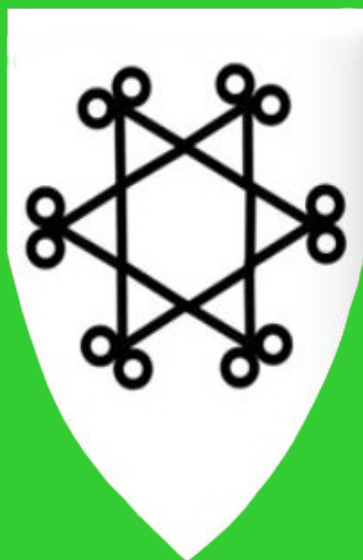


*Doctor Brahim Mokrani*

*The genealogy  
of the Mokrani  
since 1510*



*Doctor Brahim Mokrani*

*The genealogy  
of the Mokrani  
since 1510*

© Copyright by Doctor B. Mokrani

Photo of the logo on the cover:  
Amrabad

## **Preface**

This genealogy of the Mokrani family is dedicated to my son Mourad Mokrani, who died some 20 years ago.

It was he who provided me with the sources I needed for this project in the National Library in Paris.

He even wrote the family tree of the Hafsid kings (sultans) from their beginnings at the time of Ibn Toumert in the 12th century (the founder of the Almohad dynasty) to the last Hafsid king of Bejaia in 1510, which marked the beginning of the Mokrani dynasty. I have not yet published his manuscript.

My late son Mourad, after finishing his studies, got married. He died of illness in 2004 and is buried in the cemetery of his ancestors at Boumansour (formerly called Amâdan) near Oued-Ghir, not far from Bejaia.

It is a pity that he was not able to see his son Amine, who was born shortly after his death.

I myself have been working on the family tree of the Mokrani since the last king of Bejaia, Sidi Abdelaziz, and I started this work about 25 years ago. I myself have been Now I have finally decided to continue this genealogy and publish it in the form of a brochure.



Photo of Mourad Mokrani.  
(Died in 2004 at the age of 28).

## **Mokrani family trees since 1510 AD.**

The Mokrani are descendants of the last king of Bejaia, Sidi Abdelaziz, who reigned from 1494 AD.

Sultan Sidi Abdelaziz was descended from the Hafsid dynasty of Tunisia.

The Hafsids were a branch of the Almohads (in Arabic, Almohidine). They were descended from the family of Omar Abou Hafs El Hintati, from the High Atlas in Morocco. Omar Abou Hafs' real name was Kasba Oumezal El Hintati (a Berber and village chief). He was born around 1090 and died in 1175 in Salé in Morocco. It was he who gave Ibn Toumert asylum and protection from his enemies when he returned to Morocco after his stay in the Orient and in Bejaia.

### **Who are Ibn Toumert and Abdelmoumen?**

#### **Ibn Toumert:**

He is the son of Mohand Outoumert (a Berber) from the Masmouda tribe in the High Atlas (Morocco).

Ibn Toumert (born around 1080) was the founder of the Almohad dynasty in the early 12th century. He died in 1130 in Morocco, just 7 years or so after the start of his political career. His mausoleum is at Tinmel (or Tinmellal) in the High Atlas.

His successors were Abdelmoumen and Omar Abou Hafs El Hintati and their descendants.

#### **Abdelmoumen:**

Abdelmoumen (a Berber) was the son of Ali Akoumi, from the Koumia tribe, one of the branches of the Masmouda in Tagrat or Tajra on the hill overlooking Honaine, west of Oran, by the sea. The Koumia are a branch of the

Masmouda (see Ibn Khaldoune, Volume II, beginning of page 573).

Abdelmoumen was born between 1094 and 1106 and died in 1163 in Salé, Morocco.

### **Abu Zakaria ibn Hafs:**

Abu Zakaria Yahia Ibn Hafs was the great-grandson of Omar Abou Hafs El Hintati (1090-1175), one of the founders of the Almohad Empire.

The Almohads installed him at the age of 26 as governor of *Ifriqiya* (today Tunisia and its surroundings). He then declared himself independent and became the first Hafsids king. In 1236, his kingdom stretched from Libya in the east to the Mitidja and Chelif in western Algeria. It was also the year that marked the end of the Almohad Empire.

### **Sidi Abdelaziz, the last king of Bejaia:**

The last king of Bejaia, from whom the Mokrani descended, was a descendant of King Abu Zakaria Ibn Hafs.

The Hafsids king of Tunis, Abu Mohammed Ben Hassan, installed his son Abdelaziz as governor of Bejaia in 1494, who then proclaimed himself king of Bejaia.

In 1510, Bejaia was conquered by Spanish troops, and King Abdelaziz was forced to leave his city. He fled with his two sons, Abderahman and Abbas, their families, and other inhabitants of Bejaia to the Biban Mountain. His two other sons were martyred by the Spanish during the battle for their city.

King Abdelaziz and his two remaining sons founded a citadel on the Biban Mountain, from where they continued to govern their territory. The citadel is located on a rocky plateau at an altitude of 1,300 meters, which is difficult to

access. The site was formerly known as *Iwannuren* (*Iouanoughen*).

They had chosen this place for its difficulty of access from almost 360° and its defensive position to build their new capital (see Figs. 1 and 2).

In earlier times, this site was a Hammadit fort connected to the *Kalâa of the Beni Hammad* to control the strategic passage through the “iron gates” (*the Bibans*). Before Bejaia was taken by the Hafsids, this city was the Hammadit capital.

The *Kalâa of Beni Hammad* was founded in 1007. It is located on a mountain called Djebel Mâadi at an altitude of 1869 meters, 54 km south of Bordj-Bou-Arreridj. The Hammadits abandoned it after it was taken by the Hilalits and took refuge in Bejaia, which subsequently became their new capital.

