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Historical and Archaeological Study of Tlemcen Al-Ziyaniya a Brief Presentation on the Restoration of Some of its Archaeological Monuments- the Royal Palace “Al-Mashwar is a Model” –

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Abstract

The status of nations is gauged by the extent to which they have contributed to progress and civilization. Under Islam, which extended its conquests from India in the east to the Atlantic Ocean in the west, this contribution became more comprehensive and profound. Open countries had already possessed a scientific and artistic civilization, yet Islamic civilization enriched it with inspiration in its arts, dominated by Islamic spirit. The successive Islamic states left behind a material civilization and enduring relics that unequivocally indicate their greatness, magnified by the greatness of Islam that unified them. Historians of civilization rely on their knowledge of the conditions and customs of nations, their advancements, sophistication, daily lives, as well as their architectural, industrial, and artistic skills, all based on the artifacts and remains left by those nations. Islamic civilization, in this regard, possesses from its architectural and artistic heritage, solid facts that constitute a rich record of the progress and prosperity of Islamic society. Muslims bequeathed to us various religious, civil, military, and social structures, in addition to numerous artifacts and arts mastered by Muslims, attaining levels of refinement and perfection, such as sculpture, painting, metalworking, textiles, woodworking, glassmaking, and so forth. This is indeed what came to us from the Zayyanids in Tlemcen and the entire Maghreb region, through one particular example we have chosen, a model of creativity and the spirit of Islamic palaces, exemplified by the Almoravid palace "Qal'at al-Mashur".

Keywords: The city of Tlemcen, the Zayyanids dynasty, Al-Mashur palace, the Maghreb, civilization

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introduction:

The city of Tlemcen is one of the historically significant cities deeply rooted in Islamic history and one of the oldest cities in western Algeria. It still preserves important archaeological remnants that bear witness to a period of its Islamic history. Therefore, it is considered the cradle of Islamic civilization and a beacon of knowledge, history, and material and immaterial art.

Today, we present one of its magnificent palaces, where restoration work was carried out as part of the Tlemcen, Capital of Islamic Culture event. This coincided with the excavation of Aghadir and Mansoura, with each project assigned to researchers from the National Center for Archaeological Research. Some appendices from the National Office for the Management and Exploitation of Cultural Properties and archaeology students from Tlemcen University were also involved in the research. Through this archaeological excavation, the history of Tlemcen's palaces was unveiled.

We have been chosen for the excavation of the M'shawar Fortress, which still conceals a wealth of historical information and data. This necessitates further excavations to unveil the secrets of this historical monument. Our goal is to achieve results that contribute to the field of archaeological research, while also preserving and valorizing the archaeological heritage. We aim to gather all the archaeological information, including plans, forms, images, and historical investigations, to create a repository in the scientific archives. This will enable us to extract information from it in cases of absence or obliteration of the monument.

What are its secrets? What are its aesthetic and architectural foundations? All of these aspects will be covered in our forthcoming article through a series of informative and sequential explanations.

1-Geographical Location of the City of Tlemcen:

The city of Tlemcen is situated below a mountainous massif, overlooking it from the south. It consists of ranges that extend from the southeast to the northeast. To the north of the city lies the fertile Hennaya plain, which meets the Moulouya plain to the west. To the east, it extends through Tafna, connecting the city to the sea via the mountain range known as the "Seven Saints." Tlemcen is among the finest cities in northwestern North Africa and serves as a major crossroads between the east and west, as well as between the north and south. It is located at an altitude of approximately 830 meters above sea level and is about 60 kilometers away from the coast (Ibn Al-Ahmar, Abu Al-Walid, 2001, pp. 17-18) (Bouaziz Yahia, 2003, p. 34). It is approximately 700 kilometers away from the capital city of Algiers and is in close proximity to the Algerian-Moroccan border. It is situated in the northwestern part of Algeria, bordered to the north by the Mediterranean Sea, to the south by the state of Naâma, to the east by the states of Aïn Témouchent and Sidi Bel Abbès, and to the west by the farthest region of Morocco. The area falls between the longitudes of 1° and 2° west and the latitudes of 33° and 35° north. Tlemcen is the only city that combines both hill and desert landscapes (Chaouch El-Hadj Ben Ramdane, 1995, p. 25). It is composed of four mountain ranges that are almost parallel, arranged from south to north, which include:

1.1 - Ténouchfi Mountain Range:

This mountain range reaches its highest peak at 1483 meters and overlooks the cave where the city of Sbendou is located, approximately 17 miles south of Tlemcen.

1.2 - Bani Ismail Mountain Range:

This mountain range overlooks the cave extending from the village of Ouled Maimoun in the east to Sbendou in the west. It consists of 12 peaks that appear from a distance like majestic sitting ghosts gazing at Sbendou.

1.3 - Ras El Aasfour Mountain Range:

This mountain range is crowned by its highest peak at 1566 meters and overlooks the plain where the city of Oujda is located, near the Algerian-Moroccan border (Amr Al-Tammar, Mohammed, 1984, p. 110).

1.4 - Laâlssa Mountain Range:

Reaching its highest peak at 1306 meters, this mountain range overlooks the city of Tlemcen, located on its northern slope. From this plateau, a spring called El Fawara gushes forth with abundant water.

The city of Tlemcen is surrounded by fertile plains on all four sides, known for the quality of their soil and their abundant fertility. The most famous among them are two: El Hartoun, located in the southeast between the fortress and Al-'Abbad, and Al-Minia, located in the north (Ibn Khaldun, Yahya Abu Zakariya, 2007, p. 40). Tlemcen also enjoys a unique climate, with moderate temperatures even in the summer, as the desert's toxic winds do not affect it. However, the cold is intense in winter due to its elevation above sea level. In autumn, the temperature remains high until late September, and the weather only cools down for a short period in October. It starts to drop significantly with the arrival of November. The best days in Tlemcen are during spring, characterized by mild weather. The annual rainfall is estimated at 670 mm, sometimes accompanied by snow in winter. This led people to construct dams and dig wells for water storage. Among its famous rivers are three: Wadi Tafna, which springs from the surface of Mount Merchich, located south of the village of Tirni, but is not suitable for navigation, and the other two are Wadi Al-Khamis and Wadi Yassar (Ibn Khaldun, Yahya Abu Zakariya, 2007, p. 15).

Tlemcen has five gates: Qibla Gate, located to the west, Bab Al-Jiyad; to the east, Bab Al-'Aqaba; to the north, Bab Al-Halwi and Bab Al-Qarmadine; and to the west, Bab Kushut. The city is composed of two merged cities enclosed by a single wall (Amr Al-Tammar, Mohamed, 1984, p. 33).

