

## Islamic manuscript Inductive methodology, an Exemplary archaeological and artistic study

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### Abstract:

Islamic manuscripts are an essential material heritage that serve as invaluable sources for historical and archaeological studies. They represent a precious legacy, encompassing a vast array of knowledge meticulously documented by scholars across diverse fields. Moreover, manuscripts embody an art form precisely crafted by the author or copyist to render them aesthetically pleasing, complementing their rich content with artistic merit, evident in the script, ornamentation, and colors employed. We have selected the manuscript "Al-Tuhfa Al-Murdiya fi Al-Dawla Al-Bakdashiya fi Bilad Al-Jazayer Al-Mahmiyya" (The Pleasing Masterpiece of the Bakdashian Rule in the Lands of Protected Algeria) by Mohammad Ben Mimoon Al-Jazayri for its significant value, as it exemplifies Algerian Islamic manuscripts and provides raw scholarly material for writing Algerian history.

This study aims to highlight the significance of this Algerian manuscript and propose it as a model for an inductive methodology to explore and interpret manuscripts through archaeological analysis. We thoroughly read the "Al-Tuhfa Al-Murdiya" manuscript and extracted its content related to archaeological material relevant to archaeological studies. This includes landmarks, scholars, rulers, and even military and administrative ranks bestowed in Algeria during the Ottoman period. Ultimately, we arrive at a general conclusion that can constructively enrich academic research. What does this artistic and archaeological manuscript encompass, and how can we utilize it in academic studies?

**Keywords:** Algerian manuscript, Al-Tuhfa Al-Murdiya, inductive methodology, Mohammed Ben Mimoon Al Jazayri.

## Introduction

Algerian Islamic manuscripts are one of Algeria's most important heritage types. Some of these manuscripts have been researched, while others remain stored in Algerian libraries and private collections, awaiting preservation, research, and appreciation. The subject matter of Algerian Islamic manuscripts is diverse, encompassing history, archaeology, literature, poetry, jurisprudence, Quranic studies, interpretation, biography, and other fields.

In this research paper, we have selected one of the most prominent historical manuscripts that narrates significant events from the history of Algeria in general and the history of Oran in particular, namely "Al-Tuhfa Al-Murdiya fi Al-Dawla Al-Bakdashiya fi Bilad Al-Jazayer Al-Mahmiyya" (The Pleasing Masterpiece of the Bakdashian Rule in the Lands of Protected Algeria) by its author, Mohammad Ben Mimoon Al-Jazayri." This heritage, considered one of the most precious manuscripts preserved in the National Library of Algeria, presents a biography of Dey Muhammad Bakdash's virtuous life, which renowned scholars and writers praise. It also recounts his achievements during his rule, including the conquest of Oran, to which most of the manuscript is dedicated under his reign. The manuscript is further enriched by a collection of poems from writers and scholars who lived during the time of both the author, Mohammad Ben Mimoon, and Dey Mohammad Bakdash.:

The manuscript is distinguished by its sequential narration of events and occurrences, immersing the reader in those events. The author often supports his narrative with Quranic verses, prophetic hadiths, and poetic lines relevant to the topic. The manuscript holds two significant values in scientific and archaeological research: First, a historical and archaeological value, embodied in the detailed account of battles, preparations for war, and stages of the attacks on the city of Oran, including specific dates, names of fortresses and towers, and highlighting the artistic material used in the manuscript's illumination. Second, it has literary value, as it includes sixteen chapters titled 'maqamat' (stations) and seven hundred and ninety-five poetic lines by Algerian writers and poets. It also covers several fields, including biography, history, archaeology, literature, and rhetoric (Ben Mimoon, 1981, p. 85).

Through this research paper, we aim to propose a model methodology for analyzing the Algerian Islamic manuscript dating back to the Ottoman period. We have chosen "Al-Tuhfa Al-Murdiya" as our raw material, seeking to extract its historical, archaeological, and artistic content simultaneously. This manuscript serves as a valuable foundation for exploring its hidden treasures. It is also a reliable and informative source for archaeological researchers, who can glean crucial information from its content, as everything mentioned in it is a factual account experienced and witnessed firsthand by the author.