The citadel of the *Iwannuren* in the Bibans was later named the *Kalâa of the Aït Abbas* (or *Beni Abbas*); it is located in the commune of Ighil Ali, wilaya of Bejaia.

After the death of King Sidi Abdelaziz, his youngest son Sidi Abbas succeeded him on the throne because his elder brother Sidi Abderahman had renounced it.

After the death of King Sidi Abbas in 1550, his eldest son Sidi Abdelaziz II succeeded his father. He was killed in 1559 during the war against the Turks, and his head was delivered to the Turkish authorities in the regency of Algiers.

His brother Sidi Ahmed succeeded him and ruled until his death around 1596.

He was then given the title Sidi Ahmed “*Amokran*,” which means Ahmed “*the Great*,” because of his exploits and the expansion of his kingdom into the Sahara (see fig. 4). His mausoleum is located in the *Kalâa of the Aït Abbas*. (see fig. 5).

His children then took “*Mokrani*” as their family name, which means “*of Greatness*” or “*Great*.”

All the Mokrani scattered around the world are descendants of this great Berber king.

After the death of King Sidi Ahmed Amokran, his son Sidi Nacer Mokrani succeeded him to the throne and governed until around 1624 (Rinn gives the year 1600). Rebels assassinated him, his guards, and his other companions in an ambush, and they also want to kill his children.

Sidi Nacer Mokrani left three very young sons:

His eldest son, Sidi Betka Mokrani, was saved by the Beni Hachem of Medjana, his mother's relatives. It was he and his descendants who then governed the Mokrani kingdom. He is the ancestor of the Mokrani of Medjana and its region. Like his father, Sidi Betka was very religious; he had memorised the Koran and preferred the title of *sheikh* to that of *sultan* (*king*). His mausoleum is located in Bordj-Bou-Arreridj (see fig. 6).

At the time of the Ottoman regency of Algiers, the *Kalâa of the Aït Abbas* had a total of 14 mosques and mausoleums.

The Mokrani governed their territory until their defeat by the French colonial army in 1872. Their last great leader was the *bachagha* Sidi El Hadj Mohammed Mokrani (born around 1815). The title *bachagha* or *bacha agha* is of Turkish origin and means “the great chief”.

He was killed in battle by the French in 1871, and his mausoleum is located in the *Kalâa of Aït Abbas* (see fig. 7).



His brother Sidi Ahmed Bou-Mezrag Mokrani (born around 1830 in Medjana) was at that time the Caïd of Iouanoughen (Aït Abbas). He continued to fight against the French army until he was captured by the French on 20 June 1872 in the Sahara, not far from Ouargla. The French court in Constantine sentenced him to death in 1873, and his sentence was later commuted to deportation for life to New Caledonia. New Caledonia is an island in the Pacific Ocean that is under French rule.

He was pardoned in May 1904 for his participation in the suppression of the *Canaques* revolt (the native people of New Caledonia), after which he returned to Algeria. He lived in Chlef (Orléanville or El-Asnam) under house arrest until his death one year later at the age of 75 years. He is buried in Algiers, in the Hamma cemetery.

After the defeat of the Mokrani, the French army destroyed their citadel, expropriated them, and distributed their vast lands and possessions to colonists from France.

As for the other two brothers of Sidi Betka, Sidi Mohammed, or M'hamed Mokrani, and Sidi Boutemzine Mokrani, they were also rescued by their mother's relatives, the Aït Messaoud, in Amâdan, near Oued-Ghir, not far from Bejaia.

Sidi M'hamed Mokrani (born around 1615?), who came from Medjana as an infant, around 1624, later became a great scholar of the religion of Islam and founded the *Zaouia* of Amâdan (a religious institution). He and his descendants are religious leaders.

As for Sidi Boutemzine Mokrani, he must have gone to the west of Algeria in the Maskar region. I have no further information about him.

Due to his noble origins (prince) and his religious virtues, Sidi M'hamed Mokrani acquired a certain influence over the Berber peoples as far as Jijel.

The Turkish authorities then called him to Bejaia to entrust him with the provision for the construction of ships, called *karasta* in Turkish. They also granted him many political and other favours.

The mausoleum of Sheikh Sidi M'hamed Mokrani is located in Bejaia above the old town, on the street that bears his name. His mausoleum is still open to visitors today (see Figs. 8a and 8b).

He is the ancestor of the Mokrani living in Amâdan, Oued-Ghir, Bejaia, Barbacha, Aït Tizi, Ziam Mansoriah, Boulzazene, Aït Smail, in the entire Bejaia region, and of the Mokrani of Jijel (the Beni Siar).

Sidi M'hamed Mokrani left five sons:

The first son settled in the *Zawiya* of Barbacha, the second son settled in Tamesna (Aït Smaïl), he is the ancestor of the Mokrani of Tamesna, they were called *Irchiden*, which means *the leaders*.

The third son returned to his cousins in Medjana.

The fourth son, Sidi El Mouhoub Mokrani, settled among the Ouled Nabet near Ziam Mansouriah.

At that time, Tamesna, Barbacha, and Ziam Mansoriah were probably strategic places to control the transport of grain and goods from the hinterland to Bejaia.

The fifth son, Sheikh Sidi Abdelkader Mokrani, remained in the *Zaouia* of Amâdan near Bejaia. He was a doctor of law and became a great religious and political leader. He became the successor of his father, Sidi M'hamed, in Bejaia. In 1682, the Turkish authorities in Algiers granted him *Habous* rights over Barbacha and the surrounding area, meaning the right to govern its inhabitants and benefit from the taxes.