2-A Historical Overview of the City of Tlemcen:

Tlemcen was initially founded by the rulers of the Banu Ifran tribe from Zenata in the early centuries. Its original name was Akkadhir, a Zenati word meaning "rock with rugged slopes," overlooking the fertile plain that it dominated. It later became known as Tlemcen in the late 2nd century and the beginning of the 3rd century AH (8th-9th century CE). There have been various interpretations of the meaning of the word Tlemcen among historians. It is an Arabic word, and some suggest it means "a gathering of two," while others argue that its original name was Tlemseen, derived from "thelmat," meaning "an eye" or "a water spring." It is also known as the

"City of the Wall" or "Al-Hait" because it was fortified, surrounded by walls, which indicates its antiquity (Ibn Khaldun, Yahya Abu Zakariya, 2007, p. 11). It is a city deeply rooted in history, with evidence of human settlement from ancient times. Caves such as Boudghen, Bohanaq, and Kifan, as well as hidden dwellings, attest to its long-standing habitation (Brahmi Nasreddine and Sidi Neqqadi Mohamed, 2010, p. 9). Tlemcen is mentioned in historical sources that document its development and the events that took place in the region. According to Mohamed Amr Al-Tammar in his book "Tlemcen throughout the Ages," Tlemcen experienced Roman occupation by Berber tribes, during which it was called "City of Pomaria." It served as a connecting point between the farthest west of Morocco and the central Maghreb. After the Romans, the Byzantines arrived and implemented a policy of isolating the local population, which led to a rebellion against them (Amr Al-Tammar, Mohamed, 1984, p. 33).

1-2- Roman Period:

During the Roman conquest of North Africa, Tlemcen, then known as Pomaria, was not a significant city but rather a military outpost. Its name, derived from the Berber word "Akkadir," meaning gardens, reflects its location in the area known as Akkadhir.

2-2- Arab Conquests and the Era of Governors:

The first Arab conqueror to set foot in Tlemcen was Abu Al-Muhajir Dinar, a freedman of Musa ibn Nusair, who was appointed by Caliph Muawiyah as the governor of Egypt and Africa. Abu Al-Muhajir and his troops marched towards Tlemcen around 55 AH/675 CE, engaging in a fierce battle against Kusayla Al-Orbi Al-Barnsi. The battle ended with Abu Al-Muhajir's victory in the Wadi Yassar north of Tlemcen. Later, Uqba ibn Nafi Al-Fihri led his troops to Tlemcen and briefly occupied the city. However, Tlemcen came under the control of the governors of Kairouan, who ruled the region on behalf of the Umayyad caliph in Damascus until 132 AH/750 CE, and later the Abbasid caliph in Baghdad. Among the governors was Musa ibn Nusair, who conquered Tlemcen in 134 AH/752 CE. The city remained under his rule until Abu Qurra Al-Yafrani seized it during the 3rd century AH/9th century CE and established the Emirate of Sefra. (El-Hajj Ben Ramdane, Mohammed, 1995, pp. 53-54) (Amr Al-Tammar, Mohamed, 1984, p. 24)

In 148 AH/766 CE, two Zenata tribes, the Banu Ifran and the Maa'ila, rose against the governors of Kairouan in Tlemcen after embracing the Kharijite sect and pledged allegiance to Abu Qurra Al-Yafrani for his leadership. However, his rule did not last long, and power shifted to the Banu Khazar, a Zenata tribe. Among them was Mohammed ibn Khazar Al-Maghrawi, who eventually handed over Tlemcen to Idris ibn Abdullah, the ruler of the farthest Morocco. (Ibn al-Athir ibn Ahmed ibn Abu al-Karam, 1999, p. 76).

2.3- Idrisid Period:

Idris ibn Abdullah Al-Hasani entered Tlemcen without resistance, as it was handed over to him by Mohammed ibn Khazar Al-Maghrawi. Idris sought refuge in Tlemcen, fleeing from the persecution of the Abbasid caliphs. He arrived in Tlemcen with his armies and was met by

Mohammed ibn Khazar Al-Maghrawi, who pledged allegiance to him and handed over the city without resistance. Tlemcen became under Idris's authority, and he continued his conquests in the central Maghreb. He later returned to the farthest Morocco and remained there until the caliph Harun al-Rashid sent an assassin to kill him in the year 794 CE. (Dhina, Amar, 1986, p. 83).

2.4- Almoravid and Almohad Periods:

The Almoravids were able to expand their influence in the Maghreb and Al-Andalus between 1050 CE and 1147 CE. They captured Tlemcen in 1070 CE. The name "Almoravids" refers to their role as reformers and their practice of wearing veils. Historians point out that the true founder of the Almoravid state was Yusuf ibn Tashfin, who seized Aqadir in 1070 CE and established his rule in the city of Tagrart. The selection of its location was not a coincidence but rather due to its distinctive geographical position. The city was situated at an elevation of 800 meters, overlooking the vast plain of Hennaya. This led people to build their homes around the seat of power, elevating the city's status and increasing its population (Belhaj Marouf, 1999-2000, p. 23).

During the reign of Ali ibn Yusuf ibn Tashfin, who followed in his father's footsteps after his death, he maintained close relations with scholars and jurists. They took advantage of the opportunity and labeled the study of theology as heresy, convincing Prince Ali to burn the books of Al-Ghazali, which posed a threat to their authority. They also debased the dinar by using gold and dirhams, and the qarats and dang were debased with silver.

Among the archaeological landmarks that Prince Ali ibn Yusuf ibn Tashfin ordered to be built is the Grand Mosque, and its minaret was later constructed by Yaghmurasen, the founder of the Zayyanid dynasty in the 7th century AH/13th century CE. It is considered the oldest and most ancient mosque in Tlemcen, located in the Aqadir area, which is the oldest residential settlement in the city (Belhaj Marouf, 1999-2000, p. 08).

Due to the weakness that the Almoravid state experienced in the late days of Ali ibn Yusuf ibn Tashfin, the Almohads seized many of its territories. In these circumstances, a man named Muhammad ibn Tumart appeared in Marrakech, the founder of the Almohad state in the farthest Morocco. He was deeply influenced by the teachings of the Ash'ari school of thought and also by the theological theories of Al-Ghazali, which were prevalent in the East and reached the Maghreb (Amrou Al-Tammar Mohammed, 1984, p. 44). After meeting with Abd al-Mu'min ibn Ali, who hailed from the Qomah tribe located on the coast of Nadoroma in the Tlemcen province, the two of them were determined to combat corruption and set out for the Maghreb. When the students of Tlemcen heard about Ibn Tumart, they sent for him, and he left "Malala" in the company of Abd al-Mu'min until they reached Tlemcen. They settled in Aqadir, and Ibn Tumart focused on teaching and established the Rabat al-'Ibadah (Association of Worshipers) in 515 AH, attracting students and tribes to join him (Faraj Abdulaziz, 2011, p. 147).

