

The image of Algeria on the journey of Ibn Hammadush al –Djazairi

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Abstract

Algerian journeys to the Far Maghreb fall within a cognitive, cultural, and commercial context, as these journeys were not merely geographic movements, but served as a means to record observations of cities. Travel literature contributed to presenting a clear image of urban spaces by documenting customs, values, and civilizational landmarks, making it an important source for studying the cultural history of Maghreb cities.

The travel account of Abd al-Razzaq Ibn Hammadush , entitled "Lisan al-Maqal fi al-Naba' 'an al-Nasab wa al-Hal", stands as a representative model of this tradition during the eighteenth century , offering descriptions of social, cultural, and economic aspects of the city of Algiers, then the capital of the Ottoman state .

The text goes beyond mere descriptive narration, opening the way for analysis and critical reading,, thereby enabling the study – based on the data extracted from the text to approach the image of the city of Algiers as depicted in the travel narrative, and to discern its architectural features .

Through the study of this text, the research aims to highlight how travel literature contributed to shaping the representation of the city, and to reveal the relationship between the traveller's subjective perspective and urban reality, thereby enhancing the understanding of Algiers image in eighteenth-century travel consciousness and confirming the scholarly value of travel literature as a historical and civilizational document.

1- Introduction:

Discovery is an innate human inclination. Since the earliest stages of human existence on Earth; human beings have sought exploration as a means of acquiring knowledge and exercising a form of control over the surrounding space.

Travel subsequently emerged as a fundamental cultural practice through which humans engaged with the unknown and contributed to the production of meaning. Accordingly, travel thus represents a distinctive mode of knowledge-an idea aptly expressed in the proverb:" He who lives long sees much, but he who travels sees more."

This saying highlights the epistemic value of mobility and experiential knowledge, establishing a close link between movement through space and the expansion of perception. Such a conception of travel resonates across various intellectual traditions. The English philosopher Francis Bacon, for instance speaks of travel when he states that "travel is a part of education for

the young and a part of experience for the old", underscoring its role in refining knowledge and accumulating experience. In the same vein, Hassan al-Attar, Sheikh al-Azhar during the reign of Mohamed Ali Pasha, stressed the role of travel in broadening intellectual horizons and renewing cultural awareness, as reflected in his statement: "Travel is the mirror of marvels and the measure of experience¹."

Travel also occupies a central position in Qur'anic discourse, where several verses encourage journeying, among them Allah, the Most High, said: "Qul seeru fi al-ard."² a clear indication of the contemplative value of travel and the journey in discovering the conditions of past nations, reflecting upon their historical civilizational experiences.

2- The Concept of Travel

2-1-Linguistically:

The structure of "travel" dominates the travel narrative insofar as it represents a spatial and temporal transformation endowed with intentionality and purpose³, Consequently, travel writing attracted particular attention from scholars of language, as it constitutes widely circulating material and emerges from the lived environment of Arabic culture. From a linguistic perspective, the word *rihla* (journey) derives from the root *rahala*. One says *rahala*-meaning to mount a camel; *al-rahl* refers to the camel's saddle; and *al-rahil* and *al-irhal* denote departure. It said that a people *rahala* when they depart, and *irtahala al-qawm* when they leave a place. *Al-tarahul* and *al-irhal* signify movement and transition, while *al-Rihla* is the noun denoting the act of departure or travel.⁴

In *taj al-Arus*, it is stated: *irtahala al-bair*-meaning the camel set out; and *irtahala al-qawm'an al-makan*-meaning the people departed from a place. If they move from one place to another, it is said *irtahala*. The noun *al-rihla* is formed with the sense of departure and movement, and *irtahal* denotes breaking camp for the journey it is said *danat rihlatuna* (our departure approached). With the implied sense of destination, one says: *Makkah rihlati*, that is, my destination-the direction toward which I wish to depart.⁵

From the foregoing, it becomes clear that the journey is confined in its core meaning, to the ability to move and to travel from one place to another. All of this requires strength and a means to overcome the hardships and difficulties of travel.

2-2- Terminologically:

Abd al- Rahim Mudan holds that any journey is fundamentally based on a dominant structure, namely travel

From this perspective, the structure of travel underlies the generic features and content of the journey, encompassing detailed description, the multiplicity of spaces, the recording and

¹ Fahim, Muhammad Hussein. *Travel Literature. The world of Knowledge Series*, no.138. National Council for Culture, Arts and Letters, Kuwait, 1989, p.19.