His name is mentioned in the “*Revue Africaine*” (see L. Charles. Féraud, “Exploitation des forêts de la karasta, dans la kabilie orientale, sous la domination turque, op. RD 1868, pages 382 to 390”).

The Chevalier d'Arvieux, an extraordinary envoy of King Louis XIV of France, met Sidi Abdelkader Mokrani in Bejaia on 6 September 1674. He wrote of him:

*“Sidi Abdelkader received Habous rights for himself and his descendants over the region of Barbacha, the Ouled Abdallah, and the Berri. Sidi Abdelkader was seen as a saint by the Turks and Moors [North Africans]. He preached peace and enjoyed a great reputation, so much so that the dey of Algiers entrusted him with his seal for passports.*

*Sidi Abdelkader, nicknamed “El Nadjar” because of his involvement in shipbuilding, owned a forest concession in Barbacha, offered by the Ottoman authorities in recognition of his protection of Turkish officials in difficulty in Bejaia. From this forest, he shipped the wood [oak] destined for the construction of ships [galleys].*

*The mausoleum of Sidi Abdelkader is located at the top of the fort that bears his name, above the port of Bejaia, where he was buried. Built by the inhabitants of this city after his death, the mausoleum is today a place of veneration and pilgrimage.” (See Fig. 9).*

See the following sources:

<https://www.vitamedz.com/fr/Algerie/le-fort-sidi-abdelkader-7278859-Articles-0-0-1.html>.

Groupe D'études sur l'histoire des mathématiques à Bougie médiévale GEHIMAB.

<https://www.facebook.com/people/Bejaia-La-Perle/100064729297540/>.

I will present this genealogy of the Mokrani in two sections: The first section begins with the king of Bejaia, Sidi Abdelaziz, at the Kalâa des Aït Abbas in 1510, following the branch of the Mokrani from Medjana, whose ancestor is Sidi Betka Mokrani, until 1872. This branch is well known in history.

Then came the second section, which was the branch of the Mokrani from Bejaia and Jijel, whose ancestor was Sidi M'hamed Mokrani. This branch has fallen into oblivion.

**Notes from the author:**

The Mokrani call themselves "*Imrabten*" (*the Merabets* or *Marabouts*); they are a sort of religious aristocracy who guard and maintain the religion of Islam according to the *Malikit* rite. They teach religion and provide sheikhs (imams).

The *Merabets* normally marry among themselves.

**Please note!**

Do not confuse the "*Merabets*" with the "*Morabitin*" warriors of the Almoravid dynasty. They have nothing in common with them, except the names that resemble each other.

**Zawiya:**

In this genealogy, the word "*Zawiya*" is often used:

*Zawiyas* are religious institutions, widespread in North Africa.

A *Zawiya* is a religious complex comprising a mosque, study rooms, and a hostel for the poor. It also channels the military combat, the "*Jihad*," against attacks of foreigners.

This genealogy can by no means be considered complete due to the lack of written sources of information.

I would like to encourage other people who are interested in this topic to continue their research and complete it if possible.

Further sources can be found in France in the archives of Aix-en-Provence, in the National Library of Paris, and in the Ottoman Archives in Istanbul-Topkapi in Turkey.

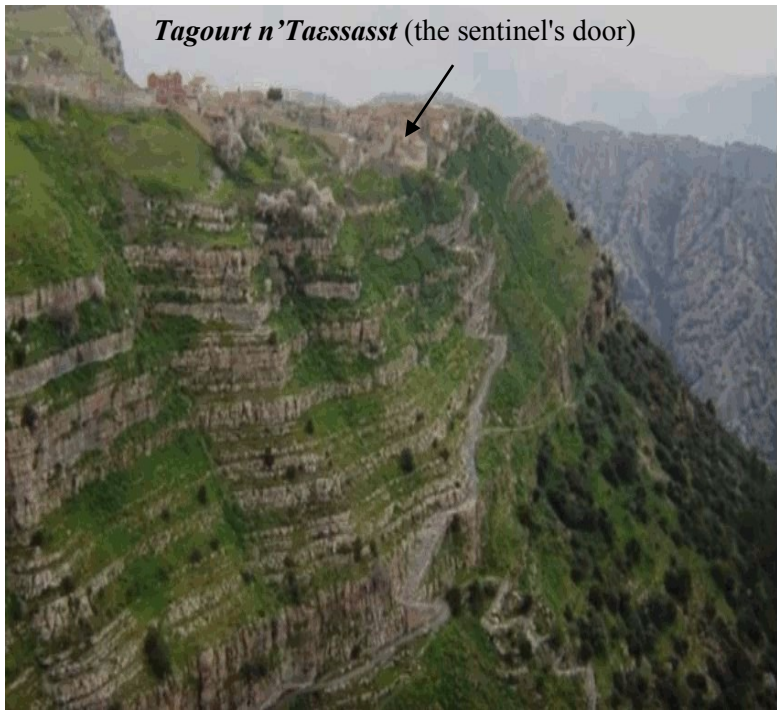


Fig. 1: Photo of the Kalâa of the Aït Abbas.  
Source: <https://www.youtube.com/@Amrabad>.



Fig. 2: Aerial view of the Kalâa of the Aït Abbas.  
Source: Google Earth.

