

Rachid Bourouiba: Historian and Archaeologist, and His Contribution to Historical and Archaeological Research

المؤرخ والأثري رشيد بورويبة ودوره في البحث التاريخي والأثري

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• Abstract:

- Professor Rachid Bourouiba, one of Algeria's most prominent archaeologists and historians, known as the Dean of Algerian archaeologists, possesses a significant scholarly legacy reflected in his excavation activities, particularly the excavation of the Qal'at Bani Hammad. In this context, we aim to highlight his efforts in excavation and archaeological research, as well as his contributions to the study of applied arts, Arabic calligraphy, epigraphy, ornamentation, and Islamic coinage in Algeria during the medieval period

- **Keywords:** Rachid Bourouiba, archaeologist, historian, Islamic antiquities, Algeria.

• ملخص:

الأستاذ رشيد بورويبة من أبرز أثري ومؤرخي الجزائر، يعرف بعميد الأثريين الجزائريين له رصيد معرفي هام يتمثل في نشاطاته التنقيبية خاصة حفرة قلعة بني حماد، وفي هذا السياق أردنا أن نبين جهوده في التنقيب والبحث الأثري ومساهماته في دراسة الفنون التطبيقية والخط العربي والكتابات الأثرية والزخرفة والمسكوكات الإسلامية بالجزائر خلال الفترة الوسيطية.

- **الكلمات المفتاحية:** رشيد بورويبة، الأثري، المؤرخ، الآثار الإسلامية، الجزائر.

• Introduction:

Historian and archaeologist Rachid Bourouiba is among the Algerian scholars who left a substantial legacy of historical writings and archaeological studies that form the basis of the contemporary Algerian school. He laid the foundations of archaeological research in Algeria, particularly in the field of Islamic antiquities, and successfully combined historical research with archaeological excavation.

This paper aims to present the efforts of Professor Rachid Bourouiba by showcasing his diverse personal and scholarly collections, with the objective of establishing them as part of the archaeological and historical memory that serves as a fundamental reference for contemporary studies. It seeks to highlight various aspects of his contributions to the fields of history and archaeology by addressing the following points:

- Birth and academic background
- Scientific publications
- Articles
- Field activities
- Academic supervision
- National and international scientific contributions.

1.Early Life and Education:

Professor Rachid Bourouiba was born on 29 July 1917 in Algiers. Owing to his father's professional commitments, he moved with his family across several Algerian cities, beginning in Bejaia, then to El-Qalaa and Sétif, and later to Thénia Ben Aïcha in the district of Thénia, Boumerdès Province, where he obtained his elementary certificate. He subsequently returned to his hometown to pursue further studies, earning the intermediate certificate before successfully passing the competitive examination for admission to the Teacher Training Institute in Bouzaréah. Upon graduation, he was appointed as a teacher and began his career in education, working in several cities, including Chlef, Khemis Miliana, and Boufarik¹.

In 1956, Professor Bourouiba obtained a bachelor's degree in social sciences and humanities, after which he pursued a postgraduate diploma with research on the personality of Mohammed Ben Toumert. He continued his academic training by earning two degrees in Islamic civilization, one in the East and another in Morocco, which enabled him to undertake doctoral studies (Phase III) on the topic *Islamic Art in the East and West*, under the supervision of the French orientalist Lucien Golvin. In 1961, he was awarded a state doctorate for his thesis entitled *Monumental Archaeological Inscriptions in the Mosques of Algeria*, written in French under the supervision of the same professor. One year later, he was appointed Director General of Primary Education, before joining the university as a professor specializing in Islamic history and archaeology, where he lectured in French. In November 1969, he was appointed Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, a position he held for three years².

