
The Plague Epidemic and Preventive Measures to Confront it in Algeria During the Ottoman Era.

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Abstract:

This study addresses the topic of "The Plague Epidemic and Preventive Measures to Confront it in Algeria During the Ottoman Era." Despite Algeria's distinctive climatic conditions, it was susceptible to various diseases, with the most dangerous being the plague, which, according to some sources, appeared in the country every fifteen to twenty-five years. The plague is an infectious disease, also known as the resident or settled disease. It constituted the most dangerous disease suffered by all social classes in Algeria during the Ottoman era. Foreign residents in the country were also severely affected by its acute consequences, as it repeatedly appeared in successive outbreaks alongside endemic epidemics in the region, leading to demographic collapse and deterioration in health conditions. Algeria thus implemented preventive measures to curb this epidemic.

Keywords: Diseases; Epidemics; Plague Epidemic; Algeria; Ottoman Era; Deterioration; Health; Prevention.

Introduction:

Diseases and epidemics are factors that contribute to the backwardness and weakening of societies due to the damages they inflict on economic, social, and demographic sectors. Algeria, like other Maghreb, Eastern, and European countries, repeatedly faced the plague during the Ottoman era, which claimed a significant number of lives. Therefore, we deemed it necessary to dedicate a study to it due to its severity on Algerian society. This study aims to understand the plague, its transmission methods, spread, and effects. We addressed the topic by answering five questions:

1. What is the plague epidemic?
2. What are its transmission methods?
3. What are the key historical periods in which the plague epidemic appeared in Algeria during the Ottoman era?
4. What are its effects on Algeria during the Ottoman era?
5. What are the preventive measures to confront the plague epidemic?

Hence, and in connection with the aforementioned issues, it was necessary to approach the topic. In an attempt to answer the questions posed, this study relied on the analytical historical method as well as the descriptive method dictated by the requirements of constructing the historical event within its academic framework.

1. Definition of the Plague Epidemic:

Despite Algeria's distinctive climatic conditions, it was susceptible to various diseases, with the most dangerous being the plague, which, according to some sources, appeared in the country every fifteen to twenty-five years (Ghattas, 1983, p. 124). It is narrated that the Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him, when asked about the plague, said: " The plague is a gland like the gland of a camel; one who stays in it is like a martyr, and one who flees from it is like one fleeing from a battle (Ghattas, 1983, p. 124) . Thus, according to this authentic tradition of the prophet, the plague is an infectious bacterium that swiftly kills humans, much like advancing armies.

The plague is an infectious disease, also known as the resident or settled disease (Al-Qasha'i, p. 49). It begins by infecting rodents and then spreads to humans, as well as through airborne contamination due to the smell of corpses in graves and from dead, decaying locusts during periods of invasion. Its symptoms include severe fever, chills, headache and limb, palpitations, and subcutaneous bleeding, manifesting as black spots leading to ulcerations causing death (Gendouz, 2017, p. 66).

The plague commonly affects various types of rodents, especially rats. There are two types of plague: bubonic plague or animal plague and pneumonic plague. It is popularly referred to as "boubakar" or "habuba." Most scholars tend to agree that Algeria was not historically a source of this deadly disease, and its source is believed to be the East (Gendouz, 2017, p. 124).

Bubonic plague, also known as glandular plague, appeared on the skin as hard spots located under the armpits, thighs, neck, and ears. Pneumonic plague affects the lungs and typically appears in winter, unlike other types that occur during hot periods. It is a contagious disease transmitted from person to another through coughing. Another type is septicemic plague, or blood poisoning plague (Petit Larousse de la Médecine, p. 586).

The plague constituted the most dangerous disease suffered by all social classes in Algeria during the Ottoman era. Foreign residents in the country were also severely affected by its consequences. Its repeated appearance in successive outbreaks alongside endemic epidemics in the region led to demographic collapse and deterioration of the health situation. This, in turn, negatively impacted the country's economy, leaving serious distortions in the Algerian social structure. It is worth mentioning in this context the manuscripts' owners who lived through the recurrent plague epidemics in Algeria. They expressed their fear and apprehension through concentrated phrases and impactful writings, reflecting their dread of the devastating effects caused by the epidemic. Examples of such expressions include:

