The Artistic Impacts of Egypt's Foreign Relations on Cairo's Religious Architecture under the Reigns of al-Nāṣir Muḥammad

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Abstract

The development of peaceful well-established foreign relations between different nations increases the awareness of intercultural influences along with enhancing useful exchanges between different culture groups. During many phases of its Islamic history, especially during the Mamluk period, Egypt had enjoyed a solid foreign policy with different States and political entities around the world. In this context, Art Historians could effectively underscore and analyze the different innovated architectural elements and decorative arts that were imported to Cairo from foreign nations, especially during the Mamluk period. This criterion is believed to contribute to revealing more substantial information about the artistic life in medieval Egypt. This study attempts to show professionals and student Tour-Guides how to use a comprehensive criterion in historically rooting different foreign artistic elements that were ushered in Mamluk architecture.

Introduction:

Robert Alan Silverstein, a famous American writer, artist and social activist, once said that "intercultural dialogue is the best guarantee of a more peaceful, just and sustainable world".[1] This statement demonstrates the usefulness of creating an effective cultural interaction between different nations and civilizations, especially in terms of spreading peace, prosperity and progression among those interacting nations in different fields and areas. By nature, Sulṭān al-Nāṣir Muḥammad was a peaceful ruler who looked at both peace and safety as major pillars of stability and development in the entity of the Mamluk State. For this reason, al-Naṣir had always been keen to establish and develop pacific and fruitful relationships with many foreign countries and nations around the world. Al-Naṣir's robust approach to promote Egypt's foreign policy resulted in establishing an efficacious interaction between the Mamluk State and numerous foreign nations in different areas such as culture, politics, architecture, and arts.

Objective:

From an art history perspective, the Mamluk architectural and artistic styles during al-Nāṣir's reign were partially affected by the aforementioned Mamluk State foreign policy. This affection added an artistic touch of excellence to the Cairene religious architecture under the sovereignty of al-Nāṣir Muḥammad. Such a significant phenomenon had supposedly played a significant role in the appellation of the reign of al-Nāṣir Muḥammad by the "golden age" of the Mamluk art and architecture in Egypt. In this context, I believe that exploring few examples of those imported architectural and artistic elements could result in providing a sound database for Tour-Guides, on the unique decorative arts that were introduced to the artistic vocabulary of Islamic Egypt's religious architecture under the Mamluks.

Aims: The major objective of this paper is to investigate the direct and indirect artistic impacts of Egypt's diplomatic interactions and political relations with different foreign nations, during the different reigns of al-Nāṣir, on Cairo's religious architecture through articulating and analyzing newly introduced decorative arts to the archaeological legacy of al-Nāṣir himself, his family members, and amūrs.

Al-Sulṭān al-malik al-Nāṣir Abū al-Fatḥ Nāṣir al-Dīn Abū al-Maʿālī Muḥammad ibn al-Sulṭān al-malik al-Mansūr Sayf al-Dīn Qalāwūn al-Alfī al-Ṣaliḥī al-Najmī was born in 1285 in the citadel of Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn in Cairo.[2] Al-Nāṣir's mother was a Mongol princess called Khāwand Ashlūn, she was the daughter of the Mongol prince "Skanāy" who took a refuge in Egypt during the reign of al-Ẓahir Baybars after having few political conflicts with different Mongol princes.[3] With regards to al-Nāṣir's Mongol background, from his mother's side, it could be possibly assumed that his origins played an incorporeal role in shaping his later relation with the Mongols, especially with Ilkhanids dynasty in Persia.

