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Representations of Narrative Discourse in Travel Literature An Analytical Study of Selected Models

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Abstract:

In this research paper, we aim to highlight the theoretical and conceptual aspects related to travel literature and to elucidate its significance among Arab writers. Travel literature is defined as “a collection of works that encompass the author’s impressions of their journeys in various lands,” where the author may describe customs, behaviors, and ethics, as well as provide detailed accounts of the landscapes they observe. The author may narrate the stages of their journey step by step or combine all of these elements, as noted by Magdi Wahba Kamel. This is evident in the journey of Shihab al-Din al-Maqri al-Tlemceni (992-1041 AH) in his book “Nafh al-Tayyib min Ghusn al-Andalus al-Ratib” and in “Azhar al-Riyad fi Akhbar al-Qadi Iyad,” as well as in the journey of al-Husayn al-Wurtalani in his book

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“Nuzhat al-Anzar fi Fadl Ilm al-Tarikh wa al-Akhbar,” where al-Wurtalani describes these places, their people, scholars, and customs. This includes his performance of the pilgrimage, describing Mecca, Medina, and other locations.

Additionally, we explore the works of Amin al-Rihani and Muhammad Umar al-Tunisi (1789-1857) and others. In the Arab East, we examine the journey of Ahmad Faris al-Shidyaq in his first book, “Kashf al-Makhba ‘an Funun Awropa,” where he discusses the pathways and topography of Europe, along with its distinctive customs, traditions, and ways of living. His second book, “Al-Wasita fi Ma’rifat Ahwal Malta,” describes the island of Malta, its history, geography, and civilization, highlighting the key customs, ethics, and languages of its inhabitants.

Undoubtedly, each journey from these travelers provides an opportunity to delve into the manifestations of narrative discourse and its reflections in the works of Muhammad ibn Ahmad ibn Jubayr (540-614 AH) in his journey titled “Tadhkirah bil-Akhbar ‘an Ittifaqat al-Asfar” and in the works of Abu Abdullah Muhammad (703-776 AH), known as Ibn Battuta, in his journey titled “Tuhfat al-Nazar fi Gharayib al-Amsar wa ‘Ajayib al-Asfar.” We will utilize a critical analytical approach to uncover the secrets and depth of these texts.

Keywords: Discourse, Travel Literature, Narrative Discourse, Literary Genres

Introduction:

Travel has been known since ancient times, with the first journey being the descent of Prophet Adam from Paradise—down to Earth—with our mother Eve, peace be upon them. This was accompanied by the descent of the serpent in conspiracy with Satan. The journeys of Prophet Ibrahim (Abraham), peace be upon him, from the land of Babylon in Iraq to the land of Canaan in Palestine with his wife Sarah, and his travels from Palestine to Egypt and back, are also notable. His journey on the Buraq to the valleys of Mecca to place his wife Hagar and his young son Ishmael (peace be upon them) is significant, as is his second journey to the same location, driven by longing for them.

The journey of Musa ibn Imran (Moses), the Speaker of God and His Messenger, to the city of Prophet Shuaib, fleeing from the tyranny of Pharaoh and the scheming of Haman, is another critical expedition. Queen Bilqis’s journey from Yemen to Prophet Sulayman (Solomon), peace be upon him, and many other journeys of Prophets and Messengers are too numerous to count or detail in this space.

Additionally, the journeys of Prophet Muhammad, including his commercial trips to the Levant and Yemen while managing Khadijah's affairs (may Allah be pleased with her) before Islam, his migration from Mecca to Yathrib (Medina), and the miraculous night journey from his bed in Mecca to the Al-Aqsa Mosque, ascending to the seven heavens and witnessing the other world during the event of Isra and Mi'raj, are all significant. The accounts of this event are among the longest narrations shared by the Prophet with his companions.

Abu al-Ala al-Ma'arri (363-449 AH) referenced these journeys in his work "Risalat al-Ghufran," particularly through his character "Ibn al-Qarih," who converses with poets in paradise, including Zuhayr ibn Abi Sulma and Ubayd ibn al-Abrass. Following him, Dante Alighieri was influenced by al-Ma'arri's "Risalat al-Ghufran" in his epic poem "The Divine Comedy," showcasing literary intertextuality in theme, content, structure, and character events.

Subsequently, popular works from mythical memory emerged, such as "One Thousand and One Nights," which includes the imaginative tales of Sinbad the Sailor, narrated by Scheherazade to King Shahryar. This genre is known in literature as "travel literature," defined as "a collection of works that encompass the author's impressions of their journeys in various lands," where the author may describe the customs, behaviors, and ethics they observe, provide detailed accounts of the landscapes, narrate the stages of their journey step by step, or combine all these elements (Magdi Wahba Kamel).

In Arab literature, examples include the journey of Abu Hayyan al-Tawhidi (310-414 AH) in his work "Al-Imta' wa al-Mu'anasah," where he is known as the "Philosopher of the Writers and the Writer of the Philosophers," and the journey of Abu Rayhan al-Biruni (362-440 AH) in "Taḥqīq mā lil-Hind min maqūlah fī al-'aql wa al-marḍūlah," as well as Abu Bakr Muhammad ibn al-Arabi al-Ishbili (468-543 AH), a pioneer of travel literature in Arab heritage, in "Tartib al-Rihlah li al-Targhīb fi al-Millah."

Western travel literature includes the journeys of Marco Polo (1254-1324) in "The Travels of Marco Polo," Vasco da Gama (1460) in "The Journal of the Voyage of Vasco da Gama," Christopher Columbus (1451-1506) in "The Letter of Columbus About His First Voyage to the Indies Beyond the Ganges," often referred to as the "Admiral of the Ocean Sea," Ferdinand Magellan (1480-1521) in "The Pacific Ocean," Charles Darwin's global expedition (1808-1882) in "The Voyage of the Beagle," and Wilfred Thesiger (1910-2003) in "Arabian Sands," among others.

There are also historical journeys, such as that of Shams al-Din Abu Abdullah Muhammad al-Maqdisi (336-380 AH), documented in his book "Ahsan al-Ta'asim fi Ma'rifat al-Aqalim," and the journey of Muhammad ibn Umar ibn Sulayman al-Tunisi (1204-1274 AH) in his work "Rihlat Tashhid al-Adhan bi Sirat Bilad al-Arab wa al-Sudan." Additionally, there is the journey of Muwaffaq al-Din Abdul Latif al-Baghdadi (557 AH) in his book "Kitab al-Ifadah wa al-I'tibar fi al-Umoor al-Mushahahah wa al-Hawadith al-Mu'ayyanah bi Ard Misr," among others.

There are also religious journeys for performing the Hajj, such as that of Muhammad ibn Ahmad ibn Jubayr (540-614 AH) and the journey of Ibn Battuta (703-776 AH), which falls under the umbrella of "Andalusian Literature" in the category of "Travel Literature." Both authors provided detailed descriptions of their homelands and other regions from geographical, social, cultural, religious, economic, political, and psychological perspectives, covering customs and traditions familiar to them as well as those that were not. They also addressed various religions, sects, beliefs, wonders, curiosities, and breathtaking natural landscapes.

We have decided to divide this research paper into two sections: the first section covers the concept of travel literature, its causes for emergence, and the benefits and literary and scientific value of travel. The second section includes a critical analytical reading of the journey of Muhammad ibn Ahmad ibn Jubayr (540-614 AH), as recorded in his book "Tadhkirah bil-Akhbar 'an Ittifaqat al-Asfar," and that of Abu Abdullah Muhammad al-Lawati (703-776 AH), known as Ibn Battuta, in his journey documented in "Tuhfat al-Nazar fi Gharayib al-Amsar wa 'Ajayib al-Asfar."

