

European Travel Accounts as a source for the Study of Algerian History during the Ottoman period, 1518–1830 AD – English Travels as a Case Study –

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Abstract:

During the Ottoman period, Algeria was a popular destination for European travellers, particularly the English, who were sent there for various reasons, both overt and covert. They left behind numerous works containing valuable information, depending on the purpose of their journey. Many of them came with the intention of espionage and colonial expansion. These writings covered all aspects of life and included reports, letters and memoirs, many of which have been published and translated into other languages. Research has shown that these writings played a significant role in the planning of military campaigns against Algeria during the 17th and 18th centuries. This includes writings resulting from the interest of English travellers in North Africa in general and Algeria in particular.

Keywords: Ottoman Algeria – historical writings – European travel accounts – English travel accounts – sources on the history of Algeria

Introduction:

In general, travel has diverse value; it is one of the most enlightening and instructive means of human thought and intergenerational communication, reflecting both the traveller's personality and their surroundings. Historical schools of thought and methodologies throughout the ages, such as Greek, Roman and Islamic, have therefore relied on travel accounts as tools and guidelines for writing history as they are based on first-hand observation and the collection of historical material from available sources.

Historians rely on these primary sources when writing the history of Algeria during the Ottoman period, given the popularity of travel among Europeans and the diversity and development of their journeys in terms of both scope and quality. From the beginning of the 16th century onwards, Algeria became a popular destination for travellers from all over the world, particularly Europeans such as the French, Germans, Spaniards, English, Danes and Dutch. They recorded numerous observations about the country in their various languages. This has enriched the history of Algeria during the Ottoman era, providing documented material across all fields.

This study aims to identify the most significant English-language works on the history of Algeria during the Ottoman period, which began in the early 16th century and was particularly prominent during the 17th and 18th centuries. During this time, relations developed between the Kingdom and the Eyalet of Algiers, political and economic

interests converged, and the Algerian navy dominated the Mediterranean and controlled international shipping. Consequently, there were clashes with the English navy, with many merchants, soldiers and monks being captured and imprisoned in the Eyalet, where they were employed in palaces and various institutions in Algiers. The Mamluks dispatched consuls and ambassadors to protect their interests in the Eyalet, while the Church sent monks and clergy to ransom the captives. Many of these captives converted to Islam and lived freely within Algerian society. Consequently, numerous accounts have been recorded by these individuals in the form of diaries, describing their lives in captivity and in the palaces, as well as the general conditions of Algerian society and the state of the country across various spheres.

This topic examines travel literature in general and European travel literature in particular, as well as its role in writing the history of Ottoman Algeria, focusing on English-language accounts. The study involves identifying the most significant publications according to their type and purpose, and provides details of each source in the form of a book review.

1- Definition of ‘travelogue’:

- **Linguistically:** its linguistic root goes back to the root ‘raḥal’: ‘the man travelled’, ‘his travels were frequent’, ‘the people left the country’; and ‘al-raḥāl’ and ‘al-raḥālah’ refer to one who travels frequently, and it also came to mean the intended destination ((al-Bustani)). Accordingly, the word ‘travel’ (al-riḥlah) implies the necessity of movement and travel from one place to another ((Abadi)). As stated in Lisan al-‘Arab: ‘Al-riḥlah is that which one undertakes as a journey, a departure or a wandering; and his journey from his homeland is what drives him out of it; and he journeyed as a wanderer’(Manazur, 1609) . These are all derivations from the root ‘rahl’, which is directly linked to the act of movement and travelling.