¹ Kamel Nasser, L'Algérien Rachid Bourouiba, رشيد بورويبة, un maître de l'histoire de l'architecture et de l'art arabo-islamique, <https://algeriearabite.canalblog.com/archives/2022/01/04/39290301.html>, 01/05/2025

² Sharifa Tayan Sahid, Rashid Bourouiba: Meeting and Interview, Journal of Historical Studies, vol. 23, No. 1, Year 2022, pp. 43-53, pp. 45

Between 1964 and 1972, Professor Rachid Bourouiba was granted authorization to conduct archaeological excavations, during which he directed numerous field campaigns at the Qal'at Bani Hammad in the Ma'adid region, accompanied by his archaeology students. He became known for his rigor during practical training sessions, holding students accountable for the smallest details and instilling in them the importance of precision in uncovering antiquities and revealing their historical value³.

Through his fieldwork and frequent visits to archaeological sites for research and investigation, Professor Rachid Bourouiba identified several important monuments, including the Abu Marwan Mosque in Annaba and the Great Mosque of Constantine. These experiences culminated in the publication of a book in French entitled *Islamic Religious Art in Algeria from the 11th to the 14th Century*, produced with the guidance of his Orientalist mentor Lucien Golvin. At a later stage, Professor Bourouiba undertook the study of Arabic, working with his teacher known as 'Ibn Blida,' who assisted him in improving his writing skills in the language, thereby strengthening both his linguistic proficiency and cultural insight⁴.

Professor Rachid Bourouiba retired in 1981 after fulfilling his administrative and pedagogical duties with integrity and high efficiency. During this period, he also supervised the Department of Antiquities at the Institute of History, while continuing his teaching responsibilities, combining fieldwork with academic contributions marked by seriousness and dedication⁵.

In 1990, Professor Rachid Bourouiba received special honors from the administration of the Institute of Antiquities, then headed by Professor Dr. Mohamed El Mustapha Falah, in recognition of his significant contributions to advancing Algeria's scientific standing and to highlighting the importance of Algerian Islamic monuments on the international stage, after they had long remained unknown to many. During the tribute ceremony, held in one of the halls of the University of Algiers, Professor Bourouiba delivered a moving speech in which he reflected on his scholarly journey and the difficult circumstances of his academic formation⁶. He stated:

'Those who think that we adopted French as our language for a purpose are mistaken. We were able to assert ourselves before the French not only through their language, but also through the Arabic language. Thanks be to God, destiny has allowed us to contribute to the education of our fellow countrymen in the scientific field, and this is an honor that I cherish and that makes me hold my head high in the service of my country among nations''⁷

Professor Rachid Bourouiba passed away on 3 April 2007 in the city of Poitiers, France, at the age of 90. Six months after his death, he was honored for the second time during the Conference of the Union of Arab Archaeologists, held in Egypt, seventeen years after his first recognition. On this occasion, the "Golden Shield" of the Union of Arab Archaeologists was awarded to him posthumously and was received on his behalf by the late Prof. Dr. Ali Hamlawi, former Director of the Institute of Antiquities, may Allah have mercy on him⁸.

2. Scientific Publications:

³Sharifa Din Sahid, former reference, p46 .

⁴Ibid, p46 .

⁵ Mohamed El-Tayeb Oqâb, "Professor of a Generation: Rachid Borouiba, Pioneer of Archaeology in Algeria," *Journal of Archaeological Studies*, vol. 2, no. 3 (1995), p.0 7.

⁶ Sharifa Tayan Sahad, *op. cit.*, p.46

⁷Mohamed El-Tayeb Oqâb, *op. cit.*, p. 08.

⁸Sharifa Tayan Sahad, *op. cit.*, p. 47

Professor Rachid Bourouiba made substantial contributions to the enrichment of both the Algerian and Arab libraries through a collection of original works on the history and antiquities of Algeria during the medieval period. His research covered diverse topics, including Islamic architecture in its religious, military, and civil forms, as well as the history of several Algerian cities such as Qal'at Bani Hammad, Oran, and Constantine, in addition to other towns that he rehabilitated through his in-depth studies. He also worked extensively on applied arts and Islamic ornamentation in Algeria, leaving a distinctive imprint in this field. Moreover, he wrote about pivotal figures in Islamic and Moorish history, such as Mahdi Ibn Tumart, Abd al-Mu'min Ibn 'Ali, and Amir Abdelkader⁹.