Section One: The Concept of Travel Literature and Its Causes for Emergence

Subsection One: The Concept of Travel Literature

"Travel Literature" is a literary genre that exists alongside other literary forms such as novels, short stories, diaries, and autobiographies. It is also akin to literary maqamat or poetry; however, it encompasses a broader scope and a wider range of topics. Travel writers may describe a captivating natural scene that astonishes them, evoking feelings of wonder or admiration, which they then document in their travel accounts, illustrating them photographically.

Emotions of alienation, nostalgia, and longing may ignite within the traveler, prompting them to compose poetry or spontaneous prose without regard for meter or rhyme. They might write reflective passages filled with their feelings and sorrows to express their yearning for their families or homeland. A traveler may address geographical matters, such as describing the waves of the sea while

sailing towards the Sacred Mosque in Mecca for the pilgrimage, which falls within the realms of both sea literature and travel literature.

Journeys vary according to their methods, means, objectives, and purposes, whether by land, sea, or air; yet, they encompass a broader scope than sea or land literature. Here, literary genres intersect at a crossroads, all flowing into a single ocean—travel literature.

Travelers may also tackle historical issues that are subjects of agreement or disagreement. For instance, they might pass by a cave or a desolate historical site, recalling significant events that occurred there, such as visiting “Ibn Khaldun’s Cave” in Tihert, Algeria, and reminiscing about its role as the starting point for writing “Ibn Khaldun’s History” in his “Muqaddimah.” They may address geographical matters or the borders of ancient or contemporary neighboring states they traverse, documenting them incidentally.

Thus, travel literature is a literary genre that encompasses various disciplines, sciences, and mixed and diverse literary forms. So, what exactly is travel literature?

The Concept of Travel Literature:

Linguistic Definition of “Journey”:

The term “journey” in Arabic is derived from the root “har) ”l as noted in (lisan arab)Ibn Manzur. It defines “ rahil” as a means of transport for camels and female camels, with its plural forms being “arhal” and “rahhal.” It states that “rahil” and “rahhal” refer to the modes of transport used by men rather than women. An example from a hadith states: “When the sandals get wet, pray while riding,” indicating that one should pray while mounted when it rains heavily and the ground becomes muddy. “Rahhal” can also refer to homes and dwellings, as it is the plural of “rahil.”

Definition of Travel Literature (Terminological)

Travel literature, or “أدب الرحلة,” is defined as “a collection of literary works that encompass the author’s impressions of their journeys in various lands. The author may describe the customs, behaviors, and ethics they encounter, and provide a detailed account of the natural landscapes they observe. They may narrate the stages of their journey step by step or combine all these elements simultaneously” (Magdi Wahba and Kamel al-Muhandis).

In travel literature, the author's intellect may reason or explain, and their emotions and inclinations might either be present or absent, leading to a suppression of desires. Conversely, the opposite may occur, causing the author's emotions to fluctuate between self-reflection and objectivity. Thus, travel literature holds two significant values:

1. Scientific Value: This pertains to the wealth of geographical, historical, social, economic, religious, and other knowledge contained within travel accounts. The traveler, therefore, acts as a conduit, presenting these phenomena to geographers, historians, sociologists, or religious scholars, functioning akin to a margin surrounding the core text.

2. Literary Value: This relates to the literary styles and artistic expressions found within travel literature. It captures scenes through artistic imagination and literary imagery, utilizing a narrative style characterized by engaging storytelling.

In summary, travel literature represents a blend of personal experience and artistic expression, contributing to both scientific knowledge and literary richness.

Benefits of Journeys and Travels and Their Value in Literature

The term “journey” is mentioned in the Holy Quran in Surah Quraish, where Allah says: “For the accustomed security of the Quraish—Their accustomed security [in] the caravan of winter and summer” (Surah Quraish, 106:2). Variants of the term appear in various contexts within the Quran, often using the word “sīr” (travel) and its derivatives. Among the benefits of travel is the scientific observation that follows a methodological approach through observation, deduction, and experimentation. This leads to an understanding of the universe, the stages of creation, and the like, which falls under the fields of geography, geology, and physics.

This quest for knowledge serves as a reminder that every beginning has an end, and the commencement of creation in this world necessitates an ending, leading to another life known as the Afterlife, encompassing Heaven and Hell and their respective ranks and degrees.

We read in the Quran: “Say, “Travel through the land and observe how He began creation. Then Allah will bring about the second creation. Indeed, Allah, over all things, is competent” (Surah Al-Ankabut, 29:20). This verse emphasizes the obligation to travel and explore the various regions of the Earth, encouraging contemplation of God's creation, His dominion, and the wonders of His craftsmanship.

Another verse states: “Have they not traveled through the land and observed how was the end of those before them? They were greater than them in strength and in terms of [the] traces [they left] in the land. But Allah seized them for their sins, and they had not from Allah any protector” (Surah Ar-Rum, 30:9). The interrogative “serocsrednu (ton did)” أولم with the negation “nibmoc (?ton yeht diD)” ألم the condemnation of those who fail to explore and learn from “archaeology” and “the history and news” of past nations known for their advanced civilizations, monumental constructions, and scientific discoveries, such as the artifacts and pyramids of ancient Egyptians and the knowledge of the pharaohs.

Subsection Two: Reasons for the Emergence of Travel Literature

Through the examination of critics and specialists in “Travel Literature,” as documented by Professor Fuad Qandil in his book “Travel Literature in Arab Heritage,” I have also added additional reasons for its emergence, which include: religious, scientific, educational, political, tourist, cultural, health-related, economic, commercial, security, diplomatic, natural, and exploratory curiosity. We will present these as follows:

1. Religious or Sectarian Reasons: Such as the migration of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) from Mecca to Medina, the pilgrimage (Hajj) and Umrah journeys undertaken by every Arab Muslim traveler, or visits to the graves of the Prophets and Messengers, the graves of the Companions, the Mothers of the Believers (wives of the Prophet), and the graves of his children and grandchildren, as well as other religious sites in Karbala and Alexandria. There are also journeys to the three mosques, as mentioned in the Hadith of Abdullah ibn Umar, where the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: “Do not set out on a journey except to three mosques: the Sacred Mosque, my mosque, and Al-Aqsa Mosque.” This indicates a religious and devotional visit to perform prayers in these mosques, as prayer therein is not equivalent to prayer in any other mosque. However, this does not mean that travel to other places is prohibited, as mentioned in previous verses.

Islam has defined the times for the pilgrimage visit in His statement: “And proclaim to the people the Hajj. They will come to you on foot and on every lean camel; they will come from every distant pass, that they may witness benefits for themselves and mention the name of Allah in the appointed days” (Surah Al-Hajj, 22:27). Among the benefits of the visit, as indicated by the verse, is the mention of Allah’s name. This purpose is evident in the journeys of Ibn Jubayr and Ibn Battuta.

2. Scientific or Educational Reasons: Such as traveling to seek knowledge and delve deeply into it, as stated in the Hadith: “Seek knowledge even if it is in China.” This Hadith is reported by Ibn Adi

and Al-Bayhaqi in Al-Madkhal and Al-Shuab from the Hadith of Anas, with Al-Bayhaqi noting that its text is well-known but its chains are weak. This was exemplified by the imams of the four schools of thought and the authors of works in the science of Hadith and narration, such as Al-Shafi'i, Abu Hanifa, Ahmad ibn Hanbal, and Abu Hamid Al-Ghazali.

Al-Maqri, the Algerian traveler, mentioned in his book “Nafh al-Tayyib” that nearly two hundred and eighty travelers journeyed to seek knowledge, from the East to Al-Andalus and from Al-Andalus back to the East. Similarly, Al-Maqri traveled from Greater Syria to Egypt to write about the Andalusian minister-poet Lisan al-Din ibn al-Khatib, as recorded in his book “Nafh al-Tayyib min Ghusn al-Andalus al-Ratib.” There are many examples, such as the scientific journey of Rafi' Rafi' al-Tahthawi from Al-Azhar in Egypt to Paris, France, which he documented in his book “Takhlis al-Ibreez fi Talkhis Bariz.” There are numerous such examples.