Our study relies on two versions: the first is the manuscript preserved in the National Library of Algeria in Al-Hamma, under catalog number 1625. The second version is the one verified by Professor Muhammed Ben Abdelkrim. In our analysis, we have analyzed the manuscript from its archaeological and artistic aspects, extracted various historical landmarks and

sites, and studied its artistic features. Our ultimate goal is to arrive at a general conclusion that can enrich academic research. This study represents a new interpretation of the manuscript "Al-Tuhfa Al-Murdiya." In this regard, we can pose questions as follows: What is the content of the "Al-Tuhfa Al-Murdiya" manuscript, and how can it be used in academic archaeological studies through a scientific methodology?

### **First: Introduction to the Author Mohammad Ben Mimoon Al-Jazayeri**

Abu Abdullah Mohammad Ben Mimoon Al-Zawawi Al-Najjar Al-Jazayeri was the grandson of Abu Al-Abbas Ahmad Ben Abdullah Al-Zawawi Al-Jazayeri. He was a contemporary of many literary figures, including his teacher Abu Abdullah Mohammad Al-Thaghri Al-Jazayeri. He was a jurist with a leaning towards politics, well-versed in all the arts of his time, Sufism prevailed over him, as evidenced by his writing of "Al-Tuhfa Al-Murdiya fi Al-Dawla Al-Bakdashiya fi Bilad Al-Jazayer Al-Mahmiyya," which portrays a statesman and his political and historical circumstances. He lived during the era of Dey Mohammad Bakdash, to whom he dedicated most of the book. He witnessed numerous internal upheavals, political events, and external wars in Algeria during Ottoman rule (Ben Mimoon, 1981, pp. 11–29). All these circumstances led the author to fill his book "Al-Tuhfa Al-Murdiya" with vivid descriptions of what he lived and made us live through his literary style, enriched by poems, which made the book more valuable. We can sense through them the truthfulness of his feelings and his veracity in recounting events and anecdotes with accuracy.

### **Second: Overview of "Al-Tuhfa Al-Murdiya"**

The manuscript includes a preface, a conclusion, and sixteen chapters titled "Maqamat" (episodes) between them. Each "Maqama" recounts a series of events and occurrences embellished with poetic lines, Quranic citations, and prophetic hadiths.

#### **1- The Preface**

An introduction to the manuscript, which includes the Basmalah, prayers for the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), the name of the author, Mr. Mohammad Mimoon Al-Jazairi, and expressions of gratitude to God Almighty for his blessings. The author also clarifies the manuscript's title and purpose, confesses his love and praise for Dey Mohammad Bakdash, and expresses his joy in drawing closer to him and serving him.

#### **2- The "Maqamat"**

They are presented in a structured and titled format, narrating detailed events and occurrences supported by specific dates. We will briefly summarize the content of each "maqama":

**2-1- Maqama One:** The author praises the lineage and noble character of Dey Mohammad Bakdash, his intellectual and religious orientation, and his adherence to the Badawiya Sufi order attributed to the Sufi Sheikh Ahmad Al-Badawi. He mentions his arrival in Algeria in 1086 AH /

1675 CE, his attachment to scholars and holy saints, and his kindness towards the poor, which made him the target of envious individuals who plotted against him. This forced him to leave Algiers and go to Bona (Annaba) to stay with Sheikh Sidi Qasem and his companion Ibrahim Ben Sinan.

**2-2- Maqama Two:** He mentioned when Mohammad Bakdash joined the military and held several positions, including Sanjaqdar (bearer of the banner) in 1107 AH/1695 CE and Khatib (preacher), where he ascended the pulpit in 1104 AH / 1693 CE.

**2-3- Maqama Three:** He mentioned when Mohammad Bakdash held a third position as a bread distributor (military quartermaster) in 1112 AH / 1700 CE. When he saw that Dey Baba Haji Mustafa had become tyrannical, plundered the country's wealth, and neglected its affairs and welfare, Mohammad Bakdash rushed to save the Muslims and rectify the injustices and corruption. This forced the ruler to flee to Kolea, where he later died. The soldiers and Shawash (military officials) pleaded with Mohammad Bakdash to take over as ruler. However, he declined and urged them to choose the noble Hussein Khodja while he remained his advisor.

**2-4- Maqama Four:** He mentioned when Mohammad Bakdash was appointed Deftar Dar (minister of finance) in 1117 AH/1705 CE, which further increased people's respect and love for him, making him a source of assistance for those in need.

