

**The Citadel of Cairo, 1176-1341:
Reconstructing Architecture from Texts**

by

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Abstract

This dissertation reconstructs one of the major works of military and palatial architecture in the Middle Ages, the Citadel of the Mountain (*Qal'at al-Jabal*) in Cairo. It traces its development from its inception in 1176 under Salah al-Din al-Ayyubi until it reached its definitive and most monumental form under al-Nasir Muhammad (1293-1341, with two interruptions). The dissertation focuses on the part of the Citadel called today the southern enclosure, which was the residence of the sultan, and of which only the congregational mosque remains standing. It analyzes the different stages of its topographic and architectural development using primarily references collated from the chronicles, biographical compendia, and legal documents of the Mamluk period, and secondarily surface archeology, toponymy, and typological comparisons with extant Bahri Mamluk palaces in Cairo.

Through the reconstruction of the Citadel, the study addresses a number of wider methodological and historical issues. It evaluates the influence of the Mamluk socio-political hierarchy on the structure of the palatial complex and on the conceptualization of its spaces and forms. It stresses the importance of construing the architectural vocabulary of the period in its proper historical context. And finally, the dissertation questions the modern perception of the architectural development in a medieval Islamic environment by emphasizing the difference between its secular and religious architecture, and by showing how this perception is disproportionately molded by the latter.

Thesis Supervisor: Stanford Anderson
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Note on the Use of Arabic terms

Ease of spelling was the overriding concern in the transliteration of Arabic words in this study. The simplified transliteration system applied is based on that used by the *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, but no diacritics, aside from (') for the Arabic letter *ain*, and (') for the Arabic letter *hamza*, have been used.

Arabic names of buildings are capitalized and their English equivalents follow in brackets, e.g. the Burj al-Ahmar (Red Tower). Terms common in English scholarly literature, such as *mihrab* and *qa'a*, are anglicized and not defined. Terms not familiar to the English reader, and which have clear and unchanging meanings in Arabic appear in English with the Arabic word in italics between brackets, e.g. *vestibule (durkah)*. Terms that have several meanings, or whose meanings changed over time or are unclear appear only in italics without an English equivalent, but are explained when first introduced. All architectural, topographical, or administrative terms that are used can be found in the glossary at the end.

A few terms require special notes. First, the word *Mamluk*, which linguistically means the owned one, is used in capitalized form to designate the Mamluk period, or the attribution of people, practices, or legacies to it. The word appears in lower case whenever it is used to mean an individual, or a group of people who were themselves mamluks, that were owned at a certain period in their lives.

The term *dar al-'adl* which, strictly speaking, means "house of justice," was used in the Mamluk sources to designate both the practice of sitting for the dispensing of justice and the building in which this practice was performed. The term is capitalized for the first, italicized in lower case for the second meaning. The words *iwan*, *qubba*, *rafraf*, and *qasr* also appear in two different ways to express its two denotations as they appear in the sources. *Iwan* and *Qubba* are capitalized whenever they designate any of the audience halls built at the Citadel, such as the *Qubba of Baybars* and the *Great Iwan*. In their capitalized form, the two words refer to complete structures rather than to the architectural elements that they normally denote. *Iwan* as alcove and *qubba* as dome, appear in lower case. *Rafraf* and *qasr*, as is proven in the study, each had two meanings in the Mamluk period's sources: a general one,

which is the one that we still use today, and a period-specific one that appeared to signify a Mamluk architectural invention and was dropped out of use afterward. In their common meaning, the two words are romanized lower case. In their period-related meanings, they are italicized.

The word Cairo is used whenever the intended meaning is that of the whole capital city of Egypt. The two words *al-Qahira* and *Misr al-Fustat* are used to signify the two administrative entities, the Fatimid walled city and the old Islamic capital of Egypt, that eventually merged into one urban area, but this did not happen until after the sixteenth century. The two words remained in use throughout the Mamluk period to mean the two different administrative and urban entities despite the building expansion that effectively joined them together.

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Introduction

The Citadel of the Mountain (*Qal'at al-Jabal*) in Cairo is a monument with a long history. It was founded by Salah al-Din al-Ayyubi in 1176 on a spur that was artificially cut out of the Muqattam Hills east of Cairo. Salah al-Din's nephew, al-Kamil Muhammad completed its construction and transferred the court to it in 1206. After the Ayyubid period, the Citadel became the royal center of the Mamluk sultanate which ruled the Eastern Mediterranean for more than two hundred and fifty years (1250-1517). During that period, the Citadel was in turn expanded, endowed with an impressive number of palaces and other structures, divided and subdivided, neglected, and, at the end of the fifteenth century, twice refurbished. In the Ottoman period, the Citadel remained the residence of the pashas sent from Istanbul, but very little construction took place in it until Muhammad 'Ali established himself as the semi-independent ruler of Egypt in the early nineteenth century. He renovated it entirely, strengthened its fortifications, altered its interior division, and constructed a few monumental buildings in it. His descendants lived at the Citadel until Isma'il Pasha moved to the new 'Abdin Palace in Cairo in 1874.

