

Objectives of Symposium:

- To encourage archaeological work on a crucial and largely unknown period in Algerian history.
- To revise the colonial school's approach to examining and interrogating the archaeological heritage of the Maghrib al-Awsat in general.
- Employing archaeological approaches to investigate a historical period with scarce local written documents.
- Charting new paths for archaeological research for doctoral students and postdoctoral researchers in this field.

Symposium Themes:

- Urban settlements in the Maghrib-al-Awsat during the first four centuries of the Islamic period.
- Aspects of agriculture and irrigation in the early Maghrib al-Awsat.
- The development of mints and the evolution of coinage in the early Maghrib al-Awsat.
- Cultural connections between the Maghrib al-Awsat and its neighbours during this period.
- Archaeological maps of mines and mining activities in the Maghrib al-Awsat during the early Middle Ages.

Symposium Preparatory Committees:

* Organising Committee:

Pr.Doc. Amel Youssefi Deputy HOD.
Doc. Qada Labtar Laboratory Manager.
Doc. Aicha Fatemi Division Head.
Doc. Samia Bouragueba Laboratory Researcher.
Aissa Koujati PhD Student.
Athemane Yabedri PhD Student.

* * * *

* Scientific Committee:

Pr.Doc. Stefan Heidemann U. Hamburg, Germany.
Pr.Doc. Alastair Northedge U. Sorbonne. 1, France.
Pr.Doc. Rafael Blanco-Guzman U. Cordoba, Spain.
Pr.Doc. Faouzi Mahfoudh U. Manouba, Tunisia.
Pr.Doc. Mohammed Hossein U. Masquet, Oman.
Pr.Doc. Maarouf Belhadj U. Tlemcen, Algeria.
Pr.Doc. Rezki Chergui U. Tlemcen, Algeria.
Pr.Doc. Bouabdallah Beljouzi U. Tlemcen, Algeria.
Doc. Tarek Sabraa U. Münster, Germany.



Higher Education and Scientific Research Ministry



Abou Bekr Belkaid–Tlemcen University
Humanities and Social Sciences Faculty



Department of Archaeology
In collaboration with
The Laboratory of Archaeological Heritage
And its Valorisation

Organizing an International Symposium with
The Title:

THE ARCHAEOLOGY OF THE EARLY ISLAMIC PERIOD IN MAGHRIB AL-AWSAT (ALGERIA) (1ST -4TH CENTURIES A. H / 7TH- 10TH CENTURIES C.E.) -CROSS-READINGS-

* * * *

7th-9th February 2026
Department of Archaeology, Section VI, New Pole.

*** Preamble:**

Since the establishment of the “Islamic Antiquities” specialization at the University of Algiers in 1923 under the supervision of Georges Marçais (1876-1962), the archaeology of the first four centuries of the Islamic period in the Maghrib-al-Awsat (current Algeria) has not received significant attention.

The relevant archaeological excavations thus far have been limited to merely seven sites, three of which were excavated in hurried fashion during the period of the French occupation: *Tihart* by Marçais and de Lamare in the 1940s; *Ashir* by Marçais’ student Lucien Golvin (1949-1952); and *Sedrata* by the independent researcher Marguerite Van Berchem (1952-1953).



Early Islamic copper coin of Tilimsān struck by The Umayyad governor “Mūsā b. Nuṣayr” (704-714).

In his historical and geographical studies on medieval North Africa, Emile Felix Gautier (1864-1940) denied the existence of local states and significant political entities in the *Al-Maghrib-al-*

Awsat, reducing the history of the region to a series of sterile tribal conflicts between Bedouins and urbanites, which he called the “Dark Ages”. For him, the lack of political development of the local population and its narrow-minded tribalism, resulted in an inability to establish durable state-structures.



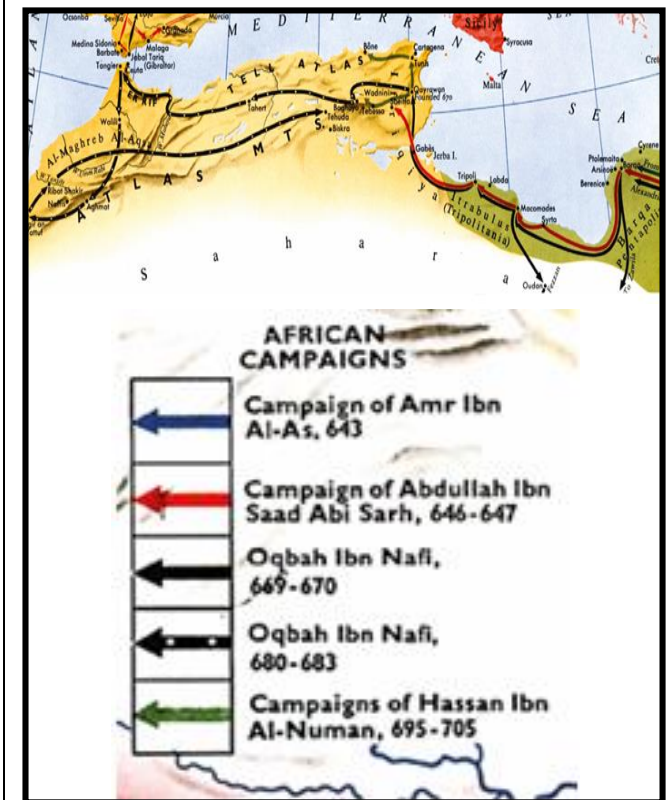
A glass pound discovered in Mila, dated (127AH/745AD) -The *Fihri* Emirate- preserved in the National Museum of Antiquities and Islamic Art, Algiers.