Most of these works have been translated into Arabic, which allowed his ideas and research to reach a wider audience of readers and scholars. The following are his most notable publications:

- L'Art musulman en Algérie, SNED, 1972.
- L'Art religieux musulman en Algérie, Alger, SNED, 1973.
- Ibn Tumert. Alger, SNED, 1974.
- Abd el-Mu'min, flambeau des Almohades, Histoire. Alger, SNED, 1974,
- La Qal'a des Bani Hammad, Alger, Sous-direction des Beaux-arts, 1975.
- La Qal'a des Bani Hammad, Ministère de l'information et de la culture, Sous-direction des Beaux-arts et antiquités, Alger, 1975
- Abdelmoumen, Alger, Ministère de l'Information et de la Culture, 1976.
- Constantine, Alger, Ministère de l'Information et de la Culture, 1978.
- Béjaia, Alger, Ministère de l'Information et de la Culture, 1978.
- Les inscriptions commémoratives des mosquées en Algérie, Thèse 3^o cycle, Publications de la Bibliothèque Nationale. Alger, SNED .
- Les Inscriptions anciennes dans les mosquées algériennes, Alger, SNED, 1981.
- Cités disparues, Alger, Ministère de l'Information et de la Culture, 1982.
- L'Art religieux musulman en Algérie, Alger, SNED, 1983.
- L'Architecture Militaire de l'Algérie Médiévale, Alger, SNED, 1183
- Oran, Art et culture, Ministère de l'Information et de la Culture, Alger, 1983.
- Anecdotes, récits et contes maghrébins et andalous, Contes. Alger, ENAL, 1985.
- L'apport de l'Algérie à l'architecture religieuse, Alger, OPU, 1986.

3. Articles:

In addition to his published books, Professor Rachid Bourouiba enriched the scientific field with more than fifty articles appearing in specialized national and international journals. These include the Journal of History and Civilization of Morocco published by the University of Algiers, the Journal of Algerian Antiquities issued by the Algerian Agency for Antiquities, the Journal of Algerian Culture of the Ministry of Information and Culture, Asalah published by the Ministry of Religious Affairs, the journal of the Arab League Educational, Cultural, and Scientific Organization, and the Journal of Islamic Studies published in Paris¹⁰. His articles covered a wide range of themes within Islamic decorative arts, such as Sanhaji art, as well as human and animal motifs in Hammadid art, along with studies on Umayyad art in Syria. He also examined Islamic

Zakaria Qarnah, A Reading of Dr. Rachid Bourouiba's Studies in the Journal of Authenticity, Journal of Historical Studies, ⁹ Volume 23, Issue 1, Year 2022, pp. 54-71, p. 58.

¹⁰ Mohamed Al-Tayeb Oqâb, op. cit., p. 11.

architectural elements, focusing in particular on niches, pulpits, and Hammadid capitals, with an approach that skillfully combined academic research and fieldwork¹¹.

He also contributed to the preparation of inspection and archaeological survey reports in several regions of Algeria, in addition to supervising and participating in excavations, particularly at Qal'at Bani Hammad, which was the focal point of much of his archaeological research. Among his notable findings were jewelry pieces, inscribed plaster and stone fragments, the discovery of the Hall of Honor in the western Manar Palace, and a large stone basin¹². His research themes were equally diverse, ranging from numismatics to the study of mosque floor plans, along with other topics that effectively combined history and archaeology within a rigorous scientific framework¹³.

His most prominent scientific articles are as follows:

