned to Tinbuktu, he praised him and commended him with the *sultan*. It was for this reason that *Askiya* al-Hajj Muhammad appointed him as the chief judge of the metropolis of Djenne' after the *Askiya* had returned from the pilgrimage. Thus, Fodio Muhammad became the first judge in the city to render decisions among their people in accordance with the *shari`a*. Before that the people would take arbitration with the Imam of the mosque. This precedence laid down by Fodio Muhammad then became a quality of the Blacks and the *baydaan* that they would seek judgment with their judges and it is a custom which continues to this day. All that has been mentioned concerning his *baraka* has been witnessed by all the people openly, even to the point where supplications are answered immediately at his grave. His grave is located in the open square north of the *mihrab* of the central mosque next to the wall which surrounds the mosque. May Allah be pleased with him and shed his mercy upon him and provide us with his *baraka*. Amen.

Among them was the judge **al-Abbas Kibi**, who was a long time resident of Djenne' and whose origin was from the Wangara. He was a jurist, a distinguished scholar, a man of venerable, excellent and generous traits, who had his feet firmly established in the earth of generosity. His grave may Allah be merciful to him, is located inside the central mosque on the south rear side.

Among them was the judge **Mahmuud ibn Abu Bakr Baghyuyu**, the father of two of the most eminent scholars and venerable jurist: the jurist Muhammad Baghyuyu and the jurist Ahmad Baghyuyu. He was a long time resident of Djenne', Wangara by origin and an eminent jurist and theologian. He was appointed to the judiciary after the death of *Qadi* al-Abbas Kibi in the year 959 by the hand of *Askiya* Ishaq ibn *Amir'l-mu'mineen* *Askiya* al-Hajj Muhammad when he returned from the military excursions against Ta`ba.¹⁰

¹⁰ This occurred about 1562/3 C.E..

Among them was the judge **Ahmad Turfo** ibn *Qadi Umar Turfo*. He was originally from Djenne' and was among its original inhabitants. He was initially a preacher (*khateeb*), then he was made the *Imam* of the central mosque, and finally he was given the seat of the judiciary. Thus he was able to join all three responsibilities into one. When he made the pilgrimage to Mecca, he delegated *Khateeb* Mama as the *Khateeb*, *Imam* Yahya as the *Imam* of the central Mosque, and *Qadi* Modibo Bukar Turuuri as the judge. *Qadi* Ahmad, may Allah be merciful to him, eventually died in Mecca. And the post remained in the hands of those he had appointed. As for the above mentioned *Qadi* Bukar, he was originally from Kala among the sons of the *sultan* of that region¹¹. However, he renounced his inherited position of authority, took up the full employ of seeking knowledge and by that gained much *baraka*.

Among them was the judge **Muhammad Binba Kenati**, who was originally Wangara, an eminent jurist and distinguished scholar. He was appointed to the judiciary after the death of *Qadi* Bukar Turuuri and he was the last of the judges of this Sudanese Government.

For these were the renowned scholars of the metropolis of Djenne'. We did not make mention of them except for their pre-eminence in erudition and scholarship and in order to obtain the *baraka* of remembering them. As for a list of the judges of the city of Djenne' in sequential order: the first of them was

- [1] *Qadi* Fodio Muhammad Sanu;
- [2] *Qadi* Fuka;
- [3] *Qadi* Kunaaji;
- [4] *Qadi* Tinata u;
- [5] *Qadi* Sunqumo;
- [6] *Qadi* Umar al-Abbas Kibi;
- [7] *Qadi* Mahmuud Baghyuyu;
- [8] *Qadi* Umar Turfu;
- [9] *Qadi* Tulma Kilisi;
- [10] Ahmad Turfu;
- [11] Abu `l-Abbas Umar Turfu;
- [12] *Qadi* Modibo Bukar Turuuri; and
- [13] *Qadi* Muhammad Binba Kenati.

These were the judges of the metropolis of Djenne' that were appointed from the beginning of the government of the city until after its demise. Mention will be given of them, if Allah wills, when we mention the government of the Ahmadiya Hashimiya Abbassiya Mulayya dynasty, the master of Merekesh, may Allah be merciful to him. As for the scholars of the *baydaan*, there were many of them living there from the people of Tinbaktu. Mention will be made of some of them, if Allah wills, when we discuss those who have died during the government of the above mentioned Ahmadiya dynasty.

¹¹ This indicates that *Qadi* Bukar was of Mandinke' (Wangara) origin since Kala was among the provinves of the kingdom of Mali.