Immediately after the assassination of his elder brother al-Sulṭān al-Ashraf Khalūl, al-Nāṣir Muḥammad, despite the fact that he was only nine years old at the time, was chosen by most of the Mamlūk amūrs to succeed his slain brother. That choice was not based on a hereditary concept, but the amūrs aimed to exploit his young age, as part of their plot, to impose their trusteeship in terms of toppling al-Nāṣir and usurping his throne later.[4] The Mamlūk amūr al-ʿAdil Katbughā was appointed by al-Nāṣir as the Vice-Sulṭān, as a result, al-ʿAdil himself became the actual ruler and al-Nāṣir had not enjoyed his sovereignty except its title. In other words, he was only a nominal Sulṭān.[5] Al-ʿAdil Katbughā, being supported by the Abbasid Caliph, the judges and many other amūrs such as Lajīn, succeeded in toppling al-Nāṣir after a short reign of less than a year than he officially became the new Sulṭān.[6] Generally speaking, the Egyptians did not appreciate the reign of Katbughā, for they suffered from some natural disasters, such as drought, additionally, he welcomed almost 10,000 Mongols to live freely in Egypt after they had fled from the drastic persecution of Maḥmūd Ghazān, but they wreaked havoc on the country in many fashions from bothering the Egyptians to plundering properties and so on.[7] Consequently, amūr Lajīn, being supported by many other Mamluk amūrs and the populace, succeeded in toppling Katbughā after a relatively short reign of two years and a few days.[8]

Al-ʿĀdil was succeeded by al-Mansūr Ḥussām al-Dīn Lajūn whose reign was not a lot better than that of his predecessor, especially after imposing the project of "al-Rawk al-Ḥussamī" by which he lessened the land share of the Mamluk amūrs and soldiers in Egypt.[9] He was murdered in 1298 by al-Ashrafia Mamlūks after reigning for two years and two months.[10]

The first reign of al-Nāṣir Muḥammad along with the two intermediate periods of Katbughā and Lājūn had remarkably contributed to shaping the relationship between the Mamluks and the Mongols back then, especially Ilkhanids of Iran, with whom the relationship of the Mamluks had developed to peak during the last lengthy reign of al-Naṣir. That relation resulted in introducing new decorative elements to the religious architecture of Cairo under al-Nāṣir. As for the Mongols, they appeared for the first time in the world's history by the end of the 12th century, they took the form of a tribal nation which resided in the northern regions of China.[11] They were known firstly as the "Tatārs", but after the period of Genghis khan the term "TaTār" was replaced by "Maghūl". In the 13th century the Mongols ravaged Persia under Hulago who established Ilkhanid dynasty.[12] The reign of Maḥmūd Ghāzān (1295-1304) is considered a turning point in the history of Ilkhanids, for he made a political conversion to Islam in 1295 when he took the throne.[13] Accordingly, he created a radical change in the Mongols religion in central Asia. The Mamluk-Mongol official relations under Ghāzān could be classified as "hostile," especially during the first reign of al-Nāṣir and the two following intermediate periods of Katbughā and Lājūn. Ghazān aimed to exploit the fragile political state of Egypt during those periods in conquering Bilād al-Shām, especially Damascus and then Egypt.[14] Immediately after the murder of Lājūn in 1298, the Mamluk Amirs agreed on bringing al-Nāṣir back from al-Karak to ascend the throne of the sultanate. Al-Nāṣir was broadly welcomed by the Egyptians and the Mamluk amūrs when he arrived Egypt he appointed amūr Silār as the Vice-Sultan and amūr Baybars al-Jāshankūr as the Istādār.[15]

After al-Nāṣir's second ascension to the throne, Ghāzān prepared a huge army estimated almost by 100,000 fighters to invade Syria.[16] For this reason, al-Nāṣir prepared his army as well, estimated by 20,000 Mamluks, and the two parties met in the battle of al-Khāzindār between Ḥims and Ḥamāh in Syria, but al-Nāṣir was badly defeated and Ghāzān was able to enter Damascus where he started a long series of persecution against its residents.[17] Al-Nāṣir did not give up; he re-arranged his army and dragged out towards Syria in 1302 to expel the Mongols out of the country. The two armies met again in the battle of Marj al-Ṣafar, near Ḥims where the Mongols were severely defeated and al-Nāṣir gained again a full control over Bilād al-Shām.[18] Additionally, al-Nāṣir gained victory over the Crusaders who exerted their maximum effort in re-arranging themselves in Cyprus to re-invade Bilād-al-Shām after being expelled by al-Ashraf Khalūl in 1291.[19] Therefore, they conquered the island of Arwād which is located in front of the coastal line of Tripoli as an initial step towards attacking Bilād-al-Shām. Upon knowing the Crusaders naval movement, al-Nāṣir Muḥammad ordered the construction of 4 battleships to sweep them, and he was the victorious in that war ending by that axial battle the presence of the Crusaders in and around Bilād-al-Shām.[20]

