

# **Study of housing in the Mamluk (1517-1250) and Ottoman periods (1789-1517) In Egypt (a comparative study: The House of Zainab Khatoun - The House of El Sitt Wassila)**

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## **The importance of the research:**

Reaching the philosophical values and cultural influences of the interior design and furnishing elements of the dwelling in both the Mameluke and Ottoman eras and deriving what is appropriate from them in the design of contemporary housing and the requirements of the modern era without transferring craftsmen or copies of the heritage.

Research problem: lies in the invasion of Western thought in the design of our contemporary home. In order to solve this problem, the designer had to lay new foundations on which the interior architecture of the residence would be based on a contemporary concept, in order to benefit from this in residential buildings that are concerned with the design and its internal elements and their compatibility with the Islamic content of architecture.

## **Research aims:**

- 1- A comparative study on the impact of cultural influences on some philosophical values of interior design and the elements of interior furnishing in both the Mameluke and Ottoman eras.
- 2- A study of the cultural and heritage constants of interior design and furniture for homes in both the Mameluke and Ottoman eras, and using what is appropriate for them in the interior design and furniture of the modern residence.

## **Research methodology:**

A historical approach: a study of the most important characteristics of the interior design and furniture elements of the Islamic dwelling in both the Mameluke and Ottoman eras).

## **Research hypotheses:**

- 1- The interior design and furniture of the Islamic dwelling in both the Mameluke and Ottoman eras included specific philosophical foundations that were influenced by some religious and social factors and treatments for environmental factors.
- 2- The interior design of the Mameluke and Ottoman dwelling has achieved the necessary requirements that are suitable for the residence in the dwelling while providing treatments for ventilation, heating and lighting.
- 3- The interior design of the Islamic dwelling was distinguished in both the Mameluke and Ottoman eras, by exploiting internal architectural spaces and making use of them in the elements of interior furnishing.
- 4- The interior design and furniture of the Islamic dwelling in both the Mameluke and Ottoman eras was distinguished by some aesthetic values resulting from the realization of the housing function by using some elements of the architectural and decorative formation characteristic of this era.

## Introduction:

The Muslim artist, when he created architecture and tried to beautify it, his philosophy was from the standpoint of Islamic thought, which was concerned with the interconnected, coherent and unbroken elements of work, and the use of harmonious colors and materials to reach an infinite degree of quality and accuracy in architecture and the elements of interior furnishing.

### **First: Islamic architecture in the Mameluke era in Egypt: (648-923 AH) (1250-1517 AD):**

The Mameluke era is considered the golden age in the history of Islamic architecture in Egypt. The desire to construct a large number of buildings such as mosques, schools, mausoleums, baths, agencies and siblings increased.

### **A - Characteristics of Islamic arts and architecture in the Mameluke era: One of the most important features in Mameluke arts and architecture is what is summarized as follows:**

- Its small area due to the congestion of residential areas in which it was built with residents and many other establishments, followed by the smallness of the iwans and the emergence of the two saddle elements i.e. the two small ewes. This also led to the small area of the courtyard, which led to it being covered with a wooden ceiling and this is one of the architectural solutions that led to the emergence of new architectural elements.

- The architecture, as a result of the constriction of the establishment, sometimes in schools, especially those of the iwans, separated the saucer from the iwans, making it lower from it and it is called (al-Daraqqa), which is a Persian word meaning the lower part of the hall.

Wooden ceilings were used in buildings of this era instead of stone vaults, after the iwans became transversal to the saucer or shield and their depth decreased, which helped to cover them with wooden beams of various types and shapes, the most famous of which is the wooden truss in the shape of the crocodile.

One of the advantages of architecture in this era is not to take the entrance in the middle of the building, but rather in its extreme corners so as not to affect the decorative units that decorate the facade.

- It was also common in buildings of this era to use broken entrances that consist of roofed gazebos that lead to a corridor that breaks once or twice before it leads to the inside of the facility's courtyard.

- The construction of suspended facilities increased in this era, under which many shops were built to spend their income on these buildings, a phenomenon that Islamic Egypt knew for the first time in the Fatimid era.