- « Rapport préliminaire sur la campagne de fouilles de septembre 1964 à la Qa'la des Bani Hammad », BAA, t.I, Alger, 1962-1965.
- « Note sur les bijoux trouvés à la Qa'la des Bani Hammad(1968) », BAA,t. III, Alger, 1968.
- «Sur un petit oratoire mis à jour à la qa'la des Bani Hammad », BAA, t. V,Alger, 1970,
- «L'influence de l'art sanhadjien du Maghreb sur l'art des normands de Sicile», Actes du 1^{er} congrès d'études sur les cultures méditerranéennes d'influence arabo-berbère, SNED, 1972.
- « Objets de plâtre et de pierre sculptée mis à jour à la Qa'la des Bani Hammad (1971-1974)», bulletin d'archéologie algérienne, t. V, Alger 1976.
- «La salle d'honneur du palais ouest du manar », bulletin d'archéologie algérienne, t. V, Alger, 1976.
- « Note sur une vasque de pierre trouvée au palais du manar de la Qa'la desBaniHammad », bulletin d'archéologie algérienne t. V, Alger, 1976.
- «Tagdemt , capitale de l'empire Emir abd el kader»,
- «Mirabs hammadites»
- «Sur six chapiteaux trouvés à la qa'la des Bani hammad »
- «Sur quatre dinars aghlabides récemment trouvés dans le département de Sétif»
- «Les représentations figurées dans l'art Hammadite»
- «Les représentations figurées dans l'art des Ummayyades de Syrie»
- « Note sur les plans des mosquées».

4. Field Activities:

Professor Rachid Bourouiba was distinguished by his extensive and intensive fieldwork. His contributions were not confined to theoretical research but extended to archaeological practice, thereby enriching knowledge of Algeria's Islamic heritage through his active participation in numerous excavations and meticulous field investigations, the most notable of which include¹⁴:

- Participation in Archaeological Excavations: He collaborated with his professor, Lucien Golvin, on several excavation projects, particularly in the city of Achir, the capital of the Zirid state.
- Description of the Great Mosque in Constantine (1960): He conducted a thorough field investigation of the mihrab, during which he discovered three previously unpublished inscriptions executed in Kufic and cursive calligraphy. These inscriptions included the *Basmala*, the name of the craftsman, and the date of construction. His research demonstrated

¹¹ Sharifa Tayan Sahad, op. cit., p. 48.

¹²Nadhir Gouadria, "Excavations of Rachid Bourouiba at Qal'at Bani Hammad – Testimonies and Evidence," Vol. 22, No. 1, 2024, pp. 126–142, p. 130.

¹³Mohamed Al-Tayeb Oqâb, op. cit., p. 12.

¹⁴ Sharifa Tayan Sahad, op. cit., p. 50.

that the mosque dates back to the Hammadid era, emphasizing that these inscriptions constitute the only available evidence for this attribution.

- Study of Almoravid Dinars: He conducted a study of four dinars dating back to the Almoravid period, discovered in the city of Bordj Bou Arreridj near Sétif, which represented one of the earliest research works in the field of Islamic numismatics.
- Excavations of Rachid Bourouiba at Qal'at Bani Hammad: Between 1964 and 1972, he directed excavations at Qal'at Bani Hammad. It is worth noting that these excavations, which he supervised, formed a continuation of earlier archaeological work conducted at the site by several French researchers between 1897 and 1962¹⁵, most notably Charles Féraud, Paul Blanchet¹⁶, Robert Achille, Major General Léon de Beylié¹⁷, and Lucien Golvin¹⁸.

Archaeological research at Qal'at Bani Hammad began with the efforts of the French explorer Micas, who first identified the site in 1869. His study was based on oral accounts linked to three prominent monuments: the minaret of the Great Mosque, the Al-Manar Tower, and the mausoleum of Abu al-Fadl, located to the west of the archaeological site. These landmarks had served as centers of human activity in the Ma'adid region for centuries. In 1886, Micas published descriptions and studies of these monuments in the journal *L'Afrique*¹⁹.

Rachid Bourouiba is regarded as one of the foremost pioneers of Islamic archaeology at Qal'at Bani Hammad, an important archaeological site inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List in 1980. He directed the longest series of Algerian excavations at the site after independence, spanning more than seven years²⁰, with the direct support of the Ministry of Information and Culture, which provided a dedicated budget and a team of specialists. Excavations began in 1964 by decision of Mr. Lassis, then Dean of the Faculty of Arts at the University of Algiers and led to discoveries that contributed new data to the results of earlier excavations carried out by French researchers.