During that important political phase of al-Nāṣir's life, he commenced his magnificent fun architectural activities by establishing his funerary madrasa (1295-1303). It is sandwiched and recessed between two other larger buildings, i.e., the complexes of Barqūq and al-Nāṣir's father Qalāwūn on shāriʿ al-Muʿizz.[21] The plot on which the Madrasa stands nowadays was engaged previously (before 1295) by a dār attributed to Amūr Sayf al-Dūn Balbāy al-Rashidī.[22] Upon ascending the throne, al-ʿĀdil Katbughā showed an interest in that spot, so he bought it and started building his madrasa up to the ṭirāz band in the façade, and the rest was carried out during the second reign of al-Nāṣir who, in turn, bought the unfinished madrasa and continued its construction.[23] Certainly, the outstanding Gothic portal that al-Nāṣir used to articulate the entrance of this madrasa is chef d'oeuvre in Cairo's architectural heritage (fig. 1). This portal has a complicated history: it was originally brought to Egypt by amūr Sanjar al-Shujāʿī after being removed, as a booty gain, from a crusader church in Acre during the decisive battles of al-Ashraf khalūl against the Crusaders in Bilād al-shām.[24] Immediately after its arrival, it was confiscated by amūr Baydra, the viceroy. Five years after the assassination of Baydra by al-Ashraf Khalīl amirs, Katbugha acquired the portal from Baydra's heirs.[25] The Gothic art was born in France by the end of the 12th century; its unique features urged different European countries to import this art which became a predominant artistic style in many parts in Europe up to the end of the 15th century which witnessed the birth of the Renaissance age.[26] The Gothic art was the first European art through which the architecture was freed from the dominance of both arts; the pagan Roman and the Byzantine in terms of their conceptual features.[27] The main architectural and artistic features of the gothic art are demonstrated in the mature complete shape of the pointed arch, the fine slim colonnettes with unique capital engaged with especial floral patterns representing different plant or tree leaves, such as grape, ivy or oak, and the tapered cross vaults.[28] This portal was praised by al-Maqrīzī as one of the most magnificent doorways in the world.[29] It takes the form of a memorial entrance executed in pure marble and framed by a multi layer retrograde pointed arch; the portal is flanked on either side by marble fine colonnettes with impressive Gothic capitals engraved in typical Gothic floral patterns (fig. 2). The apex of the portal is taking the form of a roundel enclosing the name "Allāh" (fig. 3), it is flanked on either side by a semi round shape engaged with floral patterns.[30] Apart from its unique beauty, this Gothic portal through its European architectural and decorative features underscored a significant aspect in the Mamluk – Crusaders relationship during that period. Starting from the reign of al-Ẓahir Baybars, and through the second reign of al-Nāṣir, the frequent military confrontations between the Mamluks and the Crusaders had resulted in the induction of trophy culture manifestation. Such unique manifestation was depicted in the utilization of Christian spolia. In other words, the re-usage of different architectural and decorative elements, along with various building materials, that were originally removed from Christian monuments, especially from the battlefields to complete and adorn different prominent Mamluk establishments, in particular, religious buildings.[31] For example, the dome of al-Ẓahir Baybars was reported to have been built with marble and wood from captured