- **Terminologically:** it is the movement of individuals, groups, a family or a tribe from one place to another for a specific purpose; a tribe may move as a result of drought, the destruction of livelihoods, war or persecution, provided that the act of moving takes place between the place of departure and the place of arrival (Ali 1999) , It is also considered a transition from one society to another that differs in customs, traditions and beliefs; it is an important means of discovering the world , and of broadening one’s horizons and diversifying one’s experiences, knowledge and understanding (Fahim, 1990)

2-Types of European Travel Accounts to Algeria:

The motivations for a travel vary from person to person and from country to country, and travellers often document these in the form of diaries containing their impressions, observations and conclusions:

- **The individual or scientific travel:** This type often falls within the category of scientific and exploratory expeditions, which document cultural aspects; an example is the journey of the physician J. Apeyssonnel (1724–1725 CE) (Zain, 2012)¹ , who travelled to North

¹ - Jean-André Pissonnal, a French traveller who travelled through North Africa between 1724 and 1725 AD on a scientific mission to study coral and to continue his research into the plague following its outbreak in Marseille in 1720 AD, wrote a book in which he recorded his important scientific observations alongside an account of the political system in Algeria, He travelled between Oran, Constantine and

Africa to continue his studies on the plague, as well as the journey of L.R. Desfoutcine (1783–1786 AD), who took an interest in plants, flowers and soil fertility; and the travel of the Russian Cyrgorievitch Kokovtsov (1787 AD), undertaken to gather information on the Algerian naval forces and their role within the Ottoman fleet, as well as the extent of cooperation between them (Al-Aziz 1997)².

- **Political travel:** these were undertaken by delegations from European monarchs and governments to assess the situation in a particular country, to identify ways of safeguarding their interests there, and were motivated by political issues common to both countries (Nassar, 1990). These may involve the dispatch of ambassadors, consuls and political envoys, with the aim of improving relations, concluding agreements and treaties, and resolving issues affecting public relations between the two parties, foremost among which is the release of prisoners, or it may involve espionage in preparation for an invasion, and the planning of campaigns, such as the European expeditions to Algeria, for example the expedition of J.B. Salvago³, who came to Algeria to represent the Venetian Senate with the aim of securing the release of prisoners held there, but which ultimately failed.

- **Diplomatic travel:** an official travel undertaken by an individual whilst carrying out their country's diplomatic duties in a foreign state (Al-Andalusi 2002), and is sometimes the result of the ambassador or one of his companions recording their observations and impressions, particularly if they are men of letters or scholars, and learning about everything that is new to them due to the differences between countries and civilisations (Al-Andalusi: 2002). An example of this type is the journey of the Frenchman Jean-Michel Fontaine de Paradi (⁴ Ventur de Paradi) in the year 1788 AD, when he was appointed as assistant to the consul during his negotiations with the Dey Muhammad Osman Pasha in 1789 AD (Bougfala: 2007). He used his spare time to conduct research on Berber culture, and his observations on the population, their rulers, trade and maritime affairs contributed to the preparation of the colonial campaign in North Africa.

The journey of the German scholar Habenstrait in 1732, which he titled ⁵, provided a detailed account of the customs and traditions of the society of the city of Algiers.

Algiers; his work is entitled :A Tale of a Voyage along the Barbary Coast. See: Mohamed Zine, 'A Look at Health Conditions in Ottoman Algeria during the Late Era of the Deys', Al-Wahat Journal of Research and Studies, vol. 17, 2012, University of Sidi Bel Abbès, Algeria, p. 129.

² - An officer in the Russian Navy who fought against the Ottoman fleet in the Mediterranean visited Algeria in 1787 AD; he is the author of a book entitled :Reliable Accounts of Algeria. See: Abdelaziz Boubakir, Russian Journeys to Algeria, Annals of the University of Algiers, 1997, p. 153.

³ - An Italian interpreter, who used to accompany officials to the Levant, came on a mission to North Africa – Tunisia and Algeria – to recover property and prisoners following the campaign carried out by Tunisian and Algerian naval vessels in 1627 AD against the islands belonging to Venice; he stayed there for four months.

⁴ - A French interpreter who worked at several French consulates in the Levant and was awarded a scholarship to study Turkish, Arabic and Latin; he was sent to Algeria in 1788 AD and died of a serious illness in 1799 AD.