2.5- Zayyanid and Marinid Periods:

When the power of the Almohad state in Morocco weakened, it paved the way for another state that would witness glory and splendor, known as the Zayyanid state. Discussing this state leads us to talk about its ruling dynasty, known as the Banu Abd al-Wad. Sultan Yaghmurasen was the first king of the Banu Abd al-Wad in Tlemcen. He made it the capital of his kingdom and was pledged allegiance by his people in 1236 CE. He remained on the throne for 48 years and a few months, during which Tlemcen reached the peak of its prosperity, power, and urban development (Amrou Al-Tammar Mohammed, 1984, pp. 51-52). Othman ibn Yaghmurasen, also known as Abu Said, established trade relations with the Kingdom of Aragon in 1286 CE and with some French cities like Montpellier. He passed away in 1304 CE in the midst of the lengthy siege imposed on the city by the Marinids. He was succeeded by Abu Musa I in 1318 CE, who managed to quickly restore the city's cultural and economic standing. He established the Kasbah neighborhood, designated for the hostages brought from various journeys (Salem Abdulaziz, 1990, p. 70).

Abu Tashfin Abd al-Rahman I (1318 CE - 1337 CE) was known for his passion for the art of architecture. He was the one who commissioned the royal arm placed at Bab Al-Qaysariyya, and he had several architectural projects built under his command. As for Abu Hamu Musa II (1359 CE - 1389 CE), he revived the Zayyanid state after the Marinid rule that lasted for 22 years. He quickly regained control over the entire territory in a short period of time. He also had notable works in the fields of urban development and culture. Abu al-Abbas Ahmed al-Aqil (1462 CE) constructed the Mashur Wall in 1446 CE to prevent rebels from reaching the seat of power. The Sultan al-Mutawakkil came after the end of Abu al-Abbas' rule in 1462 CE. His position was later succeeded by his nephew, Prince Muhammad ibn Thabit, known as al-Mutawakkil, after his death in 1485 CE. The state began to weaken and dissolve, and animosities and grudges spread. Khair al-Din Pasha called for the complete elimination of Tlemcen, along with their Spanish protectors, in 1555 CE. Tlemcen was subsequently incorporated into the emerging Ottoman Empire in Algeria (Amrou Al-Tammar Mohammed, 1984, p. 85).

Among the archaeological landmarks that date back to this period is the Mosque of Awlad al-Imam, which was ordered to be built by Abu Hamu Musa I around 710 AH / 1311 CE. It was added to the old school, and there is an open corner for foreign students. There is also the Jame' Sidi Ibrahim al-Masamoudi, which was constructed by Abu Hamu Musa II in 765 AH / 1363 CE. Outside the western gate of the mosque is the well-known Rouwda Mosque, and the name of the Tabboul Bath was mentioned in a document issued by Abu Hamu Musa II. The Karmadine Gate, with its smooth appearance and its distinctive reddish color, represented a formidable and tall barrier and symbolized the residence of one of the royal dynasties that ruled Tlemcen. The gate protected the old palace, which Yaghmurasen relocated to the Mashur area.

The Tachfiniya School was built by the order of Abu Hamu Musa I (717 AH / 1316 CE to 728 AH / 1327 CE) next to the Great Mosque as a tribute to the jurist Abu Musa Imran Meshdalli. The school maintained its overall structure until the period of occupation (Ibn Khaldun, Abd al-Rahman, 1999, page 197). The Yakoubiya School was founded by Sultan Abu Hamu Musa II in honor of his father Abu Yakoub in 760 AH / 1358 CE. Historians praised its splendor, beauty,

and architectural excellence. The construction of the school took more than a year and a half, and it was completed in 763 AH / 1363 CE. Abu Hamu Musa II designated this school as an annex to a corner and cemetery dedicated to the burial of the kings of Tlemcen. As for the Mosque of Mashur, it was established on a leveled ground by Abu Hamu Musa I on a date from 517 AH / 1123 CE to February 1124 CE. It is worth noting that it was built after the construction of the fortress by approximately a century.

The Awlad al-Imam School, on the other hand, is the first school constructed in the central Maghreb region. It was ordered to be built by Sultan Abu Hamu Musa I in 710 AH / 1310 CE as a tribute to the brothers Abu Abdul Rahman (743 AH / 1342 CE) and Abu Musa (749 AH / 1348 CE). Its origin is from the city of Borchek, located west of the Mosque of Awlad al-Imam. Only the small mosque remains from it. As for the markets, there is the Blacksmiths and Copper Tools Market, and the Dyers Market located east of the city. Such markets can be found dispersed in various neighborhoods of Tlemcen, such as Souiqa Ismail, Seradjine, Qubabine, Manshar, and Kutub (Bouaziz Yahia, 2003, page 34) (Ibn al-Athir ibn Ahmad ibn Abi al-Karam, 1999, pages 17-18).

As for the Casbah, it consists of a group of buildings that include workshops, commercial stores, industrial workshops, and warehouses. Sometimes, there are residential quarters above the shops, and it also houses hotels over a large area in the center of Tlemcen, near the Mashur. The Casbah is surrounded by a wall with several gates and towers. There are also kilns for pottery, ceramics, and tiles outside the city walls, especially in the northwest near Bab al-Qarmadin and in the southeast in front of Bab al-Aqaba (Filali Abd al-Aziz, 2002, pages 141-147).

Before Abu al-Hasan al-Marrakeshi entered Tlemcen, the city endured a tremendous siege of 8 years by Abu Ya'qub al-Mansur, who failed to conquer it. However, Abu al-Hasan al-Marrakeshi succeeded in entering the city after besieging it for two years, on Wednesday, 27th of Ramadan, 737 AH (April 29, 1337 CE). Sultan Abu Tashfin died in battle, defending his harem, palace, his sons, and his minister Musa ibn Ali al-Qari (Fraj Abdulaziz, 2011, p. 149) (Ibn Khaldun Abdul Rahman, 1999, p. 40). Thus, Tlemcen fell into the hands of the Marinids, who had dreamt of occupying it. Abu Yusuf bin Ya'qub also attacked Tlemcen in 1290-1291 CE, but the city resisted, and he withdrew his army. He was succeeded by Abu Said Uthman and then his eldest son, Abu al-Hasan ibn Ali, who was the Marinid Sultan ruling over the Islamic Maghreb from 13 to 16 CE. He was known for his noble character, keen understanding, and sharp intellect (Filali Abdulaziz, 2002, p. 139) (Bouaziz Yahia, 2003, p. 37).

Among the Merinid archaeological landmarks, we find the Mosque of Abu al-Hasan, which was built in the year 696 AH (1297 CE) by the order of Abu Said Uthman ibn Yaghmurasen, to honor him as he was one of the most distinguished scholars of his time, pious and revered. The mosque has faced various challenges during the colonial period, as it was converted into a warehouse for wine, then used for animal feed, before finally being transformed into a school and eventually a museum (Amr al-Tammar Muhammad, 1984, p. 125).