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Crusaders monuments.[32] In the same context, the mausoleum of al-Manṣūr Qalāwūn was built in thirteen months (1284-85) using a labor of five hundred Christian prisoners imported from Palestine and southern Anatolia, with the Gothic influenced bays of its street façade.[33] Based on the previous evidences, we could speculate that al-Nāṣir Muḥammad aimed behind re-using the Gothic portal to add a European artistic touch of excellence on his madrasa, in the same time, to deliver a symbolic political message to Europe in connection with terminating the Crusaders' ambitions in any region across the Mamluk territory, especially after the precious victory which he gained over them around Arwād island. Despite the fact that the Mamluk - Ilkhanid relationship during al-Nāṣir second's reign was classified as hostile, the political tension between the two nations was not able to stop the cultural interactions between them, especially in the field of architecture and decorative arts. The gorgeous prayer niche of al-Nāṣir madrasa could stand as an evidence for this argument. It is a carved stucco niche with a notable conch richly engaged with open work, carved, and pierced bosses that automatically recall to mind the repoussé technique of metal work.[34] Accordingly, the conch demonstrates clear similarities to contemporary Ilkanid stuccowork motifs from Iran (fig. 4).[35] This resemblance springs from reproducing the high relief in the conch over the mihrab, the multiple levels of arabesque, and the fine techniques of punching and stamping. The aforementioned artistic aspects do clearly belong to the Iranian tradition of stucco carving that culminated in the mihrab of Öljeitü that was added to the Friday mosque in Isfahan in 1310.[36] Doris Abouseif assumes that this prayer niche was added in a later period when the Ilkhanids enjoyed a peaceful relations with al-Nāṣir.[37] Although al-Nāṣir's second reign was fruitful from different perspectives, it was terminated in an unusual way. The main reason behind that was the severe disturbance caused by both amūrs Slār and Baybars al-Jāshankīr. They extensively intruded in al-Nāṣir political and personal lives to deprive him of his power for their own favor. For that reason, al-Nāṣir claimed his wish to perform Hajj in 1308, and on his way to al-Hijāz, he stopped at al-Karak and willingly dethroned himself, so his second reign was estimated by ten years and a few days.[38] Al-Nāṣir Muḥammad was succeeded by al-Muẓafar Baybars al-Jāshankīr, but he mistreated the Egyptians and The amūrs of al-Nāṣir, so most of the population did not appreciate Baybars reign and urged al-Nāṣir Muḥammad to come back to Egypt. Al-Nāṣir, being supported by the amūrs of Bilād al-shām, was able to seize back the throne from Baybars who ruled the sultanate for ten months and twenty-four days.[39] After his execution Baybars was buried in his khānqāh in al-Darb al-Aṣfar.[40] The khānqāh of Baybars al-Jāshankīr (1307-1310) is not only unique for being the oldest surviving khānqāh in Islamic Cairo,[41] but also for possessing decorative elements of foreign style. The impressive portal of the khānqāh is flanked on either side by two recesses taking the form of niches crowned by conches executed in black and white marble "ablaq," arranged in a sun rise motif.[42] The corners of those niches are engaged with beautiful marble colonnettes crowned by Gothic capitals (fig. 5).[43] The colonnettes along with their Gothic style capitals do recall the delicate engaged Gothic style colonnettes which adorn the main façade of Reims Cathedral (1225-99) in the Champagne-Ardenne region of France (fig. 6). In this context, we can find many columns and the capitals dating back to this period were carved in European Gothic style, many of which were spolia taken from other Crusaders monuments for utilitarian purposes, and some others are Mamluk imitations, such as the Gothic capitals of the previously mentioned colonnettes of Baybars al-Jāshankīr.[44] Being a distinctive European art, the Gothic and Corinthian capitals had always attracted the Egyptian craftsmen to imitate those styles rather than creating new designs for the capitals.[45] Therefore, the war state between the Mamluk and the Crusaders led to a dynamic artistic interaction between the two entities along with useful aesthetic outcomes such as the employment of Gothic capitals in different religious buildings.