⁵ - A German physician and botanist, a native of the town of Neustadt an der Orla, who was well-versed in medicine, rare botanical arts and pharmaceuticals; he enjoyed the trust of the King of Poland, who commissioned him to lead a scientific expedition to investigate the political, social and religious realities

- **Religious travel – propaganda and proselytising:** these were motivated by a spiritual desire to visit holy sites, or to free and ransom captives, such as the travel of Father Pierre Dan⁶, who was commissioned by the Church in North Africa in 1634 to free 42 captives, whom he brought back to France. During this time, he recorded his travel in a work entitled "History of Barbary and its Pirates", which he published in Paris in 1637 AD. In it, he discussed the history of piracy and its spread across Africa, and described the countries and their rulers.

The travel of Francisco Jiménez, who was keen to gather information about Algeria, attempted to build a hospital in Oran and then in Tunis; his diaries, comprising seven volumes preserved in the Library of the Royal Academy of History in Madrid, recount his experiences in Algeria from 1717 to 1720 (Al-Abed: 2007)

- **Compulsory travel :** the traveller is compelled to take a specific route that had not previously crossed his mind, such as being taken captive and finding himself on a forced journey into the unknown, like the travel of Simon Pfeiffer, who was captured in the city of Izmir by the Janissaries⁷ in 1825 AD. He was then transferred to Algiers, where he joined the court of Al-Khaznaji⁸, working first as a cook and later as his personal physician until his release in 1830, after which he returned to Germany. He wrote an account of his travel and published it in 1832 under the title 'My Journey and Five Years of Captivity in Algiers', It is considered one of the most important sources on the modern history of Algeria during the late Ottoman period (Befayer: 2009)

Among the most prominent Spanish figures taken captive in Algeria was Miguel de Cervantes, author of the masterpiece "Don Quixote", who was captured in Istanbul and then transferred to the Eyalet of Algeria, where he remained a prisoner for five years. He recounted his captivity in his book "The Prisons of Algeria and Life in Algeria", and in "Don Quixote".(Amoura: 2009)

And the story of the Spanish prisoner Tedina, who worked as a treasurer in the Baylik of Maskar, having been purchased as a servant by the Bey Muhammad al-Kabeer⁹, who entrusted him with running his household; he remained in his palace for three years. In his memoirs, he recorded a wealth of information about the western region of the Eyalet of Algiers, covering all aspects of society, the most prominent figures in the Western Beylicate, and the inner workings of the royal court (Amoura: 2009)

of North Africa, He aspired to explore the Sahara Desert, reach Senegal and gain an understanding of the African continent. His journey was translated into Arabic by the historian Nasir al-Din Sa'iduni. See: Nasir al-Din Sa'iduni, The travel of the German Scholar J. O. Habenstrait to Algeria, Tunisia and Tripoli, 1145 AH/1732 AD, Dar al-Gharb al-Islami, Tunis, 1st ed., 2008 AD, pp. 12–13.

⁶ - A French historian and abbot of the Monastery of the Holy Trinity

⁷ - Janissaries: a term used to describe a new class of Ottoman soldiers, namely the regular infantry.

⁸ - Al-Khaznaji: or al-Khazandar, appointed by the Dey following approval by the Diwan; he must be educated and qualified to carry out his duties, and serves as the guardian of the treasury

See: Yamina Deryas, The Algerian Railway in the Ottoman Era, Dar al-Hadara, Algiers, 1st ed., 2008, p. 42

⁹ - Bey Muhammad al-Kabir held the office of Bey during the reign of Dey Muhammad Uthman Pasha (1766–1791 AD). He was renowned for his victories over the Spanish and the liberation of the city of Oran by day; he concluded the surrender agreement between Algeria and Spain, and made Oran the capital of the Western Beylicate. See: Ahmeda Amiraoui, Algeria in Travel Literature and Family Chronicles during the Ottoman Era – The Memoirs of Tidina as a Case Study, Dar al-Huda, Algiers, 2009, p. 25

Alongside the account of Emmanuel Daranda, who was taken captive with his companions between 1640 and 1642 AD off the coast of Britain, and Jean Baptiste Gramaye, who was captured in 1619 AD by Algerian sailors and remained in captivity for around six months until he was ransomed, during which he recorded his adventures in Algeria (Sawabi, 2003)

and the sailor João Carvalho Mascarenhas, who remained a prisoner in Algeria for five years, from 1621 to 1626 AD, and took care to recount the years of his captivity in detail (Al-Sabawi, 2003) .