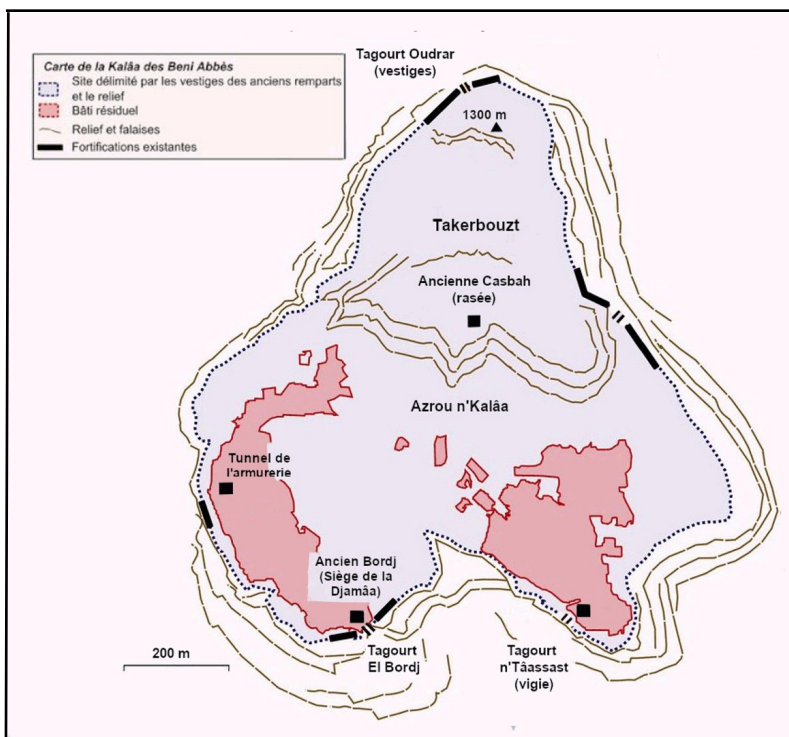


Fig. 3: Map of the Kalâa of the Aït Abbas (this map is rotated 180°).

Source: Wikipedia.





Fig. 4: Map of the kingdom of Sultan Sidi Ahmed Amokran.

This kingdom was about half the size of the former kingdom of Bejaia.

Source: <https://www.youtube.com/@Amrabad>.



Fig. 5: Mausoleum of Sultan Sidi Ahmed Amokran in the Kalâa of the Aït Abbas.

Source: <https://www.youtube.com/@Amrabad>.

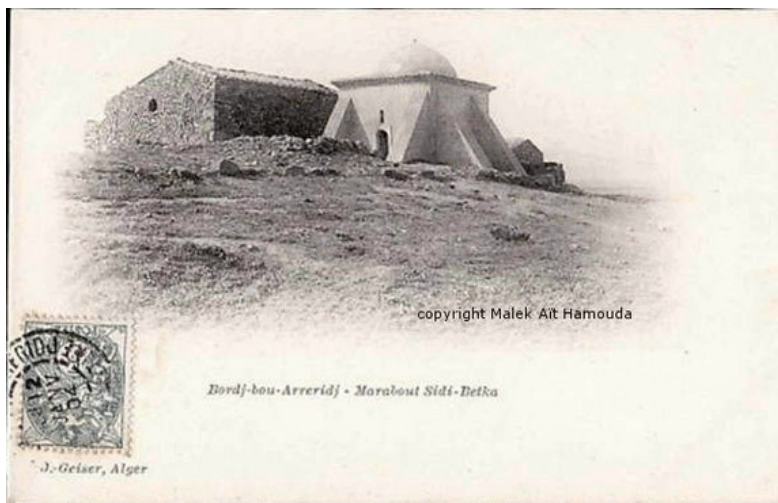


Fig. 6: Mausoleum of Sheikh (King) Sidi Betka Mokrani in Bordj-Bou-Arreridj.  
Source: Malek Aït Hamouda.



Fig. 7: Mausoleum of Sheikh Sidi Mohammed Mokrani in the Kalâa of the Aït Abbas, killed by the French Army in 1871.

Source: Benifoughal.com.



Fig. 8 a: Interior view of the mausoleum of Sheikh Sidi M'hamed or Mohammed Mokrani in Bejaia, who came from the Kalâa of the Aït Abbas around 1624. Source: Malek Aït Hamouda.



Fig. 8 b: Exterior view of the mausoleum of Sheikh Sidi M'hamed or Mohammed Mokrani in Bejaia. Source: Malek Aït Hamouda.



Fig. 9: Mausoleum of Sheikh Sidi Abdelkader Mokrani in Bejaia, at the fort bearing his name, above the port. He was the 5th son of the prince and Sheikh Sidi M'hamed Mokrani, who came from the Kalâa of the Aït Abbas and was buried in Bejaia.

Source: Google Earth.





Fig. 10: Mausoleum of Sheikh Sidi El Mahdi Mokrani of Amâdan in the old Boumansour mosque. He is a grandson of Sheikh Sidi Abdelkader Mokrani of Bejaia and a great-great-grandson of the prince and Sheikh Sidi M'hamed Mokrani from the Kalâa of the Aït Abbas and buried in Bejaia.  
Source: Dr B. Mokrani (photo taken in 1994).



Fig. 11: Mausoleum of Sheikh Sidi El Hadj Cherif Mokrani in Tergregt-Aït Smaïl.

He is a grandson of Sheikh Sidi El Mahdi Mokrani of Amâdane and a 6th-generation descendant of the prince and Sheikh Sidi M'hamed Mokrani, who came from the Kalâa of Aït Abbas around 1620 and was buried in Bejaia.