Regarding the Sidi Al-Banna Mosque, located in the Kharrāzīn Market or Leather Tanning Market, it dates back to the 9th century. It was ordered to be built by Abdulwahid Abu Malik ibn Musa in 15 CE and underwent repairs and restorations not too long ago. It is attributed to Sidi Al-Banna (Ibn Sanusi Al-Ghouti, 1990, p. 356). Another notable mosque is the Sheikh Sanusi Mosque, constructed during the reign of Abdullah Muhammad ibn Abu Tashfin ibn Ali Thabit from 1485 to 1496 CE. It is located in the Berradain Market above the entrance of the Msofa Path. It has a distinct feature of being a multi-story building, indicating renovations and restorations that have taken place. It is attributed to Sheikh Sanusi, the Imam and scholar Sheikh Muhammad ibn Yusuf Al-Sanusi, who passed away in 895 AH (1492 CE) (Filali Abdulaziz, 2002, p. 145). As for the Sidi Al-Haloui Mosque, it is situated outside the walls of Tlemcen in the northeast. It was built by the Marinid Sultan Abu Anan Fares in 754 AH (1353 CE) and is attributed to the righteous man and Sufi scholar Abu Abdullah Al-Shawdhi, who was nicknamed Al-Haloui due to his occupation of making and selling sweets to children. He passed away in 737 AH (1337 CE). Lastly, the Sidi Boumedién Mosque was ordered to be built by Sultan Abu al-Hasan al-Marinid in 739 AH (1339 CE), as indicated by the inscription on the first panel after it suffered a fire. The dome was restored by the Turkish artist Sar Mashik in 1793 CE, under the command of Muhammad Bey of Oran (Filali Abdulaziz, 2002, p. 145).

As for the tomb of the princess, it was located in the heart of the old city of Tlemcen, known as "Taghart," overlooking the Archers' Square. The tomb was constructed by the hands of Abdulwahid Abu Malik ibn Musa in the year 1410 CE. The Mansoura Mosque, on the other hand, is the second largest mosque in the Arab Maghreb, with an estimated area of 500 square meters. It was built by the Marinids, and it is surrounded by a channel of fresh water. It consists of 164 pillars and columns, supporting 226 arches and featuring 13 gates for entry into this unique mosque. As for the Bab al-Zir Mosque, it has undergone renovations and still serves as a place for the five daily prayers to this day.

The Sidi Al-Haloui School was established by the order of Sultan Abu Anan Al-Marinid in the year 754 AH (1348 CE). He was Ali ibn Amir ibn Yusuf Ya'qub ibn Abd al-Haq Al-Marinid. It is located at an elevation of 9,071.69 square kilometers in westernmost Morocco (Shawsh Al-Hajj Ben Ramadan Muhammad, 1995, p. 255). As for the Al-Khaldouniya School, it was constructed by Sultan Abu Al-Hasan ibn Ali in the year 1347 CE. As for Bab al-Khamis or Bab al-Jaysh, it was an idea of the Marinids, who built it to commemorate their victory over Tlemcen. The construction of Bab al-Khamis was carried out by the French authorities after their occupation, and it was named "Bab Fes." It is located below the prayer hall to the left of the Tlemcen-Maghnia Road. The building is made of adobe and has a height of 9 meters (Filali Abdulaziz, 2002, p. 147).

2.6 - The Ottoman Period:

During the 10th century AH (16th century CE), the Ottoman Empire reached the peak of its power through its victories and the acquisition of territories. Two great naval commanders emerged during this period: Aruj and his brother Khair ad-Din Pasha (Farraj Abdulaziz, 2011, pp. 265-283) (Al-Maqari Ahmed, 2000, pp. 154-157). They played a significant role in

liberating Algeria from Spanish occupation. At the time, Tlemcen was ruled by Andak Abu Hamu III with the support of the Spanish. Aruj came to their rescue and headed to Tlemcen in 1517, where he was welcomed by its inhabitants. Sultan Abu Hamu III fled to Oran (Shawsh Al-Hajj Ben Ramadan Muhammad, 1995, p. 100). Later, he returned to Algeria after seizing the throne and incited the supporters of the deposed Sultan and the Spanish, leading to a conflict between Aruj and Abu Hamu III. The Spaniards managed to eliminate Aruj in the Battle of Wadi Mouilah in 1518. However, the people of Tlemcen revolted with the assistance of Sultan Ahmed al-Zayani and attempted to eliminate the rebels. But their power struggle paved the way for opportunists, and Hassan Agha quickly moved to occupy Tlemcen in 1545. The Turks did not enter Tlemcen on their own initiative but rather through the betrayal of its inhabitants, who conspired with the Beni Zian family against the ruling power. However, the rule of the Turks was no less oppressive than that of the Beni Zian and the Spanish, causing the population of Tlemcen to suffer from the behavior of the Turkish troops. This led to the migration of many Tlemcen residents. However, over time, the people of Tlemcen rose up against the Turks and expelled them from their land, making Algeria a unified and independent territory until the arrival of French colonization. Finally, the city of Tlemcen fell under French rule in 1836, and it underwent several architectural transformations. It is worth mentioning the complete demolition of the ancient Agadir Mosque and the surrounding Islamic landmarks, as this mosque was the oldest one cared for by the Adrissi dynasty (Al-Bitar Aziz Samih, 1989, p. 61).

3-Examples of Monuments that Underwent Restoration:

One of the significant monuments that underwent restoration is the Mosque of Sidi Ibrahim al-Masmoudi. The restoration work took place from 1994 to 2005 and included the entire mosque and extended to the shrine. Separate ablution areas were added on the north side of the mosque, and some doors were closed, eliminating two rooms that were situated between the shrine and the mosque, as indicated by the restoration plans. The most extensive restoration work focused on reinforcing the foundations of the mosque using reinforced cement beams that reached the solid bedrock (Jilali, Abdelrahman, page 79).

2.3 - Shrine of Sidi Abi Medin:

The first restoration work on the shrine was ordered by Muhammad al-Kabir Pasha of Oran in 1208 AH/1739 CE during the Turkish period. The inscription in the entrance indicates that the Ottoman engineer, Ben Sarr Mashiq, adorned various parts of the shrine. In November 1994, the shrine suffered from a devastating fire that destroyed much of its landmarks and decorations. Afterward, extensive restoration work took place, starting in 1996 with specialized architectural restoration workshops. The restoration efforts continued until 2001, in coordination with local authorities and the archaeological department of Tlemcen. These operations covered several aspects, including the restoration of the interior decoration of the shrine chamber to its original state, using specialized laboratories and craftsmen in the field of gypsum decoration. It is said that most of them came from the farthest regions of Morocco (Amr Al-Tammar, 1984, page 236) (Abdulaziz Filali, 2002, page 145) (Ibn Maimun, Muhammad al-Jazairi, 1981, page 135).