**2-5- Maqama Five:** It describes the incident of Mohammad Bakdash's exile to Tripoli and his departure from Algiers in late 1117 AH/1705 CE by sea, heading to the region of Arad in Libya, then to Tunisia. There, he met a group of Algerians who were in exile, and they decided to return to Algiers, which they successfully did through Bab al-Jadid.

**2-6- Maqama Six:** It discusses the events of the aforementioned battle in 1118 AH/1707 CE, in which the author and about 12,000 others participated. In this battle, Mohammad Bakdash was pledged allegiance as the Caliph. He made administrative changes, appointed trustworthy individuals to various positions, and ordered the exile of Dey Hussein Khodja by sea. Hussein Khodja and his followers sought refuge in the village of Delis, then in one of the villages of the Zawawa tribe.

**2-7- Maqama Seven:** The author returns to the biography of Dey Bakdash, mentions his name, lineage, qualities, professional life, ministers, and others, as well as the inscription he engraved on his ring: "The One who Trusts in Protector Allah, Mohammad Bakdash Ben Ali."

**2-8- Maqama Eight:** Here, the author expatiates the scholars and jurists who sent letters and poems to the Dey, congratulating him on his appointment as ruler. He mentions his relationships with sheikhs and noblemen, dedicating a section to each based on their standing and expertise.

**2-9- Maqama Nine:** The author began narrating the battles waged by Dey Bakdash to liberate Oran from the Spaniards, who built fortresses there, captured scholars, and wreaked havoc in the city. The Dey placed Hassan Awzen in command, leaving behind Al-Mansour in charge of the army, and urged them to obey him. They set out from Algiers towards the city of conquest, Oran.

**2-10- Maqama Ten:** It mentions the events of the conquest of the Fortress of Al-Ayoun in 1119 AH/1707 CE, the first fortress to be besieged. The battle with the Spaniards raged with cannons and bombs until the infidels retreated to the trench of Al-Ayoun's fortress. The victorious army stormed them, forced them to surrender, and captured 545 prisoners, who left behind war spoils and provisions.

**2-11- Maqama Eleven:** It describes the conquest of the Fortress of Al-Jabal in detail. It starts by locating it at the top of a mountain, a formidable fortress. The victorious army dug a trench at the base of its courtyard, besieged it from the outside, finally conquered it in Jumada al-Akhira in 1119 AH/1707 CE, and captured 106 men and six women.

**2-12- Maqama Twelve:** It recounts the events of the conquest of the Fortress of Ben Zahwa, a fortified castle situated on a hilltop. The Muslims besieged it in 1119 AH/1707 CE, but their forces were depleted due to previous conquests. The Dey ordered his lieutenant to dig three mines to open the fortress, they killed those inside and captured war materials. The army entered the fortress, raising the call to prayer within its walls.

**2-13- Maqama Thirteen:** It describes the conquest of the city of Oran. It begins by describing the city as renowned, with fertile land, water, gardens, crops, and vineyards, exploited by the infidels who plundered ships on land and sea, launched raids on the outskirts of the country, and killed and captured people. Then came the army of Mohammad Bakdash, who confronted the invaders, seized the city, and captured war supplies, weapons, and provisions stored in the warehouses. Hassan Awzen entered the city with the soldiers on the first day of Shawwal, 1119 AH/1708 CE. Scholars and sheikhs wrote him encouraging letters and poems, urging him to continue the blessed conquest of Oran.

**2-14- Maqama Fourteen:** It mentions the conquest of the Red and New Towers. After their defeat, the captured infidels, numbered 560 soldiers, sought refuge in the Red Tower and the New Tower. They surrendered the keys, and God granted the Muslims their land, homes, and wealth.

**2-15- Maqama Fifteen** describes the conquest of the Fortress of Al-Marsa (the Harbor), a massive fortress that resembled a city. The Muslims pursued about 3,000 Spaniards to this fortress from both land and sea and captured it. Oran became a royal base, a stronghold on land and sea, and a gateway to the west.

**2-16- Maqama Sixteen** concludes the "maqamat." The author mentions the Islamic army's victory and the spoils of war they gained, praising and thanking God Almighty for blessing this momentous conquest. He describes the scenes of joy and celebration that swept through the people of Algiers as they went out to celebrate and welcome the Caliph Hassan Awzen.

### **3- The Conclusion**

Muhammad Ben Mimoon Al-Jazayeri concluded his book by stating the date he finished the manuscript of "Al-Tuhfa Al-Murdiya" by hand as a draft. That was at the end of Jumada al-Akhira of 1121 AH/1709 CE.