² The Qur'an Surat al-An am, verse 11.

³ Maskin, Souad. *The Treasure of Scheherazade: Narrative Genres in ONE Thousand and One Nights*. Ru'aya publishing and Distribution, Egypt, 1st ed., 2012, p.367.

⁴ Ibn Manzur, Muhammad, *Lisan al-Arab*. Vol.5, Dar Subh, Beirut, Lebanon, 1st ed., 2006, p.166.

⁵ Al Zabidi, Muhammad Murtada. *Taj al-Arus Jawahir al-Qamus*. Vol.7, Dar Maktabat al-Hayat, Beirut, p.341

narration of events, and the manifestation of travel culture and its codification.⁶

The journey is subject to different motivations, as it operates by collapsing the spatial distance between one place and another. This accomplishment is undertaken in pursuit of a specific goal, responding to human will and the dynamics of life on earth, whether directly or indirectly. The journey may be undertaken as a hobby that fulfils a need and satisfies a desire, or it may assume a professional dimension that serves human necessity and fulfils it. In both cases, it constitutes a direct response to specific motives and incentives that call for movement and mobility.⁷

Thus, the journey, in its essence, is a movement with multiple purposes, culminating in the acquisition of experiential knowledge derived from engagement with the other.

Accordingly, a comparison can be established between *rihla* (journey) in both linguistic and terminological senses, as both are united by fundamental notion of movement.⁸

3- The concept of journey literature:

Travel literature is regarded as one of the narrative genres known to Arabic literature in general, and Moroccan literature in particular, most closely connected to lived experience, as it constitutes a form of writing grounded in observation, description, and direct engagement with reality. It emerges from the traveller's encounter with space and society, combining narrative pleasure with cognitive and documentary functions. Within this framework, travel; writing reflects a wide-ranging cultural awareness and openness to diversity, making it a fertile field for intellectual and literary production.

Travel narratives are often characterized by their capacity to document cities; landscapes, customs, and social practices. They provide the reader with detailed knowledge about regions, routes, and modes of living, while simultaneously conveying the traveller's personal impressions and evaluations. This dual function-informative and expressive-endows travel literatures with a distinctive position among literary genres.

The traveller records his observations and impressions with a high degree of accuracy, sincerity, and stylistic elegance, thereby endowing the text with an added aesthetic and semantic dimension. When travel writing takes the form of a unique literary genre, articulated in a specific language and shaped through a distinctive artistic vision, it acquires its own features and autonomous qualities. This autonomy is manifested through its artistic construction and independent characteristics.⁹

Travellers document their journeys, discoveries, and observations about cities, countries, routes, and diverse regions, as well as patters of daily life, customs and traditions. Their writings thus become a source of evidence and reference for students of knowledge, travel enthusiastic, and adventures in their explorations.

⁶ Mouden, Abd al-Rahim. *The Literariness of Travel Writing*. Dar al-Thaqafa, Casablanca, Morocco, 1st ed., 1996, p.26.

⁷ Al Muwafi, Nasir, Abd al-Razzaq. *Travel Writing in Arabic Literature until the end of the Fourth Hijri Century*. University Publishing House, Egypt, 1st ed., 1995, p.26.

⁸ Al Muwafi, Nasir, Abd al-Razzaq. *Travel Writing in Arabic Literature until the end of the Fourth Hijri Century*, p.25.

⁹ Al-Nassakh, Sayyid Samih. *A Journey through Travel Books(Ancient and Modern)*. Gharib Library, Cairo, p.5.

Accordingly, a number of works emerged that recount journeys undertaken by Arab travellers, such as the travels of Ibn Jubayr, Ibn Khaldun and Al-Muqri. Some Arab travellers ventured into lands far removed from their homelands, with some reaching China and India, as in the journeys of Ibn Battuta and Al-Biruni.¹⁰

From this perspective, authorship in travel literature requires broad cultural knowledge, precision in observation, and the ability to capture subtle details and meaningful landmarks. It also presupposes engagement with multiple fields of knowledge, given that travel writing encompasses disciplines such as history, geography, philosophy, sociology, stylistics, and the craft of linguistic formulation and structural organization.¹¹

This indicates that the art of travel writing among Arabs began to experience a noticeable development starting from the Hijri era, during which scientific description and literary expression become harmoniously intertwined, it gradually established itself as an autonomous literary genre at the dawn of the Arab-Islamic renaissance following the major conquests. In this context, Al-Mas'udi's *Muruj al-Dhahab* represents a significant scholarly effort in presenting history and geography through the lens of travel. Likewise, Al-Khawarizmi's work on documenting remote regions exemplifies this tendency.¹²

Such an approach enables the reader to experience a distinctive pleasure arising from the convergence of scientific and literary values upon which travel narration is constructed. Consequently, the reader's sensibility is refined through an engaging narrative style that vividly conveys the lived reality of the milieu being described, as through the reader were personally inhabiting that world.

