Hassan
Ibn Mohammed
Ibn Ahmed
Al Wazzan
Al Zayatti
Al Fassi

Johannes
Leo
Africanus
De Medici
Al Granati
“Africanus”

“[The African people] who are divided among hundreds of tribes and thousands of homes use only one language which they commonly call awal amazigh, which means noble speech. It is Africa’s mother tongue: it is special and different from the others, though it contains a few Arabic words. This is why some people argue that the Africans descend from the Arabian peninsula (...) while others deny this arguing instead that these Arabic words entered the language after the Arabs had conquered the land.”
The Places Leo Lived

- Rome (3)
- Granada (1)
- Fes (2)
Pope Leo X (1475-1521)
Leo’s Text: a travel guide...
The Place Leo Died

- Rome (?)
- Granada
- Tunis (?)

Map showing locations in the Mediterranean region.
Leo’s Ambiguous Identity:

“There once was an amiable, valiant bird with a gift of great intelligence. He had the capacity to live both in water with fish, and on earth with birds. In those days, all birds paid dues to their king, and our little bird came up with a scheme to pay none. When the tax collector came, the little bird flew off and dove into water. When the fish saw him they came to him and asked why he had come. And he answered: “the world has gone mad. My king wanted to kill me, though I am the most noble of my kind.” He then asked if he could stay with them. A year later, when the fish tax collector came, the bird flew off. And so he continued: every time the bird tax collector came he dove into water, and every time the fish king demanded his dues, he escaped to earth.

If I hear criticisms of Africa I will say that I was born in Granada. And if I hear criticisms of my home country, I will say that I was raised in Africa.”