

A Comparison between The Wakala of Al- Gouri in the Mamluk era and The wakala of Bazara in the Ottomanera in Cairo

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Summary

The Egyptian state was concerned with the comfort of foreign merchants, so Wakalas were allocated to them as centers for commercial exchange, and bathrooms, ovens, and places of worship were established near them. So the Arab trade caravans became uninterrupted, their route from Egypt to Damascus and then to Europe, was not interrupted, and this is the case for foreign trade. The trade exchange between East and West had a great importance and impact on the development of industries and arts. Many oriental industries arrived in Europe such as fabrics, perfumes, textiles, carpets, dyeing materials, colored glass and other industries. Paper industry was also introduced through this way for the first time to Europe. And all the merchants from all the countries of the East came to the city of Cairo in Egypt and they stayed in the Egyptian Wakala or Khans such as Khan al – Khalili for example and others. Barter and exchanges took place such as precious incense and scented woods from India, silk and earthenware from China, embroidered textile from the Levant, and Persian carpets from Persia. And they all met in the Egyptian Khans and wakalas. The research deals with study and technical analysis of two wakals, each of which was built in Islamic times. The first wakala is El Ghorri wakala, which was built in the Mamluk era in Egypt and the second is Bazara Wakala, which was built in the Ottoman era. And in terms of planning and attached buildings to each of them, and a comparison of the style of decoration used in each of them. At first, the research will present an overview of the history of trade in the Mamluk and Ottoman eras, the economic situation that each era experienced, and the management style that was followed in each of the two eras. It will also discuss the names that were given to commercial establishments with different names according to the countries of the Islamic world, especially Iraq, the Levant, Egypt, and Turkey. Each name will be explained and referenced to its linguistic origins, and the function of each facility separately. For example, Al-Khan, Al – Qaysariyyah, the Hostle, and Al- Wakala. And finally, a comparison between Al- Ghorri wakala in the Mamluk era, and Bazara wakala in the Ottoman era, and how to use virtual reality technology in a brief presentation of the history of each of the two wakalas and their current uses.

Commercial conditions in the Mamluk era: Commercial and economic conditions deteriorated at the end of Mamluk era, due to the transformation of global trade routes, especially after the discovery of the cape of Good Hope, which caused a scarcity of funds and a scarcity of commercial movables, which in turn led to the deterioration of the state's economy from that time until the beginning of the Ottoman era. The imposition of taxes on merchants and products contributed to the poor condition of merchants and commerce at the end of the Mamluk era, and also the sense of injustice by merchants coming from entering the ports of Alexandria and Damietta, as a result of the imposition of tax and on them, which led to a scarcity of goods and products in the markets that foreign merchants used to bring from abroad, north south.

Commercial conditions in the Ottoman era: In the beginning, the Ottman established the Diwan after their entry into Egypt, and the diwan of Egypt was attended by the governor himself, and its members consisted of the heads of the garrison, and it was held four times a week. While the small court is held daily in the PashaPalace, which looks into general administrative affairs, and with the late tenth century AH/ sixteenth century AD, the stage of the decline of the administration began in the Ottman era and the return of influence of the Mumluk princes and follow them, and their control of the management system in Egypt. That stage is considered the transition period between the Ottomans control of the administration in Egypt, and the Mumluks attempt to take it back from the Ottomans and trying to reach the most important administrative positions. Problems also appeared among the soldiers, and taxes were imposed on students at the beginning of the eleventh century AH/ seventeenth century AD. This is in addition to the scarcity of various commercial goods and products. And the weakness of the administration increased at the end of the Mumluk era. The city of Cairo was attacked by some gangs and thieves, which helped spread corruption and looting shops, which led to great losses for merchants, until the new Ottoman governor was able to arrest the thieves, and stability began to return once again in Cairo. The merchant sects in the Ottoman era used to gather in one market, like any craft sect at that time and each market had a craft sheikh who knew the secrets of the craft, and the richest merchant was the one who held the position of sheikh of the craft, which was called at that time (shahbandar merchants), and the job of shahbandar merchants was directly with all the merchants, masters of various crafts and retailers spread in the market. One of his duties is also to separate merchants in the event of disputes arising between them, and he was also regulating the merchants internal affairs in trade. Then trade went through a new phase in which control of the administration shifted in favor of the Mumluks and an attempt to remove all influence of the Ottomans. During that period, some attempts were made for independence from the Ottoman Empire. And Ali Bey the great tried to monopolize the affairs of governance in Egypt, and the administration in that period reached extreme chaos and deterioration. The names of commercial establishments differed in the Ottoman era, including the name of the khan, the Caesarea, the Hostel and the Wakala, and all of them were used to store goods and establish merchants inside or outside the city, especially in the Ottoman era. The Khan was playing an important role in the economic life of Egypt at that time.