Ironically, in the same period during which the hostile relations between the Mamluks and Ilkhanids had peaked, in particular, in the second reign of al-Nāṣir along with the short intermediate period of Baybars al-Jāshankīr,[46] few Mongol artistic elements found its way in the Mamluk religious architecture, for instance, the ribbed cupola at the top of the minaret of Baybars al-Jāshankīr khanqāh. It had, until some years ago, traces of green glazed tile decoration which may once have covered it entirely.[47] The usage of glazed ceramics at that was unique before this Mongol decorative feature had peaked afterwards during the third reign of al-Nāṣir.[48]

The third lengthy reign of al-Nāṣir (1309-41) was the most remarkable period in the Baḥrī Mamlūks history from many perspectives, especially when considering al-Nāṣir's policy in developing and maintaining Egypt's foreign affairs with different nations and countries worldwide. Indeed, such a successful foreign policy had its impacts on Cairo's religious architecture back then. Succeeding his father Öljeitü, Abū Saʿīd Bahādūr Khān (1316-35), being the ninth ruler of the Ilkhanid dynasty, an orthodox Sunnī, and the first Ilkhan, (we should note, that he was born a Muslim),[49] was keen to re-consider the Mamluk-Mongol relations, i.e., achieving a notable reconciliation with al-Nāṣir.[50] The main reason behind Abū Saʿīd's peaceful approach was the general instability of his nation along with the deficiency of his military preparedness.[51] In this context, he expedited an envoy to the court of al-Nāṣir proposing peace and reconciliation with the Mamluks. Being a peaceful individual by nature, al-Nāṣir accepted Abū Sāʿīd's request, and in turn he decided to send a return delegation on his behalf back to the court of Abū Sāʿīd; that delegation was led by the amīr Aytamish al-Muḥammadī who became the darling of the international scene in the 1320s.[52] That visit resulted in boosting and spreading a unique feature in Ilkanid art among many of the religious foundations of al-Nāṣir and his amūrs. That art was illustrated par excellence in using colored glazed ceramic tiles in coating especial parts of the building.[53] This Mamluk fascination with Ilikhanid art is reported by the chronicler al-ʿAyni, who based his information on the earlier chronicle of al-Yūsīfī.[54] It mentions that the Amūr Aytamish did admire the mosque of Abū Saʿīd's vizier ʿAlīshah in Tabriz, thus, he hired its builder to work in Egypt in terms of benefiting from his architectural experience along with his Tabrizian artistic skills. This anonymous builder carried out many architectural projects in Egypt, such as the two minarets he built for the

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mosque of the mighty Amūr Qawsūn in Cairo, they are no longer extant, but were described three centuries later by Evliya Çelebi as decorated with ceramic.[55] In consequence, a hypothesis could be placed here, i.e., Aytumush's official visit to Tabrīz had its impact on Mamluk architecture, especially in connection with the implementation of advanced ceramic decoration techniques by a group of ingenious ceramists who accompanied the mentioned Tabrīzī builder.[56] The Mamluk-Mongol relations were further fortified by that political marriage between al-Nāṣir and a Mongol princess who was one of the granddaughters of Baydo, the sixth ruler of Ilkhanid dynasty in Persia.[57] This socio-political relation helped in developing the cultural and artistic interactions between the two nations. Such interactions could be illustrated in the famous mosque of al-Nāṣir Muḥammad at the citadel. This mosque was established to be the royal mosque of Cairo and the citadel. [58] It was originally founded in 1318, then according to al-Maqrīzī, it was pulled down and rebuilt on a larger scale, but apparently its masonry shows that the mosque in its second building phase was only heightened not broadened.[59] Despite the fact that it is not the first mosque in Egypt to feature multiple minarets, as it is the third in row after the mosque of ʿAmr, al-Ḥakīm and al-Ẓahir Baybars, its two minarets played a significant role in adding a unique spirit to the mosque.[60] One of the two minarets stands on the top of the north-western façade to the right of main entrance, while the other one is located in the corner of the north-eastern façade towards the qibla riwāq (fig. 7). The two minarets do radically vary in the general architectural design, but they were both built in stone and their cupolas features are almost of the same design and decorative aspects.[61] They both take the form of a fluted garlic-shaped bulbs on a fluted cylinder covered with ceramic glazed tiles and adorned with an epigraphic band in tile mosaic (fig. 8). The main colors of the ceramic tiles are dark blue and green along with white color for lettering and dark blue for the backgrounds of the inscription bands. However, the crudeness of the tile mosaic could possibly be attributed to the unfamiliarity of the local craftsmen with this newly introduced technique.[62] The glazed ceramic tiles of these minarets are of Iranian origin, developed in the Ilkhanid period and adopted in Anatolia. Michael Meinecke dates such exotic ceramic decoration to the second building phase of 1335, linking it to the arrival of the craftsmen and ceramists who accompanied the anonymous Tabrīzī builder on his trip to Egypt sometime between 1322 and 1328.[63] Accordingly, we could assume that such artistic application would be a direct reflection of al-Nāṣir's foreign policy which he adopted with Ilkhanid dynasty. Being executed by masonry, the minarets of al-Nāṣir Muḥammad mosque could set another possibility of being influenced by foreign architectural features. Ülkü Bates suggests that the structure of the minarets could have possibly been inspired from Anatolian architecture where stone architecture with deep carvings along with ceramic decoration existed.[64] This theory could be physically supported by the shape of the north-western minaret, as it follows the rounded profile with deeply carved zigzag motif (fig. 9). This feature was unprecedented in Cairo, and in the same time, was a common feature in Anatolian architecture.[65] Accordingly, those minarets could reflect a unique foreign combination between Iranian and Anatolian architectural and artistic elements.