- **Exploratory travel:** these are trips undertaken by lovers of adventure and travel, lasting a considerable length of time, during which the traveller records what they like, what catches their attention, and what differs from their usual experiences in the countries they visit, Among these European travellers who visited Algeria during the Ottoman era, we find at the forefront the famous Spanish traveller Marmol Carvajal¹⁰ , author of the book "Africa" , who accompanied King Charles V's army to Tunisia in 904/1535 AH (Carvajal: 1984) , He travelled throughout North Africa for 22 years. In his account, he referred to the arrival of the Barbarossa brothers in Tunisia and Algeria, the key events and circumstances they faced, the appeals for help made to them by the local population, and the main geographical and social features of certain Algerian cities (Carvajal: 1984)

We also find the account of the Scottish traveller William Lithgow during the 17th century AD (Al-Hamisi, 1981) , alongside the account of the Dutch sailor Logie de Tasse, who visited Algeria in 1685 AD and resided there for five and a half years, and was in direct contact with the reality of the city of Algiers through the consular office; he published his account in 1725, in which he recorded his observations on the political, social and economic reality of the city of Algiers, and spoke of the election of the Dey Muhammad ibn Hasan (1718–1724), the ceremonies of his appointment, and described all the procedures involved

3-Motives behind European interest in writing the history of Ottoman Algeria:

The motives of European travellers for visiting Algeria varied depending on the nature of their journey; they can be summarised as follows:

- **Political motives:** These were two-sided, the first was to strengthen political relations between the two countries, exchange solutions and expertise, and achieve peace by concluding agreements and treaties. The second involved appointing official informants, such as consuls, merchants and ambassadors, as well as unofficial ones, such as spies, travellers, prisoners and people working or residing in the provinces. These informants were tasked with gathering confidential reports, conducting espionage and analysing points of weakness and strength in preparation for invasion or occupation. This predominant aspect characterised European-Algerian-Ottoman relations after their maritime trade in the Mediterranean had been disrupted, as led by France, Spain, Britain and the Netherlands. (Al-Aroui: 1999) , The best example of this is the Spanish captive Miguel de Cervantes, who was ransomed in 1580 AD after five years of captivity in the city of Oran, only to return to Algeria shortly afterwards as an envoy from

¹⁰ - Marmol Carvajal: Born in the early 16th century in Granada, he travelled through North African countries and wrote his famous travelogue, which includes several chapters from Hassan al-Wazzan's book "Description of Africa". See: Marmol Carvajal, "Africa", Vol. 2, translated by Muhammad Hajji et al., Al-Ma'arif al-Jadida Press, Rabat, 1984, pp. 4–5.

the King of Spain to the Governor-General of Oran on a special mission, This was due to his knowledge of the city's conditions, which helped Spain to finalise its plans for the invasion of Algeria (Al-Madani: 1986) , The French officer Boutan¹¹ stayed in Algeria in 1808 as an amateur archaeologist. He was received by Consul Duval and obtained important information beyond the limits permitted to foreigners; he managed to deceive the security forces there and wrote numerous reports that helped organise the French occupation campaign of 1830 (Al-Suleimani: 1994) , This confirms the assertion that 'foreign expeditions to the country were undertaken solely for the purpose of colonial expansion, and that overland or maritime travels, whether directly or indirectly, supported colonial activity, which reached its peak in the nineteenth century'(Fahmi, 1978)

- **Religious motives:** This relates to the captives who came to Algeria as a result of the Mediterranean naval wars; they were sailors, merchants and travellers, and their ransom formed part of the foreign treasury's resources. For this purpose, specialised European organisations were established, such as the Holy Trinity, Our Lady of Mercy and the Decentralised Organisation; these collected funds through contributions from kings and clergy (Atli, 2012) , Numerous European travellers have written on this subject, such as Thomas Hitz, who undertook a mission to ransom 197 Dutch captives, who returned with him aboard two warships (Ali, 2017)