"Many deaths resulted from the epidemic, to the extent that cities and villages were emptied." - "A great famine and an excessive epidemic." - "A plague in which many people died." - "A famine that afflicted Algeria greatly." - "The epidemic in its of peak deployment and at the time of dawn, the number of funerals would reach up to a hundred." - "A plague in which countless people perished." - "Death befell the people to the point where they were unable to bury their dead." - "The plague in Biskra (in the year 1649) left mosques and houses in the city deserted." - "Houses were abandoned, and graves were dug." - "The successive plagues are a continuation of the great plague and are less fatal than it." - "A great epidemic"; "The major bubonic plague" or "the strong one"; "The year of the pestilence." - "During the

plague of 1786, the country was deserted and the people were consumed." - "Severe famine was widespread." - "The epidemic made people eat each other." - "The number of deaths increased from day to day." - "During the devastating plague, homes and dwellings were emptied." - "A hundred people were buried in one pit." (Al-Qasha'i, p. 134).

2. Its transmission methods:

the plague epidemic was considered a chronic disease in Ottoman Algeria, which affected the health situation in Algeria and was linked to other factors affecting health, such as weather disturbances, climatic fluctuations, periods of droughts and floods, as well as locust invasions leading to periodic famines and droughts. Additionally, earthquakes and fires occurred, resulting in destruction and devastation (Al-Qasha'i, p. 134). The epidemic was widely spread in the city of Algiers and the western regions of the country. Areas such as Oran and Tlemcen were affected, and most regions along the coastal strip were also impacted (Shweitam, 2006, p. 283).

The spread of these infectious diseases was facilitated by the proliferation of stagnant water in coastal plains and around major cities such as Annaba, Algiers, and Oran. Moreover, the population's lack of adherence to the health regulations that characterized Islamic civilization in the Maghreb region contributed to the establishment of these diseases. The inhabitants were no longer knowledgeable about these regulations, except for basic information and personal experiences. Furthermore, medicines and remedies were not readily available. According to the German traveler "Marsiol," the only pharmacy in Algiers at that time had only a few medications and herbs, and the chief surgeon overseeing it was unaware of their specifications and medical benefits (Bouabdelli, 1984, p. 88).

What made the health condition worse was the lack of interest from the rulers regarding health matters and their failure to provide care for them. They did not take any preventive measures against diseases, considering them natural or as divine wrath. As for medical treatment facilities, they were limited to a few hospitals and shelters for the elderly, such as the Zanka Al-Hawa Hospital and the shelter for mental illnesses designated for the Turks. Additionally, there were some clinics run by Christian clergy (Bouabdelli, 1984, p. 88).

As is known, the origins of this epidemic lie in the unhealthy environments of Central Asia, Iraq, the Arabian Peninsula, Anatolia, and the Nile Valley. From these regions, the disease spread mainly to the Province of Algeria and other countries bordering the western Mediterranean Sea. Travel, especially the pilgrimage journey, was one of the main routes of transmission. Concerning the pilgrimage journey, we notice that the transmission of the plague occurs through two routes: overland and maritime. The overland route involved traders and pilgrims returning from the Hijaz region through Cairo, where Moroccan caravans mingled with Egyptian caravans. From the city of Alexandria, a significant portion of pilgrims preferred to board ships and return by sea to Algeria. The rest of the pilgrims, the majority, traveled along the coastal route through Barqa and Tripoli, passing through the Bintan region and the Tamimi district to reach western Tripoli. The journey between Alexandria and western Tripoli took about two months. From Tripoli, the caravan of pilgrims and traders joined Gabes and Kairouan, sometimes intending to go to Tunis before heading to Constantine, Algiers, Tlemcen, and Fez. Often, pilgrims spent some time in cities like Annaba, Bejaia, Algiers, Medea, and

Oran to engage in economic activities, from where they either transmitted the infection to these areas or became infected if the epidemic was present in these regions. Additionally, the Tunisian and Algerian mountain route was not the only crossing intended by these tribes. Some took the desert route through the Ksour region to go to Biskra, Ouargla, El Oued, or some oases (Al-Qasha'i, pp. 143-144).

As for the maritime route, it departed from the eastern ports, especially Istanbul, Izmir, and Alexandria, towards the ports of western Tripoli, Tunis, Algiers, Tangier, and Tetouan. This maritime route was a significant factor in the transmission of the plague infection. Istanbul, being the center of the East and the largest city in the Ottoman Empire, and due to its strategic location, provided a suitable environment for the spread of the plague to the regions of the Levant and the Maghreb. The infection would then spread from Istanbul to Alexandria and from there to Cairo via the Nile River. Often, it would further spread from Egypt to the regions of Libya, Tunisia, Algeria, and Morocco. Every Ottoman port, whether small or large, was susceptible to the danger of the plague due to the ships docking there, coming from Istanbul, Izmir, and Alexandria, carrying passengers infected with the disease or goods contaminated with plague bacteria.