3. Tourist and Cultural Reasons: For some, travel or journeys are considered their favorite pastime, as they are naturally inclined to love exploration and have a penchant for the thrill of experiencing different places. The soul seeks renewal through remembrance, travel, observation, reflection, and drawing lessons, as stated in the Quran: “Say, ‘Travel through the land and observe how was the end of the deniers...’” (Surah Al-An'am, 6:11). The Quran describes the ranks and conditions of those who travel: “The repentant, the worshippers, the praisers, the travelers, the bowers, the prostrators, the enjoiners of good, the forbidders of evil, and the preservers of the limits of Allah. And give good tidings to the believers” (Surah At-Tawbah, 9:112). Among these, the “travelers” refers to those who journey for conquest or the quest for knowledge. The term “siyah” denotes movement, akin to flowing water, as opposed to stagnant water.

Culturally, this desire for discovery encompasses exploring archaeological sites, natural wonders, towers, and the seven wonders of the ancient and modern world. This is evident in the journeys of Ibn Battuta in “The Gift to the Observers” and Abdul Latif al-Baghdadi in “The Benefit and Consideration in Observed Matters and Incidents in Egypt,” as well as in the journey of Abu al-Hasan Ali ibn al-Husayn, known as “Al-Mas'udi,” in his work “The Meadows of Gold and Mines of Gems,” among others.

4. Health and Therapeutic Reasons: Traveling for healing or treatment, or to take a period of rest and recovery, is another motivation. This includes undergoing surgical procedures for physical, psychological, and mental well-being. An example is the journey of Ahmed Faris al-Shidyaq from the island of Malta to Egypt due to health issues. He spent months in his room in Malta suffering from

arthritis, a condition prevalent on the island, which had no remedy except for the golden rays of the sun in Alexandria. His doctor advised him that returning to Egypt would restore his health, as described in his famous journey recorded in “The Link in Knowing the Conditions of Malta.”

5. Economic and Commercial Reasons: Travel for trade or the exchange of goods and commodities was practiced by the Quraish Arabs during the winter and summer journeys. They would trade hides for textiles, linen, silk, and other goods that they needed but were not available in their homeland. An example of this type of journey is that of Shihab al-Din Abu Abdullah Yaqut al-Hamawi, which was both commercial and scholarly, as recorded in his work “Dictionary of Countries.”

6. Security Reasons: The migration of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) from Mecca to Medina can also be considered for security reasons, in addition to the religious motivations. Islam encompasses faith, law, worship, and transactions, as well as politics. This migration laid the foundation for the Islamic state in Yathrib (Medina) and the leadership of the tribes of Aws and Khazraj, along with his companions who migrated to them. It also included sending ambassadors with messages to the kings of the world (the King of Rome, Persia, and Abyssinia), such as the mission of Ja'far ibn Abi Talib to the King of Abyssinia (the Negus) to seek political asylum. This journey aimed to preserve life, honor, wealth, religion, and lineage, which are fundamental objectives of Islamic law.

The preservation of two essential pillars—securing food and ensuring safety—reflects natural life. This is highlighted in the Quran: “Let them worship the Lord of this House, who fed them against hunger and made them safe from fear” (Surah Quraish, 106:3-4). Here, worship is mentioned after attaining food security and ensuring personal and communal safety.

Thus, there are journeys aimed at escaping famine and severe epidemics that threaten the stability of communities, as depicted by traveler Abdul Latif al-Baghdadi in his journey “The Benefit and Consideration...” Similarly, journeys driven by economic necessity are encouraged in Islam, as indicated in the verse: “Did not the earth of Allah provide spaciousness for you to emigrate therein?” (Surah An-Nisa, 4:97).

7. Security Reasons: Islam does not encourage migration or travel due to serious diseases and deadly epidemics to prevent their spread to other regions. For instance, it prohibits travel and migration under health conditions that require quarantine between countries afflicted by plagues like the Black Death or COVID-19. An example of this type of journey is that of Ahmed Faris al-Shidyaaq, who traveled from Lebanon to Egypt fearing persecution and imprisonment by the Maronite Church against

his brother and the harassment of his family. He also journeyed from the island of Malta to Tunisia seeking broader opportunities for sustenance from its ruler, who honored him with a precious ruby, as recounted in his work "The Link in Knowing the Conditions of Malta."

8. Personal Social Reasons: Among the popular sayings in Algerian folk literature, there is a proverb that states, "O Allah, grant me a companion at every turn." This implies a desire for companionship and shelter wherever one travels, serving as motivations for travel and the intention to journey. It signifies a wish to increase offspring, expand social networks, and strengthen familial ties through marriage and polygamy. This need has led to the acceptance of "misyar marriage," accommodating the conditions and durations associated with travel and residence in a new place. Ibn Battuta exemplified this by engaging in multiple marriages, marrying at least twice in Egypt and having four wives in the Maldives, as he mentioned in his book "Gift to the Observers."

9. Curiosity, Yearning, and Desire to Explore: This motivation manifests in the love of understanding the circumstances of other societies, their social, political, and intellectual conditions, as well as connecting with scholars, intellectuals, social reformers, religious leaders, and rulers. It involves discussing perspectives on critical issues that affect the fate of Arab and Islamic peoples. This desire is reflected in the journeys of Sheikh Muhammad Hussein al-Khidr, who noted in his work "Five Journeys to Algeria" (1904-1932) that he traveled from Sudan to Tunisia and then to Algeria to understand the plight of the Algerian people under oppressive French colonial rule, where he stayed for an extended period. Similarly, Ibn Jubayr journeyed to meet the valiant leader Salah al-Din al-Ayyubi in the Levant, as described in his work "A Reminder of Events."

In conclusion, while we have identified some evident reasons for travel, there are others that remain unexplored and some that are hidden, whose roots we could not uncover. Perhaps in time, more will be revealed, providing material for study and inquiry by critics and scholars of "Travel Literature."

Regardless of the numerous reasons and motivations for travel, the ultimate aim is "Travel Literature," which intricately weaves together vibrant threads and diverse genres of literature. These include maritime literature, émigré literature, Moroccan literature, Andalusian literature, and Eastern literature, alongside autobiographies, biographies, daily diaries, and various sciences such as history, sociology, politics, economics, and religious studies. This encompasses different schools of thought, including Sufism and the Brethren, as well as language, literature, storytelling, anecdotes, maqamat, reflections, poetry, and traditional supplications, among others.

The blending of reality and imagination, the intensity of emotions and feelings, nostalgia, and longing, alongside various artistic and literary images, contribute to this genre. It engages the imagination and reflects on objects, people, events, times, and places. Travel literature is an art form that encompasses all forms, grounded in authentic emotional experiences and observations, as the saying goes, “Seeing is not like hearing.”

Section Two: An Examination of the Journey of Ibn Jubayr (540 AH/614 AH) Recorded in “A Reminder of Events about Travel Incidents” and the Journey of Ibn Battuta (703 AH/776 AH) Documented in “The Gift to the Observers on the Wonders of Lands and Marvels of Travel.”

Subsection One: The Journey of Ibn Jubayr

Ibn Jubayr is Muhammad ibn Ahmad ibn Jubayr al-Kinani al-Andalusi, known as Abu al-Husayn. He was a traveler, imam, hadith scholar, jurist, and author born in Valencia in 540 AH. He settled in Al-Shatiba, excelled in literature, and composed poetry. He passed away in 614 AH in Alexandria and is among the most famous Arab Muslim travelers of the sixth century AH, whose experiences he recorded in his book “A Reminder of Events about Travel Incidents.”

The journey comprises 339 pages.

