Arabic Travelogues as Historical Sources: Rethinking Knowledge Systems in Indian Universities

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DOI: https://doi.org/10.47772/IJRISS.2026.102000057

Received: 22 October 2026; Accepted: 27 October 2026; Published: 20 November 2026

ABSTRACT

Arabic travelogues occupy a unique position at the intersection of literature, history, and cultural memory. From Ibn Battuta's vivid accounts of fourteenth-century India to the lesser-known Hajj narratives written by Indian scholars in Arabic, these works offer more than descriptive journeys; they serve as repositories of indigenous knowledge, intercultural exchange, and lived experiences of diverse communities. Despite their richness, travelogues remain underexplored in Indian higher education, often overshadowed by colonial historiography and Eurocentric sources.

This paper argues for rethinking Arabic travelogues as alternative knowledge systems that can be meaningfully integrated into university curricula under the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 framework. NEP's emphasis on multidisciplinary learning, Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS), and global engagement provides an opportunity to revisit these texts as valuable educational resources. Travelogues not only enrich literary and historical studies but also extend to disciplines such as anthropology, geography, religious studies, and cultural history, thereby transcending conventional disciplinary boundaries.

Case studies of Ibn Battuta's Rihla in India[1] and A Pilgrimage to Mecca, by the Nawab Sikandar Begum, G.C.S.I., of Bhopal)[2] will illustrate how such texts illuminate socio-cultural dynamics, mobility, and intellectual networks between South Asia and the Arab world. The paper further highlights the pedagogical potential of travel narratives in fostering critical thinking, intercultural dialogue, and comparative historiography in line with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG 4 (Quality Education), SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities), and SDG 17 (Partnerships for Goals).

By foregrounding Arabic travelogues as historical and literary sources, the study calls for a decolonial approach to higher education in India. It repositions travel writing as a bridge between local heritage and global scholarship, contributing to the creation of inclusive, contextually relevant, and future-ready curricula.

Keywords: Arabic travel literature, higher education, NEP 2020, decolonial knowledge, SDGs, Ibn Battuta, Hajj narratives

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Arabic travel literature is a significant source of historical knowledge, offering valuable information about the conditions of countries and societies in different eras. It records historical events, the names of rulers and scholars, and cultural landmarks that may not be mentioned in other historical sources. The travels of Ibn Jubayr and Ibn Battuta contributed to documenting various aspects of political, social, cultural, and religious life, relying

[1] Ibn Baṭṭūṭa. (1987). Tuḥfat al-nuẓẓār fī gharāʾib al-amṣār wa-ʿajāʾib al-asfār (M. ʿAbd al-Munʿim al-ʿAryān, Ed.; M. al-Qaṣṣāṣ, Rev.). Dār Iḥyāʾ al-ʿUlūm.

[2] Originally written in Urdu, translated from English into Arabic by Dr. Sumama Faisal & Dr. Ebraheem Muhammad Al-Batshan; original title: A Pilgrimage to Mecca, written by: Nawab Sikandar Begum). 2nd Ed.: New Delhi: Noor Publications, 2014 (ISBN: 8192909867).

on the travelers' direct observations and experiences. Therefore, travelogues are considered important historical documents that help researchers understand the nature of societies and the development of civilizations.

From a literary perspective, travelogues transcend mere direct writing, employing artistic narrative techniques, linguistic aesthetics, and prose devices such as rhyme and dramatic storytelling, while also intersecting with other genres like autobiography and essay, thus acquiring an independent artistic value. Historically, travelogues serve as documents and visual sources based on direct observation, recording political events, systems of government, military conflicts, and economic and financial transactions, making them a primary source that complements and documents official history. In terms of cultural memory and anthropology, travel literature records customs and traditions, architectural styles, food and drink, and the daily lives of peoples, as well as tracing the evolution of social roles and cultural statuses across the ages, thereby strengthening the connection between human heritage and the components of cultural identity. (Al-Nassaj,1985)