3.3 - The M'shawar Castle:

The M'shawar Castle is located at the highest point in the city center, surrounded by a latitude of 34° north and 10° south. It sits at an elevation of approximately 806 meters above sea level. The castle is a rectangular structure measuring around 200m by 150m. It was originally established by Yaghmurasan at the location he chose when besieging the city of Agadir in 1145 CE. Initially, it served as a residence for the rulers of the Almoravids, and later the Almohads inhabited it. Its fate changed with the arrival of the Zayyanid authority, as Yaghmurasan made it his residence. According to Alfred Baille and George Marçais, he moved from the palace to the Mashur Castle due to his annoyance by the muezzins who could see into his harem from the top of the minaret of the Great Mosque. This is because the castle was built on a low hill, which did not allow for overseeing the city, and it became increasingly difficult to monitor the city with buildings obstructing the view, such as the minaret and the Qaysariyya (Belhaj Marouf, 2002, page 145).

The M'shawar Castle currently occupies an area of 3 hectares. It has two gates. The first gate, called "Al-Twayta," is oriented towards the qibla (direction of prayer) and serves as an exit from the castle to the outside of the city. It may have been specifically for those dealing with the royal palace. The second gate is located on the western side and opens towards the city. It is considered the main gate and is named after the castle itself, known as the Mashur Gate. It was previously called "Al-Rahba," the name of the area it opens onto (Ibn Khaldun, Yahya Abu Zakariya, 2007, page 130).

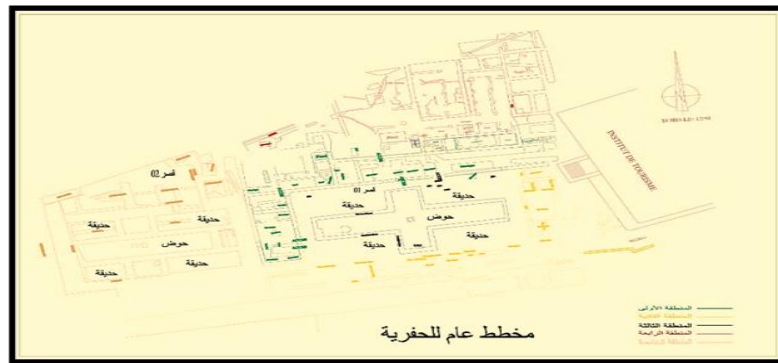
image 01: South Gate: Twita Gate



By the Researcher

The M'shawar Castle is situated on the southern edge of the city center and is strategically located at the intersection of major roads and prominent cultural sites. To the north, it is bordered by the commercial center, market, and Qaysariyya. To the west, there is the cultural center, and to the east, there is the educational hub represented by the two major high schools in the city center: Mashur High School and Maliha Hamidou High School (Brahmi Nasr al-Din and Sidi Nekkadi Mohammed, 2010, page 61). Please refer to the provided diagram (Diagram 01) for a visual representation of the layout.

Figure 01: Facilities of M'shawar Castle through explanations about the excavation

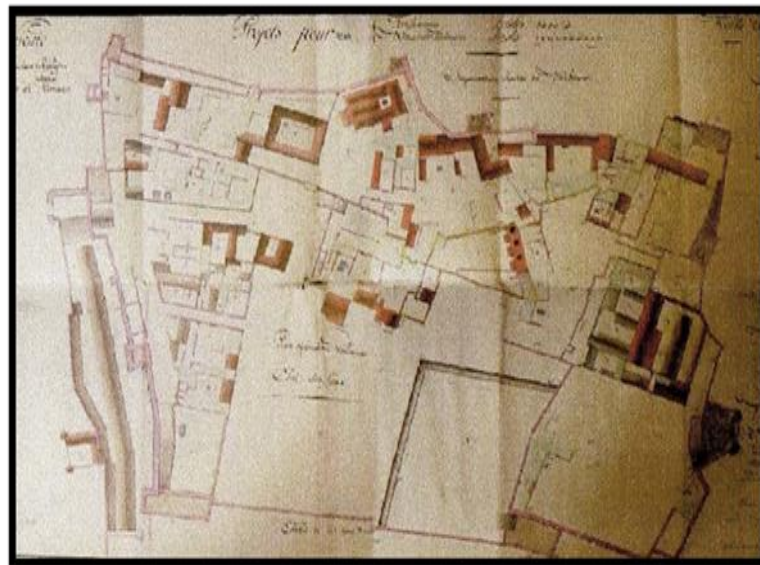


The Research Department of the Directorate of Culture for the Province of Tlemcen.

The name M'ashur refers to a castle built by Abd al-Mu'min, which held significant importance in the lives of the people of Tlemcen, politically, socially, and culturally. It served as the seat of power during the Zayyanid dynasty and also functioned as a place of confinement for rebels. The surrounding walls were a creation of Abu Ahmed Amin al-Zayyani, reaching a height of 13 meters. The castle was inhabited by court officials and foreign princes. It hosted the meetings of the kings of Tlemcen with their ministers, which led to it being named 'Mashur.' Initially, Abd al-Mu'min resided in the old palace of Tlemcen Alia Takarrart. Later, he decided to construct a new residence befitting the status of kings and in accordance with the traditions of Muslim sultans. He chose a location in the south of the city and built a palace, which is known as M'shawar Castle or Qasbah al- M'shawar. Its construction took place where Yusuf ibn Tashfin of the Almoravid dynasty pitched his tent during the siege of the city of Agadir. In 1317, Sultan Abu Hamu Musa I added two architectural elements to the castle: the palace and the mosque, which were used by the princes, government officials, and dignitaries for Friday prayers and the five daily prayers. Subsequently, Rahman Abu Tashfin added three additional structures to the castle. The first was called the House of Joy, serving as a civilian headquarters. The second was the House of the King, designated for military purposes. The third was the House of Fihir, serving as a place for worship, cultural activities, and political discussions within the Zayyanid state. Later, the "Conference Palace" was constructed between 1299 and 1394 (Ibn Khaldun Yahya Abu Zakaria, 2007, page 146).

In the 8th century AH, three fortifications were built for Mashur: the Fortress of Hope, the Political Fortress, and the Civilian Fortress. Historical texts indicate that Sultan Ahmad ibn Abu Hamu Musa al-Zayyani II contemplated the renovation and expansion of M'shawar r's walls after they were destroyed during the siege of Tlemcen by enemies. To achieve this, he had to appropriate many houses belonging to the subjects, which were connected or close to the Sultan's palace, and ordered their demolition in order to carry out the expansion and fortification project in 1446 (Hajj al-Asha'ashi, 2002, page 209). During the Ottoman period, the influence and significance of the palace declined, and it faced the first blow of French colonization on June 2, 1837. M'shawar stands as a testament to the Algerian people, witnessing eight centuries of Arab-Islamic civilization (refer to Diagram 02).