During these excavations, Bourouiba uncovered approximately 750 artifacts, the results of which he documented and published in periodic reports in the *Algerian Archaeological Bulletin* and, at times, in specialized international journals. His work also encompassed the study of the permanent monuments at the site, thereby enriching the scientific, historical, and archaeological record of Qal'at Bani Hammad. These contributions included²¹:

- The Castle Wall: The remains of the wall of Qal'at Bani Hammad are still preserved today. It was constructed according to a layout resembling the form of a 'ram in motion.' The wall begins on the eastern side, running along the western slope of the Faraj Valley, then extends northward until reaching Mount Tarakst. From there, it descends toward Mount Qurain, continues its course north across the valley, and finally follows the eastern slope²².

¹⁵Ramzi Frhichi and Aïcha Henefi, "History and Future of Archaeological Research at the Site of Qal'at Bani Hammad," *Journal of Archaeological Studies*, Vol. 22, No. 1, 2024, pp. 113–125, pp. 114–123

¹⁶Blanchet P, Rapport sur les travaux a la Kalaa des Bani Hammad, Recueil des notices et mémoires de la société archéologique du département de Constantine, Ed Jourdan, Vol 32, Alger, 1898, p29

¹⁷De Beylié, L., *La Kalaa des Beni Hammad, capitale berbère de l'Afrique du Nord au XIe siècle*, Ernest Leroux, Paris, 1909, pp. 2–27.

¹⁸Golvin, L., *Recherches archéologiques à la Qal'a des Banū Hammad*, Éditions G. P. Maisonneuve et Larose, Paris, 1965, pp. 9–11.

¹⁹Alaoua Amara, "The Archaeological Excavations in the First Hammadid Capital between Memory and History," *Journal of Arts and Humanities, University of Emir Abdelkader for Islamic Sciences, Constantine*, Vol. 7, No. 1, 2008, pp. 33–43, pp. 34–39.

²⁰Khelifa A; "Bilan de la recherche archéologique musulmane en Algérie (1962-2004)", *L'Algérie 50 ans après. Etat des savoirs en sciences sociales et humaines 1954-2004*, CRASC, 2008, pp179-181

²¹Nadhir Gouadria, op. cit., p. 139.

²²Rachid Bourouiba, *The Hammadid State: Its History and Civilization*, Diwan of University Publications, Algiers, 1977, p. 203.

- The Arches Gate: Excavations revealed that no physical remains of the Arches Gate itself have survived. However, its location is still identifiable, flanked on both the right and left sides by traces of the surrounding wall. Examination further indicates that the left side of the gate was reinforced with defensive buttresses.
- Al-Manar Tower: The palatial structures of Bani Hammad Castle are distinguished by their harmonious integration with the surrounding natural environment. The architectural layout adapts to the uneven terrain, with facilities constructed on multiple levels. A notable feature of this design is the inclusion of gardens and water structures. Despite the rocky and mountainous setting, characterized by limited rainfall and scarce water resources, the inhabitants succeeded in channeling water from natural springs and nearby valleys, creating reservoirs, baths, and fountains to secure a continuous supply. The tower itself measures approximately twenty meters on each side, with its façade adorned with decorative elements in the form of semi-circular arches. Architecturally, it comprises two superimposed halls: the lower, square in plan and covered by a dome, and the upper, cruciform in shape. These halls are encircled by a corridor reserved for guards, which ascends from the lower level to the summit, where the mirror apparatus was once situated. It is likely that this device had already been in use on the site prior to the construction of the castle under Hammad²³.
- Southeast Section of Manar Palace: This part of the complex was constructed along the course of the Shatt Wadi Faraj. Today, only a rectangular hall remains. Its northern wall is distinguished by the presence of a flat *mihrab*. The floor of the hall is paved with marble, while the walls are adorned below with polychrome marble panels and above with floral motifs surmounted by inscribed calligraphic bands.
- Southwest section of Manar Palace: During the 1971 excavations, the honorary hall of this section was uncovered. It is a spacious hall accessed through a cantilevered door on the northern side. The floor is covered with green and white porcelain tiles, with decorations alternating between squares and St. Andrew's crosses, reflecting the artistic and cultural interplay in the design²⁴.
- Northern section of Manar Palace: This section is composed of three main architectural groups²⁵:
 - **The first group:** Connected to the south-central section, it comprises three rooms opening to the east, along with a large hall paved with stone tiles.
 - **The second group:** Extending from southwest to northeast, this group consists of two rectangular halls separated by a narrow brick wall. In the eastern part, ash, small pieces of coal, and shards of pottery and porcelain were found. The western part contained a large amount of plaster, along with custom glass pieces used to decorate it, in addition to many pinches "Muqarnasāt". Three other rooms were discovered adjacent to these two halls, two of which open to the north. The third is square but irregular in shape. There are also two additional rectangular halls, separated by an earthen wall, that open eastward into a large hall.
 - **The third group:** Extending from east to west, this group comprises several elements, including a small rectangular room where ashes, pieces of coal, porcelain, and iron were discovered, as well as two rectangular rooms that open onto a large hall whose excavation remains incomplete.
 - **Stone-tiled floor:** An obliquely oriented, square-shaped surface, accessible by three stone steps.
 - **Al-Manar Tower:** It is believed that Prince Nasser initiated the construction of Al-Manar Tower, which was later completed by the caliph Al-Mansour²⁶. This structure, also known as the