Morocco witnessed a wide variety of travel accounts characterized by geographical, historical, and scholarly dimensions. This diversity emerged particularly from the early centuries of Hijri era, reflecting the country's social and cultural nature. These journeys were undertaken for multiple purposes, including the pursuit of knowledge, pilgrimage, and intellectual exchange, such motivations contributes to the flourishing of travel writing and enriched the Islamic cultural heritage.

These journeys, which were continuously undertaken, played a significant role in enriching Islamic civilization. They contributed on the accumulation of knowledge and facilitated cultural exchange and the transmission of sciences. Moreover, they provided detailed descriptions of cities, regions, customs, and social practices, thereby expanding the intellectual horizons of the Arab reader. Gradually, travel writing in the Arab East and West became a fertile field for recording cultural and civilizational experiences, until it attained a prominent position among the principal sources of cultural and intellectual documentation.¹³

Given the importance of literature and its diversity, many scholars and writers in morocco devoted themselves to the composition of travel accounts. Among the most prominent sources that merit attention is the corpus of Algerian travel literature, which constitutes a rich and varied

¹⁰ Husayn, Husni Mahmud. *Travel Literature among the Arabs*. Dar al-Andalus, Beirut, 3rd ed., 1983, pp.12-14.

¹¹ Abd al-Nur, Jubran. *The Literary Dictionary*. Dar al-Ilm lil-Malayin, Beirut, 2nd ed., 1989, p.122.

¹² Bin Qinah, Umar. *On Modern Algerian Literature: History, Genres, ISSUES? AND Figures*. National office of University Publication, Algiers, p.98.

¹³ Hammadi, Abd Allah. *Studies in Ancient Moroccan Literature*. Dar al-Bath, Constantine, 1st ed., 1986, p.126.

body of texts encompassing different thematic and methodological approaches. These travel narratives occupy a central position within the study of Algerian intellectual history and its cultural manifestations.

Within this framework, Algerian travel produced a number of distinguished figures. Foremost among them is Ibn Hamadush, who is regarded as one of the most important personalities to engage in travel writing during the second century of the Hijri era. He represents a distinguished model of early Algerian travel authorship, through his famous journey known as "Lisan al-Maqal fi al-Nasab wa-al-Hal."¹⁴

Authored by Ibn Hammadush himself, this journey offers a rich and detailed account of his travels, shedding light on the geographical spaces he traversed, as well as the social, cultural, and intellectual dimensions of the societies he encountered.

4-Introducing the author of the journey:

The author of this journey is Abu Abd al-Razzaq Ibn Muhammad Ibn Muhammad Ibn Hamadush, known as Ibn Hamadush al-Jazairi. He was born in Algiers in 1071 AH (1660 CE) and died approximately ninety years later in an unknown place and date.¹⁵ Orphaned at an early age, he was raised by his paternal uncle, who oversaw his education and introduced him to the principles of religious and linguistic learning, after having memorized the Holy Qur'an, as was customary among the children of his hometown. However, the details of his early educational stage remain unknown. Nevertheless, this can be inferred from the level of his intellectual formation, as reflected in his surviving works, as well as from indications he himself mentioned when speaking about his family and his generation of men of letters and jurists.¹⁶

From this we can discern the breadth of Ibn Hammadush's learning, which he drew from numerous and diverse sources. In his travel account, he mentions the scholars and men of letters whom he encountered- whether those he deliberately sought out or those he merely heard about. We also observe that he was keenly committed to establishing contact with them, learning from them, and benefiting from their experiences, with the ultimate aim of obtaining scholarly authorization [ijaza]¹⁷.

Ibn Hammadush travelled to morocco on two occasions. In his travel narrative, he states that he was there in the year 1145 AH, and we we also find him there again in 1156 AH, during which he prolonged his stay¹⁸.