Figure No. 02: Fort of El Mechouar 1843 AD



From the Archives of France's Ministry of Culture - The Directorate of Culture for the Province of Tlemcen.

2.4 - Architectural Description:

Al-Tanisi speaks of magnificent buildings, high wings, and lush gardens. Leo Africanus also mentions the splendid architecture of the buildings during the 16th century. One of the most important builders of the city of Mashur was Abu Hamu Musa I and his grandson Ibn Khaldun Abd al-Rahman ibn Tashfin, who constructed palaces, schools, and mosques. Ibn Khaldun mentions four magnificent palaces: Dar al-Malik, Dar al-Surur, Dar Abi Fahir, and Dar al-Bayda. They also created beautiful gardens and palaces within the castle for the princes. Abu Hamu II made the days of the Prophet's birthday celebrations and praise competitions inside M'shawar. Inside the palaces, there were notable features such as the "Al-Munqanah" clock, the Quran adorned with precious stones, and the stunning mosque, of which only the minaret remains in a lamentable state. M'shawar served as a place for decision-making and meetings with poets and scholars (Amr Al-Tammar Muhammad, 2000, p. 142).

Sultan Abu al-Hasan al-Marinid seized the unique contract or the "orphan contract" made of precious stones known as "The Serpent" and the Quran of Uthman (may Allah be pleased with him) when he forcefully entered Tlemcen in 1337. However, both were lost when his ships sank near the city of Béjaïa in 1379 (L'Abbé Bages, 1859, p. 359).

Al-Munqanah

The "Al-Munqanah" clock, created by the renowned scholar and engineer Abu al-Hasan Ali ibn Ahmad, known as Ibn al-Fahham, represents a marvelous clockwork mechanism that the Arabs had mastered in its construction for centuries. It was developed in the 8th century AH/14th century CE. According to the description by Yahya ibn Khaldun, the clock consisted of a cabinet

adorned with intricate clay figurines. At the top, there was a dome-carrying a pair of birds under its wings engaged in a playful interaction. These birds moved up and down within a cavity in the root of the dome. The cabinet's front featured hollow doors representing the hours of the night. Flanking the doors were two larger and wider hollow compartments. The pinnacle of the cabinet traced a complete path equidistant from the celestial equator, simulating the celestial movement. The first gate of each hour had a protruding handle, and when pulled, two small doors opened simultaneously, releasing a spherical pellet from the mouth of each door. The pellets were directed into hollow containers within the cabinet through a hole, causing a sound and activating the mechanism. One of the birds would then peck at the pellets, producing a distinct sound to indicate the current hour. At that moment, the door of the corresponding hour would open, and a miniature figurine would emerge, holding a scroll in its right hand, bearing the inscription of the current hour in a systematic manner, while its left hand rested on its mouth, symbolizing allegiance to the Commander of the Faithful, may God support him (Ibn Khaldun, Yahya Abu Zakariya, 2007, p. 10).

The mosque and minaret were constructed by Abu Hamu Musa I in the early 14th century, according to available texts. It was initially used by hostages as a place of worship and later became a mosque for the princes. It is located on the western side of the square, near the western fence and the archaeological area. The entrance tower consists of a hall dedicated to prayer with dimensions of 23.80m x 15.60m, and the minaret has a base diameter of 5m. The mosque can be accessed through the direct entrance on the northern side of the building and through a secondary entrance that passes by the minaret (Al-Tansi Abu Abdullah, 1985, p. 141). The walls were constructed using mud bricks and lime mortar, while the columns and arches were made of fired clay. They rest on a wooden base with a thickness of 0.12m. The mosque has a modest architectural design resembling the Mosque of the Caliph in the city of Al-Zahra "Cordoba." The minaret is adorned with metallic-glazed tile inscriptions, possibly of Andalusian origin (Al-Wazan Hassan, 1989, p. 20).

It thus confirms the strong connection between Tlemcen and Al-Andalus. As for the image of the restored mihrab after the fire that engulfed it, its style proves its Andalusian origin. The mosque represents a precious example of Arab art that has endured in Tlemcen. As for the minaret, its elevated lattice work is adorned with metallic-glazed tiles, and atop the lattice stands a rectangular structure embellished with three arches. After its restoration, windows were opened in the French style. The original entrance, located on the northern side and now only its external structure remains, has undergone several renovations. The minaret has been restored several times, preserving its eastern facade and the ceramic band inscribed with the following words: 'To Yemen and Iqbal, my trust, my hope, you are my refuge, you are my guardian, seal my hopes with goodness.' Similar examples can be found in Seville and Granada. Additionally, the prayer hall has been modified several times, including the discovery of three intersecting tiles with the qibla wall during cleaning" (Ibn Khaldun, Yahya Abu Zakariya, 2007, p. 40) (See Image No. 02).

Image No. 02: Exterior view of the Mosque of El M'shawar.



By The Researcher

Ammunition Storage Depot:

Designed during the colonial era to meet the spatial requirements of military service, it has a somewhat unique architecture independent of others. Its dimensions are 10.4 x 15.2 meters, with a height of 5.04 meters. It is an impressive building constructed with carved stone. It has a door and two windows on the side facades, contributing to the additional space in the outdoor theater.

Prison:

Dating back to the Ottoman era, it was built on the old fortress "Al-Burj." It has been renovated several times to fulfill military duties during the colonial period. The prison leans against the northern fence and occupies an area of 160 square meters. It consists of two separate parts that share an entrance. The first part extends over two levels with a balcony leading to a corridor, while the second part contains a single level with a balcony leading to the entrance. The prison has a distinct architectural style, designed with stones. Its dimensions are as follows: width 10.4 meters, height 5.4 meters, and length 15.2 meters (Ibn Khaldun, Yahya Abu Zakariya, 2007, p. 40). It housed prisoners where members of the ruling family, ministers, scholars, judges, officers, and other privileged individuals were held. It was called "Ad-Dawwira," consisting of small houses resembling solitary confinement. Another prison called "Dar An-Narij" also existed, which was divided into sections. It is worth mentioning that a minister from the Banu 'Abd al-Wad was once imprisoned there (Ibn Khaldun, Abdul Rahman, 1999, p. 215) (See Plan 03).

Outline No. 03: Ammunition Storage Warehouse and Prison in the North of El Mechouar 1858 AD.



The Research Team from the French Archives.

Private Houses:

These houses are found in the southeast of Al- M'shawar and contain some architectural details and visible archaeological remnants, indicating that these houses were built on the remains of buildings dating back to the Zirid period. Their location faces the western entrance of Bab Tawita and occupies a secluded area within Al- M'shawar. They are surrounded by a wall consisting of two sections, a garden with a fountain, and fruitful trees.