The majority of the plague outbreaks that Algeria experienced during the Ottoman era originated from the ports of Turkey and Egypt, which were connected to Algerian ports. These ports were often responsible for transporting pilgrims, goods, army units, or prisoners. Due to the ease of plague transmission via maritime routes, Algerian ports were more susceptible to the plague than inland regions. For example, the city of Algiers was sometimes visited by people coming from plague-affected areas, who would stay in the scattered inns within the city during their visit. This increased the incidence of plague. Additionally, the prisons in Algiers were often dirty and poorly ventilated, providing an environment where plague-carrying rats could thrive (Al-Qasha'i, p. 143)

The first to be exposed to the plague were the port workers, most of whom were from Biskra city. Then, the Christian prisoners were affected due to their residence in the prison located near the port of Algiers, as confirmed by "Cathcart," who said: "...During the plague epidemic period from 1702 to 1787 AD, the number of those infected among the inmates of this prison was greater than those killed in other prisons, due to their direct contact with the hospital." However, the epidemic did not stop at these boundaries but spread to the city center, claiming a large number of soldiers residing in barracks, then wiping out public bath workers, most of whom were from the Beni Mezab tribe. Afterward, the disease seeped into the populous neighborhoods where dirt and filth were abundant. The epidemic quickly spread from coastal cities to inland areas, decimating villagers. It appears that the rural dwellers, who worked in cities, were the main cause of spreading the infection to their villages (Shweitam, 2006, p. 288).

It is noteworthy that all the plague diseases during this period had been transmitted from outside Algeria through its ports. In the city of Algiers on July 8, 1817 AD, the plague leaked from a Turkish ship that had docked at the port, resulting in the death of around 50 individuals daily. Similarly, in the city of Annaba, which was affected by the epidemic in the same year, the death toll ranged between 10 and 15 individuals daily due to pilgrim ships. The situation was similar in Oran, where people were dying in the streets. In the years 1822-1830 AD, the plague began to fade, with this year marking the end of the years during which Ottoman Algeria

suffered from the plague epidemic (Gendouz, 2017, p. 67). Furthermore, all gatherings and means of communication can be considered contributing factors to the spread of the plague in Algeria during the Ottoman era. The most significant of these factors include:

1. **The Hajj season:** A large number of Muslims gather in one place, facilitating the transmission of infection from the contaminated environments in the Middle East to Algeria. Often, rats living on ships are responsible for transmitting the plague infection, known as port plague. "Haydo" observed this phenomenon as far back as the 16th century, stating, "...the plague was transmitted to Algeria from outside, which is not surprising considering the number of ships carrying goods entering the port of Algiers continuously from various directions..." The epidemic of 1787 that struck Algeria was transmitted from Alexandria to Tunis in 1783 before reaching Algeria later on. As for the epidemic of 1817, "Al-Zahar" described it, saying, "...when the ships arrived from Istanbul, the epidemic came with them to Algeria, and its fire ignited." (Almadeni, 1974, p. 127)

2. **Trade caravans:** They constitute a means of facilitating the transmission of infection.

3. **Markets:** Places where infected traders may come into contact with others, leading to the spread of the plague through the exchange of goods. Additionally, infected individuals may come into contact with healthy population groups present in the market to fulfill their needs.

4. **Military forces:** They also constituted a contributing factor to the transmission of the plague from an infected area to a plague-free region during military campaigns when troops moved from plague-affected areas to regions free from the disease.

5. **Correspondence:** This is a factor that has not received much attention from researchers but is responsible for transmitting the plague infection.

6. **Clothing and blankets:** Often, infection is transmitted through the use of garments, blankets, bedding, or tents. The main cause of infection is usually the infectious fleas that spread and hide within the fabric. The importance of this factor has increased due to the population's need to use second-hand clothing, as they are unable to purchase new garments most of the time) (Al-Qasha'i, p. 145).

