

The Relationships between the Ottomans and the Sufi Orders in Algeria during the Ottoman Period (1516-1830)

العلاقات بين العثمانيين والطرق الصوفية في الجزائر خلال الفترة العثمانية (1830-1516)

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ملخص

أقام العثمانيون، منذ وصولهم بحراً في أوائل القرن السادس عشر، علاقات خاصة مع قادة الصوفية المحليين. واستمر هذا التحالف، لا سيما خلال المرحلة التأسيسية لإيالة الجزائر (1516-1671)، حيث توطدت علاقاتهم بشيوخ الصوفية، وأسدوهم إدارة الأوقاف، ووفروا لهم امتيازات عديدة. يهدف هذا البحث إلى تحليل مظاهر التحالف بين السلطة العثمانية والزعماء الدينيين المحليين. وسنقوم بتحديد الطرق الصوفية التي ساندت السلطة ودعمتها، ومتبعين تأثيرها على المجتمع المحلي، وكيف ساهمت في ترسيخ وتوسيع النفوذ العثماني في المناطق الداخلية والأرياف؛ كما سنحاول توضيح تطور العلاقة بين السلطة والطرق الصوفية خلال ما يُعرف بمرحلة الاستقرار أو الدايات (1671-1830)؛ بالإضافة إلى تحليل أسباب ونتائج ظهور بعض الثورات المحلية التي قادتها طرق صوفية، كالدرقاوية والتيجانية، وكيف شكلت تلك الثورات تهديداً للنظام السياسي القائم. وعلاوة على ذلك، سنسعى إلى إدراك الوسائل والأساليب التي استخدمتها السلطة لمواجهة الطرق الصوفية المعادية والقضاء عليها، وتأثيراتها على الوضع السياسي والاجتماعي في الجزائر خلال الفترة العثمانية.

الكلمات المفتاحية:

العثمانيون؛ إيالة الجزائر؛ الطرق الصوفية، أوقاف الزاوية؛ الانتفاضات الصوفية؛ المجتمع ومشايخ الزوايا.

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Abstract:

The Ottomans, since their arrival by sea in the early 16th century, instituted special relationships with the local Sufi leaders. This alliance continued especially during the founding phase of the Eyalet of Cezayir Garp (1516-1671), when they got closer to the Sufi sheikhs, assigned endowments to them, and granted them numerous privileges.

The main aim of this research is to analyze the manifestations of this alliance between the authority and Algerian religious leaders. We will seek to identify the Sufi orders that supported and backed Turkish authority, tracing their influence on local society and the way they helped to enforce and expand Ottoman Turkish power in the inland and rural areas.

We will also attempt to put clear the evolution of the relationship between the authority and Sufi orders during the so-called stability phase (1671-1830), as well as to analyze the causes and consequences of the emergence of certain local revolts led by Sufi orders, such as the Derqâwiyya and Tidjâniyya Orders, and how they even posed a threat to the extant political system. Furthermore, we will look up for understanding the means and methods used by the authority to both counter and eliminate hostile Sufi orders and their effects on the political and social situation in Algeria during the Ottoman period.

Keywords:

Ottomans; Eyalet of Cezayir Garp (Algiers); Sufi orders; zawiya's endowments; Sufi uprisings; society and sheikhs of zawiya's.

Introduction:

The Ottoman period in Algeria is considered a pivotal stage in the history of Algeria in the modern era. Perhaps the most important of these changes is the arrival of the Barbarossa brothers in the 16th century, who made the city of Algiers their new capital and linked its destiny to the Mediterranean Sea and the Ottoman Empire, making it one of the most important maritime cities whose reputation and naval power exceeded the Mediterranean geographical scope.

The second advantage is the establishment of the pillars of a strong and modern central state and the elimination of the power of local tribal emirates.

The third advantage is the distinct social composition that characterized the cosmopolitan Algerian society, which contributed to the diversity and creation of an environment of coexistence between the various ethnic groups that all came from the sea and settled in Algeria, such as the Ottoman Turks, Andalusians, Sephardic Jews, and the Renegades, along with the indigenous Arabs and Berbers.

Through this research paper, we try to investigate and analyze the relationship of the local spiritual authority with the newcomers from the Turks in the 16th century, to know the reasons that made the Turks, at the time of the Barbarossa brothers, who were alien to Algerian society in terms of ethnicity and language, find an environment and a status through which they could secure the support of the heads of the religious brotherhoods and local tribes and their acceptance as a new Islamic authority in the region.

We also try to investigate the reasons that led to the existence of a natural alliance between the early Turks and the local spiritual authority since the 16th century and how that relationship developed after the stability phase since the 18th century and the emergence of the rebellion movement of the sheikhs of the religious brotherhoods and Sufi orders that began to compete and challenge the Turkish authority and oppose its legitimacy at the regional level.

1. The alliance between the cheikh of the Zawiya and the Turks during the founding period in the 16th century.

Before discussing the relationship between Sufi sheikhs and the Turks, it is important to remember that the spread of Sufi orders and lodges in North Africa, both in cities and in rural areas, dates back to the Islamic Middle Ages, particularly the 13th and 14th centuries. These lodges and zawiyas combined worship, religious education, and jihad at the same time. Many sheikhs of the zawiyas took refuge in the coastal strongholds of cities like Bejaia, Tènes, Annaba, Jijel, and mountain peaks to spread religious teachings and urge students and tribes to jihad, especially after the fall of the Almohades State in 1212 and the beginning of the Spanish Christian Reconquista in Andalusia under the leadership of the Kingdoms of

Aragon and Castile. The situation of chaos and political division those North African countries experienced in the 13th century, and the beginning of planning by the Spanish monarchy to seize the Maghreb coastal cities, were noticed by many Sufi figures who called for preparing equipment and supplies for jihad and defending the borders of Dar al-Islam. In this context, we mention a letter on jihad by the Sufi and religious scholar, buried in the city of Algiers, Sidi 'Abd al-Rahman al-Thaâlibi (1384-1471). In it, he asked the rulers of the Emirate of Bejaia and its affiliated tribes to prepare for jihad against any attempted occupation by what he called "the Roman infidels"¹.