On the twenty-fifth anniversary of its founding, the Archeology Department at the University of Tlemcen (2021-2025) is organizing an international symposium which recognises the need for a more intensive and comprehensive investigation of the *Maghrib al-Awsat* in the early Islamic period. The symposium seeks to evaluate archaeological and historical approaches and methodologies, past and present, and to foreground archaeological evidence that has been largely neglected since the pioneers of the colonial archaeological school. This critical work, it is hoped, will bring greater awareness of

The early Islamic period and foster interest among young researchers and students.

*** Questions:**

What types of material evidence survive from this largely obscure period in medieval Algerian history? What are some effective ways to foster collaboration between researchers working in the archaeological and historical (textual) fields?



Map of The Early Islamic campaigns in North Africa, From the begging to the death of al-Kahina (74H/693CE).



Higher Education and Scientific Research Ministry

Abou Bekr Belkaid–Tlemcen University

Humanities and Social Sciences Faculty



Department of Archaeology in collaboration with
The Laboratory of Archaeological Heritage and its Valorisation

* * * *

International Symposium Programme

=====

First Day (Saturday 7th February 2026)

Reception of Conference participants from abroad and outside of Tlemcen

Second Day (Sunday 8th February 2026) (Inaugural Session)

Recitation of verses from the holy Qur'an	09:30 - 09:35
National anthem	09:35 - 09:40
President of the Conference Speech Prof. Dr. R. Chergui	09:40 - 09:50
Welcoming address by the Dean of the faculty Prof. Dr. N. Ben Daoued	09:50 - 10:00
Opening remarks by the Rector of the University Prof. Dr. M. Meghachou	10:00 - 10:05
Inaugural Communication: <i>Tubna, the Silverhub of the Abbasid Empire</i> Prof. Dr. S. Heidemann, Germany.	10:05 - 10:25
Coffee break	10:25 - 10:45

First Session: Chairman: Prof. Dr. B. Marouf, Rapporteur: Dr. A. S. Baadj

L'Afrique du nord à la veille de la conquête musulmane (<i>North Africa on the eve of the Muslim conquest</i>) Prof. Dr. S. Drici, Algeria.	10:45 - 11:05
The 'Dark' Period of the Early Islamic Maghreb: Post-conquest Spaces and Politics across Literary Genres Prof. Dr. K. Franz, Germany.	11:10 - 11:30
<i>Mulahazat 'an etta'myr wa al'umran fi al-majalayn al-kutami wa al-ssnhajy fi al-fatarat al'Islamiya al-mubakira</i> (Observations on urban developement and sttlement in the Kutama and Sanhaja regions during the early Islamic period) Prof. Dr. A. Amara, Algeria.	11:35 - 11:55
Debate	12:00 - 12:15

Second Session: Chairman: Prof. Dr. B. Beljouzi, Rapporteur: Prof. Dr. A. Youssefi

<i>Mulahazat hawl al-falaahin fi 'afriqiya min al-^ceusur al-qadima al-mta'khira hatta al-^ceasr al-zzyry</i> (Obsevation on peasants in North Africa from late antiquity to the Zirid period)	Dr. A. S. Baadj, Algeria.	12:15 - 12:35
<i>Min al-fatrat al-qadima al-muta'akhira ila bidayat al-fatrat al-islamia: Qira'at 'atharia limawqi^c Tahudat fi daw' 'asalib al-ttnqyb al-hadith</i> (From the late antiquity to the early Islamic period: An Archaeological Reading of the Tahouda Site in Light of Modern Excavation Methods)	Hadji. Y. R, Algeria.	12:40 - 13:00
Settlements in the Early Islamic Maghrib al-Awsat	R. K. MEWES, Germany.	13:05 - 13:25
Debate		13:30 - 13:45
Lunch break		

Third Session: Chairman: Prof. Dr. M. Ben Hammou, Rapporteur: Prof. Dr. A. Bassou

<i>Fanu al-zzakhrafa al-jissiya bi Aljazayir khilal al-qarnayn al-thany wa al-rabi^c al-hijri dirasa lil 'ibda^cat al-fanniya bi madinat sadrata al-'atharia</i> (The art of stucco decoration in Algeria during the second and fourth centuries AH; A study of artistic creations in the ancient city of Sedrata)	Prof. Dr. B. Marouf, Algeria.	15:00 - 15:20
<i>Hawl 'aqdam naqd burunzi 'islami madrub fi almaghrib al'awsat (al-jazayir) wa 'aqdam ratl zujaji mu^cadal bihi</i> (About the oldest Islamic copper coin stroked in al-Maghrib al-Awsat (Algeria) and the oldest glass pound calibrated there)	Prof. Dr. R. Chergui, Algeria.	15:25 - 15:45
Debate		15:50 - 16:05
Closing ceremony		15:25 - 15:45

Third Day (Monday 9th February 2026)

Symposium Post-Event & Recommandations	09:00 - 10:00
A curated cultural tour of Tlemcen and its surroundings, hosted in honour of our guests	