Arabic travel literature and geographical and historical records are a fundamental and highly important documentary source for studying the history of India and understanding the dimensions of Arab-Indian relations throughout the ages. They conveyed a vivid picture based on mutual admiration for the exact sciences and profound Indian philosophy. This documentation was not limited to travelers who traversed the Indian regions and recorded their firsthand observations, but extended to major encyclopedic works by scholars and historians such as Ibn Khurradadhbih in "The Book of Routes and Kingdoms (Al Masalik val Mamalik," Ahmad ibn Rusta in "The Precious Necklaces (Al A'alaq Annafsiyya)," al-Idrisi, al-Qazwini, Yaqut al-Hamawi, al-Nuwayri, and al-Umari. These scholars relied on the accounts of merchants and travelers to observe the features of political, social, religious, and cultural life in Indian society. This intellectual tradition continued in the modern era through the visits and studies of prominent figures such as Rashid Rida in "Al-Manar," the poet-diplomat Omar Abu Risha, and Ahmad Amin. This allowed historians to observe the direct Indian influence through trade and conquests, and the indirect influence through Persian culture, confirming that Arabic travelogues and observations were not just passing descriptions, but a solid bridge that contributed to the cultural rapprochement and extended human interaction between the two nations. (Salim, 2023)

Arabic travelogues and chronicles are of exceptional importance in understanding Indian history and the roots of bilateral relations between Arabs and India. Their value extends beyond geographical documentation and observational accounts, offering firsthand and direct testimonies of the social structure, political systems, and cultural and religious richness of the subcontinent throughout the ages. Arab travelers and geographers—whether those who set foot in India or those who gathered information from the routes of traders and travelers—formed a bridge of knowledge, transmitting details of Indian civilization, its sciences, and philosophies to the Arab and Islamic world. This fostered intellectual and commercial exchange between the two sides, making these texts an authentic historical reference that traces the depth of mutual influence and the paths of human convergence that have linked the two cultures from early periods to the modern era.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Reyes and Salvador (2022), in their article “Travelogue as Supplementary Learning Tool Towards Students’ Historical Thinking Skills,” published in the International Journal of Educational Management and Development Studies, explored the effectiveness of travel literature as an educational tool for developing historical thinking skills. Their experimental research with middle school students in the Philippines demonstrated a significant improvement in students' abilities to critically examine sources, verify evidence, connect information to context, engage in in-depth reading, and interpret historical texts. They emphasized that travel texts transcend their literary value, constituting vital educational and historical sources that connect knowledge to its geographical and cultural contexts.

Santhosh Kumar (2019), in his study “Effectiveness of a Travelogue on Achievement in Social Science of Secondary School Students,” investigated the effectiveness of using travel literature in teaching social studies to secondary school students compared to activity-based learning. The results of the experiment—which involved 80 ninth-grade students in Thiruvananthapuram via pre- and post-testing—showed that students who

incorporated travel literature achieved significantly higher academic scores, highlighting the value of travel texts as an effective teaching tool for enhancing the understanding of social and historical concepts.

These findings provide an important pedagogical foundation for the current study, moving beyond viewing Arabic travel literature as merely literary texts to utilizing it as an authentic source for historical learning and the reconstruction of cultural and social knowledge in Indian universities.

Although these studies highlight the effectiveness of travelogues as educational tools, their focus on school-level education is insufficient to understand their relevance in higher education. While some universities include travelogues in literature curricula, their systematic incorporation into history curricula, particularly as primary sources for historical and cultural research, appears to receive comparatively less attention. Therefore, the present study focuses on the college and university level, exploring how Arabic travelogues can be integrated into higher education curricula as historical sources and how they can contribute to rethinking knowledge systems in Indian universities.

Research Gap

Although these studies highlight the effectiveness of travelogues as educational tools, their focus on school-level education is insufficient to understand their relevance in higher education. While some universities include travelogues in literature curricula, their systematic incorporation into history curricula, particularly as primary sources for historical and cultural research, appears to receive comparatively less attention. Therefore, the present study focuses on the college and university level, exploring how Arabic travelogues can be integrated into higher education curricula as historical sources and how they can contribute to rethinking knowledge systems in Indian universities.

Significance of the study

The significance of this study lies in its opening a new epistemological and methodological horizon for utilizing Arabic travel literature. It transcends its conventional reading as mere literary or geographical texts, highlighting its value as historical documents and authentic sources for reshaping awareness of shared history and cultural interaction between India and the Arab world. Its practical and educational value lies in providing scholarly justifications for integrating these heritage texts into higher education curricula at Indian universities. They serve as supporting educational tools that cultivate students' critical thinking and historical analysis skills, thus contributing effectively to a rethinking of contemporary knowledge systems and a deeper understanding of cultural memory and transregional human connections.