### **Third: A Historical, Archaeological, and Artistic Study of "Al-Tuhfa Al-Murdiya"**

#### **1- The Historical and Archaeological Study: Content Analysis**

Most of the manuscript details events related to Oran's conquest. It is rich in detail, including numerous scholars, nobles, rulers, their roles, and historical landmarks with significant archaeological value. The manuscript also mentions the names of some cities and tribes.

##### **1-1- The Rulers Mentioned in the Manuscript:**

"Al-Tuhfa Al-Murdiya" manuscript is considered one of the most essential sources in the biography field. In this work, the author includes many religious and political figures. This section will provide a concise overview of the most prominent among them:

**1-1-1- Dey Mohammad Bakdash (1118 AH - 1122 AH / 1707 CE - 1710 CE):** He is Mohammad ibn Abi al-Hasan Nour al-Din Ali ibn Mohammad al-Nekid, derived from Nekida in Turkey. He is an Arab and a descendant of the Prophet Mohammad. He was raised in Nekida, a place known for its religious and scholarly environment. His father nicknamed him 'Bakdash' since childhood in honor of the Sheikh of the Bakdashi order, Haji Bakdash, the founding saint of the Bakdashi order in the 7th century AH/11th century CE. This practice was derived from social beliefs that were transmitted to Anatolia through the ancient religions of Turkey before Islam. It was closely related to the Janissaries, and when they went too far in it, the Ottoman state fought them. Despite this, it still exists in the Balkans, especially Albania, where their leader resides in the Tirana Tekke. The origin of the nickname "Bakdash" is disputed. Some trace it to a Turkic origin, meaning "hard stone," while others believe it is a Persian word meaning "the one who stands alone in power" (Al-Jilali, 1415 AH / 1994 CE, p. 207). When he arrived in Algeria, he met Sheikh Qasim al-Buni in the city of Bône, who named him Mohammad. He was later known as Mohammad Bakdash (Ben Mimoon, 1981 CE, p. 112).

Historians have praised his vast knowledge, to the point where he was called "the scholar of princes and the prince of scholars." Sheikh al-Halfawi, the Mufti of Tlemcen, described him as an expert of the Islamic law who was proficient in many arts, different sciences and knowledge. He was also a great preacher, having led the recitation of the Quran numerous times and delivered sermons at some of the mosques of Algiers in 1104 AH/1692 CE. (Al-Madani, p. 454). He also assumed power in the year 1118 AH/1706 CE and died assassinated in the year 1122 AH/1710 CE at the hands of Dey Dali Ibrahim Agha (Ben Mimoon, 1981 CE, p. 112). He was distinguished by gathering a large group of scholars, poets, and writers around him, a quality that

no other Ottoman ruler of Algiers had achieved. He was the most responsive ruler to the people, and he was keen on fighting the Spaniards in Oran and permanently cleansing Algeria of their presence (Al-Madani, nd, p. 455)

**1-1-2- Bey Mustafa Bouchlagham:** He is Mustapha Abi Shlagham, the son of Youcef el-Mesrati from the Kalaa of Beni Rached. His father came to the city of Algiers and became a soldier. He had saved the people from one of the highwaymen, so the Pasha rewarded him by appointing him Bey of Constantine. He then moved to Mostaganem and then to the Kalaa, his birthplace. He remained there as a Caliph until he died and left eight sons and one daughter, including Mustapha Abi Shlagham (al-Mazari, pp. 276-277), who took over the rule of the Beylik of the West in 1098 AH / 1686 CE, and unified between Mazouna and Tlemcen after each was under an independent Bey then moved the capital of the Beylik to the Kalaa of Beni Rached, then to Mascara, which is located between Tlemcen and Mazouna and close to Oran. He paid great attention to Oran and Marsa El Kebir and found in the Dey Bakdash a good supporter for him, so victory was his ally in Oran in 1119 AH / 1708 AD (Bouaziz, 2009, pp. 53-54). Then he moved there, settled in it, and made it his capital city (Al-Mazari, nd, pp. 274-275). When the Spaniards invaded Oran in 1143 CE / 1730 AD, he left for Mostaganem and lived there for 47 years until he died and was buried in the tomb he built for himself and his descendants (Al-Zayani, 2013, p. 254).