- **Economic motives:** Most European travellers had entered Algeria for the purposes of trade and the exchange of goods, relying on maritime activity which helped them to establish trade links between the Mediterranean states and Algeria. The French were thus able to secure concessions for coral fishing off the eastern coast of Algeria, and to establish a trading company for this purpose, exchanging crops and goods that would generate profits for their country's economy (Al-Tar, 1989) . Following the expansion of the economic base in Europe, this intensified the activity of expeditions aimed at exploration and regional expansion" (Fahmi, 1989)

- **Tourist motivations:** these were travels undertaken for the sake of adventure, a love of travel and exploration, despite the dangerous events in the Mediterranean, foremost among which were the repeated European campaigns against Algeria, such as the Spanish campaign, as well as epidemics and infectious diseases, chief among them the plague and drought. The most prominent traveller was Marmol Carvajal, and William Leithgo (Abar, 1971)

4. English Travel Accounts to Ottoman Algeria:

English travel accounts to Algeria were varied and their purposes differed. Among the most famous political travels were those dating back to the beginning of the Ottoman presence in North Africa and the Algerian navy's control of the Mediterranean. We note that the English government, in its attempt to establish good relations with the ruling regime at the time, sent a number of envoys in the form of consuls and ambassadors. During the first half of the 16th century, most English sources on Algeria were written in Latin, and were subsequently translated into several languages.

Among the accounts by English captives, we find, for example, that in 1542 AD, Sir Nicholas TJyllagon, who was part of Emperor Charles V's army (during his campaign against

¹¹ - Officer Boutan, born in 1772 in Nanant, undertook several espionage missions in Algeria in 1808.

the Turks in the city of Algiers), wrote a deeply moving letter, and insisted that every Christian should read it. This letter describes not only the courage and heroism displayed by him and his army, but also the mysterious hardships they faced in the form of winds and storms, along with many other trials capable of moving even the strongest heart to stand firm against them and pray to God for His help and assistance. This letter was written and sent to Lord Langest. It has been translated from Latin into French and English¹² .

In addition to Sir Thomas Chaloner's journey to Algeria with Charles V in 1541—he was a Knight of Rhodes and a close friend of Sir Henry Knivett, Henry VIII's ambassador to Charles V—there is an account of the campaign against Algiers written by Charles V. This account also contains a brief discourse on the grandeur of the Ottoman Empire, in which he bestows several titles upon the Turks, such as 'the Beylik, the Senzaki and the Timariots', stating: 'The Beylik of ... Caesar (who was then called Julia Caesarea), but now Algiers, where the Beylers still reside, commands the whole of that kingdom, in which there are forty thousand Timariots' (Playfair) .

In the year 1640 AD, the captive K. Jiight, Francis, published K. Jiight, Francis, published an account of seven years' captivity under Turkish rule in Algeria, as endured by a captive English merchant. It contains a description of Algeria, its original system of government, and its economic development at that time, and includes a fascinating account of Karghali's rebellion against the mission of Monsieur de Sanson in the year (Playfair) 1635.

In the year 1642 AD, the captive Henry Robinson published a work entitled "Freedom or Relief for English Captives in Algiers and the Grand Turk", in which he briefly discusses how captives might be released as soon as possible, how others might be safeguarded, and how the Grand Turk might be compelled to accept and maintain peace in order to secure the greatest benefit for trade. (Playfair)

In the same vein, William Davies wrote in 1614 AD a true account of the sufferings of the most wretched families; the author left England on 28 January 1597 and describes Algiers in the second chapter of his journey, and upon his departure from there, his ship, the Francis Saltash, was seized by the ships of the Duke of Livorno, who kept him in slavery for eight years and ten months (Playfair)

As for the exploratory voyage, we find the navigator Hakluyt, E. Richard Hakluyt, Eev. Richard – published in 1599 AD, his account detailing the principal voyages, travels and discoveries undertaken by the English nation by sea or land to the farthest reaches was printed in two volumes in London in 1600 AD (playfair) .