3. **The significant historical periods in which the plague appeared and its effects occurred:**

Throughout the 16th century, the appearance of the plague in Algeria was frequent until it returned from its permanent centers and preferred environments. This was expressed by Professor "Panzac" who stated: "The plague is one of the continuous and permanent phenomena in Ottoman Algeria" (Panzac, 1985, p. 212). Epidemic occurrences repeated, and the disease became a stable endemic illness with its appearances occurring progressively, making Algeria an established environment for the plague. The plague settled in Algerian territories starting from the year 1542 AD (Al-Qasha'i, p. 138). It continued to appear at certain intervals until the year 1822 AD, with the number of victims estimated at nine thousand. It appears that the 1552 plague was transmitted to Algeria through the fleet sent by the Ottoman Sultan to support "Salah Rais," the Beylerbey of Algeria, in his wars against the Spanish (Shweitam, 2006, p. 138). The plague is considered one of the most dangerous epidemics suffered by both Mediterranean and

Maghreb countries. In 1556, it ravaged the city of Oran, which was still under Spanish occupation, and in the same year, it spread to the city of Tlemcen (Ghettas, 2001, p. 61).

In the years 1579 and 1580, as a result of consecutive droughts, the country experienced a terrible famine, which was soon exacerbated by the plague. Additionally, the plague spread in the city of Constantine in 1582 and depleted the countryside, leading people to refer to that year as the year of the plague. This situation persisted until 1584 (Khayati, 2013, pp. 33-34).

In addition to that, In the years 1602-1603 AD, the plague struck Constantine, claiming many lives, followed by famine and drought that persisted for a full nine years, leading to severe famines and causing numerous casualties (Al-Antri, 1991, p. 33) . In 1611, all North African countries were exposed to a sweeping plague that extended from east to west, recurring at very close intervals. It had a significant impact on causing periodic demographic crises throughout the Ottoman presence in Algeria (Ghates, 1983, p. 61). The epidemic ravaged the city of Algiers in 1621 AD, claiming fifty to sixty thousand victims. The southern regions of the country were not spared from it (Shweitam, 2006, page 284).

When this disease afflicted the country, it spread both east and west, resulting in significant human losses. However, the scope of this study does not allow us to delve into all the epidemics that afflicted the country during the period from 1516 to 1830. In the sixteenth century, two-thirds of the population of the city of Algiers perished, including four Pashas, among them "Saleh Raïs" (Ghettas, 1983, p. 125).

At the beginning of the seventeenth century (17th century), the plague was characterized by its recurring frequency, alternating in a remarkably astonishing manner. During this period, the Regency of Algiers suffered more from the invasion of the disease compared to the Regency of Tunis, which also suffered as a result of the spread of epidemics by a percentage of 26 infectious years. Meanwhile, the share of Morocco from the plague did not exceed 12 years, while during this time, the share of Algeria was no less than 70 infectious years (Al-Qasha'i, 1988, p. 64). In this seventeenth century, we find it ravaging the region of Biskra around the year 1650 AD, with the number of deaths rising to seventy thousand (Ghettas, 1983, p. 125) . This was confirmed by Al-Ayashi upon his return from the pilgrimage when he stopped in Biskra on his way to the farthest Morocco, saying: "... the epidemic was excessive; about seventy thousand persons died in Biskra, as we were told ..." (Shweitam, 2006, p. 284)

During the eighteenth century, the appearance of the plague recurred, and the total years of this epidemic during this century reached 63 years in the city of Algiers alone, distributed as follows:

- The plague appeared in the years 1717-1718-1723-1730-1731-1732.
- Then, between the years 1738-1758, it spread to areas such as Guelma and Annaba, with the mortality rate in the city of Algiers reaching between 200 and 400 deaths per day in 1740.
- From the years 1778 to 1804, the plague spread across all regions and had a severe impact on the population. In 1787, it affected most parts of the country (Mekhelli, 2021).

The epidemic in the year 1787 was considered one of the most dangerous and violent epidemics experienced by Algeria due to the casualties it caused. It was said that in that year, it

claimed the lives of a third of the population of the city of Algiers, with the number of Muslim victims ranging between two hundred and two hundred and forty victims per day for four months. The following table shows the total number of epidemic victims during the years 1787 and 1788 (Shweitam, 2006, p. 285):

| Nationaliy | Number |
|-------------------|---------------|
| Muslims | 13482 |
| The Jews | 1771 |
| christians | 50 |
| Total | 15203 |