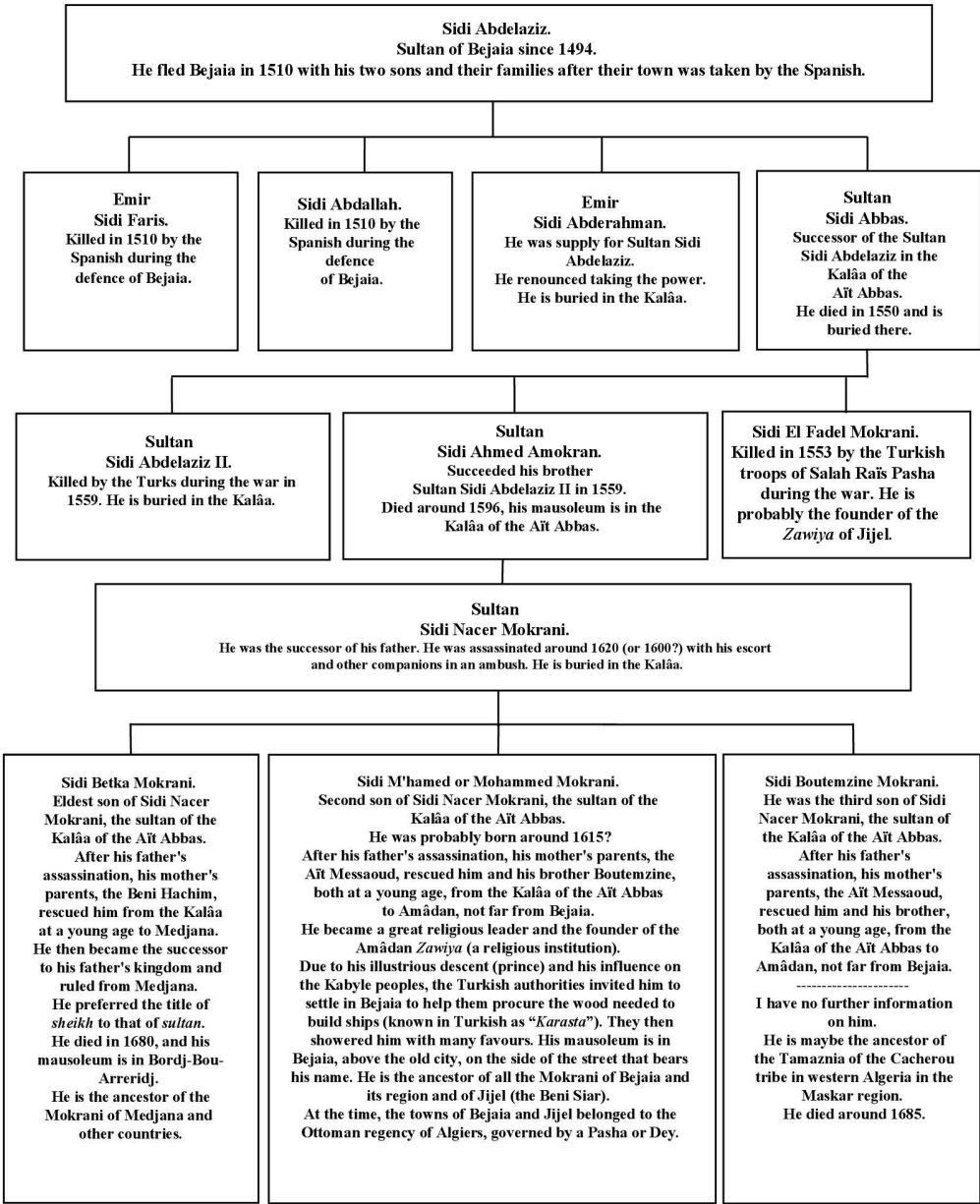
Source: Dr B. Mokrani (photo taken in 1994).