Certainly, the fall of Granada on January 2, 1492, and the beginning of the arrival of the first waves of Andalusian emigrants to the coasts of North Africa, escaping the Inquisition, as well as the beginning of the Spanish campaigns against the Maghreb coasts from 1497 and 1505, pushed many sheikhs of the Zawiyas to call for jihad and the protection of Dar al-Islam, as is the case with the scholar and jurist, Ibn Ruqayya al-Tlemsani, who states in his manuscript: "That if one of the Islamic maritime enclaves is attacked by Christian infidels, that enclave city becomes a Ribat for jihad for ten years. If the same maritime enclave is attacked by the infidels for the second time, this place becomes a Ribat for jihad for a period of one hundred and twenty years, and in the event of an attack on it for the third time, it becomes a Ribat for jihad for eternity"².

On the same subject, the man of letters and scholar, El-Wartilani mentions in his manuscript how he used to visit the Ribat of Bejaia port every Ramadan to perform the duty of Ribat and protect it as an obligation of Jihad for the sake of God³. In the same

¹ خبزاوي (يوسف): "رسالة عبد الرحمن الثعالبي في الجهاد - دراسة تحليلية -"، مجلة الشريعة والدراسات الإسلامية، مج. 14، ع. 2، 2023، ص. 140.

² بن رقية التلمساني (محمد بن محمد بن عبد الرحمن): الزهرة النائرة فيما جرى في الجزائر حين أغارت عليها جنود الكفرة، ضبط النص وعلق عليه خير الدين سعدي، جيجل، أوراق ثقافية للنشر والتوزيع، 2017، ص. 3-4.

³ شذري معمر (رشيدة): "السلطة الروحية والسلطة السياسية في الجزائر العثمانية (1518-1830م)"، دكتوراه العلوم في التاريخ الحديث، جامعة الجزائر 2، 2018، ص. 314.

context, we mention the message written by the jurist and Sufi sheikh, Abd al-Rahman al-Yaaqubi in 1548, who gathered sheikhs and heads of tribes: Angad, Beni Snous, and Trara in the countryside of Tlemcen, calling for the revival of the Ribat of Jihad in the region to confront the Spanish attacks on the borders of the Zayyanid Emirate in Tlemcen⁴.

Certainly, the significant geopolitical change that the western region of the western Mediterranean basin witnessed, after the fall of Granada and the rapid occupation of all the coasts of North Africa by Spanish Christian forces between 1497-1510, and the beginning of the entry and presence of Ottoman Turkish sailors in the region, would make the Maghreb region one of the most important milestone of conflict between the Ottoman Empire and the Spanish Habsburg Empire in the 16th century. The Ottoman Turks, since their arrival in the Maghreb region, realized the importance and influence of Sufi and Marabouts figures on the local population and their call for maritime jihad against the Spaniards in alliance with Turkish sailors. The famous Turkish-Ottoman sailor, Piri Reis, left us in his important manuscript "Kitab-I Bahriye" (Book of Navigation), which he authored in 1520, a historical testimony about the relationship that the Turks established with the Sufi figures in Algeria.

This book came in the form of a detailed maritime report on the Mediterranean region and contains dozens of nautical charts of the Maghreb coastal area. Piri Reis was interested in drawing the strongholds of jihad there and mentioning the most famous sheikhs of the Zawiyas, such as Sidi Marwan in the cities of Ténès and Annaba, and the Sufi Sheikh Mohammed al-Touati in the city of Béjaïa⁵. Piri Reis also mentions how he arrived with his uncle Kemal Reis on board three ships to the coastal city of Bejaia in 1502, which contained within its walls about 18,000 houses, and where they found the sufi sheikh, Sidi Mohammed al-Touati who was about 100 years old.

⁴ بن سحنون الراشدي (أحمد بن محمد بن علي): الثغر الجماني في ابتسام الثغر الوهراني، تحقيق وتقديم المهدي البوعبدلي، الجزائر، وزارة التعليم الأصلي والشؤون الدينية، 1973، ص. 19-20.

⁵ Benafri (Chakib) & Bostan (Idris): Piri Reis'in İzinde, Kitab-i Bahriye'ye göre. 16. Yüzyılda Cezayir, Ankara, Türk Tarih Kurumu, 2022, p. 77.

By the friendship that related the Turkish sailors to this Sufi sheikh, they settled and spent two winters in the mentioned city⁶. And he adds that when they advanced with the ships to enter the port of Bejaia, the inhabitants went out in boats and received them and told him that they were not afraid of them despite being the first Turks who arrived in their city because the mentioned Sufi sheikh told them, that a group of sea raiders came from the lands of the Eastern Romans would arrive fighting the Christian infidels, so receive them well and cooperate with them⁷. Indeed, the Ottoman Turkish sailors realized that any successful project for stability and expansion in the Maghreb region could not be carried out without the support of the sheikhs of the religious zawiyas, who were their natural allies. Assistance and support were provided, and local tribes were mobilized to the side of these Turks, as they were considered protectors of the Islamic religion through their naval jihad against the Spaniards, and through assisting Andalusians to immigrate and settle in Algerian coastal cities. And the truth is, the tasks of the Ottoman-Turkish sailors, in alliance with the sheikhs of the religious zawiyas in Algeria, can be summarized in two main missions:

1- Working to recover the coastal cities and forts that were occupied by the Spanish forces, such as Annaba, Bejaia, Jijel, Algiers, Ténès, Mostaganem, and Oran.

2- Besieging and eliminating the small local emirates that submitted to the Spanish forces and began paying taxes to the Spanish monarchy, and also rejected the obligation of jihad to preserve their thrones and authority in the region, and which considered the presence of the Turks a threat to their authority.

The emergence and beginning of the Barbarossa brothers maritime activity in the Maghreb region since 1505 is considered a distinct period in the establishment of Ottoman authority in the region and for deepening relations between the Barbarossa brothers and the noble religious families and men of the Zawiya in Algeria. The Barbarossa brothers realized from the outset that the strategy of approaching powerful local families with religious authority over

⁶ **Mantran (Robert)**: « Description des cotes de l'Algérie dans le *Kitab-i Bahriye* de Piri Reis », R.O.M.M., n° 15-16, 1973, pp. 163-164.