²³Rachid Bourouiba, op. cit., pp. 254–255.

²⁴Ibid., pp. 266–268.

²⁵Ibid., pp. 268–269.

²⁶Abdel Halim Oweis, *The State of Bani Hammad: A Remarkable Page in Algerian History*, 2nd ed., Dar Al-Da'wa for Publishing and Distribution, Cairo, 1991, p. 277.

Palace of Signs, is associated with the mirror device that was once placed at its summit, thought to have been used for signaling or communication purposes. The tower stands as one of the most remarkable examples of Hammadi engineering ingenuity and is the most renowned surviving monument of their first fortress. It was originally crowned with a dome, the traces of which remain visible today, reflecting both the splendor of its construction and the precision of design characteristic of early Islamic architecture in the central Maghreb²⁷.

- **Palace of the Sea:** The first excavations at the Palace of the Sea were carried out in 1908 by French General Dubaelli, whose work was limited to uncovering the tops of the walls. He produced a rough outline of the site and described the artifacts found. Later, Professor Rachid Bourouiba continued the excavations in this palace after completing his work at the Great Mosque. During the first phase of his research, Bourouiba succeeded in uncovering the eastern façade of the Palace of the Sea, along with its eastern gate and the rooms situated between that gate and the eastern basin. The eastern façade is distinguished by several decorative elements: a flat-bottomed *mishkat* appears to the left of the gate, while another, with a semicircular base, is located to the right. The eastern gate itself is a cantilevered doorway, framed by four semicircular niches, two on each side, along with flat-bottomed niches on both the northern and southern façades.

- **Eastern entrance to the Sea Palace:** It takes the form of a distinctive Crusader-style hall. Notably, all the halls of the eastern wing of the palace extend from south to north, with their windows opening to the west. These halls vary in shape, with some being rectangular and others adopting the Crusader form. This wing also contains a large basin paved with bricks²⁸.

- **Grand Mosque and Manar Palace Mosque:** The Great Mosque is rectangular in form and has preserved its main walls, supports, and minaret. It is enclosed by an external wall and includes a rectangular prayer hall with eighteen arches and eight aisles. Within this mosque, a smaller mosque was later constructed and used after the migration of the Banū Hammad to Béjaïa, when the population of the fortress had declined. It is worth noting that this mosque is not a *qibla hall*, as some historians such as Saladin, De Bayle, and Georges Marçais have claimed. The courtyard of the mosque is rectangular and was paved with white tiles, surrounded by a portico. At its center was a water basin, once covered with a broken arcade, of which only traces remain. Evidence was also found of another rectangular hall paved in stone and divided into two sections by a semicircular arch, which may suggest its use as a library.