When the Citadel was first built it lay midway between al-Qahira in the northwest and Misr al-Fustat in the southwest. The first was the political center and the second the economic hub of Egypt at the end of the twelfth century. It had been designed to be an integral part of the fortification project that Salah al-Din had initiated to encircle the two cities and the vacant land between them in one continuous wall. This large enceinte was never completed, but the Citadel maintained its strategic significance as the highest point between the Nile and the Muqattam Hills that controlled the bottleneck between the city's eastern border and the hills. (**Fig A. 1 Contour Plan of Cairo**). Subsequent expansion, especially in the early Mamluk period (thirteenth and fourteenth century) surrounded the Citadel from all directions with buildings, except the east, where the slopes of the rocky hill hindered construction. Although the cityscape has changed tremendously

and the city's surface area has quadrupled over the centuries, the Citadel still dominates the city's right bank, counterbalancing the three pyramids on the left.

The interior of the Citadel has been reorganized many times, and its ground level has risen as new structures were built on top of old ones. In the 1820s, Muhammad 'Ali Pasha razed the few structures that were still standing from the Mamluk period when he implemented his own organizational program. As it stands today, the Citadel is divided into two enclosures: the northern one was a military and administrative center until recently, and the southern held the awesome mosque of Muhammad 'Ali and a number of palatial structures built by him as well, in addition to the mosque of al-Nasir Muhammad, and a few scattered remains from earlier periods. **(Fig A. 2 Plan of the Citadel Today).**

Despite its significance as the royal center of the Mamluks and as a major medieval palatial complex, the Citadel has to date attracted little scholarly interest. Aside from the pioneering study by Paul Casanova, *Histoire et description de la citadelle du Caire* published in 1894, no modern scholar has provided much to our understanding of the Mamluk palatial complex.¹ Casanova scanned the Mamluk chronicles available in his time and collected their descriptions of the royal structures. He used the scanty topographic information they provided and the valuable yet confusing *Description de l'Égypte's* map of the Citadel, drawn by the savants of the French expedition in 1799 before Muhammad 'Ali's alterations, to pin down the location of the major Mamluk structures and to sketch a schematic plan of the southern enclosure. **(Fig A. 3 Casanova's Schematic Plan of the Southern Enclosure).** Casanova does not seem to have done any site reconnaissance in the southern enclosure, although he must have toured it because he registered many of the inscriptions that were to be found there in his time. This limited his reconstruction to the uncertain plan of the

¹ Paul Casanova, *Histoire et description de la citadelle du Caire*, M.M.A.F.C. VI, (Cairo, 1894) 509-781. The study was translated and published in Arabic as, *Tarikh wa-Wasf Qal'at al-Qahira*, tr. Ahmad Darraj (Cairo, 1974). The reference is used hereafter as *Histoire* (Arabic Translation).

eighteenth-century French expedition, and prevented him from verifying many of the Mamluk remains that still exist underground.

The only other modern study of the Citadel is that of K.A.C. Creswell, "Archaeological Researches in the Citadel of Cairo," published in 1924.² In it, he meticulously and methodically reconstructs the plan of the towers, bastions, and curtain wall of the northern enclosure, but shows little interest in the southern enclosure. Creswell later incorporated his findings in his documentary study of the early Islamic architecture in Egypt, *Muslim Architecture of Egypt*, and added a few remarks concerning parts of the northern enclosure's walls that were inaccessible when he wrote his first study. In the same volume, he notes that there is plenty to be uncovered and reconstructed in the southern enclosure, but only produces a short study on the location and form of al-Nasir Muhammad's Ablaq Palace.³

Since the publication of Creswell's last study in 1959, our knowledge of Mamluk history and Mamluk architecture has greatly increased. Scores of relevant documents, historical, legal, material, and archaeological, have come to light. Several scholarly studies have been produced, the majority of them monographs on one monument or a group of structures and typological in method. A few analytical works dealing with various aspects of Mamluk architecture and urbanism have started to define the general characteristics of the period and to generate interest in more theoretical and interpretive issues.⁴ Yet architectural and urban historians who have written about the Citadel since Creswell and Casanova have not contributed any original research to its history or architecture, and have only reiterated earlier interpretations.⁵ More recently, renovation work and limited excavations in

² K.A.C. Creswell, "Archaeological Researches in the Citadel of Cairo," *Bulletin de l'Institut Français d'archéologie Orientale* (B.I.F.A.O.) XXIII (1924) 89-158.

³ K.A.C. Creswell, *Muslim Architecture of Egypt* (hereafter, M.A.E.) (Oxford, 1959) 2:1-39 for the walls and towers, and 255-63 for the discussion of the aqueduct and the Ablaq Palace. The part on the Citadel's fortifications was later translated into Arabic as *Wasf Qal'at al-Jabal*, tr. J.M. Mhriz (Cairo, 1974).

⁴ Many are reviewed and classified in Oleg Grabar, "Reflections on Mamluk Art," *Muqarnas*, 2 (1984) 1-13.