Consul "Ducrés" mentioned this epidemic and its resulting deaths in the city of Algiers during his correspondence with the French king at that time. According to this document, the number of deaths resulting from this epidemic in the city of Algiers reached sixteen thousand, seven hundred and twenty-one. In the outskirts of the city of Algiers, it claimed the lives of five inhabitants (Ghattas, 1983, p. 125) The disease continued to afflict the population intermittently. One of these disasters coincided with Zayani's visit to Algiers, where he wrote about it, saying: "... it was a year in the buildings between (Tlemcen) and Algiers, where we found every household burying their dead..." (Belhameisi, 1981, pages 39-40). Additionally, between 1805 and 1815, the epidemic intensified, leading to famines, the demographic effects of which were considered more severe than some wars (Mekhelli, 2021)

The epidemics of the seventeenth (17th) and eighteenth (18th) centuries were more severe and intense than those that swept through Algeria during the sixteenth (16th) century. Many military reports and consular correspondences indicate the persistence of "deadly epidemics" or "very dangerous epidemics" for consecutive periods, ranging from 15 to 20 years, followed by usually a period of dormancy not exceeding six years. (Saida, 1995, p. 313)

One of the consequences of the plague was that the Bey "Mohammed the Great" was forced to leave the city of Oran and stay in the plain of Mlatta for about three months until the disease subsided. (Ghattas, 1983, p. 125), In this context, "Muslim ibn Abdul Qadir Al-Wahrani" states in his book "Khātamah Anīs al-Gharīb wa al-Musāfir": "...and during his days, the plague occurred, claiming the lives of many people and scholars. The Bey left with his family and his treasury, fleeing from it, and they endured the hardships of the nomadic Bedouins for a long time..." (Al-Wahrani, 1974, p. 64).

It is worth noting that the plague was an endemic epidemic in Algeria during the Ottoman period and in the nineteenth century. Algeria witnessed waves of it during the period between 1817-1822 AD, which was the last epidemic known to the country during the Ottoman era. It was considered the largest disaster the country had experienced because it spread throughout the province and reached the outskirts of the desert, resulting in a large number of deaths. In the city of Annaba, it caused the evacuation of two-thirds of the homes, while the inhabitants

of the city of Béjaïa were forced to leave the city due to the severity of the disease. It can be said that most parts of the province experienced similar conditions. (Ghattas, 1983, p. 125), The cities of Oran and Mascara also suffered from the epidemic in the year 1819, with the disease claiming between 20 and 40 lives daily. The Chief of the Ashraf, Ahmed Ash-Sharif Az-Zahar, mentioned this, saying: "...and in the year 1239 AH, the epidemic ceased in Algeria, having arrived in Rajab 1232 AH and lasted for seven years." He also said: "... after two and a half months of the rule of Dey Hussein in 1234 AH, the epidemic had ignited its fire, and at the time of dawn, a hundred funerals arrived..." (Almadeni, 1974, p. 151).

We can attribute the absence of the plague in Algeria during the period between 1822-1830, compared to its continued severity in other areas such as Egypt, to several factors, the most important of which is the naval blockade imposed by the English fleet initially, and then the French fleet on the Algerian coast. This limited the movement of traders and pilgrims to and from Algeria. (Gendouz, 2017, p. 67).

In addition to the decrease in the influx of people from Ottoman provinces or even Istanbul, which contributed to the decline in plague infections, was due to the reduction in the number of conscripts, especially after the Ottoman Sultan "Mahmud II" revolted against the Janissary army in 1826. This might indicate that the plague epidemic experienced by Algeria during the Ottoman period was transmitted through the sea, primarily through pilgrim ships and other vessels coming from regions and places affected by the disease, entering ports, especially in Egypt, the Hijaz, and Istanbul (Saidouni, 1988, p. 124).

4. Preventive Measures Against the Plague:

Medical care during the Ottoman period was almost non-existent, with a shortage of physicians to the extent that some claimed Algeria did not have a single doctor. However, the English physician "Shaw" mentioned that the country had a number of doctors, though he considered them incompetent. Undoubtedly, the ruling system neglected healthcare for the population, as no health institutions were established for this purpose. Instead, rulers did their utmost to bring in doctors to care for themselves and their entourage (Ghates, 1983, pp. 127-128).