-Stone was also commonly used in the construction of external walls and ground floors, while bricks were used in the construction of wet places such as bathrooms and on the upper floors.

- The architecture in this era was also distinguished by the use of ministries in the walls as well as colored marble and on the floors. Marble mosaics and shells were also used in the decoration of niches. The Mameluke Circassia era was distinguished from al-Bihari by the abundance and multiplicity of independent burial domes in a clear and large way, and religious buildings such as mosques and schools often had in one of its pillars a burial dome.

- And it is evident from these characteristics the skill, creativity, good design, development of Mameluke architecture, its good workmanship and the accuracy of its details, and the important fact that we also deduced that the Mameluke monuments in particular were like a card for the

sultan and his propaganda and imprint on his life and draw closer to God and to the people, whether religious or charitable. This is also due to the fact that Egypt enjoyed a great economic position in the era of the Mameluke state, as a result of the comprehensive recovery and prosperity of all life facilities such as industry, trade and agriculture, which made it the destination of many of the people of Islamic countries.

-And there is another very important thing which is (architectural intelligence) and in the archaeological term (architectural solutions) that the architect used in his buildings to make them come out with such luxury as if it were a single carved block.

### **B- An analytical field study of a house in the Mameluke era, "The House of Zeinab Khatoun":**

- Data on the relic: The name of the monument: The house of Mithqal al-Sudani al-Zahir Jaqmaq al-Saqi. Known as "the home of Zainab Khatoun". Trace No. 77. Date: (873/1468 AD). The location: This house is located in Atefah Al-Azhari, branching from Al-Dawadari Lane in Al-Azhar, at the corner of the alley Al-Aini intersection. With Al-Azhar Street.

### **Second: Islamic architecture in the Ottoman era in Egypt: (923-1204 AH) (1517-1798 AD):**

In the previous many installations in the Mameluke era, we explained the amount of progress and prosperity that the art of construction has reached. If we say that it has reached the summit of progress and the climax of sophistication, when Egypt fell under the control of the Ottomans, the art of building entered a period of deep stagnation and apparent decline, and there is nothing strange in that, so the viewer can tell that the progress of the art of buildings and other arts depends on the encouragement of the leaders, princes and rulers, so if this encouragement is cut off, he will realize the stagnation and decadence of those arts and the Sultan is intact as he put in place the systems of the country after his control over them, he was not concerned with its welfare and progress as much as his interest in linking it with the wheel of the Ottoman Empire and the depletion of its resources and the extortion of its money and the humiliation of its people, and it was not for him at all that Cairo continued its progress and that architecture flourished in it, and had walked the way that Salah al-Din and the Mamelukes had drawn for it after them, but more than this, he was interested for the star of Cairo to decline, the decline its status, so that people do not talk about its news in the east and west of the earth.

### **A- Characteristics of Islamic Arts and Architecture in Al-Ottoman: One of the most important features in Ottoman art and architecture is what is summarized as follows:**

Ottoman art passed through different periods and genres, which developed over the years. At the beginning of its path, Ottoman arts were influenced, especially by the Chinese and Persian traditions, and in the sixteenth century a new decorative color developed that was expressed in floral drawings in a natural realistic style.

- This style quickly became the most distinctive and important characteristic of Ottoman art. These models are widely seen on tools, textiles and carpets that were produced in the sixteenth century, which is considered the "golden age" of Ottoman art, and at the end of the eighteenth century a new artistic style known as "Turkish rococo" developed in it.

Ottoman ceramics were produced in the city of Iznik, which was the center of the Ottoman ceramics industry and the headquarters of the Sultanate Factories. Blue and white ceramics flourished during this period, making the motifs in turquoise blue on a white background.

- In addition to the turquoise blue, other colors such as purple and green were used and decorated with leaves, lavender flowers, carnations, roses, irises, pomegranates and abstract clouds. The Byzantine character prevails over the mosques of this era, the character that the Turkish rulers brought with them from Constantinople, which was represented by the Church of Hagia Sophia, which the Turks converted into a mosque after their conquest of Constantinople during the reign of Muhammad the Conqueror in the year 857 AH (1453 AD).