Entrance Tower:

This building is a well-known urban landmark among all the city's residents. It was designed at the beginning of the colonial period and is considered a symbol of history and heritage. It consists of three levels and a reachable balcony. It was constructed on an ancient secure passage and has become the main entrance to Al- M'shawar. The length of Al- M'shawar is approximately 5.10 meters, with a width of 4.95 meters. Its height varies, with the ground floor measuring about 4 meters, the second level at 2.80 meters, and the third level at 3.35 meters.

City Walls:

The walls of Al-Mashur are original and were built with mud bricks, known as "Tabiya," which provide durability. The height of the walls reaches around 10 meters, but it does not exceed 6 or 7 meters at the collapsed points. Despite the lack of maintenance, the fortress is fortified from all sides and contains towers, observation posts, balconies, barracks, and a passage for soldiers, as well as a separate passage for horses and war equipment. Its construction dates back to the Zirid period precisely in the year 1446 CE, by Sultan Abu al-Abbas al-Aqil. Its height ranges from 8 to 15 meters, with a thickness of 1.5 to 4 meters, and its width varies between 5 and 6 meters (Brahmi Nasreddine and Sidi Nekkadi Mohammed, 2010, p. 95).

The Palace:

This building was constructed in a splendid artistic architectural style adorned with intricate decorations. It includes water fountains, gardens, and orchards. It has two gates, one located in the south overlooking the desert towards the mountains, and the other in the northwest towards

the city center. The palace is accompanied by the residence of the chief of the guard and encompasses courtyards, streets, paths, and other houses inside for the retinue, scribes, officers, and servants. It appears that the palace was embellished with marble and colorful mosaics covering its base and walls. The floors were paved with elegant plaster, and the ceilings were painted wooden panels. Luxurious brass chandeliers holding oil lamps and candles adorned the palace. The floors were tiled with colored ceramic tiles, and flower beds and fruit trees were scattered throughout the palace (Ibn Khaldun, Abdul Rahman, 1999, p. 216). (See Image 03).

Image No. 03: General view of the Fort of El M'shawar.



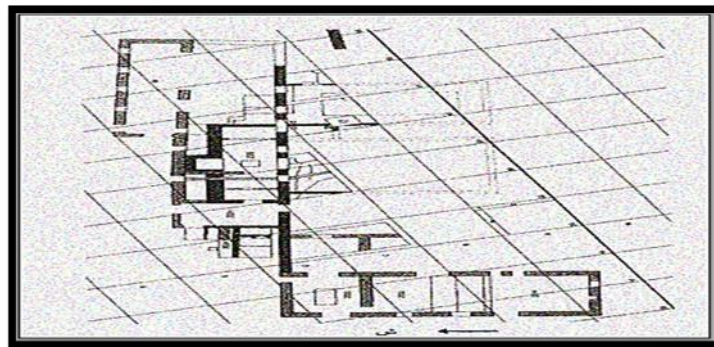
By the Researcher

It is a rectangular structure with four entrances, three of which are located on the front side and one on the southeast facade of the palace. Upon entering, we find that it is divided in a carefully planned and architecturally designed manner into two courtyards. The right courtyard was designated for winter, as its walls were constructed with stones. This courtyard consists of four halls. As for the left courtyard, it is known as the Chinese courtyard due to its construction material, which is bricks that provide coolness in the summer. It has three bases, one of which contains a secret passage. It is said that it leads to the Grand Mosque because the Sultan used to pass through it secretly to perform prayers. Additionally, there is the Royal Sanctuary Hall, which contains a fountain in the middle of the hall. There are stairs leading to the upper floor of the chamber where the Sultan would seclude himself with his harem. This area is called the private chamber and consists of three small halls. Furthermore, there is the Guest Hall, where the Sultan receives his official guests. It is adorned with skylights for illumination, ventilation, and external surveillance. In the middle, there is a marble fountain that aids in ventilation, and the sound of water prevents the leakage of internal conversations to the outside. The central courtyard of the palace is in the shape of a cross, and its edges are adorned with green spaces. On the left side, there is a bathhouse that remains only with its warm, hot, and cold water basins. There are also other buildings that have disappeared, and green spaces have been placed on top of them (Ibn al-Khatib Lisan al-Din, 2003, p. 128) (Brahmi Nasreddine and Sidi Nekkadi Mohammed, 2010, p. 61).

4- Restoration works at Al- M'shawar Castle:

The monument has witnessed several restorations, and we can highlight the most important ones during the colonial era. For example, the restoration of Al- M'shawar wall, which was carried out by the French authorities in 1843, after it lost its value and authenticity due to the restoration process. Another project focused on repairing the fortifications of Al- M'shawar aimed at achieving defensive efficiency in 1854. The works included isolating the wall completely from the buildings by creating spacious courtyards, which are located on the southern side, about 30 meters deep. They also rebuilt the notched terrace at critical points inside the castle and created a road beneath the wall to facilitate movement, surveillance, and maintenance of the gun openings on the northern side. Furthermore, they reopened the current entrance, slightly moving it away from the facade wall while preserving the minaret's style on April 3, 1858. The engineering commander issued a report on the expected works at Al- M'shawar Mosque on August 1, 1863. It included improvements to the mosque, which had been converted into a church affiliated with the military hospital. Visible inside the hall are cracks in the walls at the level of the arches, ranging in thickness from 0.01m to 0.02m. Consequently, the walls were raised with varying sizes from the lower to the upper parts. During the investigation of the causes of the arches' cracking, it was confirmed that the southwestern wall is older than the mosque itself. From the field observation, it was deduced that the inner walls are not capable of bearing the loads and pressures resulting from the arches. Although their removal is impossible as they support the roof, they can be reduced in size (refer to plan number 04).

Outline No. 04: Excavation Quadrant Method



The Directorate of Culture for Tlemcen regarding CNRA.

As for converting the mosque into a church in 1863, they removed the mihrab while maintaining its internal organization. It is noteworthy that the builders remained faithful to the original style of the arches of the mosque. In 1996, the walls were restored by increasing their thickness, especially at the base level, making them strong and resilient. However, the remaining walls, public and popular structures, are made of heterogeneous materials. During the restoration process, after exposing the walls, patches or sections of the same wall were observed, constructed using different building techniques (Nakkadi Sidi Mohamed, 2011, pp. 95-96).