The important measure that was taken in Ottoman Algeria was the quarantine (Shweitam, 2006, p. 295). "In his journey, Ibn Hamadoush, who was well versed in these matters, mentioned an incident in his book 'Lisan al-Maqal' that indicates the implementation of the quarantine system. At that time, the ruling Dey imposed that a ship carrying pilgrims infected with disease from Alexandria should not be allowed to enter until it was ensured that they were clear of the disease." (Al-Qasim, 1982, p. 124)

Thus, we find that rulers in such situations were keen to minimize the danger of such epidemics for both pilgrims and travelers alike, by imposing strict control measures on areas affected by such infectious diseases in order to isolate them from other regions. (Sa'idouni, 1976, p. 96), These measures became, according to some sources, a "custom" adopted by the authority, affecting all ships arriving in Algeria (El-Zahar, 1974, p. 152), "And it seems that this measure was prevalent in all countries, especially in European countries. Hamdan bin Othman Khawja said: '... Seeking refuge from the plague became famous in the lands of the Franks. They prepared a place for it and called it a 'quarantine.' It is indeed seeking refuge and

precaution. They placed this location at the entrances to those who entered (Khawja, 1968, p. 79).'

Among the regions whose rulers distinguished themselves with relative strictness in implementing quarantine measures is the city of Constantine. Historical sources record the measures related to it through the efforts of "Saleh Pasha" aimed at protecting the city from the spread of epidemics and infectious diseases, especially after this city became of great commercial importance and a meeting point for trade routes in the Maghreb and the Sahara. Annaba also formed an important economic and commercial resource, after its port, along with the port of El-Kala, became significant, attracting European merchant ships. As a result, the city of Annaba suffered from a lot a fatalities during the years of the spread of the epidemic in the eastern Beylik from 1783 to 1829. Based on this, "Saleh Pasha" in 1787 surrounded the city of Annaba by imposing strict health measures s to prevent the spread of the plague from this city to other areas of the eastern Beylik, especially its capital, Constantine (R.Bouyac, 1891, p. 100).

It is worth noting that some French documents mentioned the transfer of the headquarters of the African Royalty Company to the city of El-Kala instead of the fortress that was evacuated due to the epidemics that swept through it. The authorities resorted to quarantine to preserve health, in the absence of a robust health system, when they found out about the spread of infectious diseases on one of the incoming ships to Algeria (Gharaaf, p. 154).

In light of these circumstances and the lack of interest from the authorities in Algeria regarding the population's affairs, the locals were forced to defend themselves, resorting to their own means and beliefs. For instance, city dwellers would often stay in their homes during periods of outbreak, while rural inhabitants preferred fleeing to remote areas unaffected by the epidemic. Meanwhile, Jews would wash their dead with cold water, then hot water mixed with aromatic herbs, believing that mourning the dead would prolong the plague in their eyes. Christian prisoners, on the other hand, would seek refuge in hospitals established by their countries in the city of Algiers. However, their role was limited due to the abundance of plague victims on one hand, and the scarcity of medical resources on the other. (Shweitam, 2006, p. 292)

The diseases and epidemics that afflicted Algeria were a direct cause of the economic and industrial recession in the city. They also led to the demise of a large number of artisans and merchants, leaving the market open for foreign traders to export local production (Al-Zain, 2012, p. 132).Hamdan Khodja commented on all of this in his book: "I have witnessed during my lifetime, which spans over sixty years, the occurrence of epidemics in Algeria scattered over the years, with the total duration of this ordeal being twenty years. It tarnished the image of Algeria after it had been a pristine land under examination. It rendered the country barren, disrupted its conditions, eroded knowledge and preparedness, and extinguished the intellect of those who were adept in urbanism and planning. Corruption spread throughout, breaches widened, and there was no longer any place for integrity. Oh, what a disgrace that made sensitive skins shiver! Oh, what a loss whose inception was the arrival of a plague in a hospice" (Khodja, 1968, pp. 47-48).

In conclusion, after studying this subject, we have reached the following conclusions:

- Algeria during the Ottoman era experienced diseases and epidemics in general, including a lethal epidemic such as the plague, which claimed the lives of many Algerian residents.

- The epidemics that Algeria experienced during the Ottoman era, which spread widely among the population, often originated from outside sources, particularly from Eastern countries, due to intense communication with them.

- The plague, in particular, and epidemics and diseases in general, caused significant damage, especially in terms of lives lost, and also inflicted social and economic harm.

- The health situation of the population was precarious, as the country was susceptible to various diseases. The healthcare system itself was inadequate, with most diseases attributed to the neglect of healthcare. Healthcare provision barely exceeded personal initiatives and efforts that couldn't withstand the deteriorating health situation, which had the worst effects on the population.

- The implementation of quarantine was not a consistent health measure or preventative method adhered to by the ruling system throughout the Ottoman era. Rather, it depended on the rulers themselves. In this regard, it can be noted that what increased the danger and exacerbation of the situation was the population's reliance on fate and faith, leading them to downplay preventive measures.

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