On the northern wall of the mosque rises an imposing minaret, 24.70 meters high, built on a square base measuring 6.50 meters per side. The doorway is 2.40 meters wide, and the staircase comprises 127 steps arranged around a central square core with a side of 1.50 meters and a width of 1.10 meters. This minaret, among the oldest in Algeria, consists of a single tower whose upper part has been lost. Its southern façade bears distinctive decorative motifs. It is thought that the minaret may originally have had twin towers, similar to Unitarian minarets such as that of the Great Mosque of Seville, highlighting the influence of Hammadid architecture on the Almohad style.

The decoration of the Seville minaret appears to have been inspired by that of the Bani Hammad mosque minaret. Both rely on three vertical bands extending along the façades of the tower. The central band is adorned with large interlaced arches, while the side bands are filled with

²⁷Rachid Bourouiba, op. cit., p. 210.

²⁸Ibid., p. 215.

geometric latticework, as opposed to the blind and recessed arches characteristic of the Bani Hammad minaret²⁹.

- **Small Mosque in Manar Palace:** In 1968, a small mosque was discovered inside Al-Manar Palace, measuring 1.80 meters in length and 1.70 meters in width. It is accessed through a doorway 0.74 meters wide. The northern wall measures 0.76 meters in thickness and 1.02 meters in width, while the western wall stands 1.03 meters high, 1.80 meters wide, and up to 0.76 meters thick. The mosque is separated from the palace nave and is distinguished by Qur'anic motifs executed in stucco, which greatly enhance its artistic value.

This mosque can be regarded as the smallest in the Islamic world and is unique in Algeria as the only mosque from the medieval period to be incorporated within a palace. The motifs of its stucco decoration rank among the finest examples of Islamic art, notable for their distinctive and unparalleled designs³⁰.

- **Architectural Porcelain and Ceramic Pots:** During excavations at Bani Hammad Castle, a variety of architectural porcelain and ceramic vessels were unearthed. Among the findings were bricks shaped like half-conical stems, ranging in size from small to large. Different types of tiles were also discovered, including both plain and glazed varieties, as well as three types of rectangular tiles. Another significant find was a large jar uncovered in the mosque of Qal'at Bani Hammad³¹.

- **Basins:** In the western part of Manar Palace, a uniquely shaped basin was discovered. It was designed in the form of a truncated pyramid, topped by an element with a square base decorated on each side with four semicircles. The beauty of this decorative basin was further enhanced by the presence of four sculpted lions placed within the semicircles, each depicted spouting water from its mouth, giving the structure a striking artistic character.

- **Coins:** On the second day of excavations in September 1967, a treasure of coins was uncovered in the western part of the hall of the Great Mosque. The find consisted of about 1,000 silver pieces and 18 gold pieces, along with several ornaments³². This discovery is particularly significant because, unlike the six dinars unearthed at Manar Palace in 1962, no Almohad coins were found at this site. One of the most distinctive features of silver dirhams is their square shape. They lack the name of the governor or the minting house and are decorated with inscriptions arranged in three horizontal lines. These coins provide important evidence of continued life in the fortress even after the arrival of the Almohads, reflecting ongoing economic activity in the region during that period.

The design of these coins is unique: a circle is divided into four parts by a square inscribed within it. This feature distinguishes them from earlier Hammadid dinars, which were purely circular without internal divisions. The central inscriptions inside the square reveal an artistic style different from that of the 18 gold dinars discovered. Of these, eleven bear the name of the first Almohad caliph, 'Abd al-Mu'min ibn 'Alī, six bear the name of his successor, Abū Ya'qūb, and one dinar carries the name of the Hafsīd caliph Abū Zakariyyā³³.

- **Jewelry Discoveries:** Among the most remarkable finds at the site of the Castle of Bani Hammad are items of jewelry. Although these discoveries were not the first at the site, having been

²⁹Rachid Bourouiba, op. cit., pp. 215.

³⁰Ibid., p. 220.

³¹Rachid Bourouiba, op. cit., pp. 276–278.

³²Bourouiba, Rachid. "Monnaies et bijoux trouvés à la Qal'a des Bani Hammād." *Revue de l'Occident Musulman et de la Méditerranée*, no. 8, 1970, p. 68.