For this reason, his travel account is considered one of the most renowned manuscripts of the twelfth century AH/eighteenth century CE¹⁹.

¹⁴ Bin Qinah, Umar. On Algerian Literature, p.130.

¹⁵ Ibn Hamadush, Abd al-Razzaq. The Journey of Ibn Hamadush al-Jaza iri, Entitled: Lisan al-Maqal fi al-Naba an al-Nasab wa al-Hal. Edited by Abu al-Qasim Sad Allah, National

¹⁶ Sa d Allah, Abu al-Qasim. Encyclopedia of Arab Muslim Scholars and Men of Letters. Vol.7, Dar al-Jil, Beirut, 1st ed., 2004, p.206.

¹⁷ Ibid., p.207.

¹⁸ Sa'd Allah, Abu al-Qasim. The Cultural History of Algeria(1500-1830). Dar al-Gharb al –Islam, Beirut, p.426.

¹⁹ Sa'd Allah, Abu al-Qasim. Research and Views on the History of Algeria. National Publishing and Distribution Company, Algiers, p.143.

5- The Structure of the Travel Narrative:

The structure of Ibn Hammadush's journey is based on movement and the recording of events in the form of daily memoirs. At each stage, he notes both the lunar (Hijri) and solar (without specifying the year) dates. It is evident that the author wrote according to a familiar structure, dividing it into two parts:

- **Departure:** This begins with leaving the city of Algiers to reach the city of Tetouan in Morocco, traveling aboard a vessel rented from Algerian merchants in Gibraltar on February 14, 1743. He narrates: "After sunrise, we set out from Gibraltar, cast off the moorings, and some of our companions boarded the small boat while we spent the night on the ship. I entered Tetouan at seven o'clock and performed the noon prayer (isha) there with the congregation²⁰. Ibn Hammadush visited Tetouan, Fez, Meknes, and other cities of the Maghreb. In this part, he presents a vivid picture of the social life he witnessed and experienced during his stay, including scenes depicting the peculiar customs and traditions of its people, its wars, and descriptions of the study circles he attended, the sheikhs he read from, and what he learned from them.

- **Return:** The ship that he chartered, owned by an Algerian merchant known as Ibnal-Talib from Tetouan, sailed back to Algeria on 12 March 1744, it reached its destination after an absence of approximately one year and one month. He states: "We sailed at sunset that night on(Thursday), and continued our journey until the first hour of Monday of the aforementioned month , corresponding to the twelfth of March. We entered the port of Algiers, disembarked immediately, and I entered my home at the very beginning of the second hour."²¹

Within section, the author presents a set of accounts in the form of memoir-like narratives recounting events he experienced in this hometown. These include aspects of his family life (education, relationships, and observations concerning the customs and traditions of the people of Algiers). Through this material, he attempts to reconstruct an image of the city of Algiers and the political and social situation that prevailed when it served as the Arab capital of the Ottoman Regency of the Central Maghreb, before falling under French colonial rule.

When examining the section written by the travel author about Algiers, it becomes apparent that, while discussing his personal life, he demonstrates a tendency toward conciseness and restraint in providing detailed information concerning everyday life. Instead, he offers brief indications from which it is possible to infer a broader picture of daily life in Algiers during that period. In context, it is important to draw attention to two key points:

a- The data scattered throughout the travel account are not comprehensive enough to provide a complete picture of the lives of all social classes coexisting in Algiers. Rather, they primarily reflect the scholarly class to which Ibn Hammadush belonged. Nevertheless, this group represents a valuable sample that allows us to gain insight into the realities of daily life in Algiers and to understand its position as an intermediary space between the public and the private spheres.

²⁰ Ibn Hamadush, Lisan al-Maqal, p.115.

²¹.Ibid., pp.113-114.

b- Our aim is not to construct a complete symbolic system that exhaustively records the image of daily life in Algiers during this period. Rather, it is to capture fragments of everyday reality in a manner that reveals a specific environment- namely, the milieu of individuals surrounding the author of the journey, Ibn Hammadush, from his own perspective.