First: An Analysis of the Title

In the first textual threshold of this book, we find the title “A Reminder of Events about Travel Incidents,” consisting of five words: (two nouns + a preposition + two nouns), which translates to (Reminder + about events + regarding travel). The title exhibits a balance and symmetry among the words, creating a musical resonance and ease of pronunciation. The two words at the beginning of the title share the letter “r,” while the concluding part shares the letters “f” and “a.” Additionally, there is a rhythmic harmony between the words “events” and “travel,” known as saj’ (rhymed prose).

From a rhetorical perspective, the term “Reminder” has a religious connotation, echoing the verse: “No! Indeed, it is a reminder” (Surah Abasa, 80:11-12). Here, “reminder” implies a lesson or moral. The phrase “about events” draws from the Quran, referencing the dialogue between Al-Khidr and Prophet Moses, where Al-Khidr says, “And how can you be patient with that of which you have no knowledge?” (Surah Al-Kahf, 18:68). This intertextuality suggests that Ibn Jubayr intends for his book on travel literature to serve as a moral lesson that no one else can replicate, given his literary prowess in his time.

The word "events" stands in contrast to "disagreements," implying that the travelers do not differ in the accounts they provide in their journeys, and no one can refute these verified observations. The term "travel" signifies the benefits contained within these journeys, akin to pearls hidden within oysters. This evokes the lines of Imam Al-Shafi'i, which we previously discussed:

> "Travel away from your homeland in pursuit of greatness,

> For there are five benefits in travel."

This literary intertextuality highlights the five benefits mentioned earlier and reflects the virtue of frequent travel among the righteous. The title by Ibn Jubayr shares a similarity with the title of Ibn Battuta's later works in the word "travel," which is commonly recognized among Arab writers, critics, and historians, while Western scholars refer to it as "The Journey of Ibn Jubayr," favoring brevity over verbosity.

Second: The Motivation for the Journey

The primary reason behind Ibn Jubayr's journey, among his three expeditions, was the pilgrimage to the Sacred House of Allah, which included desirable visits and meetings, such as with the great leader Sultan Salah al-Din al-Ayyubi. Thus, it can be said that his journey began as a religious endeavor and later transformed into a scholarly, exploratory, and recreational one. He began writing on a Friday, blessed by this day, while at sea, on the thirtieth of Shawwal in the year 578 AH.

Third: Duration of the Journey

Historians and literary scholars have debated the duration of the journey, with some citing three years and others counting it as two. The matter is contentious and offers lessons for those who reflect upon it.

The Three Journeys:

Ibn Jubayr is known for his three journeys, which are:

The First Journey:

Ibn Jubayr documented only his first journey among his three expeditions in the book we are currently analyzing. This journey began in Granada on Thursday, the 8th of Shawwal, 578 AH accompanied by his grandfather, the judge Ibn Attiya, and his friends Abu Ja'far al-Tayyib and Ahmad

ibn Hassan. They boarded a ship, passing through Ceuta and arriving in Alexandria on Thursday, the 29th of Dhul-Qi'dah. The journey lasted approximately thirty days (Fouad Qandil, *Travel Literature in Arab Heritage, p. 386).

Some attribute Ibn Jubayr's journey to the Hijaz as a means of atonement for his sins, specifically for drinking wine at the hands of Sultan Abu Sa'id ibn Abd al-Mu'min, the Almohad emir, in 579 AH. This suggests a time discrepancy of one year, implying that the journey might have lasted two years instead of three, given that he returned to his homeland in 581 AH. During this time, he spent about six months between Mecca and Medina, seeking knowledge, before heading to Kufa, visiting Baghdad and Mosul, and then traveling north to the Levant, Akka, and Sicily, eventually returning to Granada on **the 15th of Muharram, 581 AH. He recorded his experiences in the form of diaries, which were later compiled by his students into this book.

The Second Journey:

When Salah al-Din al-Ayyubi reclaimed Jerusalem from the Crusaders in 583 AH during the Battle of Hattin, Muslims rejoiced at this victory (Shawqi Difi, Journeys, Dar Al-Ma'arif, 4th ed., p. 71). The news of this significant event spread across the East and West, and upon hearing it, Ibn Jubayr felt a deep yearning to meet the valiant warrior. He resolved to undertake his second journey, driven by excitement and a desire to witness this joyous occasion in the Levant. He set out on the 9th of Rabi' al-Awwal, 585 AH, and returned in 586 AH making this journey last approximately one year.

The Third Journey:

After parting from his beloved wife, Umm Aatika, whom he mourned deeply, Ibn Jubayr was heartbroken by her death. He wrote a collection of poetry in her memory, which intensified his sorrow. Consequently, he decided to embark on his third journey (Fouad Qandil, Travel Literature in Arab Heritage, p. 388) to perform the pilgrimage and ease his grief. He planned to travel from Ceuta to Mecca, then to Jerusalem, and subsequently to Cairo, eventually settling in Alexandria, where he passed away in 614 AH.

Summary of Ibn Jubayr's Journeys

It can be said that Ibn Jubayr's journeys were predominantly religious and educational in nature. They reflected a balanced, moderate approach typical of a traveler. His writings are accessible yet profound, resembling the style of Al-Jahiz in their clarity, structure, and elegance. They exhibit a

unique blend of linguistic beauty and meaningful content, utilizing rhetorical devices naturally rather than artificially.

For instance, he vividly describes a "stormy night" saying:

> "...On Wednesday night, a fierce wind struck us, terrifying the sea, accompanied by a rain sent forth by the winds with great force, like arrows. The situation intensified, and waves came at us from every direction... When dawn broke on Wednesday, the 19th of Dhul-Qi'dah, it brought with it even greater terror and distress, and the sea surged violently, darkening the horizons and causing the winds and rain to rage. As night fell, the situation eased somewhat, and we continued our journey, driven swiftly by the wind of the sails..." (Ibn Jubayr, A Reminder of Events about Travel Incidents, Al-Hilal Library, Beirut, Lebanon, p. 10).

Fourth: Analytical Critique of the Narrative Discourses and Linguistic Features

Types of Metaphor:

1. Mental Metaphor: This involves attributing an action to something other than its actual subject based on a relationship. It can only occur in a compound structure. The relationships can be causal, temporal, spatial, or related to the subject or object. Examples include:

- "عظم الخطب": "ereH, brev eht "عظم" ot detubirtta si "الخطب" yllacirohpatem, a htiw ecruos "relationship
- "جن الليل": "The verb "جن" ot detubirtta si "الليل", yllacirohpatem "gnitacidni laropmet a pihsnoitaler "
- "اشتد الكرب": "brev ehT "اشتد" si "الكرب", attributed to "gnitacidni ecruos a pihsnoitaler "
- "هال البحر": "brev ehT "هال" si "البحر", ot detubirtta si "gnitsegus lasuac a pihsnoitaler "

2. Linguistic Metaphor (Metonymy): This is when a word is used in a context differing from its original meaning, supported by evidence that prevents the literal meaning. The relationship between the literal and metaphorical meanings could be similarity or dissimilarity (Al-Jarim and Mustafa Amin, Clear Rhetoric, p. 71).

Examples of metonymy include:

- "جاء مطر": "Here, rain is likened to a person coming, with the implication that "جاء" daetsni desu si "of describing the falling or pouring of rain

- "جاءنا الموح: "T ehT evaw si deifinosrep sa ,gnimoc ,hguohtla sevaw dna llaf rehtar naht .evirra "

- "ilar to the previous examples, it attributes a human action to the daySim :فجاء النهار

Additionally, the phrase " " sworra ot spordniar gnirapmoc ,elimis lareneg a si " " كانه شاييب سهام
.without explicitly stating the point of comparison

In the narrative describing the aftermath of the storm:

> "...We spent that night, the Thursday following the mentioned day, wavering between hope and despair. When dawn broke, God spread His mercy, the clouds cleared, the air became pleasant, and the sun shone. The sea calmed down, and people rejoiced. The anguish lifted, and we thanked Allah for showing us His great power, which then met us with His beautiful mercy and gentle kindness. Praise be to Him for His grace and blessings..." (Ibn Jubayr, *A Reminder of Events about Travel Incidents*, p. 10-11).