⁷ **Benafri & Bostan**, Op. cit., p. 123.

the tribes and entering into an alliance with them was the key to establishing their rule and authority in the region.

So it is not surprising when the Barbarossa brothers and their fellow sea reis first settled on the island of Djerba, home of the Ibadi Kharijite sect, which they adopted after its liberation from Spanish forces and with the approval of the Hafsid ruler of Tunis, Abu Abdullah Mohammed al-Mutawakkil, as a base for their maritime activity and the privateering against Christian ships belonging to the Italian and Spanish monarchy. But in the face of threats from Emperor Charles V (1500-1558), the Hafsid ruler reneged on the agreement with the Barbarossa brothers, who moved their activity to the port of Jijel in Algeria after its liberation from the Genoese occupation in 1512⁸.

The reputation and fame that the Barbarossa brothers gained in the maritime jihad movement against Spanish ships and interests, and their assistance to the Andalusians in migrating and settling on the Algerian coasts, prompted the ruler of Bejaia, Abd al-Rahman, to seek their help in liberating the city from the hands of the Spanish forces in 1512. But despite the failure of the Ottoman siege and the local Berber forces due to the strength of the Spanish fortifications and artillery, the Turkish-Algerian cooperation was an opportunity for the Barbarossa brothers to establish relations with the sheikhs of Sufi zawiyas and local tribal leaders in the region, which was shared by both the religious family of Ibn al-Qadi, affiliated with the Rahmâniyya Sufi order (*Tarîqa*) and the Beni Abbas family in the fortress, which controlled all the tribes and clans south of Bejaia. Despite the failure of the second siege to liberate Bejaia by the Barbarossa brothers' forces and the Berber forces, or the Zouaoua according to the local term, in 1514, which lasted 24 days, due to the depletion of gunpowder and the Hafsid ruler's refusal to supply them with military equipment, as well as the strength of the Spanish fortifications in the upper city, Hayreddin Barbarossa was able to establish friendly relations with local religious families, and they began to view these Turkish sailors as

⁸ خنوف (علي): تاريخ منطقة جيجل قديما وحديثا، ط. 2، الجزائر، منشورات الأنيس، 2007، ص ص.

protectors of the Dar al-Islam and a source of hope for liberating the cities and coasts from the grip of the Spaniards.

After that, in the year 1516, a delegation of scholars and jurists from the city of Algiers went to Jijel to request the assistance of the Barbarossa brothers to recover the Peñón of Algiers, which had been under the control of the Spanish military garrison since 1510 and which had placed the city of Algiers and its port under their control, in addition to the submission of the city's sheikh, Salim al-Toumi, and his acceptance of the conditions imposed on him by the Spanish monarchy. Indeed, the Barbarossa brothers entered with those forces consisting of Turkish sailors and allied Berber land forces led by Ahmed Ibn al-Qadi, ruler of the Emirate of Koukou, into the city of Algiers in 1516. However, their efforts were not sufficient to liberate the Peñón of Algiers from the Spanish forces stationed there. The failure of the Barbarossa brothers, Oruç and Khayreddin, who were conducting naval jihad in the region independently of the Ottoman Empire, was an opportunity for the sheikh of the Thaâliba tribe in Algiers, Salim al-Toumi, to revolt against the Barbarossa brothers and conspire with the Spaniards to expel the Turks from the city. This was considered treason by the local ruler at a time when the jurists, sheikh of religious brotherhoods, were calling for jihad and the defence of Dar al-Islam, and standing by the plight of the Andalusians fleeing Spain and the Inquisition. The wisdom and intelligence of the Barbarossa brothers made the matter of killing Salim al-Toumi come after consultation and agreement with the scholars and jurists of Algiers⁹.

The truth is that Khayreddin Barbarossa's stay in Algiers between 1516 and 1520, allowed him to establish distinguished relations with the sheikhs of the Zawiyas, who showed their willingness to ally and encourage Turkish sailors to confront the Spanish campaigns and liberate the coastal sites and cities that were still under Spanish occupation. Each of the Sheikh of the Zawiya and the Sufi Sidi Ahmed al-Kebir in the city of Blida, and Sidi Ahmed ibn Yousef, Sheikh of the Shâdhiliyya order in the city of Miliana, and Sheikh al-Faqih Ahmed al-Ghobrini in the city of

⁹ [المرادي (سيد علي)]: مذكرات خير الدين بربروس، ترجمة محمد دراج، الجزائر، شركة الأصالة للنشر والتوزيع، 2010، ص ص. 78-83.

Cherchell, as well as the Sufi Sheikh, Sidi Ali M'barek, residing in the city of Kolea, showed their alliance with the Barbarossa brothers and mobilized the tribes to support these Turks in their jihad against the Spanish forces.

The victory achieved by the Barbarossa brothers in repelling the Spanish naval campaign led by Diego de Vera, in front of the city of Algiers on September 30, 1516, increased the fame of these Turkish sailors as protectors of the Dar al-Islam. Delegations of scholars and jurists began arriving from other Algerian cities, such as Ténès and Tlemcen, asking help to liberate them from the Spanish occupation and dependency.

The Barbarossa brothers understood well that any successful military movement within the Algerian territory could only come with the approval of the Sufi sheikhs. Indeed, Oruç Reis received the support of the local tribe thanks to the mediation of the Sufi Sheikh Sidi Ahmed ibn Yousef, sheikh and saint of the city of Miliana. Through this support, he was able to eliminate the ruler of the city of Ténès, Hamid el Abd, in June 1517, who was cooperating with the Spaniards. Sources mention that this victory was due to the support of local religious sheikh, such as Sheikh Ibn al-Meghoufel in Chlef, who tasked his son and the tribes of the region to work with Oruç Reis to recover the city of Tlemcen from the hands of the Spaniards. And also to support the sheikh, the faqih, Al-Mejâji, known as "Abahloul," in the city of Ténès, who sought to establish his zawiya since the 16th century, which worked to receive Andalusian refugees, fleeing from Spain, as he used to shelter students and those intending to perform the duty of jihad in the region¹⁰.