In this work, we rely on the concept of daily life in its multiple referential dimensions, insofar as it represents the subject of depiction and the foundational structure shaping everyday practices within the journey. These practices include recurring patterns of behaviour related to work, celebration, and education²². Accordingly the travel seeks to present a concise portrayal of his scientific and professional life, focusing on what he accomplished or experienced within the aforementioned domains. From this standpoint, we attempt to construct an image of the city through data connected to manifestations of material and spiritual life during his interaction with the social environment that both influenced him and was, as outlined below:

5-1 Livelihood: The first observation that emerges from the travel account, as the author narrates aspects of his personal life, is that the overall image of the world in the city of Algiers is generally marked by poverty and hardship. This condition does not remain limited in scope, but rather intensifies through the suffering he experienced with his second wife, following a case of material bankruptcy in which he fell after returning from his journey. He speaks candidly about his situation, stating: "I was exhausted during the past year in Morocco by illness, loss, hardship. Never in my life had I witnessed such distress in livelihood and such loss, to the point that I become convinced of my own demise. I then returned and found the same disposition on the part of my wife. I did not see her rejoice at my arrival, for she had become convinced that most of my wealth had been lost and that no interest remained for her therein. Nor did she attach any value to the knowledge I possessed. Thus, I found no favour with her through these sciences. And God alone grants patience."²³ The author alludes to his family's resentment over the losses he incurred in his trade –the very source of their livelihood- and to their subsequent estrangement from him, saying: "Thus my sister, my mother, and my brother came to harbour resentment in their hearts, they resolved to leave my company, and on Friday they all departed."²⁴ These circumstances intensified the disputes between him and his wife, who decided to take a similar position. He writes: "She became enraged, went to her brother's home, and sought separation. I remained perplexed, yet I did not abandon my books."²⁵, perhaps his mother's anger, in this context, maybe read as a sign of the meagre share allotted to scholars in terms of wealth and material accumulation. He notes: "My mother stayed with me that night and began to reproach my fate, until she exclaimed: 'Would I had never given birth to you as a male, given the misfortune of your destiny.'²⁶

²² A Group of Researchers. Morocco in the Conscience of its Men of Letters. Dar Sihr, Tunis, 2005, p.169.

²³ Ibn Hamadush, Lisan AL Maqal, p.115.

²⁴ Ibid., p.115.

²⁵ Ibid., p.115.

²⁶ Ibid., p.115.

The author further affirms, through brief allusions in his work, the combination of pursuing knowledge with the practice of trade, conducted from the shop he owned beside the Great Mosque of the capital.

These references, however, do not reveal the nature of this trade. We do, nonetheless, encounter a single testimony containing a measure of detail, in which he states: "In These days, I sold the mllaf, praise be to God; my circumstances improved, while the qashiniyya remained."²⁷

Despite the brevity of this testimony, what emerges from it is a significant characteristic of the lives of merchants in Algiers: Profit from trade alternated with periods of stagnation and loss. This duality, characterized by a balance between engagement with knowledge and involvement in livelihood activities, highlights and important features of scholarly life in Algiers. It suggests that knowledge, rather than serving as a direct means to wealth, was pursued of its own sake and disseminated without expectation of material gain, while livelihood was secured through the practice of another profession- such as trade-as evidence of scholar's integrity and independence.

Accordingly, livelihood, as a concept with a central dimension, occupies a pivotal place in the everyday life of the scholar in Algeria during this period. It is not perceived as a direct outcome of the pursuit of knowledge, but rather as a notion imbued with symbolic and moral significance. The testimonies provided by the traveller reveal a clear interweaving of the pursuit of learning of the pursuit of learning with the practice of an independent economic activity – most notably trade-as the primary means of securing subsistence.

This parallelism reflects as prevailing social model in which the scholar preserves intellectual integrity by maintaining a separation between knowledge and material gain, while relying on work and commerce to ensure economic self-sufficiency.

5-2 Celebration:

The scene of everyday life is completed through what Ibn Hammadush conveys of the customs and traditions practiced by the inhabitants of Algiers in celebrating Laylat al- Qadr, the night of the twenty-seventh of Ramadan. It is regarded as one of the most important nights, which the Ottoman authorities were keen to commemorate at the Great Mosque of the capital. The traveller was able to observe these rituals closely through his participation in the celebration among a group of people from his city. He noted, in particular, the care taken by the mosque's custodian to provide a large quantity of candles, describing the scene as follows:

"It is customary, that the custodian of the Great Mosque to set aside a qintar or more of wax, which he distributed into thirty green candles, each weighing between three and four artal. These are then taken to the house of the Mufti or the Wakil, whichever of them wishes to display prominence."²⁸

The celebration begins with carrying these candles in a procession through the streets of Algiers, allowing the people to share in the joy. He says: "When the Asr prayer was performed, the candles, were brought out- carried either by the muezzins or another person carries them in

²⁷Ibid., p.118.