**1-1-3- Mr. Hassan Awzen:** He was Mohammad Bakdash's son-in-law, army commander, and successor. He was also known as Hasan Abu al-Fathuh, as mentioned in the manuscript, or Baba Hasan. The word "Awzen" is a Turkish word that means "tall." He was the ruler who introduced important political reforms. He was assassinated in 1122 AH/1710 CE by Dey Dali Ibrahim (Ben Mimoon, 1981, p. 112).

**1-1-4- Sultan Ismail:** He was the Sultan of Morocco, Ismail ibn Sharif or Moulay Ismail (1645-1727 CE). He ruled Morocco from 1672 CE to 1727 CE. He belonged to the Alawi dynasty and was the seventh son of Moulay Sharif. The Alawi state was in its prime during his reign.

**1-1-5- Dey Baba Haji Mustafa:**(1112 AH - 1117 1700 CE - 1705 CE).

**1-1-6- Dey Hussein Khoja Al-Sharif:**(1117 AH to 1118 AH/1705 CE to 1707 CE).

**1-1-7- Hajj Mahmoud:** He held the position of Amin Bait al-Mal (Treasurer).

**1-1-8- Mr. Ahmed, nicknamed Ibn Aqleel:** He held the position of interpreter

**1-1-9- Mr. Abu Ali Hussein:** He held the position of Qadi (judge)

**1-1-10- Mr. Ibn Abdullah Mohammad Ibn al-Abbas, nicknamed Ibn Akodjil:** He held the position of Qadi (judge)

**1-1-11- Mr. Abu Zaid Ben Abdul Rahman Al-Ardi Al-Sharif:** He held the positions of Qadi (judge) and Mufti (religious scholar)

**1-1-12- Mr. Abu Hafs Omar Ibn Abi Abdullah Muhammad Al-Tunisi:** He held the position of Qadi al-Askar Al Mansur (The Mansur Army's judge)

## 1-2- Scholars and Saints Mentioned in the Manuscript

The manuscript mentions a large number of scholars, which is particularly helpful for researchers in the field of biographies. The author mentions their works, positions, compositions, and poems (Table 01).

**Table N° 01:** The important Scholars and Saints Mentioned in the Manuscript

The Scholars and the Writers	The Nobles and the Saints
Yahia ibn Ahmed ibn Abi al-Qasim ibn Abi Rachid	Sidi Abdel Rahman El Thaalibi in the city of Algiers
Abu Abdullah Mohammad Al-Bounsi Al-Sharif	Sidi Masoud (Said Kaddoura) in the city of Algiers
Abu Abdullah Mohammad ibn Ahmad al-Bouni	Sidi Wali Dada in the city of Algiers
Abu Abdullah Mohammad al-Mostaghanimi	Sidi Ibrahim ibn Sinan in the city of Bona
Abu Abdullah Mohammad al-Maghribi	Sidi Ali ibn Mohammad al-Sharif al-Nekidani in Turkey
Abu Abdullah Mohammad ibn Mohammad al-Thaghiri	Mohammad ibn Sidi Said in Tripoli
Abu Abdullah Mohammad ibn Ahmad al-Hilfawi	Sheikh Sufi Ahmad al-Badawi in Egypt
Ibrahim al-Qanili al-Sharif	
Abu Abdullah Mohammad ibn Mohammad al-Qali	
Abu Abdullah Mohammad, known as Ibn Yusuf al-Sharif	
Abu Zayd Abd al-Rahman ibn Abd Allah al-Jamii al-Fasi	
Abu Yazid Mohammad ibn Abd al-Rahman ibn Ibrahim al-Garumi	
Abu al-Wafa Mustafa ibn Abd Allah al-Bouni	
Ahmad ibn Qasim al-Bouni	

**Source:** prepared by researcher

## 1-3- The Positions and Titles Mentioned in the Manuscript

The author mentions several positions and titles held by leaders, administrators, and military personnel. This provides us with valuable information about the positions that were known in the Algerian administration during the Ottoman period"(Table 02).