Other important restorations took place, including the restoration of the main fortress on the southern side for surveillance and the southern gate, known as "Bab al-Tawwita." In 2002, the house of Mohammed Deeb was restored. There is also a protection plan for Al- M'shawar 's wall and restoration works for the historical complex of Al- M'shawar in 2005. In 2011, the restorations took place during the Islamic Capital of Culture, where the palace was renovated within a 6-month deadline. The halls and corridors were renewed, and partitions were added. The water fountains were renovated, and marble fountains were installed. The halls were paved with zellij tiles (refer to image number 04). Specialists in gypsum decoration were brought from Morocco to decorate the entire palace with gypsum, including the inscription "Al-Az Al-Qaim, Al-Malik Al-Daim Lillah, Wa Ni'matullah Fi Dar Abdihi," in gypsum decoration inspired by the original ornamentation (refer to image number 05) (Filali Abd al-Aziz, 2002, pp. 114-116) (Bouaziz Yahya, 2009). Marble columns were placed to support the arches of the corridors, and wooden ceilings were installed. The edges of the basin were adorned with marble pieces and green spaces. The mosque floor was decorated with zellij tiles, and a wooden ceiling similar to the palace's was installed (Laaraj Abd al-Aziz, 1999, p. 661) (refer to image number 06).

Image No. 04: The Mosaic and Fountain in the Middle of the Hall.



Image No. 05: Gypsum Decoration of the El M'shawar Palace.



By the Researcher

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Image No. 06: Wooden Roofing for the Palace.



By the Researcher

A collection of illustrative photos of the restoration process of Al- M'shawar Castle:

These photos were taken by a participating student in the excavation with authorization from the National Office for the Management and Exploitation of Cultural Properties in the year 2009-2010.

Image No. 07: View of the Excavation at its Beginning.



Image No. 08: General View of the Excavation During Work.



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Image No. 09: General View of the Excavation.



Image No. 10: Floor and Wall Decoration with Mosaic (First Area).



Image No. 11: The Second Area After Excavation.



Image No. 12: General View of the Third Area.



Image No. 13: Cleaning Process of the Mosaic.

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Image No. 14: General View of the Fourth Area.



Image No. 15: Illustrates Water Drainage Channels.



The images are from the archives of the Research Team at the Directorate of Culture for the Province of Tlemcen (CNRA)

Conclusion:

This article provides a brief overview of the fieldwork carried out in the rescue excavation at Al-Mashur Castle, which lasted approximately six months. The excavation employed the technique of urgent excavation according to the methodology of preventive excavation, due to the limited time allocated for this excavation, in order to facilitate the reconstruction process of the Zayyanid Royal Palace. The excavation resulted in the discovery of two palaces from the Zayyanid era, characterized by their architectural layout that aligns with the traditional house. All wings of the palaces open onto an inner courtyard surrounded on all four sides by gardens (courtyards) with water basins. The excavation provided insight into the construction techniques of the Zayyanid period, including water supply and drainage methods, as well as the materials used in these

structures. The walls and floors of the palaces were adorned with diverse mosaic ceramics in various shapes and colors, in line with the Moroccan-Andalusian style. The different spaces in the palaces featured numerous fountains, a characteristic often associated with the Islamic West.

The building techniques revealed the presence of different periods that succeeded each other in this palace. After the Zayyanid period, the palace underwent changes and transformations, as houses were added to the basins. This was observed through our work concerning the basins, fountains, archival research, old photographs, and comparisons with the remains that may not be apparent except to specialists through careful field observation. Parts of the palace were also reorganized, and additional facilities and houses were constructed. The internal passages of the palace were transformed into multifunctional spaces.

Furthermore, the palace experienced transformations and distortions during the period of occupation, altering its appearance and original form. This necessitated its preservation and maintenance against natural and human factors after extensive restoration operations carried out by the specialized team in excavations and archaeology from the National Center for Research in Archaeology at that time. They were able to reshape and rebuild the Royal Palace of Al-Mashur, preparing it as a historical architectural masterpiece. The experts relied on reconstructing the structures and facilities of the palace and embellishing it with designs, ruins, and some initial decorations that remained evident on the walls of the building, enduring to this day. This allowed the supervisors of the restoration process to envision the architectural structure and its design, and then replicate it in reality using traditional tools and building materials. The decoration commonly used in the Zayyanid era, such as gypsum carvings to adorn the walls and intertwined arches embellished with multicolored zellij, was also employed in beautifying this historical monument. Various intricate forms with metallic shine were created, with the pure marble water basin serving as the centerpiece of the palace. This basin allowed visitors to imagine themselves in the Alhambra Palace in Granada.

This magnificent architectural structure was where the Sultan, the leader of the Muslims, held his meetings with his ministers, advisors, and officers to discuss state affairs, consult on matters concerning the subjects during times of peace and war. It was surrounded by a grand wall with towering towers, and it had two gates. One gate was located in the south, overlooking the desert towards the mountains, while the other gate was situated in the northwest, facing the city center. The southern gate was called "Bab al-Jiyad" (Gate of the Steeds), and the northern gate was known as "Bab al-Ghadeer." The palace encompassed courtyards, streets, and pathways, along with separate houses inside designated for the entourage, scribes, officers, and servants. Within the palace complex, there were also various storage rooms and warehouses discovered during excavation, used for storing grains, meats, and different provisions. The Sultan's palace stood out from other palaces and mansions in terms of its unique design, size, and content. It was adorned with colorful marble and mosaic that covered its halls and walls. The floors were paved with elegant gypsum, while the ceilings were painted wooden structures. Most of the palace's flooring was intricately tiled with colored zellij. The palace featured flowerbeds, fruit trees, and flowing water fountains, reminiscent of the sultanate palaces in cities like Fes and Granada. This palace is

a remarkable architectural masterpiece and the only remaining structure from the four palaces that once formed the Al-Mashur Citadel, which included the Palace of the King, the House of Abu Fehr, the House of Al-Surur, and the House of Al-Raha.

According to historical texts, it is mentioned that the Algerian prince, Abdelkader, resided in this palace for a full four years during the signing of the Tafna Treaty with General Bugeaud. However, he left the palace after the treaty was violated. During the period of French occupation, the fortress was converted into a military barracks, and many of the artifacts that were present in it were removed. The Al-Mashur Palace was transformed into a military hospital. The extremely high walls of the fortress allowed them to concentrate effectively inside, seeking shelter from the attacks of the revolutionary freedom fighters.

The palace had two wings dedicated to the residence of the Sultan at that time. One wing was designed for summer, constructed with mud in a way that kept it cool and refreshing throughout the season. The other wing was for winter, built with stones that made the wing constantly warm. This unique architectural design was based on calculations of the sunrise and sunset. In the summer wing, there was a secret passage that the Sultan used when going out to perform prayers in the grand mosque and during times of conflicts and wars. It was spacious enough for him to pass on his horse. Additionally, Arabic Islamic ornamentation was discovered throughout the palace, with a repeated phrase on all the walls in all the rooms and wings, which was "Al-'Izzu Qa'imun bi Allah, Al-Maliku Qa'imun bi Allah" (Glory is established by Allah, and the King is established by Allah). Thus, the archaeological discoveries of Al-Mashur represent one of the luminous pages in the history of our Islamic heritage during the medieval period.

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