²⁸ Ibid., p.125..

their hands, and they proceed to circulate throughout the city, then place them in the House of the imamate."²⁹

Thereafter, the group of celebrants returns to the Great Mosque by a different route, and then departs again by another route. A spiritual atmosphere prevails, in which the voice of the chanter blends with devotional supplications, chanting religious invocations. He states: "They would return by a different route, while one of the deeply devout led the chants before them. The participants raised their voices in prayers and in sending blessings upon the prophet."³⁰

Upon entering the mosque, the candles are lit in preparation for welcoming the Angels who descend on that blessed night, which is considered better than a thousand months.

He states: "When they enter the mosque and settle there, they entrust the candles to the hasak(candle holder), whether wooden or otherwise, and light them with a sufficient number of glass lanterns. They then remain awake throughout the night until dawn"³¹

People gather inside the mosque, for remembrance and the recitation of the Qur'an until after the dawn prayer. He states: "when dawn drew near, they would perform the witr prayer and recite whatever they could from the openings of the Quranic suras. They would then announce the coming of dawn to the people. When people bowed in prayer, they would pray discreetly, and once they had finished the glorifications, they would recite the Hizb (a section from the Qur'an) al-subh(Morning Litany)"³²

The Mosque attendant assumes responsibility for illuminating the mihrab with candles, while the Imam continues the night vigil. He is the one who ensured that the mihrab was served by the finest reciters for the completion of the Qur'an and the repetition of devotional glorifications. All of this takes place within a profoundly spiritual atmosphere, and they are keen to sprinkle rose water upon the people to perfume them with its pleasant fragrance, seeking blessing from that fragrant night.

He states: "When they have finished, the lantern lighter brought one of those candles or something else to the mihrab. The Imam then enters it- especially before the dawn prayer- while they gather therein. He opens his book and reads until completing the recitation, then pronounces the glorification: "Subhan Allah wa bi-hamdih, Subhan Allah al-Azim"(" Glory be to God and praise be to him; Glory be to God the Most Great"). This glorification is repeated one hundred times, during which rose water is sprinkled until it permeates the people present"³³

The celebration concludes with a particular custom and tradition, whereby the Imam recites a supplication that he composed specifically for the observance of that night. He states: Then they fall silent so that the Imam may commence the prepared supplication, during which they recite whatever portions of the opening chapters are possible, all while raising their hands. They then depart, and this remains the customary practice of the people of Algiers at all times."³⁴

After the conclusion of the celebration of Laylat al Qadr, the inhabitants of Algiers customarily proceed to the shrine of the saint 'Abd al-Rahman al- Tha alibi in order to complete the recitation

²⁹ Ibid., p.126.

³⁰ Ibid., p.126.

³¹ Ibid., p.126.

³² Ibid., p.126.

³³ Ibid., p.126.

³⁴ Ibid., p.126

of Sahih al-Bukhari. This ritual marks the culmination of the religious gathering and signals preparation for the forthcoming celebration of Id al-Fitr.

He states:" This shows and reveals the deep attachment of the people of Algiers to the transmission of al-Bukhari's narration and the scholars of their city. They read it repeatedly from beginning to end over a recognized period extending for three months- from the beginning of Rajab until the end of Ramadan- at a fixed and established time, as a charity intention. "³⁵

This account reflects the author's intention to document the method by which Sahih al-Bukhari was completed in Algiers, as an inherited tradition deeply rooted in Islamic history and in Arab-Islamic civilization more broadly.³⁶

The author further records a specific formula of prayer upon the Prophet Muhammad that was customary in Algiers.

This effectively confirms what the author stated regarding the method of narrating Sahih al-Bukhari in Algeria, a method whose foundations are deeply rooted in Islamic history and in Arab civilization more broadly.

The author thus conveys to us the formula of invocation of blessings upon the prophet, coupled with supplication, as it is customarily practiced in Algeria.