⁵ See for example, 'Abd al-Rahman Zaki, "Al-'Amara al-'Askariyya fi-l-'Usur al-Wusta bayn al-'Arab wa-l-Salibiyyin," *Egyptian Historical Review*, 7 (1958) 106-133; idem, *Qal'at Salah*

the southern enclosure conducted by the Egyptian Antiquities Organization in the 1980s uncovered a number of Mamluk remains in the terrace facing the city and in the entrance area, but the data gathered have yet to be systematically studied and assimilated within the larger frame of the Citadel's architectural history.⁶

This dissertation resumes the analysis of the early history of the Citadel where Casanova and Creswell left off and in the process incorporates the archaeological and textual data provided by the newly excavated structures and the primary sources edited or discovered in recent times along with the interpretive framework developed for the study of medieval architecture in Egypt and Syria. It reconstructs the various stages of the Citadel's topographic and architectural development from its inception in 1176 under Salah al-Din until it reached its definitive and most monumental form under al-Nasir Muhammad. It reviews the palatial constructions built by four sultans: Baybars (1260-77), Qalawun (1279-90), al-Ashraf Khalil (1290-93), and al-Nasir Muhammad within their historical framework. On the city level, the study traces the evolution of the Citadel's position within Cairo from the plan of Salah al-Din which sought to remove it from the city, to the various alterations introduced by the early Mamluk sultans which coupled physical seclusion with visual and functional connections.

By reconstructing the building program, the dissertation evaluates some aspects of Mamluk secular architecture, and addresses a number of wider methodological and historical issues. It proposes new interpretations for the significance of some architectural terms, such as *iwan*, *qubba*, and *qasr*, as they could be collated from Mamluk sources. It reviews the transformations that these terms underwent in the medieval period and

al-Din wa-Qila' Islamiyya Mu'asira (Cairo, 1960); Neil MacKenzie, *A Topographical Study of Cairo Under the Ayyubids*, PhD Dissertation (University of Michigan, 1986) 103-34; Doris Behrens-Abouseif, "The Citadel of Cairo: Stage for Mamluk Ceremonial," *Annales Islamologiques*, vol. 24 (1988) 4-79.

⁶ This can be seen in the report on the discovery of a Mamluk qa'a in the western part of the Citadel, which was hastily identified as the Ablaq Palace, see, M. al-Hadidi & F. 'Abd al-'Alim, "'A'mal Tarmim al-Qasr al-Ablaq bi-Qal'at Salah al-Din" in *'Alam al-Athar* (*Archaeological Review*), an occasional section in *'Alam al-Bina'*, vol. 26 (April 1986) 4-16.

advances a number of explanations for the changes in meaning based on the architectural development of the Mamluk palatial complex. The dissertation also addresses the question of the application of architectural and figural representations as modes of surface articulation in early Mamluk palaces, and discusses their *raisons d'être*, provenance, and meanings. Finally, the dissertation reveals the interaction between the Mamluk sociopolitical hierarchy and the structure of the palatial complex including the conceptualization of its spaces and forms.

Like any other study of architectural reconstruction, this one depends on physical remains and the related visual or written sources. The first are almost totally lacking. Most Ayyubid and Mamluk structures that we know to have existed in the Citadel have irretrievably disappeared. The meager architectural remains dating from the medieval period, both uncovered and still underground, are scattered and far apart so that they cannot offer a complete image of any of the Mamluk royal palaces or audience halls. As they are today, these remains provide a number of valuable details, but undocumented alterations subsequent to the original building add to the difficulties of reconstruction and make a determination of their pristine forms impossible. Moreover, a systematic archaeological survey of the southern enclosure is not feasible, logistically and financially, at the present time and the ongoing development of the Citadel into a major tourist attraction would make such a task an even more remote possibility in the future.

A fair number of seventeenth-, eighteenth-, and nineteenth-century travelogues and documentary books with plans, views and sections of structures in the Citadel of varying degrees of accuracy and a few nineteenth-century photographic catalogues provide some visual material. Foremost among them is the encyclopedic *Description de l'Égypte*, which provides the basic plan for the study of the Citadel before the remodeling of Muhammad 'Ali.⁷ Unfortunately, the relevé plan was done at a scale six times larger than

⁷ *Description de l'Égypte, état moderne*, planches, tome premier (Paris, 1809), plate 26 for the map of Cairo and the Citadel, and plates 67-73 for views, plans and sections in the Citadel. All plates were republished recently in Cairo, see, Zuheir al-Shayeb, *Wasf Misr, al-Lawhat, al-Dawla al-Haditha* (Cairo, 1986).

the published one which compromised clarity in the reduction process and blurred many of the details that must have existed in the original. (**Fig A. 4 Plan of the Citadel from the *Description de l'Égypte***). The *Description de l'Égypte*, and a number of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century print books have a number of exterior and interior views of the Citadel. The prints of Ludwig Mayer, Robert Hay, and David Roberts display excellent draftsmanship but they depict the Mamluk structures when they had been in ruins for at least three centuries, and when their forms had been severely altered and their surface articulations had almost disappeared.⁸

Mamluk structures had already been demolished when photography came to Egypt around the mid-nineteenth century. Still, with its exactitude of depiction, photographic documentation would have preserved for us the appearance of the Citadel right after Muhammad 'Ali's renovation and before the subsequent additions and alterations under the khedives and the British occupation forces which were stationed at the Citadel after 1882. This, however, did not happen because the documentation of Egyptian monuments was focused on pharaonic antiquities, and only a handful of photographers took interest in the Islamic sites of Cairo. Even a fewer had access to the Citadel or thought it worth photographing. Among the last, the photographs of Lorent, Béchard, and Sébah offer a few clues to the changes in the western façade of the southern enclosure and the terminus area of the aqueduct south of the mosque of al-Nasir Muhammad.⁹