**Table N° 02:** The positions and titles mentioned in the manuscript

<b>The position/Title</b>	<b>The Meaning</b>
Caliph	/
Minister	/
Judge	/
Jurist	/
Mufti	/
Preacher	/
Writer	/
Interpreter	/
Teftter dar : Defter dar	He ledger keeper, also known as the ledger holder or record keeper, and it also refers to the chief accountant, financial agent, or financial supervisor
Treasurer of the king, keeper of the public treasury	He is called Khazandar, a term often used for someone responsible for managing the finances of high-ranking officials in the state
Proxy	The deputy who oversees the construction on behalf of its owner
Khodja	He is a teacher of children
Sanjak Judge	Judge of the Governors
Doulati	It is an honorary title and means 'Lord of the State'
Sanjak Dar	The bearer of the state's flag and banner, and then it became specifically the banner granted by the Sultan to the governor or prince as a sign of his confidence that he is fit to rule
Taqsim Khobz al-aaskar	A position meaning the military quartermaster
Ajnad / the military forces	the soldiers or the troops
Shaweesh/ the sergeant	he plural of 'shaweesh' or 'jawish': refers to soldiers of lower ranks, and also means 'guard' or 'attendant' for rulers
Mahilla	A unit of the army that is dispatched quarterly to

	assist the leaders in collecting taxes
Military judge	He is appointed to adjudicate religious matters for the military during wartime and would accompany the Sultan in campaigns and wars, acting as the military judge in his stead
<b>Reference:</b> Barakat Mustafa, (2000), <i>Ottoman Titles and Positions</i> , Dar Gharib for Printing, Publishing, and Distribution, Cairo	

**Source:** prepared by researcher

#### 1-4- The Tribes and the Cities Mentioned in the Manuscript

The author of the manuscript mentions several tribes that played a role in the events described in the manuscript, as well as some cities that were visited, sought refuge in, or conquered, such as the city of Oran (Table 03).

**Table N° 03:** The tribes and cities mentioned in the manuscript

Tribes	Cities/regions/countries
Berbers, Banu Aamer, Banu Moula, Zawawa	The city of Algiers, the city of Bona (Annaba), the city of Oran, the city of Kolea in the Tipasa region, the city of Dellys in the Tizi Ouzou region, the Aaradh area of Manshiya in Tripoli, Tunisia

**Source:** prepared by researcher

#### 1-5- Surnames Mentioned in the Manuscript

We have been able to extract a collection of surnames and nicknames from the manuscript, which are of great importance, as they can be used as an essential reference for surnames and nicknames in the Ottoman period in Algeria (Table 04).

**Table N° 04:** Surnames and Nicknames Mentioned in the Manuscript

Abu Al-Nasr	Al-Aallama (The sign)	Al-Aalim (The Scholar)	Al-Fata (The boy)
Amir Al Mouminine (Commander of the Faithful)	Al-Derraka (Perception)	Al-Sayyid (The Mister)	Al-Amjad (The most glorious)
Al-Amir	Al-Barii	Al_Laith	Al-Hussam


(Prince)	(The brilliant one)	(Brave lion)	(The cutting sword)
Al-Adib (The writer)	Al-Fehhama (Understanding)	Al-Hammam (Determined)	Al-Muhannad (A sword made of Indian iron)




**Source:** prepared by researcher




### 1-6- Defensive Fortifications Mentioned in the Manuscript

The author was characterized by the accuracy of his description of events, landmarks, and cities. Whenever the army entered an area or conquered a fortress, he would describe its location. We needed to extract a list of these important historical landmarks scattered throughout Oran. We will follow this up with a map on which we have marked these fortifications and defensive landmarks, as well as the route of the Mansur army during the conquest. (Table 05) (Map 01).

**Table N° 05:** Defensive Fortifications Mentioned in the Manuscript

landmark	Period/date/definition
<p><b>Bab Al-Jedid</b> (New door)</p> 	<p>It is located on the southwestern side of the city wall of Algiers. It has been linked by a main road to the west of the country since the Roman era. It closes and opens shortly before sunset and sunrise.</p>
<p><b>Fortress of Laayoune</b> <b>Fortress of Beni Zeroual</b> <b>Fort Saint-Philippe</b></p>	<p>It is a fortress built by the Spaniards in the 16th century AD. It was occupied by Hassan Qurso in the year 1556 AD, then it was destroyed by Hassan Ibn Khair al-Din Barbaros in the year 1563 AD, and ruins of its tabana remained, then it was restored during the French period.</p>