Oruç Reis and his brother Ishaq Reis, accompanied by Turkish and local forces, were able to advance westward into the Algerian region and annex the Qalaat Bani Rachid to protect their return route after responding to a call for help from the deposed Zayyanid Emir Abu Zayan, who had been expelled by Emir Abu Hammu III, who seized the ruling base of the Zayyanid state in Tlemcen with the help of Spanish forces. The truth is that the rapid movement of Reis Oruç and his forces towards the city of Tlemcen was a strategic mistake, given the size of the Spanish forces present in the

¹⁰ شدرى معمر (رشيدة): المرجع السابق، ص ص. 190-191 و 315.

region, in Oran and Mers El-Kebir, and the refusal of the inhabitants of Tlemcen to have Turkish soldiers in their city, as they were foreign strangers entering a city ruled by the Zayyanid state since the Middle Ages¹¹.

The cost of this military advance of Oruç Reis's forces towards Tlemcen, in the heart of the important Spanish presence in Oran, was exorbitant. The allied Zayyanid-Spanish forces first eliminated Isaac Reis and his force at the Qalaat Bani Rachid. Then, they besieged the forces of Oruç Reis on the outskirts of Tlemcen and pursued Oruç Reis, who was killed in the Battle of Oued el-Maleh in May 1518.

Indeed, Khayreddin Barbarossa was in a very difficult situation after the *death of his brothers at the same time. He remained alone in the city of Algiers, surrounded by local forces and sheikhs of zawiyas. This led the Spaniards to send a naval campaign led by "Hugo de Moncada" in 1518 to eradicate the Turkish presence in the city.* Despite the successful resistance of Khayreddin Barbarossa to the Spanish expedition, his position remained fragile among the local tribes. Especially in front of the ruler of the Emirate of Koukou, Ahmed Ibn al-Qadi, who saw the continued presence of Khayreddin Barbarossa in the city of Algiers as a rival to him and was not pleased with him because he was unable to recover the Peñón of Algiers from the hands of the Spaniards.

Indeed, the alliance between the two parties was at stake at that time. There is no doubt that the wisdom and strategic vision of a leader always appear during crises, and this is what was proven by the plan of Khayreddin Barbarossa when he decided to "kill two birds with one stone" by sending a delegation of dignitaries from the city of Algiers to the Ottoman Sultanate in Istanbul, led by Sheikh Al-Faqih Abu Al-Abbas Ahmad Ibn Al-Qadi in the year 1519, as a step towards reconciliation with the Ottomans dynasty and congratulating Sultan Selim I after his entry into Egypt in 1517, on the one hand, and presenting an offer for Algiers to join under

¹¹ سعد الله (أبو القاسم): أبحاث وآراء في تاريخ الجزائر، ج. 1، الجزائر، دار البصائر، 2017، ص ص. 163 و 170-171.

the umbrella of Ottoman rule, on the other hand¹². The truth is that through this intelligent work by Barbarossa, he opened up a new destiny for himself in his political and military career by putting an end to his independent maritime activity since 1505, to become during the reign of Sultan Suleiman the Magnificent 1520-1566 an admiral and the first official in charge of the Ottoman fleet in the Mediterranean Sea throughout the 16th century. As for Algeria, it will become the first Ottoman province in North Africa and will be a central link in the Ottoman-Spanish conflict in the western basin of the Mediterranean during the modern era.

Certainly, Barbarossa's position in the region was strengthened after accepting the offer to join, so he became the legitimate representative of the Ottoman Sultan in those far Maghreb borders, especially after obtaining military support and sending 2000 Janissaries¹³.

But despite Ottoman support for Khayreddin Barbarossa, Ahmad ibn al-Qadi, with the leadership of the local tribes of the Mitidja region, was able to expel Barbarossa and his Turkish forces from the city of Algiers. Khayreddin withdrew to his first military base, Jijel, where he remained for five years (1520-1525). From there, he made contact and formed an alliance with the powerful Berber family of Beni Abbas, the Al-Mokrani, who were hostile to the Berber family of Al Ibn al-Qadi. The alliance that Barbarossa established with Sheikh Abd al-Aziz Amokrane helped him ensure the safe passage of Turkish forces through the mountains of the Bibans region and expand Khayreddin's political influence in the eastern region. He annexed the city of Collo in 1520, and entered the city of Constantine in 1521 with the support of its jurists and sheikhs, especially the Ibn Fekkoun family, who remained allies of the Ottomans in Algeria until the French occupation in 1830, and then the city of Annaba in 1522 after the support of its Sufi sheikh, al-Saci al-Bouni.

¹² التميمي (عبد الجليل): "أول رسالة من أهالي مدينة الجزائر إلى السلطان سليم الأول سنة 1519"،
المجلة التاريخية المغاربية، ع. 6، جويلية 1976، ص ص. 118-119.

¹³ Chevalier (Corinne): Les trente premières années de l'état d'Alger, 1510-1541. Alger, O.P.U., 1986, pp. 39-40.

All these events were in favor of Khayreddin, who received news of the aversion of the inhabitants of the city of Algiers to the authority of Ibn al-Qadi and his mismanagement of the affairs of the population, in addition to his submission once again to the mercy of the Spanish forces stationed in the Peñón. Barbarossa's forces reached the port of Dellys in 1525, and the Berber forces led by Ahmed ibn El-Kadi succeeded each other, who was defeated and killed in the battle of "Theniet Beni Aïcha", which opened the doors for Barbarossa's return to the city of Algiers and the reorganization of his control again with the help of his Sufi sheikhs allies, Sidi Ahmed ibn Youssef al-Miliani, Sidi Brahim al-Ghobrini, and Sidi Ali ibn Ahmed al-Mejâji, on each of the cities of Cherchell, Ténès, and Mostaganem in 1526¹⁴.