Thus, given the scarcity of actual Mamluk remains, the impossibility of any large archaeological excavations, the rarity or inadequacy of images and plans, and the nonexistence of medieval Mamluk sources that specifically deal with architecture or decoration, this study has had to rely almost exclusively on general historical texts and on conjectural models. This has

⁸ Ludwig Mayer, *Views in Egypt from the original drawings in the possession of Sir Robert Ainslie taken during his embassy to Constantinople* (London, 1801); Robert Hay, *Illustrations of Cairo* (London, 1840); David Roberts, *The Holy Land, Egypt and Nubia* (London, 1842-49).

⁹ J.A. Lorent, *Egypten, Alhambra, Tlemsen, Algier, Reisebilder aus den Anfängen der Photographie* (Mamz am Rheim, reprint of 1861); M. Béchard, *L'Égypte et la Nubie, grand album monumental, historique et architectural* (Paris, 1887); P. Sébah, *Catalogue of Views in Egypt and Nubia* (Cairo, 1887).

involved some speculation in collecting pertinent references and in collating these references to construct a descriptive account of each of the structures and of the entire Citadel.

What the relevant primary sources are was relatively easy to determine. Annals, biographical compendia, legal documents (*awqaf*), manuals for the chancery, geographical treatises (*masalik*), and topographical tracts (*khitat*) all exist for Egypt and Syria in the medieval period. Of the *khitat* genre, only one complete Mamluk book survives, Maqrizi's *al Mawa'iz wa-l-l'tibar bi-Zikr al-Khitat wa-l-Athar* composed in the 1420s, which presents the most complete corpus of data on medieval Cairo's topography and toponymy.¹⁰ Maqrizi and others preserved in their books the information they copied from earlier *khitats* now lost to us, but in at least one case we have the original from which Maqrizi borrowed without admission. This is al-'Umari's *Masalik al-Absar fi-Mamalik al-Amsar*, of which part six entitled *Dawlat al-Mamalik al-Ula* includes the description of the Citadel and the ceremonials that regularly took place there in the fourteenth century.¹¹ 'Umari's text is the prime source we have, for he was an eyewitness to what he is describing and, as a high-ranking administrator, was probably involved in the design of some of the royal protocols he describes. His text is clearer than Maqrizi's. A comparison between the two texts shows that some of the latter's sentences are distorted replicas of the original. This means that evidence based on Maqrizi's *khitat* should be treated with skepticism.¹² In

¹⁰ Taqi al-Din al-Maqrizi (d. 1442), *al Mawa'iz wa-l-l'tibar bi-Zikr al-Khitat wa-l-Athar* (hereafter *Khitat*) 2 vols., (Bulaq, 1856). Another fifteenth-century *khitat* book survives in a much truncated form. That is Ibn Duqmaq, *al-Intisar li-Wasitat 'Iqd al-Amsar*, K. Vollers ed. (Bulaq, 1893). The part of which that we have is the one dealing with Misr al-Fustat rather than al-Qahira and the Citadel area which constitute the focus of this study.

¹¹ This part was edited and published by two different authors recently. Shihab al-Din al-'Umari, *Masalik al-Absar fi-Mamalik al-Amsar*, (parts 6 and 7, *Mamlakat Misr wa-l-Sham wa-l-Hijaz wa-l-Yaman*) ed. Ayman Fu'ad Sayyid (Cairo, 1985), and idem, *Masalik al-Absar fi-Mamalik al-Amsar*, *Dawlat al-Mamalik al-Ula*, (hereafter *Masalik*) ed. D. Krawulsky (Beirut, 1986). The second edition supersedes the first one by its accuracy and its comparative methodology. It is the one used throughout the dissertation.

¹² Maqrizi's method of copying and adopting has been criticized in many modern historiographical studies. One of the last contributions is Ulrich Haarmann, *Quellenstudien zur frühen Mamlukenzeit* (Freiburg, 1969) 192-93. 1.

some cases we have other sources to compare to Maqrizi, but in others, we have to rely on a critical reading of his reports.

ʿUmari's *Masalik al-Absar fi-Mamalik al-Amsar* belongs to another genre, that of tenth- and eleventh-century Islamic geographical writing. The genre was revived by ʿUmari and turned into a hybrid of political and geographical texts in the Mamluk period.¹³ Khalil ibn Shahin al-Zahiri's *Zubdat Kashf al-Mamalik wa-Bayan al-Turuq wa-l-Masalik*, composed around the middle of the fifteenth century, is of the same kind. In addition to geographical topics, the subjects covered in these works include topographic descriptions of important locales, such as the Citadel, essays on the status, prerogatives, and duties of the different orders of rulers, and listings of the functions and duties of the ruling class's members in the countries described.

