

The unfamiliar minarets in the islamic mosques of cairo The Multiple Heads minarets

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The research Summary

The importance of the research: Tracing the phenomenon of multiple heads of minarets until they reached the last form of their development.

Research problem: There are many research difficulties, between the difficulty of tracking what is lost from the effects on which the research is based; Some of them are in the scarcity of old images, others are in the scarcity of scientific material .. In addition to the fact that even the effects that are already in place; There was difficulty in tracing the many changes and modifications that had been made to some of them in different eras.

Research objectives: Shed light on the beginning of the emergence of this type of minaret tops and its development over the course of historical ages.

Research methodology: The research takes the descriptive and analytical approach.

Introduction about minarets: -

Perhaps the reason why the minarets did not arise from the beginning with the inception of the mosques was the lack of height of the buildings at the time - which would prevent the spread of the muezzin's voice in the call to prayer - so the height of the mosque was sufficient to convey the voice of the muezzin, so he used to raise the call to prayer directly from the roof of the mosque.

The first minarets were taken from the Syrian square towers as a model for them, then this style was transferred to the rest of the Islamic world, including Egypt, the island, Morocco and Andalusia, and this style was not the only one in Egypt, but the models of the minarets were varied to the extent that they were exposed to most types of minarets known to Islamic architecture, where each of the Islamic countries specialized in a specific shape and style for its minarets.

The minarets were not used for the call to prayer only, but they were used as a sign, symbol and clear expression of the location of the mosque in which Muslims would perform the obligatory prayers.

The sign of the minaret towards the sky through its shape that tapers in its direction to the highest meaning of the call to the unification of God.

It also gives double minarets (two minarets in the facility) - such as the minarets of the Al-Moayad Sheikh Mosque (818-823 AH / 1415-1420 AD), located on Al-Muizz Li Din Allah Street near Bab Zuweila), and the Sultan Hassan Mosque (757-764 AH / 1356-1362 AD), located in Salah Al-Din Square - the castle), and the suffocation of Faraj ibn Barquq (803-813 AH / 1400-1410 AD) - the meaning of the two arms extending to the supplication of the Creator, the Most High.

The material used in building minarets depended on the common building materials in every region. In Egypt, stones were used, as well as in the countries of Arabia, the Levant, Asia Minor, and also in Spain. As for bricks, it was used in Morocco, Iraq, Iran and Afghanistan. As for India, building with both materials, stones and bricks. However, the first use of stones in Egyptian minarets was the minaret of Qabgha Abd al-Wahid. Where minarets were built before him.

It is important to mention that there is a direct, dependent relationship between the tops of the minarets and the tops of the pulpits, whereby the shape of one of them follows the shape of the other, meaning that the shape and decoration of the top of the minaret are identical and completely identical to the shape and decoration of the top of the minaret, and if this did not happen, then there must have been restoration or renewal in the minaret or the pulpit, or both, in an era later than the establishment, resulted in their incompatibility.

As for the Babat area in the last rounds of some minarets, although it gives a higher appearance to the minaret, it is very weak, as evidenced by the fact that most of the tops of the minarets of Cairo were either restored or lost from the foundation, and the gates area was strengthened in the Ottoman period by filling the spaces between the columns with construction, so we find that most of the minarets built during the Ottoman period are solid at the top.

The minarets received the first attempts and experiments to implement architectural or decorative elements on them. Then I exported it later to the domes.

Multiple heads minarets: -

The minarets remained, without other Islamic architecture, of interest to the Muslim architect, as he excelled in building, designing and decorating them, and granting them the most beautiful art he could reach.

This is what we see in a unique architectural model in Egypt and Tunisia. It appears in the construction of multi-headed minarets in one mosque.

Multi-headed minarets as an architectural innovation: -

The multi-headed minarets are an architectural form created by the Muslim architect as a result of his continuous development of all the various architectural and decorative elements to which he extended in Islamic architecture.

The phenomenon of multiple heads of minarets became common in Egypt at the end of the ninth century and the first of the 10th century AH / 15th -16th CE.

Where their first examples - outside Cairo - were in the minaret of the Al-Ghamry Mosque (plate 1) located in Al-Ghamry Street in the city of Mit Ghamr, and it dates back to the era of the Sultan Al-Ghuri in the AH 10th / AD 16th century, as well as the minaret of the Al-Amrawi Mosque in Minya. Renovation works were carried out on it, the last of which was in the era. Al-Othman (1149-1150 A.H.)

Shapes of multi-headed minarets: -

With the beginning of the Mameluke Circassia era until the Ottoman era, mosques in Egypt knew three forms of multi-headed minarets, which are two-headed, four-headed, and five-headed.

[The interest in this way is due to the desire of the owners of those mosques to be distinguished and unique from the rest of the mosques that were built before them], however, that this type of minarets remained for a period and then disappeared.

The following is an explanation of the mosques that have known the phenomenon of multi-headed minarets in Egypt: -

The research results:

The Madrasa of Sultan Hasan was the first for this type of minaret tops to appear.

The presence of three forms of the minarets' heads, divided into double, quadruple and pentagonal; Some of them are existing and some of them are extinct.

The shapes of the heads differ from one effect to another, even if they have the same number of heads; Or for the same originator (as in the facilities of Qanibai Al Ramah in Qalaa Square and Nasiriyah).

The octagonal or square projection rotations were suitable for carrying the two heads, while the square bodies were suitable for carrying the four and five heads.

Presence of the hypothesis that multiple heads have a religious symbolism.

Analytical study of multi-headed minarets:

The reason for the emergence of this type of minarets was the desire of the Muslim architect to break the ordinary style of the minarets of his time, and he realized that the most remarkable part of the minaret from the rest of its body is its summit. His mind came up with a new trick to change the usual appearance of these minarets.

