

Ceramic Mosaic in the Mural Treatments of Seljuk Architecture

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Abstract

The Seljuk state was one of the major states in the Islamic history and the Central Asian region, as it played a great role in the history of the Abbasid state. The first appearance of the Seljuks was when the Abbasid princes used the Seljuk tribes in the Islamic conquests and also in their wars with the Crusaders. The name of the Seljuks was traced back to the founder of that tribe, who is "Seljuk Ibn Daqqaq", which was one of the largest Turkish tribes descended from East Asia region, and after the weakness and disintegration of the Abbasid state, they were able to rule and unify the Islamic state again and to promote it, as the Seljuks ruled all of Iran, Afghanistan and Central Asia, in addition to Iraq, Al- Sham and Anatolia in the west, all the way to the outskirts of Constantinople.

The Seljuk Kingdom has undergone a great prosperity and development in art, especially the art of architecture, as there was great interest in the architecture of schools and shrines, this development contributed to the mosaic industry in that period.

The technique of ceramic mosaic was used comprehensively in mural treatments with a distinctive decorative formulation as a result of the mixture of cultures and multiple civilizational references, because of the expansion of the geographical area and the mixture of Arab culture with Persian and Turkish culture; that led to create a distinct art with different character and richness in the field of design and decorative formation as well as a maturity of this industry, so the art of ceramic mosaic occupied a prominent place in the history of Seljuk art in terms of mural treatments, this was due to its importance in covering the non-flat architectural elements without changing the characteristics and form of the building, and throughout the thirteenth century mosaic technique became one of the most brilliant Seljuk arts used in the mural treatments of architectural buildings.

The research addresses the mosaic technique of the Seljuk era in terms of the method of implementation, the materials used and the decorative design elements used in the mural treatments of architecture in that period by presenting models of the mural treatments of that era in different places.

Keywords:

Mosaics; Mural Treatments ; Seljuks ; Decorative Design

Introduction

Islamic civilization is one of the links in the series of successive civilizations and cultures that man has passed through. This civilization was distinguished by its multifaceted aspects and the strength of its influence. This civilization, which crystallized under Islam, became called the Arab-Islamic civilization. Which indicates the ability of the Muslim artist to maintain his personality, which created a unified and common rhythm in this wide area despite its different environmental and geographical characteristics. The first manifestation of

the Islamic personality was the affirmation of the philosophy that man is part of this vast universe and that divine power is the controlling force over this existence.

Thus, mural painting techniques have multiplied across different civilizations, each of which has witnessed great development in what has been introduced to it over the ages, including the mosaic technique. The mosaic technique is one of the mural painting techniques that was used in wall treatments to create subjects that may be geometric, botanical, or drawings of living creatures. Islamic art had its own personality in the mural treatments of Islamic architecture and had its own characteristics on which most of its various arts were based. The Seljuk school is considered one of those artistic schools of Islamic art, which witnessed great artistic development, including the mosaic technique, which is one of the most important methods of mural painting that is distinguished by its ability to survive and bear. Environmental factors and nature.

It is also one of the few arts through which the masterpieces of immortal monuments that lived for long periods were presented and are still evidence of artistic creativity that was formulated by the hands of artists with their ability to create different artistic styles in the wall treatments of Seljuk architecture due to its importance in covering non-flat architectural elements without changing the texture. The characteristics of the building, its shape, and the building's aesthetic and plastic value. "The art of ceramic mosaics occupied a prominent place in the history of Seljuk art, and one of the most creative things the Seljuks achieved in the wall treatments of their buildings was decorating the walls with pieces of brick and faience tiles."

Research Problem

The research problem lies in:

- The scarcity of Arabic references covering that period in general and the Central Asian region in particular, as studies deal with Seljuk art in general.

The Mongol invasion of the Central Asian region had a significant impact on the Seljuk architecture in that region, and only simple damaged models remained in that region that were later restored.

- Some additions were added to Seljuk buildings later, which caused Seljuk architecture to lose its identity in its wall treatments, so it became difficult to determine to which era these works belong.

Research Aims

The research aims to know the techniques and materials used in producing mosaic works in the Seljuk era.

- Knowing the extent to which architectural development in the Seljuk era affected the production of mosaic works appropriate to the nature of the structure

Research Hypotheses

The research discusses some hypotheses that may be correct or incorrect as a final result of the study, which are:

- The civilizational and cultural diversity of the Seljuk era had an impact on the diversity of mosaic technology.

- The artistic renaissance in both architecture and ceramics had an impact on the development of that technology.

Research Importance

The importance of the research is as follows:

- He seeks to learn about the mosaic technique in the wall treatments of one of the most important artistic schools of Islamic art, which is the Seljuk School, that artistic school that was able to add and develop the mosaic technique in a relatively short period.
- Knowing the cultural and civilizational references that influenced the creation of a distinctive style for the Seljuks in their use of the mosaic technique for wall treatments for that period, which arose in the region of Central Asia and Asia Minor, the place where many civilizations met, and a meeting point between East and West.

The mosaic technique in the Seljuk era had a major impact on the innovation of the ceramic tile industry and its development in the wall treatments of architecture in that period and after it, especially in the Ottoman Empire.

Search Limits

The research limits are divided into:

- spatial boundaries; The geographical borders of the Seljuk state include the beginning of its emergence in Central Asia all the way to Asia Minor.
- And time limits, including the time period of the Seljuk state from the century (5 AH - 11 AD) to (7 AH - 13 AD)

Research Methodology

The descriptive analytical approach is through previous studies, references, scientific books, and scientific websites to know the methods of wall treatments used in the Seljuk era and their importance in preserving architecture in that period, through the theoretical framework and displaying pictorial models indicating this.

Results :

Through the research it was possible to reach a set of results:

The Seljuks were not satisfied with bricks as a building material, but they were able to transform bricks from being merely a building material into a supporting material for the building's exterior structure against environmental factors, as its thermal mass helps stabilize the building's internal temperatures and adds an aesthetic and sustainable element to it.

The Seljuks used a new method in wall treatments using bricks and glazed bricks, different from the treatments that had been used before.

The development of the ceramic industry in that period helped lead to the creation of faience tiles, which directly helped in developing mosaic technology and its decorative designs.

- Despite the vast geographical area of the Seljuk state and the overlap and diversity of civilizational and cultural references, they relied on the same method in wall treatments with different materials and decorative design elements, as the Anatolian Seljuks relied more on ceramic tile mosaics due to their ability to resist the climatic conditions of the Asia Minor region.

The Mongol invasion of East Asia resulted in the period of Seljuk rule disintegrating and the migration of craftsmen and craftsmen to Asia Minor, which contributed to the development of mosaic technical methods in those regions, especially the city of Konya, the capital of the Seljuk state in Anatolia.

Recommendations

Through research into this topic, it has become clear that there are many research points that have their importance and impact in adding new things, whether from a historical or technical perspective, in the field of studying mosaics in the Central Asian region more precisely. This is due to the scarcity of scientific material related to this aspect, and therefore it was necessary to It focuses on the development of technology from Central Asia to Asia Minor by presenting examples of wall treatment.

Therefore, it is preferable to focus on some analytical study models and deal with them independently, especially in the Central Asian region.

Reconsidering the use of bricks as a plastic and aesthetic element in the wall treatments of local architecture in the city of Luxor because of its appropriate properties in isolating architectural buildings from high temperatures and achieving sustainability for the building.

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