

ABECASSIS (Tunisia, Algiers, Oran, Morocco) {אביקאסיס Morocco (TJM 75, MCEM) – 17th-18th centuries Rabat (LAR 211) – אביקאסיס (MCEM, transliteration from the French spelling) – 19th century Oran and Tiaret, both from Tetouan (Leibovici 1984:261) – 19th century Laghouat from Oran, Algiers from Morocco (ACR)}; ABECASSISSE (Morocco); ABECCASSIS (Oran); ABEKASSIS (Oran); ABI KASSIS (Constantine); ABICASSIS (Algiers); ABIKASSIS (Morocco); ABECACIS (Oran); <Spanish spelling> ABECASSIS (Oran, Morocco, Gibraltar) {18th century Gibraltar from Tetouan (GCR)}; ABOUCASSIS (Oran, Morocco) {אבוקאסיס (MCEM)}; ABOUKASIS (Algiers); <Italian or Spanish spelling> ABUCASSIS (Tunisia). **Nature:** monogenetic (Morocco). **Etymology** (Nickname): *abî* אָבִי (genitive), *abû* אָבוּ (nominative) [Arabic] ‘man of’ + */qšîs/, a diminutive of *qiṣaṣ* فِصِيص [Arabic (BEAU 805, WEHR 765)] ‘stories, tales’. **Non-retained etymology1:** *abî* אָבִי (genitive), *abû* אָבוּ (nominative) [Arabic] ‘man of, father of’ + /qəšîs/ فِصِيص [Arabic (PREM 10:346)], **qasîs* قَسِيْس [Arabic (BEAU 801)] ‘Christian priest’ (LAR 211, 1077) (see also the entry Kassis). On the one hand, *abû* cannot have the meaning ‘man of’ when placed before a noun designating a person. On the other hand, the meaning ‘father of’ is unlikely either: no other case of the assignment of name to the father according to the nickname (or occupation) of his son is known. **Non-retained etymology2:** *šēmeq qšiyš* עֶמֶק קְצִיז [Hebrew] Emek-Keziz, one of the biblical towns mentioned in Joshua 18:21 among those of the tribe of Benjamin (LAR 210). No surname is inherited from the biblical times. Here we deal with a phonetic coincidence between the second part of this biblical toponym and the second part of the surname. There is no reason for the Arabic word meaning ‘father of, man of’ (and commonly found as the first part of other Jewish surnames in Morocco) to combine with a biblical toponym by dropping the first part of the toponym. **Non-retained etymology3:** *Banou Al-Qassis*, a Jewish tribe that lived—according to *Kitab al-Aghani* (a collection of Arabic poems compiled in the 10th century)—in the pre-Islamic Arabian Peninsula (LAR 210). No surname is inherited from Antiquity. This theory provides no explanation for the first part of the surname. **Non-retained etymology4:** *abû* אָבוּ [Arabic] ‘father of’ + *qāšiyš* קְשִׁיז [Hebrew] ‘old (man)’ (SEB 92). On the one hand, the Hebrew spellings of this surname do not fit this etymon. On the other hand, a word of the Hebrew origin can hardly be combined in the same surname with the Arabic prefix. **Non-retained etymology5:** the first part *Abe-* represents a distorted form of *Aben-*, the traditional medieval Spanish transcription of the Arabic *ibn* ‘son’ (COR 35, TOL 7). This idea is based on the reference to Issach, the son of Salamon Cohen Abengaçez, a Jew from Ceuta present at the beginning of the 14th century in the Crown of Aragon; the same person appears as Cofen Saçes in another document and could be related to David Avinçaes, known at the same period (Régné 1978:603, 573, 544). The existence of any link between this reference and the surname Abecassis is unlikely. The person in question belonged to the Jewish priestly caste, while there is no indication that the Abecassis are Cohanim. **Colloquial forms:** BECASSIS (Morocco); BEKISS (Morocco); BIKSSIS (Morocco); BOCASSIS (Morocco, Gibraltar); BOU KASSIS (Algiers, Oran) {אבו קאסיס (ACR)}.