The famous mosque of amūr Alṭinbughā al-Maridānī (1339-40) is another remarkable example of the Iranian influence on the religious architecture of Cairo under al-Nāṣir Muḥammad. Al-Maridānī started his career as cup bearer of al-Nāṣir, then he became the chief of the police in Cairo, and married al-Nāṣir's daughter. He died as governor of Aleppo in 1343.[66] Being designed on a hypostyle plan basis like the mosque of al-Nāṣir Muḥammad at the citadel, it enjoys three entrances, one on the axis of the prayer niche, and two on the side.[67] The south side entrance along with the northern axial entrance are adorned with tiled arabesque, set on a vegetal scroll background, on window grills, medallions, and panels.[68] The panels feature the arabesque design. These patterns had earlier precedents in cairene architecture, which were produced in stone or stucco, but in the mosque of al-Maridānī we find the earliest extant example in glazed tile.[69]

Three basic colors were used in this composition: white and a light-and dark-green.[70] The used tiles here seem, somehow, to be a form of mosaic, however, unlike the typical Iranian examples, sgraffito is also used to articulate the lines of the arabesque.[71]The mosque is also famous for the wide usage of ancient columns with pre-Islamic capitals in supporting the interior of the mosque (fig. 10).[72] Many of these columns were spolia taken from ancient Roman sites in Egypt, accordingly, few of their crowns feature the Corinthian style. This style was originally born in the Greek era, and was remarkably developed in the Roman period. Generally speaking, the Corinthian capitals were taking the bell shape, richly covered with heavy Acanthus leaves normally organized in two levels; each level features eight of those leaves.[73] Subsequently, it could be assumed that the re-use of ancient columns, with the Corinthian capitals, at al-Maridānī mosque occurred in terms of combination of the solidity of the marble column and the Egyptian craftsmen's admiration for the Corinthian style which succeeded in maintaining its features in some parts across Europe during the medieval era.

Al-Nāṣir Muḥammad, especially during his 3rd reign, succeeded in maintaining good relations with Europe. Indeed, many European countries aimed to establish a peaceful relation with al-Nāṣir. Therefore, the court of al-Nāṣir had always featured several ambassadors carrying precious gifts and letters to the Sultan on behalf of different European kings and principalities. The European countries aimed to please al-Nāṣir to enhance his leniency towards the Christians across the sultanate for example, the peace letters sent to al-Nāṣir from Pope John the 22nd and king Charles the 4th of France in the same context of reconciliation.[74] Consequently, it could be assumed that the peaceful relation between the Mamluks and Europe back then enhanced the rate of the artistic interactions between Egypt and many European nations. Such mutual interaction boosted the Egyptian artistic to continue using and adopting many European classic artistic styles such as the Corinthian style.