Research Problem

- In what ways do Ibn Battuta’s Rihla and Nawab Sikandar Begum of Bhopal's Pilgrimage to Mecca document historical experiences that may be underrepresented in conventional historical narratives?
- To what extent can Arabic travelogues be understood as alternative knowledge systems within the framework of decolonial scholarship?
- How can these texts be integrated into Indian university curricula in accordance with the multidisciplinary vision of NEP 2020?
- What pedagogical contributions can Arabic travel literature make to critical historical thinking, intercultural dialogue, and the Sustainable Development Goals?

Objectives

- To examine the historical and literary significance of Arabic travelogues as sources for understanding Indian history and Indo-Arab cultural relations.
- To analyse selected narratives by Ibn Battuta and Nawab Sikandar Begum of Bhopal's Pilgrimage to Mecca as records of social life, mobility, religious experience, and intellectual exchange.

- To critically evaluate the potential of Arabic travelogues to diversify established historical narratives and knowledge systems.
- To explore possibilities for integrating Arabic travel literature into multidisciplinary higher education under NEP 2020.
- To propose pedagogical and curricular strategies that connect Arabic travel literature with historical inquiry, intercultural learning, and relevant SDGs.

METHODOLOGY

This study adopts a composite analytical approach that precisely distinguishes between two complementary levels: the first level deals with the historical and textual analysis of Arabic travel literature to identify forms of historical representation and deconstruct the mechanisms of cultural and social knowledge production about India; while the second level focuses on presenting a forward-looking, foundational vision and an applied proposal for integrating these texts into higher education curricula at Indian universities. Based on this distinction, the research focuses on a qualitative analysis of historical texts and their educational and intellectual suitability, without claiming to offer a quantitative or empirical measurement of the current use of these travelogues in courses across Indian universities. This is because the study is not based on field surveys, personal interviews, or a comprehensive analytical survey of existing curricula. Rather, it presents a theoretical and applied model that justifies the importance of this integration and its cognitive potential.

FINDINGS

Arabic Travel Literature: Conceptual and Historical Framework

The genre of Arabic travel literature did not originate under the name "travel literature," but rather sometimes appeared under the categories of "history books," "geography," "autobiography," "confessional books," or "confessional literature." Thus, the term "travel literature" is a product of our time, reflecting the studies, terminology, and classifications of literary arts and genres.

Travel literature is a vast world that takes us on journeys through books, combining the adventures of explorers, travelogues, and inspiring fictional stories. Through it, writers and journalists offer us insights into diverse cultures in an engaging style, whether objective, personal, or even humorous. Travel literature has existed since ancient times, beginning in China and Greece, and flourished in early Arabic books, remaining a cultural bridge connecting us to the world through words.

In (Ya‘qūb et al., 1997, p. 25) Travel literature is defined as a collection of literary works that recount the author's impressions of their travels to different countries, sometimes describing the customs, behaviors, and morals they observe. (Butros, 1975, p. 52) states: "Travel literature is what can be described as realistic travel literature, which is a journey undertaken by a traveler to a country around the world, where they record a description of it, documenting their observations and impressions with a degree of accuracy, honesty, stylistic beauty, and expressive skill."

The Arabic Encyclopedia (Al-Mawsū‘ah al-‘Arabiyyah al-‘Ālamiyyah, 1999, Vol. 11, p. 141) defines travel literature as: "The literature in which the writer depicts the events and experiences they encountered during a journey to a particular country. Travel books are among the most important geographical, historical, and social sources because the writer gathers information and facts from firsthand observation and direct description, making them enjoyable and entertaining to read."

(Abū Sa‘d, 1961, p. 5) says about the scientific value of travel books: “The scientific value lies in the fact that most of these travels contain a lot of knowledge and records that are closely related to geography and history. In addition to mentioning what their writers suffered from various kinds of troubles and horrors, they contain comprehensive pictures and reports about the economic, social, political and urban conditions of the Arabs and those who lived near them from the peoples of Asia and Africa and a part of the nations of Europe: such as mentioning archaeological landmarks, studying economic relations, describing kingdoms and countries, regions

and countries, routes and roads and other things that are still considered today as a basic reference in studying the geographical, urban, social and economic description of some countries."