³³Nadhir Gouadria, op. cit., pp. 134–135.

preceded by the work of earlier researchers, most notably Clossian Golfan, they remain significant. The collection includes earrings, bracelets, rings, medallions, and silver ornaments. What distinguishes these pieces is their clear difference from those unearthed by previous researchers, adding a new dimension to the study of jewelry and ornamentation in the region³⁴.

- **Study of Unified Dinars (1965):** In 1965, a study was conducted on six unified dinars discovered during excavations at Bani Hammad Castle. These coins date back to the reign of Caliph 'Abd al-Mu'min ibn 'Alī and provide valuable evidence of significant economic activity during the Almohad era, linking the findings to the broader historical context of the region³⁵.

5. Academic Supervision:

In addition to his fieldwork, Prof. Rachid Bourouiba supervised several doctoral theses during the third phase of research, contributing to the training of a generation of scholars specializing in archaeology and Islamic history.

6. National and International Scientific Contributions:

Prof. Rachid Bourouiba made distinguished and substantial contributions to national and international scientific forums. He delivered numerous lectures and participated in several major conferences at both the national and international levels. Among his most notable contributions were³⁶:

- **Paris Forum:** Prof. Rachid Bourouiba delivered a lecture entitled "*Algerian Islamic Niche Patterns*", in which he examined the forms of niches in Algeria and highlighted their unique characteristics.
- **Conference in Italy:** He presented a lecture on "*The Influence of Islamic Art on European Christian Art*", exploring the cultural interactions and mutual exchanges between Islamic and Christian artistic traditions.
- **Malta Gatherings:** He participated in two international meetings in Malta, where he presented on "*The Influence of Synthetic Art on Norman Art*", reviewing the reciprocal influences between North African Islamic art and Western medieval art.
- **Ibn Khaldoun Forum, Algeria (1978):** He was among the principal organizers of the Ibn Khaldoun Forum, held in Algeria from 21 to 24 June 1978, where he delivered an intervention entitled "*The Place of Architecture in the Thought of Ibn Khaldoun.*"
- **Tenth Conference of Arab Archaeologists, Tlemcen:** He presented a paper on "*The Houses of Sidrata,*" emphasizing their significance for understanding the architectural and historical dimensions of Algerian civilization.
- **Lecture on Bani Hammad Castle (1983):** He delivered a lecture on Bani Hammad Castle from both archaeological and international perspectives, underlining its historical importance and architectural ingenuity.

³⁴ Ibid, p. 135.

³⁵ Sharifa Tayan Sahad, op. cit., p. 49.

³⁶ Ibid., p. 51.

- He also took part in numerous other national and international forums and conferences, which cannot all be detailed within this framework.

7. Conclusion

What can be concluded about the character of Professor Rachid Borouiba is his profound love for Algeria and its Islamic heritage. From a historical perspective, he adopted a distinctive approach to recounting events, skillfully employing myths and tales in a creative manner that enabled readers to engage with the history of Algeria and the Maghreb in a more captivating way.

From an archaeological standpoint, he laid the foundations of an Algerian school in the field of archaeology. His works were characterized by a strong commitment to scientific precision, deliberately avoiding literary embellishment. He concentrated his studies on meticulous details, reducing historical preliminaries and moving directly to the analysis of specific topics. With particular attention to designs, shapes, and decorative motifs, he made a substantial contribution to the rediscovery of Algeria's cultural heritage, ultimately becoming regarded as the dean of Algerian archaeologists.

His scholarship remains an indispensable reference for anyone studying Algeria's monuments during its flourishing Islamic period, and he enriched academic libraries with a vast body of references and articles published in scientific journals.

In conclusion, the efforts of Professor Rachid Borouiba are perhaps best captured in the words of Dr. Khalifa El Junaidy, may God have mercy on him, delivered in his honour upon his retirement in 1981³⁷. He described Borouiba as one who raised the flag of Algeria and brought to light the significance of Algerian Islamic monuments among nations, after these monuments had long remained unknown.

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³⁷Mohamed Al-Tayeb Oqâb, op. cit., p. 8.

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