After his return to the city of Algiers and arranging the administrative and military affairs there, all his efforts were focused on preparing for the attack on the Peñón of Algiers, which had remained in the hands of the Spaniards for 18 years. The intense artillery attack of the Turkish-local forces against the fort and the Spanish garrison culminated in victory in May 1529 and the surrender of the Spanish military garrison officer "Martin de Vargas". Following this victory, Khayreddin demolished the fort and thus created the pier of the port of Algiers. This port included the four islands near the city, which became from that time the capital of the Algiers Regency, which terrified the Mediterranean world with its reputation and the strength of its navy until the French occupation in 1830.

The summoning of Khayreddin Pasha to Istanbul by Sultan Suleiman the Magnificent in 1533 to appoint him admiral of the Ottoman fleet and the first Beylerbey of the Eyalet of Algiers was, in reality, aimed at studying the military strategy for opening a new front of conflict and encircling the Spanish forces of Emperor Charles V in the western basin of the Mediterranean Sea. The implementation of this plan began in 1534 when Khayreddin Barbarossa, accompanied by naval and land forces, in which Sheikh Sufi Yahya ibn Mohammed ibn Fekkoun from Constantine participated, entered Tunisia and deposed the Hafsid Sultan Moulay

¹⁴ **Gaïd (Mouloud):** L'Algérie sous les Turcs, Alger, Éditions Mimouni, 1986, p. 51.

Hassan, who was an ally of the Spaniards. When Emperor Charles V decided to lead a large naval campaign consisting of 412 ships to occupy Tunis, it was a clear declaration of opening a direct front of conflict between the Ottomans and the Spaniards in the Mediterranean. The Ottoman and local forces could not withstand the forces of Charles V, who entered the city of Tunis in July 1535¹⁵.

After securing the straits between Bizerte and the Gulf of Sicily and placing the ports of the eastern basin of the Mediterranean under the control of the Spanish forces, the next step for Emperor Charles V was to deliver the knockout blow to the Ottoman presence in Algiers, taking advantage of Khayreddin Barbarossa's absence in Istanbul. Emperor Charles V himself led this large naval campaign consisting of 150 ships and 10,000 soldiers, as well as high-ranking nobles and naval officers such as Hernán Cortés, the conqueror of Mexico, Admiral Andrea Doria, Bernardin de Mendoza, and Duke of Alba. Deputy of Barbarossa in the Eyalet of Algiers, the renegade of Italian origins (Sardinia Island), Hassan Agha, was ready to defend the city of Algiers when Charles V's fleet appeared on the horizon on October 19, 1541.

The battle that took place between the walls of the city of Algiers between the two sides on the 23rd and 24th of October, in the heart of a sea storm that led to the destruction of most of the Spanish ships and the loss of war equipment and many dead and wounded among the Spanish forces, pushed the emperor to withdraw towards Italy. It was indeed a major naval defeat for Emperor Charles V and his navy, but at the same time it was a great victory for the Algerian Eyalet, which from this event until the French occupation was called "Algiers, the house of jihad and Algiers, protected by the blessing of the Sufi sheikhs in it and the city fortified with 1000 cannons"¹⁶.

Local historical sources mention that this great victory is due to not only the wisdom and successful defensive measures of Hassan

¹⁵ **Sadok (Boubaker)**: « L'empereur Charles-Quint et le sultan hafside Mawlāy al-Ḥasan (1525-1550) », in : *Empreintes espagnoles dans l'histoire tunisienne*, Gijón, Ediciones Trea, 2011, pp. 19-26.

¹⁶ **Malki (Sofiane)**: « El Emperador Carlos V y la utopía de un éxito naval contra Argel en 1541 », *Imago Interculturalité et Didactique*, vol. 22, n° 2, 2024, pp. 43-57.

Agha, but also to the participation and blessings of the sheikhs of the zawiyas of the city of Algiers. According to these historical accounts, the Wali Dada Sufi, with the help of Sheikh Marabout, Sidi Bougdour, approached the seashore where Charles V's fleet appeared on the horizon, and they muttered and prayed against the fleet of the infidels, whose defeat they predicted, according to their religious miracles, in front of the walls of the city of Algiers¹⁷.

Since the establishment of the Regency of Algiers, it has been widely known that the Turkish ruling class derived its political legitimacy not only from the defense of Algiers against European Christian campaigns and the fulfillment of the duty of jihad, but also from the need to cultivate close ties with the sheikhs of the zawiyas and the marabouts, providing them with material and moral support. Within the walls of Algiers alone, there were approximately 32 shrines and 12 zawiyas, to which waqfs and donations were allocated during religious festivals, and with which the spoils of war were shared.

2. The status of Zawiyas Sheikhs with the Turkish rulers

Many Deys of Algiers held great respect for the Sufi orders and the shrines of Sufi sheikhs in the city of Algiers, especially the cemetery and Zawiya of Sidi Abd al-Rahman al-Thaâlibi, where the shrines of many Sufis, who were famous for their religious and scientific status and miracles are located, such as the shrine of Wali Dada, Wali Sidi Mansour, and Wali Sidi Felih. For this reason, many of the Turkish authorities in Algeria preferred to be buried in the same cemetery of the aforementioned Sufi orders, as was the case for Hajji Ahmed Pasha in 1697, and Ibrahim Pasha who died in 1720, as well as Dey Mustafa Pasha in 1808, and Dey Ali Khodja who died in 1818 and was buried near the shrine of Sidi Abd al-Rahman al-Thaâlibi. Before him, Dey Omar Pasha was buried in the same cemetery in 1817. In the same cemetery, we also find the grave of the last Bey and leader of the resistance against the French occupation in Constantine, Hajji Ahmed Bey, who died in 1851. Here, the respect, blessing, and firm belief of the Turkish authorities in Algeria, as well as the inhabitants, in the importance of burial next to religious men and Sufis, is evident. In fact, this behaviour

¹⁷ Chevalier (Corinne): Op. cit., p. 95.

and belief are shared by all Islamic societies and even the Ottoman sultans, who, even though a significant number of them were buried in their own mosques, a number of them preferred to be buried in the cemetery of Sayyid Abu Ayyub al-Ansari in Istanbul, because of the religious and honourable status of this companion, whose shrine is still a platform and a distinct religious symbol for the Turkish people in general.