Travelogues offer a window into historical realities often overlooked in specialized books. While history focuses on describing political, social, economic, and cultural events, travelogues bring these events to life with a human dimension, embodying them in reality. They provide in-depth analyses of aspects not covered by historical documents, allowing historians to explore the past more comprehensively and accurately.

Therefore, travelogues are an indispensable resource for historians studying or writing about specific periods, providing them with valuable information about events, figures, and places not mentioned in conventional history books. Through real stories and the personalities recounted, travelogues offer a vivid picture of the era in which the traveler lived. The traveler introduces us to the environment and society they encountered, giving us a deeper understanding of life during that period. Thus, travelogues constitute an important source of historical knowledge, offering us eyewitness accounts of past events from a vivid, human perspective. However, it is important to note that travelogues are not free from personal biases, requiring both the reader and the historian to approach them with a critical and analytical eye.

India in the Eyes of Arab Travelers and Geographers

The Indian subcontinent is an exceptional historical destination that has attracted travelers and scholars throughout the ages, thanks to its millennia-old civilization and unique geographical and environmental diversity. It boasts varied landscapes, nature reserves teeming with wildlife, and renowned spice plantations. Its global significance is further underscored by its astonishing cultural, religious, and linguistic richness, embodied in hundreds of living languages and vibrant festivals like Holi and Diwali. This is complemented by deeply rooted traditions of hospitality, where guests are warmly welcomed and honored, facilitating cultural integration for foreigners and playing a vital role in shaping the country's history across the ages.

Moreover, Indian expressive arts and architecture reflect a civilizational genius that has inspired visitors. Classical arts such as dance, music, sculpture, and traditional paintings like Rangoli express a rich heritage passed down through generations and encouraged by successive ruling dynasties. This creativity is coupled with unique architectural masterpieces that combine ancient temples of gods and towering landmarks of Mughal architecture, so that together these components draw a charming visual and spiritual identity that makes the trip to India a highly important cognitive and human experience in understanding the common human heritage. (Amin, 1933/2012, Chapter 2, Unit 2)

Indian Travels to Arab Lands: Literary and Historical Documentation

The relationship between India and the Hejaz has deep historical and religious roots. In addition to pre-Islamic maritime and trade ties that linked Indian ports to Jeddah, an early Islamic milestone was marked by the conversion of Cheraman Perumal, the ruler of Kerala, following his encounter with Arab merchants—most notably Sheikh Shahr al-Din ibn Baqi al-Din al-Madani—in the market of Musri (Kudungaluru). He then traveled to meet the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) and passed away in Salalah, Oman. This was followed by the dispatch of Malik ibn Dinar and the establishment of the oldest mosque in the subcontinent, the Cheraman Mosque, in 629 CE. This account is documented in historical sources such as "Tuhfat al-Mujahidin" by Zayn al-Din al-Makhdum, "Malabar Manuel" by William Logan, and "Muhammad Rasul Allah" by Muhammad Hamidullah. (Sayeed, 2023)

With the establishment of the Arab state in Sindh and Multan under Muhammad ibn Qasim al-Thaqafi in 712 CE, and the flourishing of scholarly exchange during the Abbasid era under Harun al-Rashid and al-Ma'mun, Hajj pilgrimages took on an organized, institutional form. During the Mughal era, the port of Surat emerged as the "Gateway to Mecca" for pilgrims, facilitating the passage of royal ships and the delivery of alms to the Sharifs of the Two Holy Mosques. Court ladies such as Begah Begum, Gulbadan Begum, and Salima Sultan Begum participated, traveling on the ships "Salimi" and "Ilahi." This documentation and organization continued under British colonial rule with the appointment of Thomas Cook & Son as the official Hajj agent in 1885, followed by the establishment of the Hajj Committee in 1927, headed by Dr. Healy, the Bombay Police Commissioner.