The minarets were divided in terms of the numerical gradation of their heads into three types, with an indication of the existing and lost ones as follows: -

A - The two-headed minarets: -

Their models are:

1 - The two-headed minaret of the Sultan Hassan School, which had lost its two heads (757 - 764 AH / 1356 - 1362 AD, and it is located in Salah al-Din Square - the Citadel).

2 - The minaret of the Jan Balat Mosque (the minaret was demolished in 1214 AH / 1799 AD), and the mosque is located next to Bab al-Nasr.

3 - The minaret of the Qanibai Amir Akhur School in the Caliph region (908 AH / 1503 AD), and it is located in Salah al-Din Square in the Citadel.

4 - The minaret of the Qanibai Al Ramah Mosque in the Nasiriyah area (911 AH / 1505AD), it is located on Nasiriyah Street in the Sayyida Zainab district.

5 - Al-Ghuri Minaret in Al-Azhar Mosque (909 - 910 AH / 1504 - 1505 AD, located at the intersection of Al-Muizz Li Din Allah Street with Al-Azhar Street).

B - Four headed minaret: -

And it has one model which is: -

- Al-Ghuri minaret in his school in Al-Ghouria (909-910 AH / 1504-1505AD), located at the intersection of Al-Muizz Li Din Allah Street with Al-Azhar Street.

C - The five-pointed minarets: -

Their models are: -

1- Al-Ghuri minaret in his school in Al-Ghouria (909-910 AH / 1504-1505AD), located at the intersection of Al-Muizz Li Din Allah Street with Al-Azhar Street.

2 - The minaret of the Mosque of Muhammad Bey Abi Al-Dhahab (1187-1178 AH / 1773-1774 AD, located on Al-Azhar Street).

Analysis of the floors of the remaining multi-headed minarets in Cairo: -

The shapes of the floors of multi-headed minarets varied as follows:

The first type: has two projected square rounds. Each of them is surmounted by a balcony. As for the minaret jusk, it consists of two adjacent vertical rectangles that are open on all sides, and each vertical rectangle bears the inverted oligarch shape. (Among the examples of this type are two minarets of the same origin, namely the minaret of the Qanibai Amir Akhur School (908 AH / 1503 AD) in the Caliph area, as well as the minaret of the Qanibai Al Ramah Mosque (911 AH / 1505 AD) in the Nasiriyah area).

The second type: has two octagonal cycles. The first is in the form of an octagon, with its ribs opened with arteries, each surmounted by a balcony. As for the arch of the minaret, it is two vertical rectangles that are adjacent and open, and each vertical rectangle bears the shape of the inverted oligarch. (This type has one example, the Minaret of Al-Ghuri (909-910 AH / 1504-1505 AD) at Al-Azhar Mosque).

The third type: It has three bodies, each of them is a square projection (except that it carries two heads), so the first of them was opened with a contour, the second was round, and the third had rectangular vertical vents that were arched, and each of the first and second bodies was surmounted by a balcony, while the bush is a cube with open sides carrying five wooden heads; A pear in the form of a few inverted. four in the corners; In the middle of them are the largest and highest of them.

The fourth type: It has three bodies, each of them is a square projection, the first of them is opened with a central arcade, the second is circular, and the third has rectangular vertical arched openings, and each of the first and second bodies have a balcony, while the josuq is a sub-square surface bearing five heads. four in the corners; The largest and highest of them are in the middle of them. (This type has two models, the first of which is the minaret of al-Ghuri (909 - 910 AH / 1504 - 1505 AD) in his school in al-Ghuriyya; the second is the minaret of the Mosque of Muhammad Bey Abi al-Dhahab (1187-1178 AH / 1773-1774 AD) at Al-Azhar Street).

Thus it becomes clear to us the fact that he suited the octagonal courses (such as the al-Ghuri minaret in the Al-Azhar Mosque) or even the al-Musqat square (as the minarets of al-Ghamri in the Dead Ghamr, and Qanibai spears, whether in the Citadel Square or Nasiriyah, or even the al-Ghuri minaret in the second amendment when it was with two heads) to be surmounted by the head-bearing arch and the two heads ... while the four and five heads were best suited for the projected square rounds (such as the minarets of al-Ghuri and Abu al-Dhahab); This is in order for it to settle on the corners of the roof of its summit, with four vertices; One in each corner; If the architect wanted to add a fifth head, it would be located at the intersection of two

lines. Each of them connects two different heads; However, in this case, the fifth head in the middle will be higher and larger, so that the other heads do not block it by the corners.

Religious symbolism: -

This architectural style of multi-headed minarets in Egypt is perhaps not devoid of religious connotation.

The double head, which clarifies the idea of twinning or duality that combines two similar, and neighboring elements, and perhaps the Muslim architect wanted to work on the reflection of the duality that his body composition carries, which the Creator bestowed upon him from the duality of his limbs and external organs on the artistic product that his hands made , Perhaps the idea of two heads was associated with repeating every sentence in the call to prayer twice. Or by the wording of the Shahada (I bear witness that there is no god but God and I bear witness that Muhammad is the Messenger of God), or perhaps it symbolized the succession of night and day, or the world and the hereafter .

As for the quadrangle - by which we mean specifically the Minaret of El-Ghoury in the first phase of its construction - it is certain that there was no particular ideological or sectarian idea behind it, as well as it has nothing to do with Tunisia's quadruped minarets; It is not affected by these minarets.

And finally, the five heads, perhaps it is associated with raising the call to prayer five times a day from the top of the minaret and performing the five daily prayers, as it may express the five pillars of Islam.

By this it is clear that the emergence of these forms of minarets is due to the architectural and artistic vision of the Muslim architect. Which may carry more than one meaning and purpose; But it confirms his ability to creativity.

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