Finally, the outstanding funerary khānqāh of Umm-Anūk in the northern cemetery could be another significant evidence of the Persian influence on the Mamluk decorative arts (fig. 11). [75] The exact foundation date of this funerary khānqāh is obscure, although most of the scholars date it back to the period before 1348. However it

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could be attributed to the last phase of al-Nāṣir third reign. This khānqāh was built for Khāwand Ṭughāy, "Umm-Anūk" who was the favorite wife of al-Nāṣir Muḥammad. Originally, she was a Turiksh maid, probably of a Mongol background owned by the Amūr Tinkiz before he decided to dedicate her to al-Nāṣir who was fond of her beauty and personality.[76] Afterwards, al-Nāṣir decided to marry her, and she became his favorite wife, especially after giving birth to his son Anūk in 1321.[77] Khāwand Ṭughāy died in 1348 and she was buried in this khānqāh.[78] It is classified as "unique" for its unusual architectural design and some of its decorative arts. It consists of a rectangular shape iwān with a vaulted ceiling; it overlooks the front area by a huge pointed arch. This iwān is flanked on either side, the northern and the southern, by a burial dome. The southern burial dome is considered a dome, for it surmounts the tomb of Khāwand Ṭughāy.[79] The upper register of the dome's drum is elegant, for it is coated by a fine layer of dark blue ceramic glazed tiles interspersed by light blue irregular ceramic pieces. Those blue ceramics were used as a background for a beautiful epigraphic band executed in white tile mosaics. This epigraphy illustrates the "Throne verse" which recalls the decoration of the western minaret of al-Nāṣir Muḥammad's mosque at the citadel (figs. 12, 13). In this case, the khānqāh could stand for another cultural evidence of the artistic impact of the Mamluk-Ilkhanid excellent relationship under the third reign of al-Nāṣir Muḥammad, especially when Khāwand Ṭughāy is believed, by many sources, to be of a Mongol background.

In this Final analysis, the local Mamluk style of Egypt, from both architectural and artistic perspectives, was partially affected by the successful foreign policy which al-Nāṣir Muḥammad adopted and developed with different nations worldwide. The study showed that the hostile status between the Mamluk sultanate and Europe during the final phase of the Crusaders wars from one side, and Ilkhanid dynasty in Persia from the other side, did not entirely block the cultural and artistic interactions between Egypt and these nations. Such a useful interaction resulted in importing many artistic elements to Egypt to be used mainly in the religious foundations of al-Nāṣir Muḥammad, his family and his amūrs in Cairo and its outskirts. The aforementioned cultural and artistic interaction reached its height during the third reign of al-Nāṣir which was primarily marked by the peaceful relations between the Mamluks and Europe from one side and the Ilkhanids from the other side. Accordingly, many of the Mamluk religious structures, especially those which date back to al-Nāṣir Muḥammad's reign exhibit a highly imaginative blend of local religious architecture along with foreign adaptations.

Finally, it is believed that going beyond the stone surface of the historical building, with an analytic eye, will, most probably, play a dynamic role in revealing much more priceless information about a designated archaeological site or historical building. Correspondingly, such a philosophical approach could also open new venues for scholars and art historians to carry out more research into the depth of Mamluk art and architecture scholarship, especially the golden age of al-Nāṣir Muḥammad.

<u>الملخص العربي</u>

تأثير علاقات مصر السياسية الخارجية في الجوانب الفنية لبعض عمائر القاهرة الدينية

في فترات حكم الناصر محمد بن قلاوون (دراسة تحليلية)

أحمد عواد حسين

لقد حرص السلطان الناصر محمد بن قلاوون دوما على خلق سياسات دبلوماسية متوازنة بين مصر والكثير من الدول والكيانات السياسية الخارجية وذلك بهدف تأمين دولته قدر الإمكان من الأخطار السياسية الخارجية فضلا عن أمله في تحقيق الكثير من سبل التعاون والتكامل بين دولة المماليك وتلك الدول الخارجية على مستوي الأصعدة المختلفة لما في ذلك من آثار ايجابية في تحقيق الاستقرار الداخلي المنشود لدولته.