Manuals for the chancery usually covered traditions, customs, and protocols.¹⁴ However, in the Mamluk period, they were extended to give elaborate descriptions of a wider range of topics, such as court ceremonials, the titles and honorifics of state functionaries, and codes of dress and behavior followed by these functionaries in royal processions and festivals. The expanded chancery manuals are important for understanding the functioning of the Mamluk Citadel because most processions and ceremonials took place there. Two manuals have come down to us, ʿUmari's *al-Taʿrif bi-l-Mustalah al-Sharif*, and Qalqashandi's *Subh al-Aʿsha fi-Sinaʿa al-Insha*.¹⁵ ʿUmari wrote his book in the 1320s, and Qalqashandi composed his after 1397. The latter supplants the former for our purpose because he incorporates all the information of ʿUmari in his book. The cautionary remark about the anachronistic nature of most of Qalqashandi's data – he was writing at the end of the fourteenth century while the information he produces belongs to the early part of the century – is not very important for our purpose since his data date from the period we are concerned with.

¹³ See the discussion of D. Krawulsky in her introduction to ʿUmari, *Masalik al-Absar*, 9-14.

¹⁴ See the discussion of this genre in Régis Blachère, "Quelques réflexions sur les formes de l'encyclopédisme en Égypte et en Syrie," in *Bulletin d'Études Orientales*, 23(1970) 1-13.

¹⁵ Shihab al-Din al-ʿUmari *Al-Taʿrif bi-l-Mustalah al-Sharif* (Cairo, 1894); and Shihab al-Din al-Qalqashandi *Subh al-Aʿsha fi-Sinaʿa al-Insha*, (hereafter *Subh*) (Cairo, 1918-22).

The newest type of document to be added to the corpus of Mamluk sources are the *waqfs* (legal documents in which endowed properties, both agricultural land and buildings, are described). Their significance for the study of Mamluk architecture and urbanism has been repeatedly stated.¹⁶ *Waqf* descriptions can be used to complement the evidence of an extant structure or to reconstruct original plans, or to suggest hypothetical plans for buildings that have disappeared.¹⁷ *Waqfs* offer no help for the reconstruction of the Citadel's structures, however, for the only early Mamluk building there that had a *waqf* is the congregational mosque of al-Nasir Muhammad, and it is missing. There are only three *waqfs*, to my knowledge, that deal with structures at the Citadel, all built after the time covered by the dissertation. The first is that of Sultan Barquq which describes the mosque that he constructed in the *hosh* in the southern enclosure in 1409, and which has since disappeared.¹⁸ The second is the *waqf* of Sultan al-Mu'ayyad Shaykh (1412-21), which mentions a cistern and a *sabil/kuttab* (the widespread charitable building type in Cairo that consists of a water fountain surmounted by an open space for the teaching of Qur'an for orphans) which he built near the Mudarraaj Gate in the Citadel, and which no longer exist.¹⁹ And finally the *waqf* of Suleiman Pasha from the early Ottoman period, which describes the renovation and enlargement of the mosque of Sidi Sarya in the northern enclosure. This mosque still stands today as the mosque of Suleiman Pasha.²⁰

¹⁶ The pioneering study of *waqf* and architecture is 'Abd al-Latif Ibrahim, "Al-Watha'iq fi-Khidmat al-Athar," in *Al-Mu'tamar al-Thani li-l-Athar fi al-Bilad al-'Arabiyya* (2d conference for antiquities in Arabic countries) (Cairo, 1958) 205-88. More recent studies include Michael Rogers, "Waqfiyyas and Waqf-Registers. New Primary Sources for Islamic Architecture," *Kunst Des Orients*, 11 (1976-77) 182-96; Leonor Fernandes, "Notes on a New Source for the Study of Religious Architecture during the Mamluk Period: the Waqfiya," *Al-Abhath*, 33 (1985) 3-12.

¹⁷ This was done by Mona Zakarya, *Deux palais du Caire médiéval, waqfs et architecture* (hereafter, *Deux palais du Caire médiéval*) (Marseille, 1983).

¹⁸ The pertinent part of the *waqf* and a reconstruction of the mosque were published by Salih Lam'i Mustafa, *Al-Watha'iq wa-l-'Amara, Dirasa fi-l-'Amara al-Islamiyya fi-l-'Asr al-Mamluki al-Jarkasi* (Beirut, 1980).

¹⁹ *Awqaf* 938q, *Waqf of Sultan al-Mu'ayyad Shaykh*, dated, 12 Rajab 823/1420, 19: 8-17 and 43: 11-17.

²⁰ *Awqaf* 1074, *Waqf of Suleiman Pasha al-Khadim*, dated, 935/1528, 7: 5 to 14: 7.

All these structures were not directly connected with the palatial complex and their *waqf* descriptions do not add any new information on its architecture or topography in the early Mamluk period.

The *waqf* evidence, however, is relevant in three ways. First, terms used in them help correct the architectural terminology of the period. Second, a number of *waqfs* provide some topographic information on projects around the Citadel which were related to the palatial complex inside the southern enclosure, namely the watercourses and water-channels in the area west and south of the Citadel. Third, in the reconstruction of the model for the Bahri Mamluk palace, a number of palace descriptions contained in later Mamluk *waqfs* elucidate the changes that the conception of a princely, and royal, palace underwent over the Mamluk period.