On the other hand, thanks to the information preserved in one of the Algerian state registers during the Ottoman period, known as the Register of Administrative Protocol of Dey Chaabane for the year 1691, mentions are made regarding the names of religious zawiyas, brotherhoods, and even women among them, who were allocated shares of the maritime catch. At the head of that list, we find: the great Sufi sheikh, Sidi Abd al-Rahman al-Thaâlabi 2%, Sidi Wali Dada 2%, Sidi Yaaqoub 2%, Sidi Bennour 2%, Sidi Mansour 2%, Sidi Bougdour 2%, Sidi Ahmed ibn Abdullah 2%, Sidi ibn Omar 2%, Sidi Felih 2%, Zaouia al-Marabout 1%, Sidi Ali al-Sharif 2%, Sidi Mekhlouf 2%, Sidi Helal 2%, Sidi Saadi 2%, Zaouia Ayoub 1%, Zaouia Abbâs 1%, Sidi Mohammed ibn Mehrouma 2%, Sidi Mahrez 3%, Sidi Yahya al-Jabbar 3%, the female saint Tasaadit 1%, the female saint Zerzoura 1%, Sidi Ali al-Helfawi 1%, Sidi Ali Zewaoui 1%, etc.¹⁸

The Turkish rulers continued to deal with the Sheikhs of the zawiya as a strategic ally, both in cities and rural areas, especially during the founding of the Regency of Algiers in the 16th and 17th centuries. During the reign of Hassan ibn Khayreddin Pasha (1544-1551), he sought the friendship and support of the leader of the Berber Sufi family, Abd al-Aziz Amokrane, to secure the roads and mountain passes between the city of Algiers and the eastern Beylik of Constantine for the Turkish forces, as part of collecting taxes from the local tribes during the spring and autumn seasons. Thanks to this support, the Turks were able to establish a number of forts and military centers along the roads and rural markets, such as Bordj Hamza, Bordj Bou Arreridj, Bordj Zemoura, Bordj Boghni, Bordj Sour El-Ghozlane, etc. In the same context, and thanks to the

¹⁸ [محمد الكاتب وآخرون]: دفتر التشریفات، المكتبة الوطنية الجزائرية، مصلحة المخطوطات، الجزائر، مخطوط رقم 1649، و. 138 ظ°.

support of local Sufi families, the governor Salih Reis (1552-1556), with his forces consisting of 3,000 soldiers and accompanied by 8,000 horsemen led by Abd al-Aziz Amokrane, was able to penetrate the edges of the desert, impose Ottoman authority, and impose taxes on the leader and sheikh of the Ouargla and Tougourt region in southeastern Algeria¹⁹. Also, thanks to these distinguished relations with the sheikhs and religious leaders in the Berber region of Bejaia and Jijel, (like sheikh el-Mekki Amokrane and his son, Ahmed ibn Ferhat), the Turks were able to secure the necessary wood funding for the Regency's naval arsenal, which was known as the "Karasta"²⁰.

3. Sufi sheikhs, the authority's mediator to resolve disputes

Friendship relations continued between the Turkish political authority and the local spiritual authority, which, due to its religious and tribal weight, was able to share power in establishing security and resolving crises, especially in rural areas, given that the Turkish authority was primarily concentrated in cities and not in the interior regions and the desert. Therefore, it can be said that the Sufi orders loyal to the authority constituted a part of the Makhzen tribes allied with the authority in exchange for the consideration and material privileges they obtained. When the rural population of Tlemcen revolted against the tyranny of the Turkish garrison and refused to pay seasonal taxes, chaos and rebellion spread even within the city of Tlemcen. Despite the dispatch of 1200 Janissary soldiers by Khosrow Pasha in 1524, the situation did not calm down until the Bey of the West in Mascara sent the Sufi sheikhs, Mohammed al-Jazouli and Sheikh Mohammed al-Abdelli, to mediate and quell the rebellion in 1526. The same role was played by the noble religious family of Ibn Fekkoun, when the tribes of the Constantine Beylik countryside revolted against the system of Turkish military districts for tax

¹⁹ **Boyer (Pierre):** « Contribution à l'étude de la politique religieuse des turcs dans la Régence d'Alger (XVI^e-XIX^e siècles) », R.O.M.M., n° 1, 1966, pp. 20-21.

²⁰ **مباركي (نادية):** "دور ميناء بجاية في النشاط التجاري الحرفي "الكراستة" خلال العهد العثماني"، دراسات تراثية، مج. 10، ع. 1، 2016، ص ص. 553-550.

collection. Through their mediation, they were able to calm the situation and contribute to restoring stability to the region in 1567²¹.

The mediation of these sheikhs extended even to the field of diplomatic relations, as is the case with the incident of the docking of the French ship at the port of Jijel on October 23, 1720, which was carrying the French consul in Spain, his wife, and his 14-year-old daughter, as part of their journey to Sweden. The consul's daughter was captured by one of the tribes of the Jijel Mountains. Despite sending a military campaign by the Dey Mohammed ben Hassan in 1724, after a request for intervention by the French consul in Algiers, Mr. Dussault, he did not succeed in this, which necessitated the intervention and mediation of the Marabout Sheikh, Sidi Amokrane, who was able to recover the consul's daughter, Miss. De Bourg, after her ransom was paid²². In the same context, and in order to extinguish the rebellion of Ibn Sakhri in the Beylik of the east, Yousef Pasha sought the mediation of local Sufi figures in the region, Ahmed Saci El Bouni, a jurist and Marabout of Annaba, and the support of the noble family of Ben Nacer in the El Khroub area, to calm the situation and stop the spread of the rebellion in the Constantine countryside in 1639. Later, we find Dey Ahmed Pasha requesting the mediation of Sheikh Sidi Mohieddine, grandson of the righteous Wali of Kolea, Sidi Ali M'barek, to stop the rebellion of the tribes in the Mitidja region in 1805.