In 1614 AD, William Lithgow wrote a highly entertaining and thoroughly authentic account of an impressive yet harrowing journey from Scotland to the most famous kingdoms of Europe, Asia and Africa. In Part VIII, there is a description of 'the maritime provinces between the Straits and Algiers, and their territories – the English pirate Captain Weir' - on the cities of Tripoli and Algiers and their territories (Playfair) .

¹² - The following is held in the Harleian Library: Playfair, E. Lambert, *A Bibliography of Algeria, From the Expedition of Charles V in 1541 to 1887*, from the 'Supplementary Papers' of the Royal Geographical Society, Vol. 2, Part 2, p. 3

In the year 1678 AD, the account of Joseph Pettis appeared; it is one of the writings of captives who converted to Islam, in which he states: "The Algerians, both men and women, gathered to see me; they were fascinated by my fair hair and red skin, and they would say, 'How beautiful!'" (Fathia: 2021)

As for the literary journey, in the year 1671 AD, the poet Balthorpe I, wrote "Streets' travel account" or The Poem of St David; concerning a campaign to Algiers, a peculiar poem written in dramatic verse about the campaign against Algiers in 1669, under the command of Sir Thomas Allen; The author was aboard the ship St David, flying the flag of Admiral Sir John Harman; Balthorpe had spent a year and a half in captivity.

In 1675, Okeley, William, wrote: Okeley, William – Ebenezer, or A Small Monument to Great Mercy, as Manifested in the Miraculous Deliverance of William Okeley, William Adams, John Anthony, John Gieves and John Carpenter from the Miserable Bondage of Algiers, with Another Narrative by James Dean and Others. (Playfair)

In the realm of women's literature, in 1808 Maria Martin published her diary of her time in Algeria; she had spent five years in the province of Ténès as a captive following the shipwreck of the vessel on which she was travelling in 180 AD. She spoke of the character of the inhabitants of the city of Ténès, saying: "Most of the inhabitants of Ténès are of local origin; they are dark-skinned, lazy, inclined to idleness, suspicious, ... liars ... and jealous..." (Fathia: 2021)

In the religious travel literature, we find the writings of Samuel Purchas, which were dominated by religious and racial prejudice. The most significant of these is the book "The Pilgrimage of Purchas" from 1613 AD, in which he attacked North Africa despite never having visited it, saying: 'The inhabitants are monsters, thieves, ignoramuses, ... and they hate one another,' (Fathia: 2021)

As for the political travel—which predominates in English writings on the Ottoman Empire—this was undertaken by figures appointed by the English Crown to monitor relations between the two countries and to gain first-hand knowledge of Ottoman rule in Algeria, its relationship with the population, customs, traditions, geography, and so on.

Here, we must not overlook the journey of Thomas Shaw¹³ Thomas Shaw, the greatest English traveller in North Africa during the 18th century; he spent 12 years (1720–1732) travelling between Tunisia, Algeria, Egypt, Palestine, Jordan and Syria, gathering a wide range of information; he was keen to delve deeply into every detail, recording his observations and corresponding with scholars and the Royal Society, of which he was a member. After his travels, he returned to England, settled in Oxford and died there in 1751. He compiled all his findings into a single volume, the first edition of which was published in English in 1738 under the title "Travels or Observations Relating to Several Parts of Barbary and the Levant". He subsequently added further information to it, resulting in the book's revised title: "A Supplement to a Book Entitled Travels or: Observations &c. wherein some Objections lately