As for the last group of primary sources – the annals and biographical compendia – a huge number of them exist.²¹ Two criteria for selection produced an order of relevance that justified reducing their sum to a manageable number. The first was date. Late chronicles, such as Ibn Iyas and Ibn-Shahin al-Malti who lived in the sixteenth century, are almost useless for assessing constructions of the early Mamluk sultans. The second was interdependence, and sometimes outright copying. This eliminated texts that were heavily based on others or that took the information they copied out of chronological order.²² On these grounds most biographical compendia compiled by authors who also wrote chronicles could be ignored, for the information is repeated in many cases without any new additions. The same applies to those annals that cover prolonged periods starting long before the

²¹ There are chronicles arranged chronologically, or in the order of sultans, and, to a lesser degree, in the order of caliphs. There are chronicles that follow the movements of the sultans, and there are those that focus on the life of a city, such as Cairo, Damascus, Aleppo. The total number is staggering. For the reign of al-Nasir Muhammad, for instance, there are more than thirty known chronicles, published or in manuscript form, that were written during his reign, and at least ten that were composed later but dealt extensively with his period.

²² My work in evaluating the importance of Mamluk sources has been greatly facilitated by using the study of Donald Little as a guideline, see, Donald Little, *An Introduction to Mamluk Historiography, An Analysis of Arabic Annalistic and Biographical Sources for the Reign of al-Malik an-Nasir Muhammad ibn Qala'un* (Wiesbaden, 1970), especially pp. 94-99, 112-136.

birth of the chronicler for which he had to rely on other, earlier sources that are known to us.

The criteria by which to select pertinent references were more difficult to establish. These references are usually couched in texts which report historical events, or in biographies of prominent persons who built the structures or those who worked in them. As different as the sources themselves may be, the references fall into two categories: those which are direct and those which need interpreting. To the first group belong locations of structures, their relationships to their neighboring buildings, and passing remarks about specific spaces or features inside them. These remarks are denotative, and using them in an architectural reconstruction is a straightforward process.

The second group comprises dates of building, patrons, reasons for building, and practices and ceremonies that took place in the structures once they were built. These do not reveal anything directly about the architecture. They might even seem, at first sight, irrelevant for an architectural reconstruction. But with the application of some informed speculation, they can give hints about the missing structures, their appearances, their functions, and the impressions they have left on their contemporaries. They are true clues in the sense used by the Italian historian Carlo Ginzburg.²³

The study of an architectural complex over time could be structured in various ways. One approach may be termed functional, that is to group the structures according to their uses. Thus the Citadel's structures would be separated into audience halls, mosques, palaces, courts, service buildings, stables, gardens and so on, and analyzed in light of the functions they were put to when they were built and the changes these functions underwent over time.²⁴ But this classification would be historically incorrect because most of the royal structures were never built to be used for one function, and many of the buildings that would appear to have been meant for similar functions

²³ Carlo Ginzburg, "Clues: Morelli, Freud, and Sherlock Holmes," in Umberto Eco and Thomas A. Sebeock, eds. *The Sign of Three, Dupin, Holmes, Peirce* (Bloomington, 1983) 81-118.

²⁴ This is the approach adopted by Doris Behrens-Abouseif, "The Citadel of Cairo: Stage for Mamluk Ceremonial."

eventually were made to serve totally different ones. A second approach is the one in which buildings would be classified according to type – buildings with domes, *qa'a* types, vaulted halls, basilical halls, and so on. They would then be studied in terms of their distinctive features, and compared with their antecedents and parallels in the Mamluk sultanate and elsewhere. An image of their origins and transformations in medieval Egypt and Syria would be drawn, and their significance for the understanding of architectural development in that period would be evaluated. This approach requires a type of evidence that is not available, and involves an abstraction of the separate structures which would make it difficult to construct an overall conception of the Citadel.

This dissertation is essentially a chronological account of the Citadel's architectural history reviewed within the Mamluk political and cultural contexts. The decision to organize it this way was twofold. First the available references do not provide specifics on the architecture or the spatial configuration of the Citadel's structures, but they do help to reveal the functional and topographic relationships between them, and the way they developed over time. The best means to capture this evolution is to describe it chronologically.

The second has to do with the scope of the study, which is the history of the Citadel as a whole rather than that of each of its particular structures. The continuous building and rebuilding process that characterized its development is viewed both as the reflection and as the formal expression of changing historical conditions. The discussion of the various structures follows the order by which they were built, but sometimes a sweep through time is necessary to reveal certain information that could not be gleaned from a strict adherence to the sources of the period. The dissertation comprises five chapters arranged chronologically in a division that follows the political history of the period.

Chapter one reviews the Citadel in the Ayyubid period. It looks at the conditions of Egypt before Salah al-Din, discusses the significance of the Citadel, reconstructs its original circumference, and analyzes the architectural elements that can be attributed to the Ayyubids. Chapter two assesses the transfer of power from the Ayyubids to the Mamluks and examines the works

of al-Zahir Baybars in and around the Citadel. Chapter three traces the Citadel's development in the early Qalawunid period, and investigates the works of Qalawun and his son al-Ashraf Khalil. Chapters four and five are concerned with the period of al-Nasir Muhammad. Chapter four evaluates the achievements of the first fifteen years of his third reign (1310-25). Chapter five considers his works in the last third of his reign (1333-41), and interprets his second restructuring of the Citadel and his involvement the urban development of Cairo in light of the changes that his policies underwent.