Intertextuality and Influences:

The influence of religious and literary intertextuality is evident in both form and content throughout Ibn Jubayr's journeys. He draws inspiration from the verse:

> "He it is who makes you travel through land and sea. Until, when you are in the ships and they sail with them by a good wind and they rejoice therein, there comes a stormy wind, and the waves come to them from every place, and they think they are surrounded. They invoke Allah, sincere to Him in religion..." (Surah Yunus, 10:22).

His narratives are adorned with rhetorical devices such as (rhymed prose), antithesis, parallelism, and other stylistic embellishments that were hallmarks of Andalusian poets, scholars, and orators. These texts reflect the beauty of nature, the fragrance of flowers, and the ambiance of rivers and seas, showcasing the profound influence of the Quran and prophetic traditions on this genre of literature, known as Travel Literature

Abundance of Descriptions of Cities, Mosques, and Religious Landmarks.

I have taken some excerpts to illustrate the richness and precision of Ibn Jubayr's descriptions in his accounts of "Alexandria," "Cairo," and "Egypt." No traveler has passed through Egypt without recording its wonders and curiosities, as well as its numerous sites and rich historical landmarks. He describes the Lighthouse of Alexandria, saying:

> “...One of the greatest wonders we witnessed was the lighthouse, which Allah Almighty has described through those He appointed as a sign for the observant and guidance for travelers. Were it not for its guidance in the sea to the shores of Alexandria, it would be visible from over seventy miles away. The port is of great antiquity and stability, both in length and width, competing with the sky in height and elevation. Words fall short of describing it, and the news about it is limited, while the actual sight expands...” (Ibn Jubayr, *A Reminder of Events about Travel Incidents**, p. 14).

The book *A Reminder of Events* by Ibn Jubayr is considered a rich historical lexicon of travel literature, similar to the works of Yaqt al-Hamawi (d. 626 AH), who described the tombs of the Ahl al-Bayt and the companions of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), as well as the graves of scholars, ascetics, and hermits. He also described various castles, forts, and historical mosques, such as Mosque of Ibn Tulun, Nile Garden, and the achievements of Salah al-Din al-Ayyubi, as he was a prominent religious figure of his time who played a crucial role in repelling the Mongol and Crusader campaigns. Ibn Jubayr admired him greatly and dedicated long passages to him in his journey.

He describes the city of ‘Ayadhab on the coast of the Red Sea, mentioning what pilgrims encounter while performing the rituals of Hajj. He elaborates on the ****Noble Sanctuary**** and the Sacred Mosque, detailing its corners and the Kaaba. He says:

> “...The Sacred Mosque and the ancient house... the honored house has four corners and is close to being square. I was informed by the chief of the Shiabiyyin, who are in charge of the house, namely Muhammad ibn Ismail ibn Abdul Rahman, a descendant of Uthman ibn Talha ibn Shi’bah ibn Abdul Dar, who was the guardian of the house of the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him)...” (Ibn Jubayr, p. 53).

His work contributes significantly to the fields of biographical literature and genealogy, enriching both the Arabic and religious libraries.

Ibn Jubayr provides detailed descriptions of the gates of Mecca, noting its religious significance and discussing the achievements of Jamal al-Din al-Afghani. He presents a detailed account of the rituals of Hajj and Umrah from a religious perspective, relying on what he read from foundational texts of Islamic law and obligations. He describes the washing of the Kaaba with Zamzam water and mentions the virtues of certain days and nights, including the 15th night of Sha’ban, Dhul-Qi’dah, and the honored month of Ramadan, detailing the Taraweeh prayers during its nights, as well as the month of Shawwal and the house of Khadijah (may Allah be pleased with her). He also elaborates on the month

of Dhul-Hijjah, describing the ascent to Mount Arafat (the Mountain of Mercy) and mentioning the Prophet's Mosque and its sacred garden.

He records some sermons, admonitions, and lessons he heard from scholars in ****Mecca**** and Medina, spending six months there, as previously mentioned, to attend classes in knowledge and jurisprudence, seeking to deepen his understanding of the religion. He describes his journey from Medina to Iraq, mentioning the cities of Kufa, Hilla, and Baghdad. where he was impressed by their scholarly gatherings. He describes the caliphate's residence, noting the important sights, thermal baths, mosques, and schools.

He continues to document his journey to Mosul. describing its city and those of Nisibis Diniyyah, Ras al-Ayn Haran, Manbij, and Bzaghah. His travels also take him to Aleppo, Hama, Homs, and Damascus, where he describes the ancient mosque in terms of its size, doors, and architectural features, along with its historical background. He narrates his journey to Baniyas, Acre, Tyre, and Messina in Sicily, as well as to Shafludi and Thurma, where he describes the Antiochian Church

This journey is filled with events spanning over 283 pages in A Reminder of Events about Travel Incidents, commonly referred to as “The Journey of Ibn Jubayr.”

The Second Topic: The Journey of Ibn Battuta

Ibn Battuta: His full name is Abu Abdullah Muhammad ibn Abdullah Muhammad ibn Ibrahim al-Lawati, commonly known as “Ibn Battuta.” This name refers to his family lineage to the lawata tribe. He was born on the 17th of Rajab in the year 703 AH into a religious, educated, and conservative family. He learned language, jurisprudence, and religion, memorizing the Quran by the age of twenty. He passed away in 776 AH in his birthplace. He is one of the most famous Arab Muslim travelers of the eighth century AH, and his journeys are recorded in his book The Gift to the Observers on the Wonders of Lands and Marvels of Travel, which spans 799 pages

First: Analysis of the Title

In the first textual threshold of this book, we find the title *The Gift to the Observers on the Wonders of Lands and Marvels of Travel*, consisting of eight words: (two nouns + a preposition + two nouns + a conjunction + two nouns), which translates to (Gift + Observers + on + Wonders + Lands + and + Marvels + Travels). There are six monemes and two phonemes, totaling eight. The title features

cohesive and harmonious letters, particularly the preposition "on," which indicates a spatial context, and the conjunction "and," which serves to connect and share judgment.

When we read the title in both forward and reverse order, we find it balanced and symmetrical, reading as (two nouns + a preposition + two nouns + a conjunction + two nouns) from the right. This symmetry creates a musical resonance and ease of pronunciation. By removing the two letters "on" and "and," we find a harmony in the rhyming of the three segments of the phrases, all agreeing in the letter "r."

Additionally, there is a correspondence between the words "Observers" and "Lands" and "Travels," which is known as (rhymed prose) in the pauses. There is also a notable similarity in the textual threshold of this title with the title of Ibn Jubayr's work, A Reminder of Events about Travel Incidents, particularly at the initial letter "t" in both titles. This is not coincidental but rather represents a correspondence and harmony, as well as a literal intertextuality between the titles, particularly in the word "Travels."

The word "Lands" is used to mean countries, and the term "Wonders" is significant. Dr. Saad Zaghloul Abdul Hamid commented on this book, published by the General Cultural Affairs House in Baghdad, Iraq, in 1985. The author is largely presumed to be from

Marrakech, having written in the sixth century AH a work titled The Book of Insight into the Wonders of Lands, in which he described Mecca, Medina, Egypt, and the Maghreb

This literary intertextuality is evident in both the language and style, as noted. All three travelers—namely Ibn Jubayr, the anonymous Moroccan author, and Ibn Battuta—described similar milestones in their travels, particularly regarding Egypt and the Maghreb, and the description of Mecca and Medina. This is not merely coincidental but indicates a consensus and harmony in their journeys.

Ibn Battuta presumably intended in the title's introduction to convey that his book on travel literature is a comprehensive summation of the essential texts on travel prior to and during his time. He adds the wonders and curiosities of those who preceded him in writing, suggesting that none who come after him will be able to match his work or achieve what he has done. He is the eminent travel writer among Arabs, analogous to Marco Polo (1254–1324) in the West, despite the time difference.