First section: Beginning of the Mokrani genealogy at the KALÂA of the AIT ABBAS

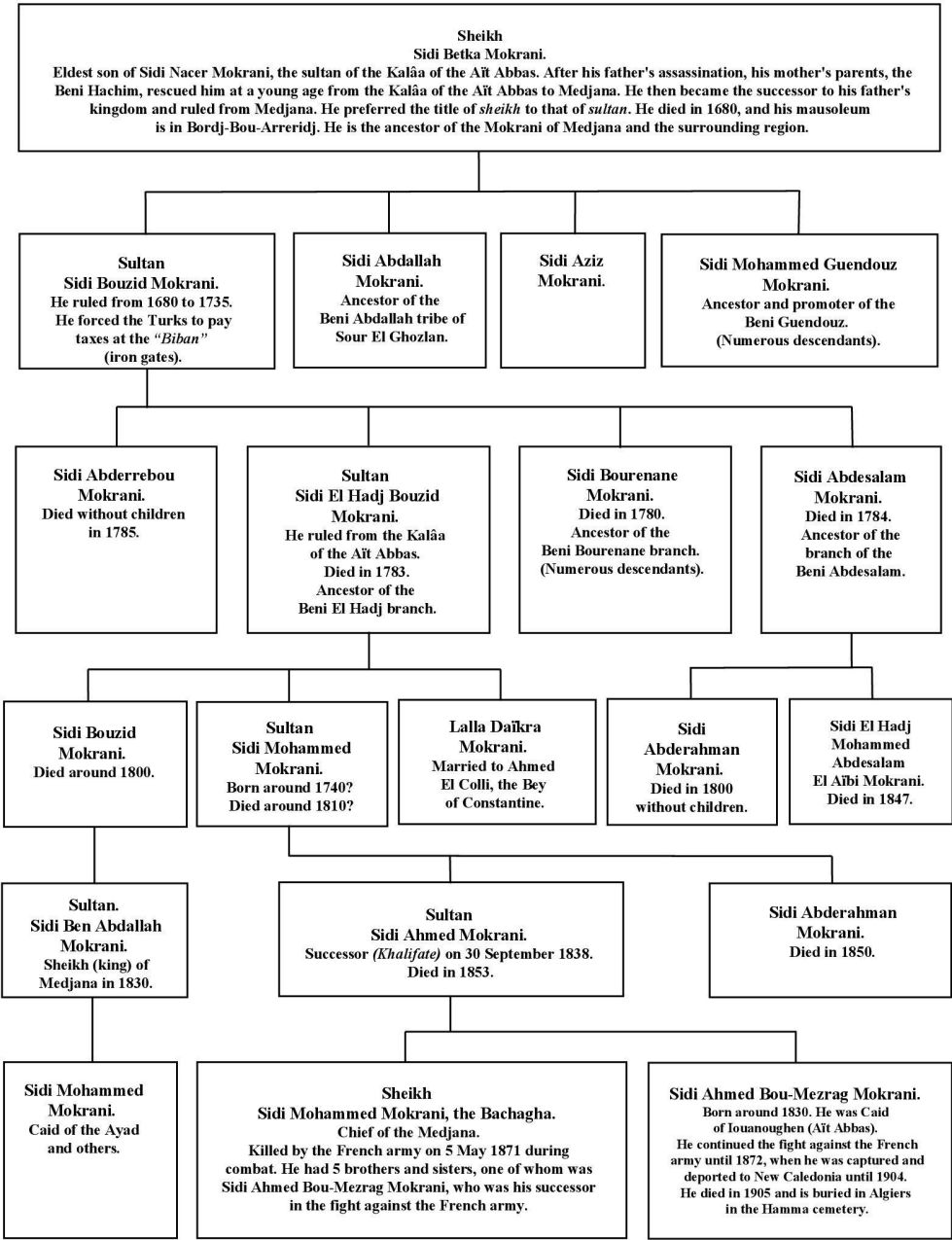
N° I

© Copyright by Doctor Brahim Mokrani



First section (suite): Genealogical tree of Sidi Betka Mokrani, the Sheikh (king) of Medjana

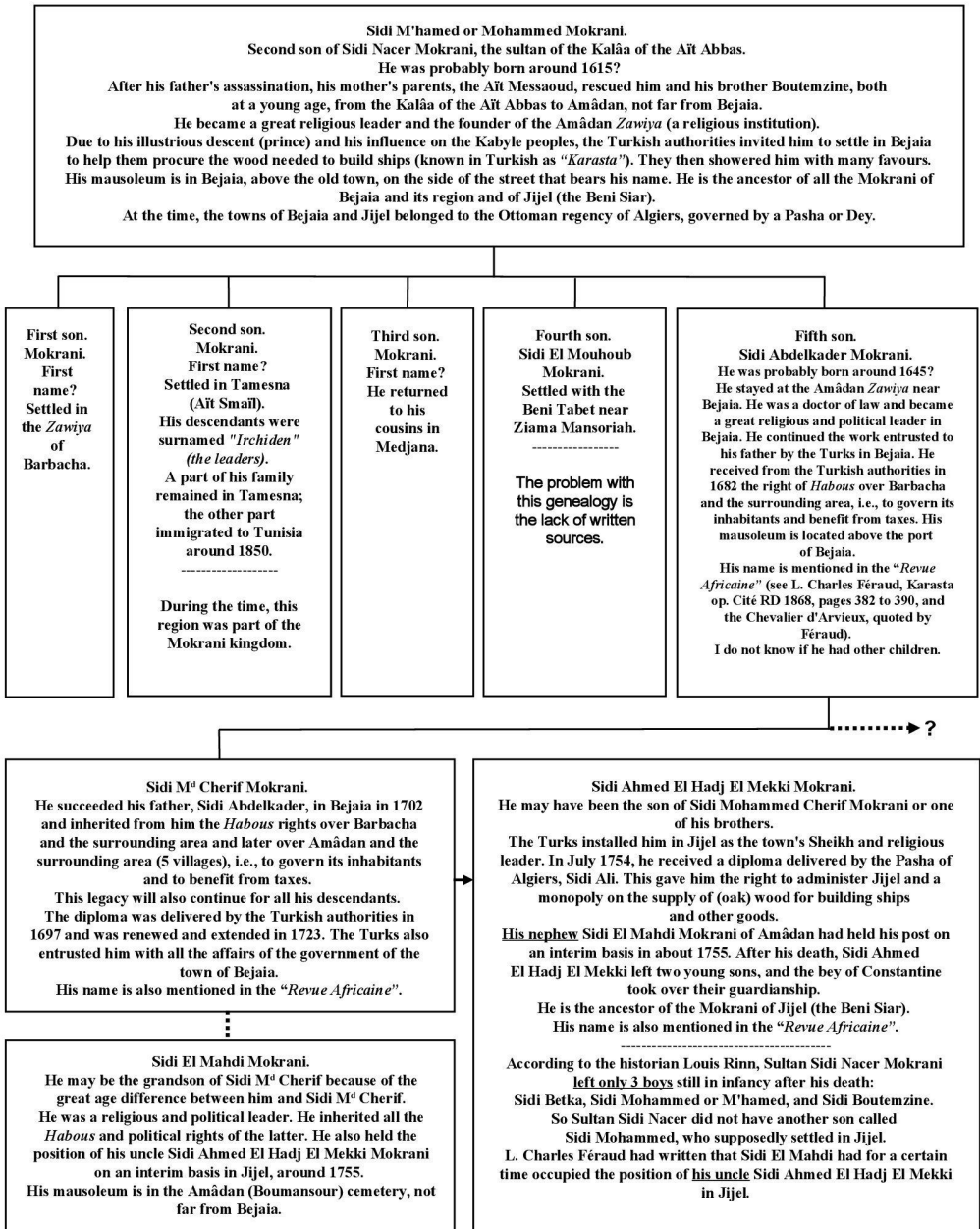
© Copyright by Doctor Brahim Mokrani N° II



## Second section: Genealogical tree of the Mokrani of the Bejaia branch

### N° III

© Copyright by Doctor Brahim Mokrani



## Second section (suite 1): Genealogical tree of the Mokrani of the Bejaia branch (from Aït Smaïl and Oued Ghir)

N° IV

© Copyright by Doctor Brahim Mokrani

**Sidi El Mahdi Mokrani.**

He may be the grandson of Sidi M<sup>d</sup> Cherif because of the great age difference between him and Sidi M<sup>d</sup> Cherif. He was a religious and political leader. He inherited all the *Habous* and political rights of the latter. He also held the position of his uncle Sidi Ahmed El Hadj El Mekki Mokrani on an interim basis in Jijel, around 1755. His mausoleum is in the Amâdan (Boumansour) cemetery, not far from Bejaia.