This culminated in the chartering of flights by Tradewings from Bombay in the 1960s, until the sea route finally ceased in 1995. These records and accounts of journeys constitute a rich historical resource that contributes to a re-evaluation of knowledge systems and the history of shared cultural interaction in Indian universities. (Sayeed, 2023)

Case Study I: Ibn Battuta's Rihla and Fourteenth-Century India

Ibn Battuta's travelogue, "A Gift to Those Who Contemplate the Wonders of Cities and the Marvels of Travel," is a unique historical and ethnographic document that transcends the boundaries of political chronicles and official court records. It offers researchers a vivid window into the social and cultural structure of India in the 14th century CE. The inclusion of this text in Indian universities is of paramount importance, as it enables a rethinking of historical and humanistic methodologies by presenting the perspective of the "witness traveler," who documented lifestyles, ritual customs, the lives of ascetic groups, and the interactions between social classes through direct, on-the-ground observation, unconstrained by subsequent colonial frameworks. (Ibn Battuta, 1987) (Deveci & Aydın, 2025)

Ibn Battuta offers rich analytical material on religious pluralism in medieval India and the interaction of Islam with local Indian traditions. He documented diverse practices ranging from death rituals such as Sati and Johar, to ascetic practices among yogis and Sufi mystics, as well as sensory and ritualistic exchanges such as burning incense during shared festivals and visiting shrines. The inclusion of these accounts in Indian academic studies contributes to dismantling the simplistic Orientalist narratives that presuppose a continuous clash of civilizations, highlighting instead networks of interaction, bureaucratic and social integration, and cultural mediation between communities under the umbrella of the Delhi Sultanate. (Eaton, 2008) (Kumar, 2007)

The study of Arab travelogues, particularly Ibn Battuta's book, represents a pivotal epistemological entry point for "rethinking systems of knowledge" within Arabic language, history, and social science departments at Indian universities; This approach encourages a critical examination of historical sources, understanding their limitations and cultural biases—such as the projection of the traveler's own legal or Quranic concepts onto local phenomena—while simultaneously utilizing their geographical and empirical data. This integrative approach bridges the gap between classical linguistics and the humanities, fostering the development of interdisciplinary university curricula grounded in sources from the Global South and the Middle East for understanding the history of the Indian subcontinent and its transnational relationships. (Dunn, 2012) (Waines, 2010)

Case Study II: A Pilgrimage to Mecca, by the Nawab Sikandar Begum, G.C.S.I., of Bhopal

Princess Sikandar Begum, daughter of Nawab Nasir Nazar Muhammad Khan, was born on August 12, 1818. Her father died a year and three months after her birth, making her the rightful heir, as he had no other children. Sikandar Begum took several reform measures and traveled to various parts of the Indian subcontinent to attend government ceremonies as regent. This increased after she became the absolute ruler of the principality of Bhopal. The year 1861 was particularly significant; her official and public travels and visits within India increased, and she gained both administrative and popular authority, for which she was awarded the Star of India by the British government. (Al-Batshan & Thumamah, 2014, p. 17)

Nawab Sikandar Begum recorded her pilgrimage to Mecca in Urdu in 1867, following her journey in 1863–1864. According to the translator's preface to the English edition, the account was written in response to a request from Lady Durand, wife of Sir Henry Marion Durand, and only two copies of the manuscript were prepared: one for Lady Durand and the other for Lieutenant-Colonel Willoughby-Osborne, the British Political Agent in Bhopal. After examining the manuscript, E. L. Willoughby-Osborne, the latter's wife, sought Sikandar Begum's permission to translate and publish the account in English. Permission was granted, and she completed the translation in 1869. The work was subsequently published in London by W. H. Allen & Co. in 1870 (Sikandar Begum, 1870, pp. ix–xi). An edition was also published in Calcutta in 1906 (Konukçu, 2000). Although the original Urdu manuscript was long believed to have been lost, it was rediscovered in the Special Collections of SOAS Library in 2020 (SOAS Library Special Collections, 2020). It is catalogued as Tārīkh-i safar-i Makkah (1867), reference PP MS 55, Durand, Box 2, File 12.

Nawab Sikandar Begum of Bhopal's nineteenth-century travelogue serves as a foundational primary text for understanding South Asian non-Western travel literature and its role in historical documentation. Her writing provides empirical observations of the Hijaz region, capturing details of Ottoman governance, urban architecture, local economic structures, and public health conditions in Mecca and Jeddah. Integrating such narratives into university curricula allows researchers to evaluate how regional rulers documented geographical and sociopolitical landscapes outside colonial reporting frameworks.