Likewise, the attendants of the Great Mosque are keen to perfume the congregation with rose water He states:" we invoked blessings upon the Prophet with the well-known formula recited after al-Bukhari, namely: Allahumma salli ala afdala salat ala ashrafi makhluqatika sayyidina Muhammad, wa ala alihi wa sahbihi wa salim, adada malumatika wa middada kalimatika, kullama dhakaraka wa dhakarahu al-dthakirun, wa ghafala an dhikrika wa dhikruhi al-ghafilun, (o Allah, bestow the most excellent of prayers upon noblest of your creation, our master Muhammad and upon his family and his companions Grant him peace in a measure equal to your knowledge and the ink of your words, whenever he is remembered by those who remember him, and even when those who are heedless of your remembrance and of his remembrance remain unaware.) The attendants then sprinkle rose water upon the people."³⁷

In the first section of his journey, Ibn Hammadush offers a comparative depiction of the celebration of al-mawlid anabawi(the Prophet's birthday) in both Fez and Algiers. He states: "on the night of my arrival, I was welcomed by drummers, tambourine players, and musical instruments throughout the marketplace, they proceeded carrying a group of candles shaped like domes each in a different colour: green, white, red, while I have forgotten the colour of the fourth . They were lighter than those commonly used among us in Algeria."³⁸

This constitutes a clear indication of the difference in the manner in which the inhabitants of the city of Fez provide candles to be lit for the purpose of celebrating the night of the Prophet's birthday in comparison with what takes place in his home town Algiers. This observation is among the authentic remarks be recorded during his journey, in which he was keen to identify and highlight the differences in the customs and traditions of the peoples of the major cities of

³⁵ Al-Madani, Ahmad Tawfiq. *Memoirs of al-Sharif al Zahar*, Naqib of the aAshraf of Algiers. National Publishing Company, Algeria, 1974, p.182.

³⁶ Sa'd Allah, Abu al-Qasim. *The Cultural History of Algeria*, p.159.

³⁷ Ibn Hamadush, *Lisan al-Maqal*, p.125.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, P.84.

the Greater Maghreb. Thus, the celebration of religious occasions in the Regency of Algiers represents one of the deeply rooted traditions that distinguish it from other Maghreb cities.

Laylat al-Qadr, the completion of the recitation of Sahih al-Bukhari, and the night of the Prophet's birthday all hold a distinguished and unparalleled status, not found elsewhere. These occasions reflect the particular spiritual and devotional atmosphere that characterizes their celebration. The Ottoman authorities sought to promote and institutionalize these religious events among the inhabitants of Algiers, as a means of fostering values of cooperation and solidarity, while preserving their religious and cultural identity. Thus representations of religious and social life emerge as active elements in the construction of a complex cultural image of the city of Algiers. Religious celebrations perform a symbolic function by consolidating values of solidarity and belonging, thereby enabling the preservation of religious and cultural identity under Ottoman rule.

Through a descriptive mode of narration, the narrator succeeds in emphasizing that the journey constitutes a cognitive instrument contributing to the documentation of customs and traditions, as well as the revelation of distinctiveness of the city of Algiers in comparison with other cities of the Maghreb-particularly Fez- within a fictionalized discourse that brings together storytelling and documentation.

6- Conclusion:

Travel writing constitutes a complex artistic and narrative discourse, as it produces a representation of a real city drawn from the traveller's lived experience and subsequently reconfigured within distinctive mental construct. Through this process, the , the aesthetics of place are reactivated by a renewed narrative consciousness in which the real and the fictional intersect.

This study has reached a set of findings that may be summarized as follows:

- The authorial/narrative subjectivity contributes significantly to shaping the image of the city of Algiers by integrating personal knowledge derived from the traveller's experiences across different and temporally distant moments.
- The interweaving of temporal layers within the travel narrative enriches the textual space through descriptive and expository discourse, allowing for the articulation of the traveller/narrator's perspective and positionality while addressing the cognitive issues generated by his engagement with the city.
- The multiplicity of discursive interactions reveals customs and traditions as condensed expressions of Algiers's cultural image, thereby highlighting the specificity of travel writing as a narrative genre that reflects the culture of its era under Ottoman rule.
- The declaration of an informational pact enables the travel text to transcend the limits of conventional narration by mobilizing the traveller-speaker's encyclopedic knowledge and openness to diverse fields of inquiry.

Thus, the travel text is constructed as a composite narrative discourse in which temporalities intersect and discourses multiply, endowing in with an encyclopedic dimension that distinguishes it among narrative genres.

Accordingly, travel writing, as a literary discourse, brings together the real and the fictional, while its structure is marked by intersecting temporalities and heterogeneous discourses. This configuration contributes to the formation of narrative elements that move beyond a merely informative function, generating a multi-layered cultural knowledge that defines the specificity of travel discourse.

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