Here it is necessary to recall that the presence of Zawiyas and Marabouts Sheikhs was more intense in the western region of Algeria compared to the eastern region, which is due to the continued presence of the Spanish occupation in the city of Oran and Mers El-Kebir until 1791. Many Sheikhs of Sufi orders, like Shâdhiliyya and Qâdiriyya, established jihad associations and mobilized resources and students to prepare and participate with the Turk forces in liberating Oran from the hands of the Spanish troops. Local sources recall how many Sufi scholars, sheikhs, and their students from Mascara, Mostaganem, Mazouna, and Tlemcen participated alongside Bey Mohammed ibn 'Othman al-Kebir in the second liberation of Oran. For example, we mention Sheikh

²¹ شدرى معمر (رشيدة): المرجع السابق، ص. 351.

²² Féraud (Charles L.): Histoire des villes de la province de Constantine. Gigelli, Constantine, Typographie et lithographie L. Arnolet, 1870, pp. 169-173.

Mohammed al-Mustafa ibn Zarfa, the learned jurist, Abu Ras al-Naceri, Sheikh Boujlal, the learned jurist, Ibn Sahnoun al-Râshidi, along with 2000 students affiliated with those religious zawiyas who were organized for the liberation of Oran in 1792, by performing the duty of jihad. Therefore, it can be said that this liberation was a wonderful model and example of the alliance between the political and religious authorities in Ottoman Algeria²³.

4. The clash between authority and Sufi orders in the 18th-19th centuries

The Deylik period in the Regency of Algiers (1671-1830) can be considered a period of stability, as the political system became established and the various state institutions continued to manage the affairs of the state at the internal and external levels. Also, the relationship between the Turkish authorities and the Sufi orders entered into constant hostility and conflict, given that the traditional allies of the sheikhs of the Zawiyas and the noble religious families maintained their distinguished relationship with the political power. However, other factors will be mentioned that contributed to the emergence of tribal rebellions or revolutions led by some Sufi sheikhs, which led to the creation of an atmosphere of instability for years in the Regency of Algiers and threatened the political system there, and these important rebellions can be confined to: the uprising of Ibn al-Ahrash, the uprising of the Derqâwi order, and the uprising of the Tijâniyya order.

It appears that the stability of political power since the 18th century, through the tight administrative and political organization of the entire Algerian territory through the Beylik system, the Beylik of Titery (Medea), the Beylik of the East (Constantine), and the Beylik of the West (Oran), meant that the authority relied more on surveillance and military force to impose its presence and legitimacy without resorting to and involving mediation and alliances with the sheikhs of the Zawiyas and the Marabouts. Moreover, after the liberation of Oran in 1792 and the achievement

²³ بلبل (محمد): "مساهمة علماء وطلبة منطقة مستغانم في تحرير وهران الأول والثاني 1708-1792"، مجلة العبر للدراسات التاريخية والآثرية في شمال إفريقيا، مج. 2، ع. 2، 2019، ص. 682-527.

of territorial unity, Jihad became limited to defending the city of Algiers from European naval expeditions. It is clear that the decline in the maritime trading revenue for the Algerian state treasury necessitated the search for new financial resources by increasing local taxes and encroaching on the edges of the desert and mountainous areas where there were resistant tribes or those that did not recognize the Ottoman authority in Algeria. In this context, we mention Bey Mohammed al-Kebir's campaign against the city of Laghouat in 1785, which he entered after a long siege and a violent battle that forced the city's notables to pay seasonal taxes to the Turkish authority in Oran.

The real clash between the political authority and the Sheikh's Zawiyas in North Constantine began with the emergence of Sheikh Hajji Mohammed Ibn al-Ahrash, a Moroccan who followed the Derqâwiyya order, who was able to bring all the tribes that were dissatisfied with the taxation policy and military rule of the Turks in the Eastern Beylik. According to local historical sources, his first appearance was in Egypt after his return from the Hajj, where he participated alongside Maghrebians and Turks in 1798 in the resistance against French forces during Napoleon Bonaparte's campaign against Egypt. The same sources state that he was supported by the English, who wanted to employ him to eliminate France's important commercial privileges and its monopoly on coral fishing in Algeria's eastern coastal cities of Collo, el-Kala, and Jijel. The Tunisian Bey, Hamouda Pasha (1782-1814), took advantage of the Sufi sheikh's passage to Tunis in 1801 to incite him against the Turkish authority in Constantine in order to get rid of the 'historical protection' of the Regency of Algiers over Tunisia²⁴. Mohammed Ibn al-Ahrash settled in Jijel in 1801 and began to spread his ideas and call among the rural tribes that were disaffected with the Turkish military regime, on the basis that he was the expected "Mahdi".

Between 1802 and 1807, Constantine's eastern Beylik region witnessed a series of tribal rebellions supporting this Sufi movement. Ibn al-Ahrash was able to bring together tribes

²⁴ **Romey (Alain):** « L'État turc et les pouvoirs religieux en Algérie à la fin du XVIII^{ème} et au début XIX^{ème} siècle », *Cahiers de la Méditerranée*, n° 41, 1990, p. 32.

disgruntled with the Ottoman authority in Jijel, Collo, Mila, and Annaba, and then besieged the regional capital Constantine in 1804, but the defense of the Turkish garrison, with the help of the city's notables from the religious families, hajji Ahmed al-Abyad and Sheikh Ahmed Ben Fekkoun, was able to force Ibn al-Ahrash's forces to withdraw from in front of the walls of Constantine.

Despite the departure of the Bey of Constantine, Othman Bey sent his army of 3,500 soldiers to pursue the forces of Ibn al-Ahrash who were stationed in the Oued Zehour region, which managed to eliminate the Turkish forces and kill the Bey in this battle (August 1804). Faced with the expansion of the danger of this rebellion, Dey Mustafa Pasha sent four ships from Algiers to reintegrate the city of Jijel under Ottoman control and appointed Abdullah ibn Ismail as the new Bey of Constantine and charged him with putting an end to the rebellion of Sheikh Ibn al-Ahrash in the entire eastern region of the Eyalet. Indeed, the Bey, with the help of the Makhzen tribes of the religious family of the Sharif, an ally of the Turks, Amokrane, killed Mohammed Ibn al-Ahrash and his supporters in 1807 in the mountains of the Bibans region in Bejaïa, in 1807.