	
<p><b>Hisn Al-Jabal (Mountain Fort) Marjajo Fort Fort Santa Cruz</b></p> 	<p>It was built by the Spanish between the years 1698 AD and 1708 AD.</p>
<p><b>Hisn Ben Zahwa Fort Lamoune (Fort Al-Jewish)</b></p> 	<p>It was built by the Spanish in 1518 AD.</p>
<p><b>Borj Al-Jedid (The new tower) Fort Saint-André</b></p>	<p>It was built by the Spanish in 1693 AD.</p>

	
<p><b>Al-Borj Al-Ahmar (Red Tower) Al Mahhal Tower</b></p>  <p><b>New Palace</b></p> 	<p>It is a fort containing three large towers in a row and connected to each other. It is located within the architectural complex called the New Palace, or Rozalcazar Castle, which is a Spanish designation that means the head of the palace.</p> <p>The construction of the Red Tower dates back to Abu al-Hasan al-Marini when he conquered the city of Oran in the year 843 AH/1347 AD. It is considered one of the most important towers due to its strategic location in the new palace</p>
<p><b>Marsa Fort (Le Fort de Mers-el-Kébir)</b></p>	<p>Located on the farthest rocky promontory on the sea, it is a large fortress with one outlet. King Abu Al-Hassan Al-Marini ordered its construction in the year 848 AH/1347 AD, and it played a major role in defending the city of Oran.</p>

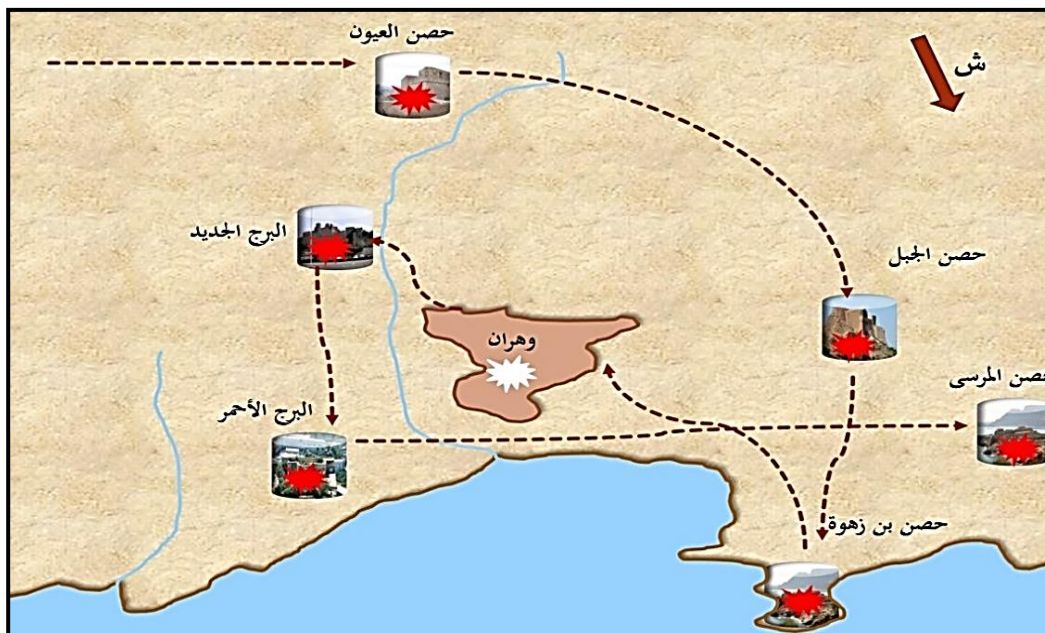


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**Source:** prepared by researcher

**Map N° 01 :** Distribution of the castles and fortresses of the city of Oran and the victorious army's route to liberate it



**Source:** prepared by researcher

## 2- Artistic Analysis of the Manuscript

Islamic manuscripts are renowned for their intricate ornamentation and aesthetic beauty, showcasing the artist's creativity in transforming the manuscript into a masterpiece of refined

taste. The "Al-Tuhfa Al-Murđiya" manuscript stands out for its unique artistic and decorative features that enhance its aesthetic value. The scribe or the artist skillfully blended the historical significance of the manuscript's content with the artistic elements, prominently displaying geometric shapes, frames, various types of Islamic calligraphy, colors, and ornaments that adorn the manuscript's pages. While the manuscript's artistic style is relatively simple, it provides valuable insights into the richness of Islamic arts.