Furthermore, there are literary intertextualities and allusions to poetry within the term "Travels," indicating the five benefits previously mentioned, along with references to a line by Al-Shafi'i.

There is a notable similarity with Ibn Jubayr's title in the final word "Travels." This title, as mentioned by Ibn Battuta, is well known among Arab writers, critics, and historians, and is often abbreviated by Western scholars as "The Journey of Ibn Battuta," reflecting their preference for brevity.

Second: The Motivation for the Journey

The primary reason for Ibn Battuta's first journey among his three journeys was to perform the pilgrimage to the Sacred House of Allah. This journey included visits and meetings that captivated him. Therefore, it can be said that his journey began as a religious mission, but upon his return, it transformed into an art and a hobby aimed at tourism, exploration, entertainment, conquests, marriage, and the joy of travel. He began writing his account in 756 AH at the request of Sultan Abu 'Anan al-Marini and completed it in 757 AH. The last thing Ibn Battuta dictated to Ibn Juzayy, the scribe, after praising Allah and acknowledging His blessings, was:

> "...Here ends the journey entitled The Gift to the Observers on the Wonders of Lands and Marvels of Travel, which was completed on the third of Dhul-Hijjah in the year 756 AH. Praise be to Allah, and peace be upon His chosen servants." (Ibn Battuta, The Gift to the Observers, vol. 2, p. 714).

It is worth mentioning that Ibn Juzayy also noted at the end that "the completion of this work occurred in the month of Safar in the year 757 AH." This work is part of travel literature, maritime literature, land literature, and literature on Islamic conquests. He is considered one of the greatest Arab Muslim travelers of all time, and his journeys spanned nearly thirty years. Ibn Battuta was the narrator while Ibn Juzayy was the literary scribe, who added poetic quotes that enhanced the descriptions of the countries, as seen in his depictions of Damascus, Aleppo, Baghdad, Egypt, the Nile, and others.

Third: Duration of the Journey

Historians and literary scholars have estimated the duration of the journey to be approximately thirty years, while some calculate it as twenty-nine and a half years. This is not a single journey but a collection of journeys, as implied by the title. The work comprises 779 pages, and I will present its sections and noteworthy aspects.

The Three Journeys:

Ibn Battuta is known for his three journeys:

First Journey: Ibn Battuta recorded his three journeys in the book we are currently analyzing. It began in his birthplace, Tangier on Thursday, the 2nd of Rajab, 725 AH, when he was twenty-two years old during the reign of Sultan Said ibn Sultan Abu Yusuf ibn Abd al-Haqq. His goal was to perform the pilgrimage to the Sacred House. He traveled on the backs of camels, traversing the northern coast of Africa, starting from Tlemcen to the city of Milyana then to Bjaia, Constantine, and on to Tunis, where he mentioned its Sultan, Abu Yahya ibn Sultan Abu Zakariya Yahya ibn Abi Hafs. He then traveled to Libya and Egypt where he described Alexandria:

> “...We arrived in the first days of Jumada al-Awwal to the city of Alexandria, may Allah protect it. It is the fortified port and the welcoming region, remarkable in its essence and strong in its construction, with all that one wishes for in terms of embellishments, fortifications, and both worldly and religious monuments...” (Ibn Battuta, *The Gift to the Observers vol. 1, p. 38).

He continued to Syria, then to Hijaz, where he completed the pilgrimage rituals. He then traveled to Iraq, entered Iran, and returned to Hijaz to perform Hajj a second time. He then journeyed to Yemen, Somalia, Oman, Bahrain, and returned to Hijaz for a third pilgrimage. After that, he returned to Egypt, Syria, and Iraq, before proceeding to Constantinople before the Turkish conquest. His travels took him to Bulgaria, up to the Arctic, then to the Crimea, Khawarizm, Afghanistan, India, China, and back to Baghdad, then Syria, Egypt, and finally to Hijaz for his fourth pilgrimage. He returned to Egypt, retracing his steps back to his homeland in North Morocco, where he arrived in 750 AH and received the patronage of Sultan Abu 'Anan al-Marini.

Second Journey: After returning from his first journey, Ibn Battuta stayed in his residence for two years. Then, the desire for travel stirred within him, prompting him to decide to travel to Andalusia. He described it beautifully, captivating the reader with his vivid depictions of its beautiful landscapes, impressive architecture, and open-minded inhabitants. He visited the city of Granada, a center of knowledge and Arab cultural heritage, before returning to his family in Fes, Morocco.

Third Journey: After returning from Granada in Andalusia, Ibn Battuta decided to embark on a journey—his last before his death—to Southern Africa. This journey took place at the end of 753 AH and the beginning of 754 AH, transitioning from the enchanting beauty of Andalusia and the natural splendor of Northern Morocco to the alluring desert landscapes and picturesque golden sands of the Sahara Desert, passing through the Niger River and then to Sudan. He returned to Fes in 754 AH, and this journey lasted nearly a year. He then settled into a life dedicated to the judiciary, serving as a judge until he passed away in 776 AH, having surpassed seventy years of age.

It can be said that Ibn Battuta's journeys were closely aligned in terms of their levels, reasons, motivations, and objectives—most of which were religious, educational, military, tourist, matrimonial, and curiosity-driven. The nature of his character as a traveler was characterized by determination, resilience, endurance, and grace in facing hardships. He shares a balanced and moderate approach with Ibn Jubayr in his narrative style.

These journeys are neither easily attainable nor overly simplistic. They are written in a style that is effortlessly sophisticated, free from pretentiousness or excessive effort. Any metaphor or rhetorical flourish present seems to arise naturally from an intrinsic generosity of spirit, surpassing the level of Ibn Jubayr's style—despite his literary prowess—and excelling in both the variety of subjects and descriptive detail. This can be attributed to the longer duration of Ibn Battuta's travels and the diversity of his experiences compared to Ibn Jubayr. In terms of the volume of their works, Ibn Battuta's journey encompasses twice the number of pages of Ibn Jubayr's account (Ibn Jubayr's work has 339 pages, while Ibn Battuta's has 799 pages).

In these three journeys, Ibn Battuta describes the traditions, customs, religions, and myths of the nations he visited, detailing their clothing, food, drinks, and shelters. He provides a photographic representation of cities and regions in the late Middle Ages with remarkable scientific accuracy and skillful detail. His writings reveal a distinct inclination towards a moderate Sufi philosophy, far removed from extremism, rigidity, and ignorance, reflecting his strong religious disposition and deep-rooted Islamic teachings since childhood until the end of his travels. He devoted much time to religious figures and Islamic matters, as well as Sufi gatherings.

This dedication prompted him to employ keen observation—common in empirical science—along with meticulous scrutiny of phenomena, both external and internal, large and small, to unveil their essence and reveal their captivating allure. This book is truly a valuable resource in the fields of history, geography, anthropology, and other sciences. His journey acted as a grand exhibition of the lives of the nations and regions he visited across Africa, Asia, Europe, and the Arctic. He is regarded as the “Prince of Arab and Muslim Travelers.”

Many Western travelers, such as Marco Polo (1254–1324), were influenced by him, and he also inspired the Egyptian novelist Naguib Mahfouz in the title of his novel *The Journey of Ibn Fattouma*, through intertextuality in the initial textual threshold.

Moreover, the numerous translations of his work into several foreign languages, including Latin (1781), English (1829), French (1859), Portuguese, German, and Turkish, reflect the global impact of his writings, categorizing them within the realm of "World Translation Literature."

Fourth: Examples from His Journey

We have selected excerpts from Ibn Battuta's journey to illustrate his style and the context of his writing...