The second serious rebellion with religious brotherhood origins, which destabilised the Ottoman political system between 1800-1813 throughout western Algerian territory, was the uprising of the Derqâwi order led by Abdelkader ibn Sharif Al-Derqâwi. This sheikh, who was taught in Morocco by Moulay Abdallah al-Derqâwi and supported by the sultans of the Alaouite dynasty, who were at odds with the Ottoman political regime in the Regency of Algiers, began spreading his call and mobilizing forces among the Algerian tribes in the desert and western Algeria who were against the expansion of the Turkish authority in their lands and paying taxes in cash and in-kind to that authority. He also issued a fatwa among the tribes on the basis that the Turks are foreigners in the region and who are outside the Islamic religion and must be fought against.

The battle between the tribal forces loyal to Sharif and the forces of the Bey of Oran, Mustapha al-'Ajmi (1800-1805), took place in an area known as Fortassa near the city of Mascara, where al-Derqâwi was able to inflict a major defeat on the Turkish forces and the Makhzen tribes loyal to the authority. After the battle, Ibn al-Sharif al-Derqâwi entered the city of Mascara and, after being joined by troops from tribes in the western region, such as the

Hashem and Gheraba he decided to lay siege to the Western Beylik capital Oran in 1805, which lasted for several months without achieving any result due to the strength of the city's fortifications and the rejection by its inhabitants of al-Derqâwi's invitation to rebel against the Turks²⁵.

Faced with the seriousness of the situation, the Dey of Algeria sent troops by sea under the leadership of the new Bey, Mohammed al-M'qellesh, in 1805, who won several battles against the Derqâwi in 1807, which prompted the followers of Sheikh to take refuge on the Moroccan border for fear of being pursued by the Turkish forces. The last appearance of Mohammed Sharif and the Derqâwi Sufi movement was during the reign of Ali Bey in 1812 in the southern region of Oran, in which he suffered a major defeat that prompted him to retreat towards the desert region of Feguig, from which he sought refuge in the Kingdom of Morocco.

The last uprising was led by Sheikh Abul Abbas Ahmed Tijâni, the sheikh and spiritual father of the Tijâni order, at his zawiya in Ain Madi, south of the semi-desert city of Laghouat, who refused to submit to the Ottoman authority and pay taxes to it. After the Bey of Oran Mohammed al-Kebir's expedition against hostile tribes in Laghouat and the Tijâni Zawiya, and due to the Ottoman force's harassment and surveillance of Sheikh Ahmad al-Tijâni's activities, he fled to Morocco, where he settled and died in 1815. Despite this situation, the Zawiya of Sidi Maadi maintained its spiritual position in the south-western region and the Algerian desert. The return from Morocco of his son, Sayyid Mohammed al-Kebir, and his settlement in the Zawiya of the Sufi order after his return from the pilgrimage, was not accepted by the Turkish authorities in Oran, who sent an expedition against the Zawiya and forced the Sheikh and his followers to pay taxes and submit to the orders of the Ottoman authority in 1820.

The Turkish ruling authority understood that Zawiyas had great spiritual power over the people and that leaving their activities unchecked could lead to a political and social imbalance in the Regency of Algiers and even threaten the existence of the Turkish rule there, given that most of the population of the Regency is from the countryside regions.

²⁵ **Boyer (Pierre):** Op. cit, pp. 42-43.

The policy of strangulation and constant surveillance of the Tijâniyya zawīya activity was not acceptable to Sheikh Mohammed al-Tijâni, who gathered an army consisting of his followers from Ain Madhi and the tribes hostile to the Ottoman presence in the western Sahara, from the clans of Awlad Nail and the Hashem tribe, and marched with it to the city of Mascara. However, the Ottoman forces and the notables of the city withstood the siege until the arrival of the Turkish troops sent by Bey Hassan from Oran. The battle that took place between the two sides, in the Ghriss plain near Mascara in 1827, ended with the defeat of the Tijâniyya order and the death of its Sheikh Mohammed Al Kebir al-Tijâni²⁶.

Conclusion:

In the end, it can be said that the relationship between Sufi orders and the ruling Turkish class during the founding period in the 16th and 17th centuries was characterized by alliance and cooperation between the political authority and the spiritual authority. In the stability phase in the 18th century, the Turkish authority relied on the system of state administrative and military institutions and the cooperating Makhzen tribes to impose order in the rural areas of the country. Even though a number of Sufi orders in the interior regions destabilized and threatened the security of the province in the 18th and 19th centuries, the Turkish authorities always succeeded in the end in suppressing those tribal religious revolts.

We also noted that the Turkish authorities, over three centuries, did not work and could not eradicate the roots of Sufi orders, because they constituted a part of the identity and religious cultural heritage of the Algerian people, and indeed of all the inhabitants of North Africa.

The proof of this is that after the fall of the Turkish political system following the French occupation in 1830, all the popular revolutions and resistances that took place in Algeria against the French occupation were led by sheikhs of Sufi orders, such as the Qâdiriyya, the Shâdhiliyya, the Rahmâniyya, and the Tijâniyya: the

²⁶ بلعربي (خالد) ومقنونيف (شعيب): "ثورة التيجانية في بايليك الغرب الجزائري إبان القرن التاسع عشر. دراسة تاريخية أنثروبولوجية"، مجلة أنثروبولوجية الأديان، مج. 17، ع. 1، يناير 2021، ص ص. 721-720.

resistance of Emir Abdelkader, the resistance of Sidi Sheikh Bouamama, the resistance of Fatma N'Soumer, El Mokrani and El Haddad, ect.

It is also important to remember that the religious dimension of Sufi orders and the tribal dimension of the inhabitants of each region of North Africa have continued over time and do not recognize the official borders between these countries, expressing cultural components rooted in these societies to this day.

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