1) A Comparison between the wakala of al-Gouri in the Mumlukera and the wakala of Bazarain the Ottoman era:

It was established during the reign of Qansuh al-Gouri in 909 AH / 1504 AD, and is located on 2 Muhammad Abdo street, off Al-Azhar street. It consists of an open rectangular dish of five floors, surrounded by halls on each side. The main facade is located in the south and has the main entrance to the wakala. To get to the first floor, you have to go through a stone staircase. On the first floor there are thirty shopkeepers (stores for goods) and in the upper three floors there are 29 houses. Merchants used to come to Al-Gouri Wakala to store their goods in preparation for selling them in the markets and the merchants resided in the upper floors where the houses are. Al- Gouri wakala is one of the archaeological group built by Sultan A-Gouri in the mumluk era. It is an Islamic and Coptic monument, bearing No. 64, and It is considered one of the few Complete models of archaeological Wakalas. It consists of a central rectangular dish overlooking all the units that make up wakala. And it has a door that opens to its sidewalk,

topped by a cross vault that leads to the open courtyard. The building overlooking the courtyard consists of three floors, the ground floor contains yards for selling goods and others for storage. As for the second and third floors, It consists of residential rooms, a group of villas consisting of two floors, between them the floor of the lower part is used for service purposes and the upper part is for the residence of merchants. Wakala Al-Gouri is one of the distinguished buildings in the style and is part of an architectural group built by Sultan Al- Gouri in the late Mamluk era. Currently, It is used as an archaeological site and a center for artistic and cultural creativity. It is known as Wakala Al- Gouri for Heritage Arts, and it witnesses many artistic seminars and cultural events. Its owner is Al- Ashraf Abu Al-Nasr Qansuh Al- Gouri Al- Jirkasy, who is one of the towering Mamluk sultans, who ruled Egypt from 1501 Ad to 1516 Ad. Wakala was completed in 1504 Ad and was designated as a place for trade. And the architectural Wakala block is distinctive as it takes a single extension whose lines appear in all parts of the architectural building. In the year 2000 Ad, it entered the project of restoration and documentation for a period of five years, and it was opened in October 2005 Ad again after the restoration as an archaeological site, and it became a center working for cultural and human development in the Islamic Cairo region.

2) Bazara'a Wakala in the Ottoman Era:

The Bazara'a Wakala was planned on the same plan as the Islamic buildings in that era, were built around the open rectangular courtyard. The Wakala building consists of two main sections: The first section is specific to the rooms or crops located around the open courtyard on the ground and first floors, there are also shops that overlook the main Wakala facade the overlooks Al-Tamboksheya street (branched from Al-Muizz Ladin Allah Al-Fatimi street) on the ground floor. As for the second section, it consist of a residential suite on two floors above the storage rooms or crops. Each housing unit consists of a small kitchen, bathroom, entrance, reception and living hall. Two entrances have been allocated to the Wakala: the first entrance is main and leads to the open courtyard. The second entrance is for the upper housing units, which I a side entrance that does not overlook the open courtyard and from it ascends directly to the floor of the residence of the merchants and their families, taking into account privacy and separating trade entrances. Movements of guests. The two entrances overlook the northern facade of the Wakala and there are other facades of the Wakala adjacent to the neighboring buildings. The main facade of the Wakala is crowned with a semi-circular arch consisting of colored stone decorations and the width of the facade is about 5.40m. And peat player is to use the letter "m" in a geometric way that forms units of hexagonal memes. As for the empty squared space of the Wakala is about 27.65m long and wide. Its four walls consists of bays, each bay consists of two rows of arches above each other, supported by squared stone pillars and they represent the facade of the corridors in front of the storage rooms (harvests) on the ground and first floors. Above the storage rooms on the first floor, we find a local wooden flap with floral motifs on the facade and this decorated wooden flap carries wooden cables. The residential units and their annexes overlook the open courtyard through openings in the windows, closed by timber windows as well. Each Mashrabiya is carried by a setoff wooden cables. The load-bearing walls were used in the construction of the ground floor and the first, while the rest of th Wakala was built with red brick and these stones were covered with a layer of lime-lime. Then it was used to cover the facade of the Wakala, the ground floor and the first floor with the famous color by