At the beginning of his book, he starts with praise for Allah and an introduction to his noble lineage, saying:

> "...All praise be to Allah, who has made the earth subservient to His servants, allowing them to traverse its paths. He has made it a cradle for them, restoring and bringing forth life in it, spreading it by His power so that it becomes a resting place for mankind and establishing it with firm signs and towering mountains..." (Ibn Battuta, *The Gift to the Observers on the Wonders of Lands and Marvels of Travel*, Dar Iḥyā' Al-'Ulūm, Beirut, Lebanon, 1st ed. 1987, vol. 1, p. 29).

This introduction resembles the opening of a Friday sermon delivered by a speaker on the pulpit. It is essential at the beginning of every sermon or book. His profound influence from the Quran is apparent, as he draws upon nearly nine verses from the Holy Quran in this introduction, including:

- "All praise be to Allah, the Lord of the Worlds." (Surah Al-Fatiha, 1:1)
- "He it is Who made the earth subservient to you, so walk in its spacious paths and eat of His provision, and to Him will you be resurrected." (Surah Al-Mulk, 67:15)
- "So that you may traverse its paths." (Surah Nuh, 71:20)
- "And Allah made you grow from the earth like a plant." (Surah Nuh, 71:17)
- "Then He will return you therein and bring you forth again." (Surah Nuh, 71:18)
- "And the earth, after that, He spread it." (Surah An-Nazi'at, 79:30)
- "And the mountains He set firm." (Surah An-Nazi'at, 79:32)
- "And He created the gushing rivers like mountains." (Surah Ar-Rahman, 55:24)
- "Did We not make the earth a resting place?" (Surah An-Naba, 78:6-7)

This dense intertextuality with the Quran signifies the profound impact of the Holy Quran and the noble Hadith on the style of the traveler Ibn Battuta and the writer Ibn Juzayy. It positions Ibn Battuta's travel literature as distinctly religious, aligning with the principle that actions are judged by intentions, as mentioned in tradition.

In his supplication and praise for Sultan Abu 'Anan, he states:

> "...We beseech Allah Almighty for our lord, the Imam, the caliph, the Commander of the Faithful, who relies on the Lord of the Worlds, the warrior in the path of Allah, supported by the victory of Allah, Abu 'Anan, the knight among our guiding imams, the rightly guided caliphs, to grant him victory that delights the world and its people, bringing joy and happiness that serves as a remedy for the times..." (Ibn Battuta, *The Gift to the Observers*, vol. 1, p. 30).

Ibn Battuta, Ibn Juzayy, or both may have exaggerated their praise beyond measure in their expressions of commendation and flattery, which may have led to excessive embellishment. As the saying goes, "When something exceeds its limit, it turns into its opposite," and thus praise can sometimes become mockery. He reflects on himself, saying:

> "...And among those who came to its exalted door, traversing the vast lands to its immense sea, was the scholar, the traveler, the trustworthy, the honest, Abu Abdullah Muhammad ibn Abdullah ibn Muhammad ibn Ibrahim al-Lawati, known as Ibn Battuta, also called 'Shams ad-Din' in the Eastern lands. He who traveled the world, measuring the cities and testing the regions..." (Ibn Battuta, *The Gift to the Observers*, vol. 1, p. 31).

The effects of affectation and rhetorical flourish are not lost on those with intellect and understanding. I doubt Ibn Battuta would praise himself in such a manner, recalling the verse:

> "...Do not praise yourselves; He knows best who fears Him." (Surah An-Najm, 53:32).

I consider this portion to be more reflective of Ibn Juzayy, albeit he too has overstated somewhat, leading to an excessive degree of pride and flattery that borders on mockery.

Fifth: The Impact of Rhetoric and Eloquence on Travel Literature

Abundance of Rhetorical Flourishes: It seems that both Ibn Battuta and Ibn Juzayy were influenced by the literary art of maqamat which was prevalent during their time. This is evident in the

abundance of rhymes present throughout the texts of the journey. As Ibn Battuta narrates the events of his travels, he states:

> “...I will recount what I witnessed in my journey to the cities, the remarkable anecdotes I memorized, and the accounts of those I met from the kings of the regions, their virtuous scholars, and their pious saints. I will present what brings joy to the hearts and delights the ears and eyes...” (Ibn Battuta, *The Gift to the Observers*, vol. 1, p. 32).

Here, we observe instances of rhyme and assonance in the words he uses—such as “cities,” “anecdotes,” “regions,” “virtuous,” “pious,” “hearts,” and “eyes”—which create musical resonance and harmony. Ibn Battuta did not forget to commend and praise Muhammad ibn Muhammad ibn Juzayy al-Kalbi, the scribe of the Sultan and his own chronicler, acknowledging him as the musical composer for Ibn Battuta’s narratives.

The examples of such rhetorical flourishes are numerous throughout his work.

Sixth: Religious References and Their Influence on Ibn Battuta’s Writings

One notable aspect of Ibn Battuta’s writings is the frequent references to Sufi gatherings. Sufism was a significant part of his journey, introducing the reader to the realm of mysticism whether intended or not. He recounts the miracles of various scholars in **Alexandria**, mentioning Imad ad-Din al-Kindi and describing his miracles, stating:

“...This is called al-Tarafiq among the Sufis... Among them is the learned, ascetic, and pious Imam Burhan ad-Din al-A’raj, one of the prominent ascetics and devout worshippers. I met him during my stay in Alexandria and was his guest for three days...” (Ibn Battuta, *The Gift to the Observers on the Wonders of Lands and Marvels of Travel*, Dar Ihya’ Al-ulum, Beirut, Lebanon, 1st ed. 1987, vol. 1, p. 42).

He then discusses the miracles of the righteous saint Abu al-Hasan al-Shadhili, who is connected to Hassan ibn Ali, and he is known for the Shadhiliya order, which is prominent in Egypt and the Maghreb. Ibn Battuta shares the morning invocation recited by al-Shadhili and his students:

“...O Allah, O Ali, O Mighty, O Forbearing, O All-Knowing, You are my Lord, and upon You I rely. Blessed is my Lord, and blessed is my sustenance. So strengthen us and support us, and make this sea subservient to us as You made the sea subservient to Moses, and the fire subservient to Ibrahim, and the mountains and iron subservient to David, and the wind, devils, and jinn subservient to Solomon...” (Ibn Battuta, *The Gift to the Observers*, vol. 1, pp. 43-44).

He mentions a talisman for fulfilling needs among the Shadhili Sufi order, referring to it as a secret knowledge, stating:

“...K.H.Y.A.S.H.M.A.S.Q.”—this is known among them as the “Invocation of Subjugation,” and it relates to the secrets of the letters and the openings of the chapters in the Quran...

This reference to Abu al-Hasan al-Shadhili exemplifies a direct religious and Sufi intertextuality. Ibn Battuta intends to promote this invocation as beneficial for travelers navigating both land and sea, implying that his spiritual guide is the righteous saint Abu al-Hasan al-Shadhili. His intention seems to be a call to adopt this Sufi path, making a clear declaration of his own Sufi alignment.

He dedicates over two pages of his work to this invocation, detailing the miracles of various Sufi saints, including Abu Abdullah al-Murshidi, the famous saint of Medina, sharing many stories to engage readers during his travels. He also describes the holy sites in Egypt, such as:

“...Among the sacred sites is the revered shrine, where the head of **Hussein ibn Ali** is located... On its doors are silver rings and plates...” (Ibn Battuta, *The Gift to the Observers*, vol. 1, p. 57).

He mentions the shrine of Sayyida Nafisa, emphasizing her piety and her acceptance of prayers:

“...And the grave of Imam Abu Abdullah Muhammad ibn Idris al-Shafi’i, may Allah be pleased with him, is there, with a large ribat...” (Ibn Battuta, *The Gift to the Observers*, vol. 1, p. 58).

These examples illustrate a rich tapestry of religious intertextuality, as he mentions the names of companions like Amr ibn al-Aas and Hassan ibn Ali, as well as notable women from Islamic history like Nafisa bint al-Hassan. His incorporation of these invocations serves as a means of intertextual reference, emphasizing his connections to the Sufi tradition and the veneration of saints.