**Sidi El Hadj Cherif Mokrani.**

He was probably born around 1785?

He is a grandson of Sheikh Sidi El Mahdi Mokrani of Amâdan and a 6th-generation descendant of the prince and Sheikh Sidi M'hamed Mokrani, who came from the Kalâa of the Aït Abbas around 1624 and was buried in Bejaia. He settled as a Sheikh and religious leader in Aït Smaïl. He died there, and his mausoleum is in the old cemetery of Tergregt, above the bridge over the W6 road in the city centre. The local population surnamed his descendants the "*Aït Cheikh*".

He was the ancestor of the Mokrani of Aït Smaïl and Oued-Ghir.

At the time, this region was part of the Mokrani kingdom.

**Si Mohammed Mokrani.**

He was the Sheikh of Aït Smaïl.

**Si Larbi Mokrani.**

Born around 1840. He was the Sheikh of Aït Smaïl and Cadi (judge) in Kherrata. He Died in Aït Smaïl.

He is the ancestor of the Mokrani of Aït Smaïl. (\*)

**Si Seddik (known as Si Saïd) Mokrani.**

Born around 1845. Died in Aït Smaïl.

He is the ancestor of the Mokrani of Oued-Ghir. (\*)

(More on another page).

**Si Mohammed (known as Si M<sup>d</sup> Larbi) Mokrani.**

Born around 1860.

He was the Sheikh of Aït Smaïl and Khodja in Bordj-Mira. Died in Aït Smaïl. (\*)

**Si Ali Mokrani.**

Born around 1864.

Died without children in Aït Smaïl. (\*)

**Si Houacine Mokrani.**

Born around 1864.

Died without children in Aït Smaïl. (\*)

**Daouia Mokrani.**

Born around 1870.

**Si Mohand called (Si M<sup>d</sup> Cherif) Mokrani.**  
Born around 1879. He died without children in Aït Smaïl around 1935. Married to Zahra Mokrani, daughter of Djoudi Mokrani. (\*)

**Si Tahar Mokrani.**  
Born around 1887. He died in 1938 in Aït Smaïl. Married to Tata Mokrani, daughter of Djoudi Mokrani. (\*)

**Yamina Mokrani.**  
Married to Si M<sup>d</sup> Oulhocine from Tala Ifassene, died there.

**Si Ahmed Mokrani.**  
Born on 20.12.1892. Died on 31.05.1936 in Aït Smaïl. Married to Zahra Zerguini from Annar-Assem (Souk El Tennine). Born around 1900, daughter of Mahdi Zerguini and Mira Boudrias. She died on 10.02.1960 in Aït Smaïl. (\*)

**Si El Foudil Mokrani.**  
Died in 1945 without children in Aït Smaïl.

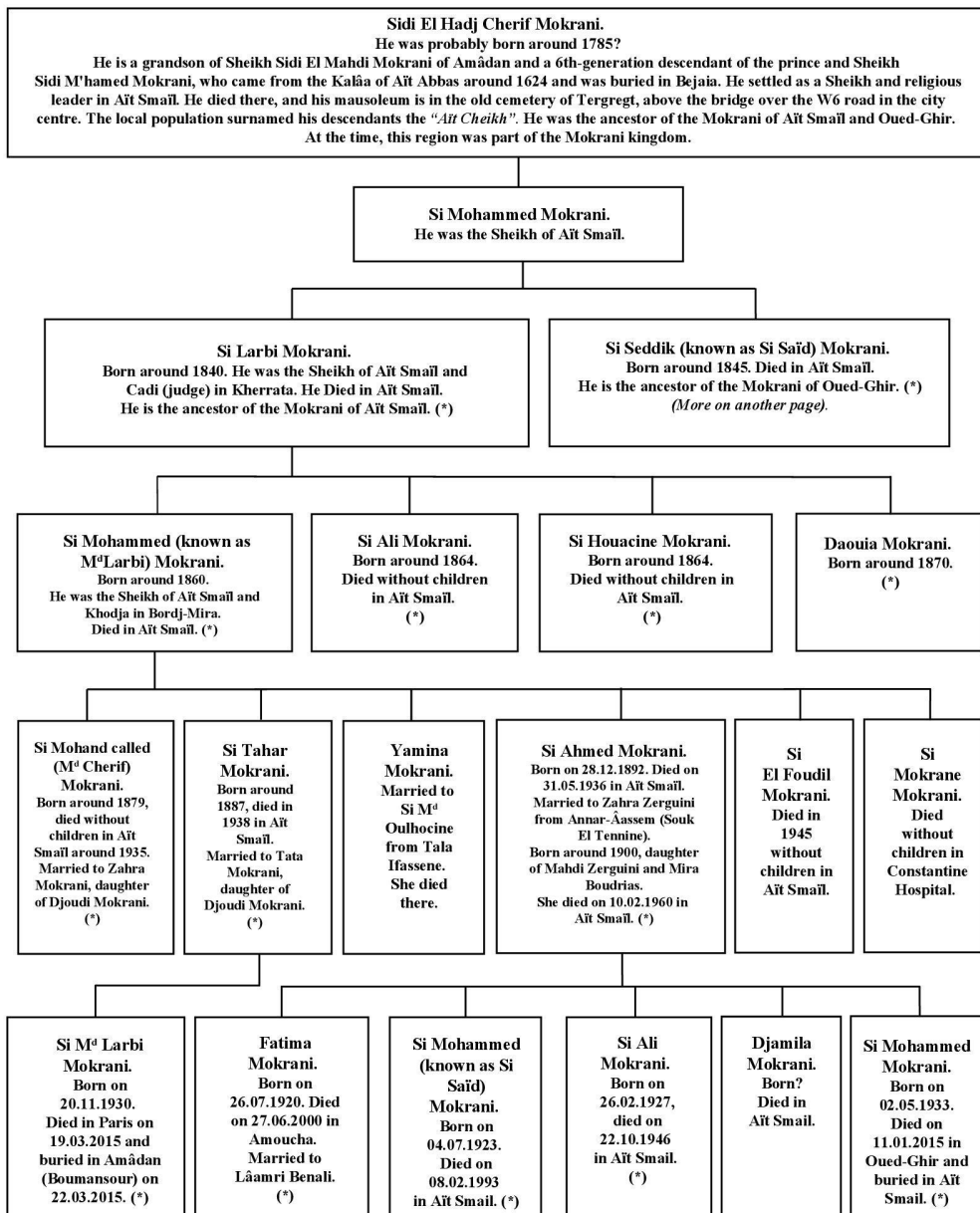
**Si Mokrane Mokrani.**  
Died without children in Constantine Hospital.