¹³ - Thomas Shaw: of English origin, born in 1692, he obtained a Bachelor of Arts degree in 1719 AD; he served as a clergyman at the British legation in Algiers between 1720 and 1732 AD, Thomas Shaw, *Voyage dans la Régence d'Alger, ou description géographique, physique et philologique*, translated by J. McCarthy, published by Wrlui, Paris, 1830, p. 5

made against it, are fully considered and answered with several additional Remarks and Dissertations", published in 1746 in London. The book was translated into several languages; it was first published in French in The Hague in 1743, under the title "Voyages de Monsr. Shaw, dans plusieurs provinces de la Barbarie et du Levant contenant des observations géographiques, physiques, philologiques et mêlées sur les royaumes d'Alger et de Tunis, sur la Syrie, l'Egypte, et l'Arabie Pétrée. Avec des cartes et des figures", in two volumes, in 1830 AD; it was subsequently translated by John McCarthy (J. Mac. Carthy, under the title "In the Regency of Algiers, or a Geographical, Physical, Philological, etc., Description of that State by Dr Shaw". It was also translated into German in 1765 and into Dutch in 1773. (Murad Taghnant, Muhammad Zargouq: 2023)

Overall, the book consists of eight chapters, the first of which deals with Algeria, bringing together a collection of observations on social, economic and cultural life, as well as nature, climate and geography...etc., under the title 'Geographical Observations Relating to the Kingdom of Algiers'; it appears he travelled extensively throughout the country, discussing Algerian society and its relationships, its natural environment, and the flora and fauna found there, and described a number of cities such as Constantine, Tlemcen, Oran, Chlef, Djerdjura and Annaba. He also drew a map of Ottoman Algeria, marking the most important landmarks and borders, particularly those of the Eastern Beylicate¹⁴ of Constantine. (Shaw)

- The importance of European writings in the history of modern Algeria:

- The numerous travels entail a variety of travellers across different time periods, as well as diversity in their purposes and literary styles—sometimes employing description, at other times narration—which embody a precision of observation that varies from one traveller to another, alongside objectivity and the ability to describe and record with attention to detail.

- European writings on Algeria during the 17th and 18th centuries were neither planned nor deliberate, as they consisted of daily diaries kept by prisoners, or by diplomatic representatives such as consuls, ambassadors and clergymen, as well as travellers settled in Algeria, whose observations took on great significance during the preparation for military campaigns and the occupation (Fathia: 2021)

- European expeditions have taken on great significance in the writing of Algeria's history, owing to the geographical, economic, social, military, urban and religious knowledge they contain...etc., given that the traveller records events whilst at the heart of the action, free from preconceptions based on doubts and conjecture, thus conveying reality with honesty and scientific rigour (Dodo,)

- These writings are characterised by the fact that their authors had no connection to the political aspects of local authority, nor did they have any material interests in the country they visited. This is evident in the letters and writings of prisoners, particularly those who were in direct contact with the local population; their works provided a clear depiction of the people's suffering. In them, we find a certain irony and a challenge to religious teachings and beliefs,

¹⁴ - Constantine is the capital of the Eastern Algerian Beylik, the largest province in terms of area and population density. It is characterised by its strategic location, serving as a crossroads for trade caravans travelling between the north and south, and the east and west.

portraying Algeria as a den of piracy and brutality, as exemplified by Simon Pfeiffer, who worked in the palace of Bey Muhammad the Great.

- European accounts were characterised by diversity in their treatment of all situations and the various circumstances in which they lived in Algeria; they consisted of testimonies with documented descriptions, accurate statistics, lists of rulers and direct analyses of events.

- European writings were divided between positive and negative accounts; they depicted the beauty of nature, the simplicity of the people, the peace that prevailed in daily life, and the historical and cultural landmarks of society, thereby opening the door for those interested in travel and adventure to visit Algeria, whilst the writings of those who ransomed prisoners consistently painted a grim picture of the prisoners' reality there. Among them was Father Dan, who was the most hostile of the clergy towards Muslims; he interpreted the prisoners' conversion to Islam as stemming from a loss of reason and wisdom, which often drove them to seek freedom through this act () , Given that their faith was under threat, the Church waged wars to save their lives, based on testimonies from clergymen () There was mockery and derision of customs and traditions, which portrayed Algeria as a nation suffering from a cultural void.

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