The character of Ibn Juzayy also reflects a scholarly depth, blending literary and religious knowledge with poetic flair, making the journey both engaging and expansive.

This long journey encompasses numerous names of scholars, cities, regions, castles, rivers, seas, mountains, plateaus, deserts, plains, currencies, beliefs, customs, legends, flora, and fauna. It stands as a significant reference for scholars and critics in Arab literature specifically, and world

literature in general, particularly in the genre of travel literature. This modest reading highlights what caught my attention, offering commentary, explanation, comparison, and simple critique.

Narrative Description and Linguistic Phenomena:

Ibn Battuta elaborated on the descriptions of scenes involving animals, humans, and the conquest of cities. We have selected a few excerpts for brevity to illustrate the abundance and precision of his descriptions, such as his portrayal of the Nile and its significance in the Quran and Hadith, which are well-known. Ibn Battuta mixed this with digressions, giving his work an encyclopedic character in terms of documentation, engagement, encouragement, and fear in the narrative of sights and scenes.

We can observe a similar style in Ibn Jubayr's writing in *Tadhkirat al-Akhbar* where he compared scenes in different locations, such as the Nile River with the Indus River. He describes the wonders of the pyramids, how they were built, the secrets they hold, and the preserved bodies of the pharaohs who ruled Egypt across generations.

Rather than repeating the scenes and cities mentioned by Ibn Jubayr, I will present important new images and wonders in distant lands, such as his description of the rhinoceros:

“...The rhinoceros appeared before us; it is a large black animal with a big head of varying size, so much so that it is said: the rhinoceros has a head without a body... I saw the rhinoceros a second time...” (Ibn Battuta, *The Gift to the Observers on the Wonders of Lands and Marvels of Travel*, Dar Ihya' Al-Ulum, Beirut, Lebanon, 1st ed. 1987, vol. 1, p. 408).

In reading this passage, one can sense the phrasing reminiscent of al-Jahiz in his book *Kitab al-Hayawan*, where he describes animals, interspersing his writing with proverbs, wisdom, and rich linguistic matters for discussion and debate. This reflects a direct heritage of popular intertextuality among Indians during the time of Ibn Battuta's visit to India.

He describes two significant expeditions: the first in India, which he undertook during his travels, and the second in China, capturing the conquest of Sandabur:

> “...Sultan Jamal al-Din equipped seventy-two ships for the expedition to conquer Sandabur... I prepared to embark on the ships, feeling that I should head for jihad. I opened the Quran, and the first pages spoke much of Allah's name: ‘And Allah will surely support those who support Him’ (Surah Al-Hajj, 22:40)... We arrived on Monday evening at Sandabur (present-day Singapore) and entered to find its people ready for war, having set up catapults...” (Ibn Battuta, *The Gift to the Observers* vol. 2, p. 582).

Upon reflecting on this text, it suggests that he received a revelation through opening the Quran, a practice common among Sufis when intending to act. Ibn Battuta had previously informed the king about his journey after opening the Quran, a habit he maintained throughout his travels. He was honored with the command of the army alongside the prince for the conquest of Sandabur, which is known today as Singapore. The war machine at the time was the catapult, akin to modern-day cannons. This expedition is viewed as a Sufi blessing for Ibn Battuta during his extensive travels, distinguishing him from previous and subsequent travelers, as Allah granted victory through his efforts, securing peace for the city's inhabitants against pillage and slavery.

He also described a peculiar practice among certain non-Muslim Indians, stating that when a woman's husband dies and is cremated, she is also cremated after adorning herself for the occasion:

> “...Cremating a woman after her husband is considered a commendable act among them, though not obligatory. However, if she burns herself after her husband, her family gains honor from this and attributes it to her loyalty...” (Ibn Battuta, *The Gift to the Observers* vol. 2, p. 408).

This practice is specific to Brahmin Hindus, not Muslims, where a man would burn himself in mourning for his wife, and not the other way around.

The Gift to the Observers is a lexicon of animal terminology, Sufi terms, doctrines, and religions, characterized by its encyclopedic breadth and precision. It serves as a rich resource for descriptions of countries and an extensive reference in the literature of biographies of scholars, leaders, and notable figures, akin to Ibn Jubayr's *Tadhkirat al-Akhbar*

Ibn Battuta's journey surpasses that of Sinbad the Sailor, as recounted by Scheherazade to King Shahryar, exceeding even the tales of *One Thousand and One Nights*—spanning twenty-nine years filled with witnessed events that marked the passage of days, months, and years, chronicled over seven hundred ninety-nine pages (799) in *The Gift to the Observers in the Wonders of Lands and Marvels of Travel*, also known as *The Journey of Ibn Battuta*.

Conclusion:

After this careful reading and critical study, we conclude with several results as follows:

1. Motivation for Ibn Jubayr's Journey: Initially, Ibn Jubayr's journey was religious, aimed at performing the Hajj, but it later transformed into a touristic and exploratory journey.

2. Three Journeys of Ibn Jubayr: The first journey was from Granada to Alexandria; the second was from Granada to the Levant to meet the remarkable leader, Sultan Saladin; and the third—after the death of his wife—was from Ceuta to Hajj in Mecca, then to Jerusalem, and finally back to his birthplace until his death.

3. Writing Style of Ibn Jubayr: Ibn Jubayr’s writing takes the form of diaries or personal notes, characterized by clarity, simplicity, and ease of style, without artifice or excessive rhetoric. He excelled in describing natural scenes and urban development, reflecting his longing to see the heroes of Islam. His travels spanned from 578 AH to 581 AH, lasting about three years, over a total of 283 pages. One might ponder how many lines he recorded over those three years.

4. Religious and Educational Nature of Ibn Jubayr’s Travels: His journeys were primarily religious, seeking to meet the heroes of the Islamic world. Tadhkirat al-Akhbar serves as a rich historical lexicon of geographical descriptions and notable figures, akin to Mu’jam al-Buldan by Shihab al-Din al-Qalqashandi.

5. Balanced Perspective: Ibn Jubayr’s journeys were marked by a balanced and moderate perspective. They were not overly simplistic nor excessively complex, written in diary form with accessible language. His style resonates with that of al-Jahiz in terms of narrative technique, elegance, and richness of vocabulary.

6. Ibn Battuta’s Journey: Initially motivated by religious duties, Ibn Battuta’s travels evolved into an exploratory and jihadist quest. His journeys lasted nearly twenty-seven years, from 725 AH to 552 AH, marking him as one of the longest-traveling Arab Muslim travelers, chronicled in 799 pages.

7. Collaboration with Ibn Juzayy: Ibn Battuta’s work, *The Gift to the Observers*, was dictated by him to the writer and scholar Ibn Juzayy, commissioned by Sultan Abu ‘Anan al-Marini.

8. Ibn Battuta’s Extensive Travels: His first journey took him across North Africa, the Middle East, and into Asia, traversing numerous countries and regions, including Algeria, Tunisia, Libya, Egypt, the Levant, the Hijaz, Yemen, Somalia, Oman, Bahrain, Iraq, Constantinople, and more, culminating in an extensive odyssey.

9. Youthful Beginnings: Ibn Battuta began his journeys at the young age of twenty-two, showcasing a rich narrative style filled with poetic expressions and compelling imagery of the cities he encountered.

10. Unique Cultural Observations: Ibn Battuta described many wonders not documented by Ibn Jubayr, such as the practices of burning widows among the Brahmins and the consumption habits of the Chinese. His journey is thus more engaging and rich in experiences compared to that of Ibn Jubayr.

11. Narrative Richness: The narrative discourse in the journeys of Ibn Jubayr and Ibn Battuta is rich in linguistic phenomena, historical events, and religious traditions, filled with intertextuality. This adds beauty and grandeur to their contributions to travel literature.

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