

The Aesthetical Aspects for Monumentality of Mamluk Architecture Reasons and Analysis. Study Case Sultan Hassan Complex in Cairo

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Introduction:

The Mamluk dynasty controlled over Egypt, Palestine, Levant, and parts of Al-Hijaz. It lasted the Ottoman invasion in early sixteenth century. The two battles e Battle of Marj Dabiq in 1516, followed by Ridaniya in 1517, ended with the destruction of the Mamluk dynasty that had ruled with the support of the puppet Abbasid caliphs. Comparing to their predecessors, the Mamluks had patronized art and architecture in the vast territories under their control. Rulers in the earlier dynasty of Ayyubids, were mainly concerned with military style architecture, since their time was characterized by warfare.

The Mamluk Dynasty was one of the greatest empires that used art and architecture as a means to manifest their power over their territories. The current paper will discuss Mamluk grand scale architecture in terms of how it represented the sovereignty of the rulers.

Ibn Khaldūn in “Al-Muqaddimah” (Ibn Khaldūn 1967: 61) justified the relationship between power and architecture, stating that the size of the erected monuments by dynasties are proportional to their power.

This paper attempts to bring clarity to the manifestations of monumentality of Mamluk architecture and discuss the reasons and factors behind such monumentality.

Since the pre-Islamic period, most of the regions that had been dominated by Muslims, had significant monumental architecture that expressed their glory. These kinds of structures characterized the identity of each dynasty.

Egypt, in particular, developed a captivating architectural style that represented a challenge to any power that ruled it.

In Muslim imperial history, there is significant evidence to prove that

Muslims responded to such architecture with a desire to surpass the earlier achievements.