Like all successful ideologies, the maraboutic ideology works by image, symbol, habit, ritual and legend. It responds to the individuals’ deep-seated irrational fears and needs and thus is likely to last for long. To figure out how this ideological discourse is constructed and sustained within the maraboutic edifice, it is necessary at this point to analyze the functioning of the healer-patient’s discourse, or in the maraboutic parlance, the healer-jinni’s discourse and other discursive forms like the patients’ dreams and healers’ narratives. How does this pacifying discourse function? How does it “materialize” beliefs into practices? How does it represent the unquestioned domination of the shrif over the patient/jinni? How does it work to re-affirm its ideological control? First and foremost, we start with the analysis of the ritual of pilgrimage to the shrine.

A. The Ritual of Pilgrimage (zyara)

Saluting the saint is a ritual in and of itself. It consists of particular ritualised tasks the visitor has to perform in order to accomplish his pilgrimage to the shrine. These tasks express the visitors’ submissiveness, demonstrating that they have successfully internalised the master-servant logic. In every ritual they perform, they humble themselves before the saint; they implore him to soothe their sorrows; they prostrate themselves in front of the power of his descendents “to tread upon them” (ya’fashum). The clients believe that the shrif’s trampling inspires cure and that his slaps and beatings chase away jnun. Playing possum in front of the shrif is a ritual intertwined with the maraboutic client’s deepest unconscious roots. Each gesture the client performs expresses his perennial adherence to the maraboutic order, an adherence that molds the client’s behavioural patterns and beliefs into submission. A detailed examination of each ritualised task performed by the visitor shows that these are designed according to a uniform structure of submission. These tasks may be charted in the following order:
Among the tasks, visitors first buy candles from the nearby shops and take them to the shrine as *zyara*. They either take them inside the domed-rooms (*qbab*) and put them on the coffin (*tabut*) of the saint or give them to the *hufdan* in the *mahkama*. But the predominant practice is that visitors give them to the *hufdan*. Candles symbolize life, hope, the enlightened future, lucidity and meaning. Light is opposite to darkness, death, desperation, obfuscation and confusion. By taking the candles to the shrine and by being given one or two candles as *baruk* (sacred relics) by the *hufdan*, the visitors conjure up a possible opulent outcome to their actions. Candles are called *aw* (light). The word is used in rhymed proverbial statements to legitimise the practice as an indisputable verity. It is said: “*daw bi daw,*” implying if you offer light (candles) to the saint, he will enlighten your way in return. It is also said: “Emit light on him; he will enlighten you (*dawi 'ih, idawi 'ik*)!”

Furthermore, there are visitors who take distilled orange blossom water (*ma zhar*) to the shrine and sprinkle the tombs and other visitors with it. This water is used here as perfume. It symbolizes prosperity and well-being. Distilled orange blossom water is used in different occasions such as weddings and funerals. In funerals, the dead corpse is sprinkled with the water as a gesture indicating people’s hope that the dead person is journeying to paradise. By taking blossom water to the shrine people conjure up a moment of impending affluence and bliss. I have also observed women taking *henna* to the shrine. They distribute it among the other women present. This *henna* has been prepared at the shrine and is thus believed to contain more *baraka* than *henna* prepared