As an important architectural complex from the medieval period, the Citadel of Cairo deserves study. The wealth of new information on the Mamluk period in general and Mamluk architecture in particular that is gathered here suggests that some of Casanova's conclusions and reconstructions are incorrect and his study is outdated. Studying the Citadel also elucidates the social and political history of the Mamluk period. The stationing of the army at the Citadel, the holding of the royal functions and ceremonies there, and the almost uninterrupted residing of the sultan in the palatial complex also made its topography and urban setting a distinctive component of the conceptual framework by which the history of the sultanate could be comprehended. As the Mamluk version of a royal complex, the study of the Citadel's southern enclosure adds to our understanding of Mamluk secular architecture, raises a few questions concerning its characterizations in modern literature, and offers new interpretations for the meaning of some of its elements.

Chapter One

The Citadel in the Ayyubid Period (1176-1249)

In the second half of the twelfth century, a unified Islamic front formed against the Crusader states established in the Levant more than half a century earlier. By 1154, Nur al-Din ibn Zengi, the king (*malik*) of Aleppo, had managed to add Damascus to his possessions and to wrest a few fortresses in the Syrian hinterland from the Crusaders. He had announced his allegiance to the Sunni Abbasid Caliphate in Baghdad, and declared his intentions to wage *jihad* against the Crusaders until all Islamic lands had been recaptured.²⁵

Egypt had been ruled by the Fatimids, a heterodox Isma'ili dynasty, since 969. By the beginning of the twelfth century, they had lost their hold over the country, and political power had fallen into the hands of their vizirs, and by its second half, the country was ravaged by internecine struggles between rival groups, each trying to install its leader in the vizirate. This vulnerability attracted the attention of both the Zengids (named after Nur al-Din's father Zengi) and the Crusaders, who realized that Egypt could constitute a major key to the military and political supremacy in the region because of its extensive economic and human resources. Nur al-Din, being a protagonist of the Sunni revival in Syria, had the added interest of wanting to see Egypt brought back to the Sunni fold.

Salah al-Din in Egypt between the Vizirate and the Sultanate

In the years between 1164 and 1169, the two rivals, Zengids and Crusaders, allied with local power-brokers in order to establish a foothold in the country, fought over Egypt. Two rounds of fighting, in 1164 and 1167,

25 The historical background in this chapter is based primarily on a few Arabic primary sources. Chief among them are, Shihab al-Din Abu-Shama (1202-1266) *Kitab al-Rawdatayn fi-Akhbar al-Dawlatayn al-Nuriyya wa-l-Salahiyya*, ed. M.H.M. Ahmad (Cairo, 1962); Ibn al-Athir, 'Ali ibn Muhammad (1160-1232) *al-Kamil fi-l-Tarikh*, 12 vols., (Beirut, 1979) especially vols. 11-12; idem, *al-Tarikh al-Baher fi-l-Dawla al-'Atabikiyya fi-l-Musil*, A.Q. Tulaymat ed.(Cairo, 1963); Baha' al-Din ibn-Shaddad (1145-1239) *Al-Nawadir al-Sultaniyya wa-l-Mahasin al-Yusufiyya*, G. el-D. el-Shayyal ed. (Cairo, 1964); Jamal al-Din Ibn Wasil (d. 1297) *Mufarrij al-Kurub fi-Akhbar Bani Ayyub*, 5 vols., vol. 2 ed. G. el-D. el-Shayyal (Cairo, 1957). Modern historical works are: Nikita Elisséeff, *Nur ad-Din: un grand prince musulman de Syrie au temps des croisades (511-569 A. H./1118-1174)* 3 vols. (Damascus, 1967); R. Stephen Humphreys, *From Saladin to the Mongols The Ayyubids of Damascus 1193-1260* (Albany, 1977); P. M. Holt, *The Age of the Crusades, The Near East From the Eleventh Century to 1517* (London, 1986); M.C. Lyons and D.E.P. Jackson, *Saladin* (Cambridge, 1988).

ended up in stalemates. After the third military campaign sent by Nur al-Din to support the cause of local allies and to counter the Crusaders' interventions, his general Asad al-Din Shirkuh managed, in 1169, to impose himself on the Fatimid caliph al-'Adid as his vizir, which actually meant that he became the virtual ruler of the country. Shirkuh did not enjoy his position for long. He died two months after his nomination, and Salah al-Din al-Ayyubi, Shirkuh's nephew and one of his deputies, was appointed vizir in his place.

Salah al-Din's position was strange and precarious, for his new appointment joined two contradictory allegiances. He was simultaneously the highest official in an Isma'ili state and a general in the army of a Sunni ruler, Nur al-Din, who was pressuring him to reclaim Egypt for the orthodox, Sunni fold. Salah al-Din instead focused on consolidating his control over the country after having repelled a Crusader attack on Damietta, and crushed a revolt in Cairo. He was very careful to implement the changes needed to restore Egypt to Sunni Islam, partly because he did not want to damage his vulnerable position in Egypt where the remaining supporters of the deposed Isma'ili Fatimids still held some military power, and partly because he was trying to assert some measure of independence from his Syrian overlord.