using yellow and black color to paint the stone and this method was one of the methods of decoration in the Mamluk Era. The Wakala went through the necessary restoration operations and was inaugurated in March 2002 AD, after the restoration operations took three years, then turned into a center for traditional and artistic crafts. It included the restoration work of the buildings' architecture especially the walls, the cleaning of all the timbers such as mashrabiya, windows and doors and the replacement of the tiles for backings that were damaged and eroded by erosion factors. The agency was also provided with a modern high-level lighting system. It was chosen precisely because it is the most famous archaeological Wakala in Egypt. The study concluded that there is a great similarity between the Wakala of Al-Ghouri in the Mamluk Era and the Wakala of Bazara'a in the Ottoman Era, in terms of the general form of the Wakalas in these two periods. With some differences in the layout of the open courtyard and the entrances, for example, a fountain was added in the open courtyard in the Wakala of Bazara'a is devoid of any architectural additions. We also find differences in the facade decorations in each of the two Wakalas. For example, in Wakalat Al-Ghouri, we find the facade decorations are a group of stone motifs and threelobed knots in the facade, while in The Wakala of Bazara'a, we find the facade decorations are stone castes that are considered part of the facade decoration with semicircular arch. As for the entrance, it is decorated with peat decoration directly above the entrance, which is the use of the letter "M" in a geometric way that forms units of geometric memes, with the use of muqarnas decorations in a horizontal strip that decorates the top of the external walls in the facade. The two Wakalas are also similar in terms of the distribution of crops on the ground and first floors, which were dedicated to storing and displaying goods. While they differed in terms of the number of floors designated for the merchants' housing, we find Al-Ghouri Wakala consists of three floors, and the Bazaraa'a Wakala consists of two floors for the merchants' housing, apart from the ground floor and the first floor designated for displaying and storing goods. The study also found that the use of lead-bearing walls in the construction and the red brick covered with a layer of lime-lime is one of the most important features of the construction method in the agency of Bazara'a in the Ottoman era, with the use of wide semi-circular arches that overlook the open courtyard on the ground and first floors. Where as in Wakalat Al-Ghouri, the construction method was based on pillars that bear large pointed arches on the ground and first floors. The two Wakalas are also similar in that there are corridors on the first floor that lead to the crops, while they differ in the method of implementing wooden balconies fences in the corridors on the first floor. We find it in Wakala Al-Ghouri depends on the decoration of the fences on the decoration of wood and auspicious, while the walls of the balconies in the Wakala of the Bazara'a were executed with simple decoration in the form of a group of wooden columns devoid of decorations. The artist also relied on beautifying the external facade of Wakala Al-Ghouri with dark brown wooden Mashrabiya windows, in addition to the use of metal grilles on the windows overlooking the main facade on the ground and second floors. And in the windows overlooking the open courtyard, the decoration of the mashrabiya was also used in dark color in both, the Wakala of Al-Ghouri and the Wakala of Bazara'a. While the architect used the style of metal grilles only, in the decoration of the windows overlooking the external façade of Wakala Al-Ghouri and Wakala of Bazara'a. And the architect in both Wakalas agreed to put small square windows above the entrances to crops and warehouses, decorated with wood motifs and their function was to renew the air and light inside the place.

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