تُعد الحياة المعمارية والفنية في مصر في مختلف فترات حكم الناصر محمد من أهم الجوانب الحضارية التي تأثرت ايجابيا وجنت ثمار نجاح سياسات الناصر محمد الخارجية، فاستحدثت في مصر في تلك الفترة العديد من العناصر المعمارية والفنية التي أضفت بعدا جماليا إضافيا للعمارة الدينية في مصر آنذاك، فظهرت العديد من المنشآت الدينية الخاصة بالناصر محمد ورجال دولته وأفراد أسرته ككيانات فنية مميزة برع فيها المعمار والفنان في المزج ما بين الأطرزة الفنية المحلية والأنماط الفنية الخارجية.

في هذا السياق تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى تحليل عدة نماذج من العناصر الفنية والمعمارية التي استحدثت في قاموس العمارة والفنون الإسلامية آنذاك في إطار من تحليل للأحداث التاريخية التي مرت بها مصر في مختلف فترات حكم الناصر والتي أدت بدورها إلى استقدام واستحداث تلك العناصر الفنية الخارجية و دمجها في العمارة الدينية المحلية لمدينة القاهرة. يعتقد الباحث أن المنظور التحليلي المستخدم في الدراسة سيكون ذا فائدة كبيرة للمرشدين السياحيين في مجال سياحة الآثار الإسلامية عند تناولهم بالشرح لأثار الناصر محمد الدينية خاصة فيما يتعلق بتأصيل وتحليل العناصر المعمارية والفنية الأساسية بها.

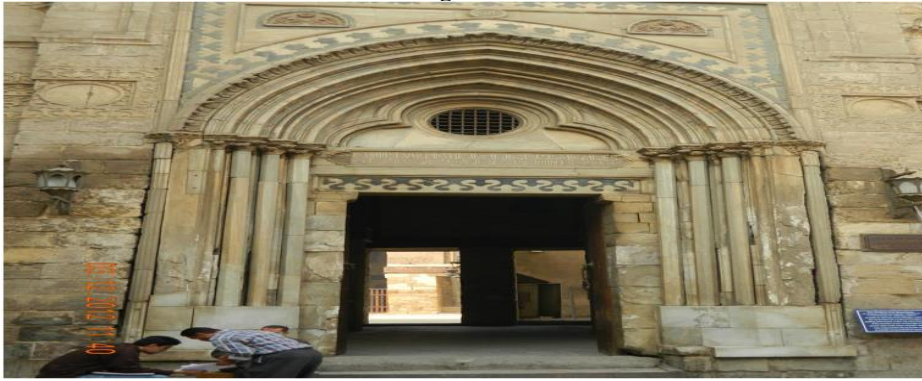الكلمات المفتاحية: عمائر القاهرة؛ السلطان الناصر؛ محمد بن قلاوون

Figures*

Figure (1)
The Gothic portal of al- Nāṣir's madrasa

Figure (2)
The multi layer retrograde pointed arch of the Gothic portal along with the Gothic style capitals

Figure (3)
The apex enclosing the name "Allāh"

Figure (4)
The carved stucco niche with its richly decorated conch

Figure (5)
The marble colonnettes with Gothic capitals which adorn the façade of Baybars al-Jāshankīr khānqāh

Figure (6)
The main façade of Reims Cathedral with its engaged Gothic style colonnettes

Figure 7
The two minarets of al-Nāṣir Muḥammad mosque at the citadel

Figure (8)*
The remarkable tops of al-Nāṣir Muḥammad's minarets

Figure (9)
The deep zigzag motif of the west minaret

Figure (10)
An example of a Corinthian capital from the interior of al-Maridānī mosque

Figure (11)
A general view of the funerary khānqāh of Umm Anūk

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*By Doris Abouseif.

Figure (12)

Figure (13)
The southern burial dome of Umm Anūk showing remnants of the ceramic glazed tiles

End Not

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