## 2-1- The Script and The Coloring

The manuscript is written in the Maghrebi script, with regular lines of black ink. Some letter endings are decorated with taqwir (rounding) and tawriq (foliation) techniques. The titles of the maqamat (Discourses/Assemblies) and important phrases are executed in gold ink, except for two words: "Sifatuhu" (his description) and "Khatimah Niddohu" (his conclusion is a call), which are written in red ink.

**2-1-1- Basmalah frame (Itar Al-Basmalah):** It comes in a rectangular shape, consisting of three frames: golden ones adorned with liquid gold, red, and white (Image N° 01).

**Image N° 01:** Basmalah frame



**Source:** From the copy of the manuscript preserved in the National Library of Algeria

**2-1-2- The Introductory Frame (Itar Al-Istihlal):** The introductory frame also comes in a rectangular shape, composed of two frames: a green one and a gold one. These frames are adorned with intricate interlocking lines and dots that harmonize beautifully. Within the frame, three lines of text appear, reading as follows: "These are the maqamat (Discourses/Assemblies) of the erudite scholar, the perceptive and the eloquent writer Mr. Muhammad Ben Mimoon al-Jazayri, may God have mercy upon him." (Image N° 02)

**Image N° 02:** Introduction frame



**Source:** From the copy of the manuscript preserved in the National Library of Algeria

**2-1-3- The Margins (Hawachi):** The margins of the first page are adorned with decorative elements consisting of three overlapping suns. Each sun is composed of two circles: an inner red circle with a five-petaled flower at its center and an outer gold circle surrounded by a double frame decorated with delicate lines along its circumference, giving it the appearance of a radiant sun. Additionally, small gold circles mark the ends of each sentence (Image N° 03).

**Image N° 03:** The first and second pages of the manuscript, featuring margins decorations



**Source:** From the copy of the manuscript preserved in the National Library of Algeria

**2-1-4- The Headings of the Maqamat:** The headings of the Maqamat are written in large gold letters, with the ends of the letters sometimes adorned with floral embellishments. Additionally, important phrases are also written in gold and large letters. As for the additions, explanations, and corrections, the author placed these in the margins to clarify or supplement what was missing from the main text. The ta'qībah (the bottom of the page) was used to maintain the order of the manuscript pages in case of mixing or loss.

**2-1-5- The Conclusion of the manuscript:** The manuscript concludes with the phrase "Completed with the praise of God Almighty" written in two lines in a larger font size and gold color, with floral embellishments at the end of the letter "الياء" in the word "تعالى". Then the phrase "The copy was completed from a draft in the handwriting of its author at the end of Jumada al-Akhir in the year one thousand, one hundred and twenty-one of the Prophet's Hijra May God's peace and blessings be upon him" written in two lines in black ink using the Maghrebi script with a slight inclination and elegance (Image N° 04).

**Image N° 03:** Conclusion of the manuscript



**Source:** From the copy of the manuscript preserved in the National Library of Algeria

## Conclusion

This study has explored one of the most significant Algerian manuscripts authored by an Algerian writer, the "Al-Tuhfa Al-Murđiya" manuscript. This local heritage piece serves as a testament to historical and political events, most notably the conquest of Oran. It meticulously details the names of a vast array of rulers, scholars, their works, and their positions, making it an invaluable historical resource for understanding and writing the history of Algeria during the Ottoman era. The manuscript also serves as a rich trove for archaeological researchers, providing them with material to analyze and apply within their field. It contains the names of numerous essential defensive structures that adorned the city of Oran, enabling us to trace the route of conquests undertaken by Dayi Muhammad Bakdash and his army. The manuscript was authored to recognize Bakdash's noble character and virtuous deeds.

This study presents a groundbreaking approach to deciphering Islamic manuscripts, exemplified by the in-depth analysis of the "Al-Tuhfa Al-Murđiya" manuscript. We have successfully extracted valuable historical insights, artistic elements, and cultural significance from this rich source by employing a rigorous methodology. We could identify important historical figures, events, landmarks, and sites by examining the manuscript from archaeological and artistic perspectives. Additionally, we revealed the manuscript's artistic merits.

Given the immense value of Algerian manuscripts, we propose the establishment of specialized departments within research centers, universities, and institutes. These departments would be dedicated to preserving, conserving, and classifying manuscripts. This would facilitate access for students and researchers studying and analyzing these cultural treasures. Algerian manuscripts are a vital heritage that must be valued and studied. They serve as vessels that preserve Algeria's memory and its glorious history and authenticity.

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