Beyond political and structural observations, Sikandar Begum's account offers critical insights into nineteenth-century social conditions through a distinct gendered perspective. Her position as an elite female monarch granted her access to spaces closed to male travelers, such as the 'zenana' (women's quarters) of the Sherif and Pasha of Mecca and Jeddah. In these accounts, she recorded domestic life, female attire, internal household hierarchies, and social practices. Simultaneously, her narrative presents candid critiques of civic administration, market regulation, street hygiene, and the slave trade at "Dakkah". Analyzing these writings in academic settings illustrates how South Asian women actively generated, structured, and transmitted knowledge about the Middle East, expanding the scope of historical primary sources. (Al-Batshan & Thumamah, 2014, p. 17)

Rethinking Knowledge Systems in Indian Universities: NEP 2020 and Decolonial Perspectives

Incorporating travelogues from South Asian elites into higher education redefines how academic institutions approach transregional history and cross-cultural exchanges. Historically, Western travel literature was used as a primary tool for geopolitical analysis and colonial expansion into the Middle East. Sikandar Begum's account presents a nuanced perspective shaped by her South Asian identity, her alliance with British authorities, and her personal religious motivations. Studying these indigenous records in Indian universities encourages a critical re-examination of nineteenth-century global connections, offering alternative perspectives to Eurocentric historical frameworks and enriching interdisciplinary research in history, literature, and cultural studies.

Rethinking Knowledge Systems in Indian Universities: NEP 2020 and Decolonial Perspectives

The study of Arabic travel literature intersects fundamentally with the Indian Knowledge System (IKS) initiative and the National Education Policy 2020 (NEP 2020) framework, which calls for a rediscovery of India's diverse cultural heritage and a transcendence of narrow epistemological frameworks. Integrating these Arabic texts into university curricula reinforces the IKS's comprehensive vision of India as a pluralistic space that has historically interacted with neighboring cultures across the Indian Ocean and trade routes. This allows universities to offer a rich national narrative that does not isolate India from its cultural context but rather highlights its role as a central link in global knowledge production networks.

This approach also provides a solid foundation for implementing multidisciplinary education, as championed by NEP 2020, since Arabic travel literature transcends rigid divisions within the humanities. The use of these texts enriches history and literature departments by providing parallel narrative perspectives to the colonial archives. It also bolsters historical geography with vital data on navigation routes and urban centers, and supplies anthropology and religious studies with unique eyewitness accounts of ethnic diversity, rituals, and coexistence in South Asian societies. This creates an interdisciplinary learning environment that encourages students to systematically connect different fields of knowledge.

Conversely, the academic benefit derived from these texts requires avoiding the trap of uncritical romanticism of local knowledge or traditional narratives. Approaching Arab travelogues should not be a blind veneration of the past, but rather necessitates rigorous source criticism and the deconstruction of historical contexts. This involves examining the travelers' biases, social classes, and cultural and linguistic expectations. In this way, these sources become tools for training students in comparative critical analysis and distinguishing between accurate ethnographic observation and stereotypical concepts, thus ensuring the development of sound and objective academic methodologies.

CONCLUSION

Arabic travel literature represents an authentic intellectual and historical resource that redraws the contours of

intellectual and cultural exchange between the Indian subcontinent and the Arab world, transcending the boundaries of geographical narrative to become a living document of cultural and social memory. Reading texts such as Ibn Battuta's travels and Hajj diaries like Nawab Sikandar Begum's journey demonstrates that these accounts are not merely record events, but also present alternative perspectives and non-colonial approaches that dismantle Eurocentrism's dominance over the writing of Indian history. Therefore, integrating travel literature into higher education curricula at Indian universities becomes an urgent necessity for reclaiming local sources of knowledge and activating interdisciplinary studies that integrate geography, anthropology, religious studies, and comparative literature into a cohesive academic framework.

Reintegrating these texts within the framework of the National Education Policy (NEP 2020) not only contributes to strengthening the Indian Knowledge System (IKS) but also establishes an inclusive learning environment that achieves the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, particularly quality education (Goal 4) and the consolidation of global cultural partnerships (Goal 17). By offering an equitable and deconstructive approach to colonialism, Arabic travel literature forms a vital bridge connecting regional heritage with universal knowledge, preparing students for critical thinking and intercultural dialogue, and supporting the development of a university system that combines the depth of traditional roots with the horizons of contemporary human knowledge.

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