(\*) I have their birth certificates.

## Second section (suite 2): Genealogical tree of the Mokrani of Aït Smaïl and Oued-Ghir (the branch of Aït Smaïl)

© Copyright by Doctor Brahim Mokrani

N° V

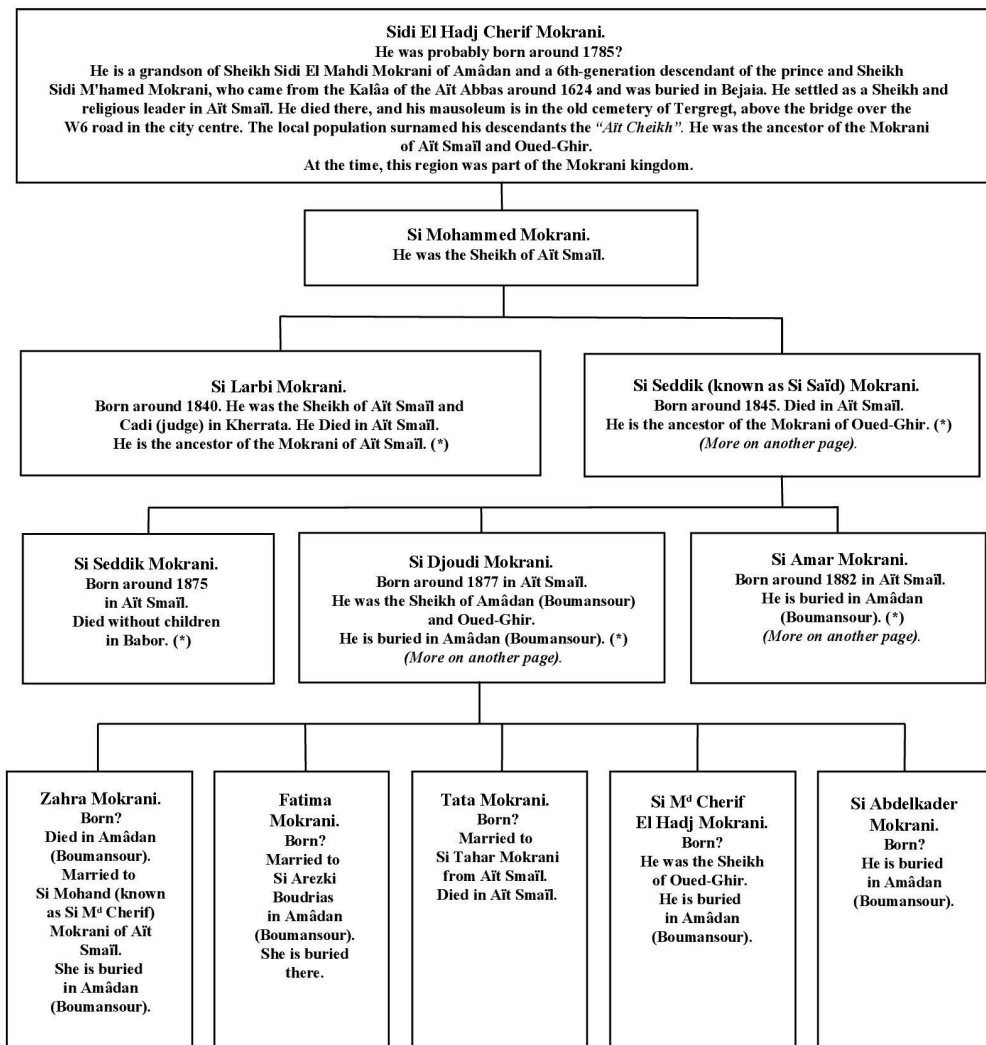


(\*) I have their birth certificates.

## Second section (suite 3): Genealogy tree of the Mokrani of Aït Smaïl and Oued-Ghir (Branch of Oued Ghir)

N° VI

© Copyright by Doctor Brahim Mokrani



(\*) I have their birth certificates.