- Nevertheless, I found several new designs for the mosque, from a square with four columns in the middle carrying the ceiling to a rectangle made of two eves in the middle of a room, to mosques such as university mosques with an open courtyard in the middle, and I found new decoration elements that were not common before that, such as covering domes and walls with faience and covering the floor and cabinet with marble.

The colorful and engraved ceilings in bright colors, and the construction of the pathway spread on top of the book alone and was not to join the mosque, as well as the creation of houses with beautiful seats and mashrabiyyas.

### **B - An analytical field study of a house in the Ottoman era, "Bayt Al-Sit Wassila":**

- Data on the effect: The name of the antiquity: The house of Abdel-Haq and his brother Lotfi Awlad Muhammad from Kanani. "It is known as Bayt al-Sit Wassila" - Trace No. 445. - Date of tracing: 1074 AH / 1664 CE - Location: This house is located at the corner of Al-Anaba Alley and Al-Dawadari Alley branching off Imam Muhammad Abdo Street in Al-Azhar in Al-Sitt Wasila Alley.

Third: An analytical field study comparing the houses in the Mameluke eras (1517-1250) and the Ottoman period (1789-1517) in Egypt (The House of Zeinab Khatoun - The House of Sitt Wassila) from the analysis and photography of the researcher.

**-The research also included a set of findings and recommendations. Among the most important of them are:**

#### **Results of the research:**

1- The traditional constants of Islamic art in both the Mameluke and Ottoman eras agree, the most important of which are:

- The organic expression of architectural elements. The contrast between closed and open surfaces.

Architectural expression for structural elements. Toning in the architectural composition and Integration of spaces.

2- Among the religious values on which the architecture of the dwelling was based in the Mameluke and Ottoman eras, and the main factor in determining the foundations of its design was to provide privacy for the people of the home, including: the broken entrance, the inner courtyard, and the separation between the seats of men and women.

3- One of the most important functional components in the dwelling is the courtyard, and it was considered the control and lung center for the people of the house and the mosque for all the activities of the house around it

- 4- Despite the simplicity of the floor design, now the bishop in the Ottoman era had a high level of accuracy and attention to decoration, unlike the Mameluke era.
- 5- The Mameluke era was distinguished by the huge wooden muqarnas that served as supports to hold the roof and are called so (in Kurdish).
- 6- The Mameluke era was also distinguished by enameling with various stones and techniques for decorating stones and taking care of their joints and muqarnas.

### **Recommendations: First: Recommendations for researchers:**

- 1- Recommending researchers to direct research and studies programs towards studying the social, educational, heritage aspects of housing and trying to benefit from them in serving some of the problems in designing contemporary homes.
- 2- Encouraging visual artists, interior designers, architects, writers, scholars, theorists and others to use the heritage vocabulary with their contemporary works in order to link their own experiences with the past experiences of society by presenting individual and collective visions distinguished by originality and innovation.

### **Second: Recommendations for the competent authorities (in the state):**

- 1 - Scientific Publishing Houses to include curricula in public education, and high schools on Islamic heritage, to maintain its continuity.
- 2- Universities in governmental and private higher education must also study studies and specializations in the field of heritage of all kinds. This duty is matched with a scientific, educational duty.
- 3- Recommending to the competent authority at the Ministry of Tourism to form governmental and private heritage associations in cities, to take care of them, and to develop their vocabulary to encourage the positives of Islamic heritage.
- 4- Recommending to the competent authority at the Ministry of Tourism to establish audio, visual, readable, and visual libraries of heritage materials and facilitate the process of utilizing them
- 5- Recommendation to the competent authority in Historic Cairo at the Ministry of Antiquities, to coordinate between all those who work in the field of heritage, architecture and interior design, so that efforts converge within the framework of a general specialized body that takes care of its affairs by various means and methods.
- 6- Recommending to the competent authority in Historic Cairo at the Ministry of Antiquities to form a scientific unit to establish appropriate standards, measures and tests to evaluate the elements of Islamic heritage in order to ensure that they are not distorted.

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