It is to this period that his first fortification work in Cairo dates. In 1171, Ibn Abi-Tayy reports, Salah al-Din started repairing the walls around Fatimid Cairo (*al-Qahira*, the Victorious) built by Badr al-Jamali a century earlier, "because the greater part of them had been destroyed, and it had become an open road stopping neither entries nor departures."²⁶ He entrusted his lieutenant Baha' al-Din Qaraqush with the task, and the building of defenses seems to have become Qaraqush's specialization from then on.²⁷ This action should be interpreted as an immediate response to the

²⁶ Abu-Shama, *Kitab al-Rawdatayn fi-Akhbar al-Dawlatayn al-Nuriyya wa-l-Salahiyya*, 1: pt II: 488. The English text is quoted from K.A.C. Creswell, *Muslim Architecture of Egypt* (hereafter M.A.E.) (O.U.P.,1959) 2: 2.

²⁷ Ibn Wasil, *Mufarrij al-Kurub fi-Akhbar Bani Ayyub*, 2: 253, Maqrizi, *Al-Suluk li-Ma'rifat Duwal al-Muluk* (hereafter *Suluk*) ed. M.M. Zyada (Cairo, 1934) vol. 1, pt I: 126. Both speak about the charging of Qaraqush with the repairs of the fortification of Acre after it was conquered in 1189, who came with his men, animals, and equipment from Cairo after he entrusted the work on the walls of Cairo to an unnamed assistant.

danger of a possible Crusader attack. The same concern for the defenses of the state in which he was a vizir can be observed elsewhere in Egypt. Salah al-Din visited Alexandria at the same time and ordered its fortifications to be strengthened. Until then, he was nominally recognizing the ultimate authority of al-'Adid as caliph and ruler of Egypt, and was executing his duties as a second-in-command.

Salah al-Din was also trying to satisfy Nur al-Din's exigencies to restore Egypt to Sunnism and to join its army to that of Syria against the Crusaders. In keeping with his master's policies, he did force a few changes upon the symbols of the Isma'ili state, as in eliminating the Shiite phrase "*hay ala khayr al 'amal*," (praise to the good deeds) from the call to prayer.²⁸ But, contrary to his overlord's wishes, he had stopped short of restoring the sovereignty of the Abbasid caliphate to Egypt. At the end of 1171, just before the death of al-'Adid, Salah al-Din finally seemed ready for the last blow against the Fatimid Caliphate. On Friday September 17, 1171, he ordered al-'Adid's title to be replaced by the Abbasid's al-Mustadi' in the Friday sermon, effectively abolishing the Fatimid caliphate. Soon afterward, he confiscated the caliphal palaces, imprisoned the late caliph's family, and expelled their servants, slaves, and courtiers. He then distributed the spaces in the Eastern Palace among his amirs, who were mostly his kinsmen, gave the Lu'lu'a Pavilion (Manzarat al-Lu'lu'a) in the Western Palace to his father, and granted the rest of that palace to his brother al-Malik al-'Adil.²⁹ **(Fig 1. 1 Reconstructed Plan of Fatimid al-Qahira).**

Salah al-Din himself continued to live in Dar al-Wizara, the official residence of the Fatimid vizir in the northeastern district of Cairo. This structure seems to have been the center of political power in Egypt starting with the vizirate of al-Afdal, the son of Badr al-Jamali (1094-1121), who had built it for that purpose. It is important to stress the connection between the structure and the office, for although Salah al-Din was practically the ruler of Egypt, he was still, at least officially, only the vizir, and thus he resided in Dar al-Wizara. The titles he held then, including the honorifics "al-Malik" (the

28 Ibn Kathir (d. 1373), *Al-Bidaya wa-l-Nihaya fi-l-Tarikh*, 14 vols., (Cairo, 1932-39) 12:263.

29 Abu-Shama, *Kitab al-Rawdatayn*, vol.1: pt II: 506; Maqrizi, *Khitat*, 1:384.

King) and "al-Nasir" (the Helper in Victory), had been conferred on him by al-'Adid in the traditional custom of the Fatimid court established since the vizirate of Badr al-Jamali (1074-94).³⁰ They did not signify the rank of independent king, as explained by the biographer al-Subki when he discussed the difference between malik and sultan.³¹ It was not until later, and after much effort, that Salah al-Din became a true sultan.

Between 1171 and 1173, Salah al-Din continued to consolidate his hold on Egypt while pursuing a tactful policy of apparent loyalty to his master Nur al-Din in Damascus, who was growing suspicious of the intentions of his lieutenant in Egypt. Before the situation could deteriorate into an open clash, Nur al-Din died in 1173. Soon after, Salah al-Din led a campaign to Syria to neutralize or subdue all his possible Muslim competitors for its rule. After a few years of diplomacy and fighting, he became the uncontested leader both of Syria and of the anti-crusader movement. During that period he managed to escape two serious attempts against his life in Syria by the *fidawiyya* (members of an Isma'ili sect known in the West as the Assassins who were especially trained to assassinate their political opponents) in 1175 and 1176, and his deputies in Cairo suppressed three pro-Fatimid revolts. After these attempts, Abu-Shama tells us, Salah al-Din became very cautious and adopted tight security measures that included alterations to the structure of his tent and the addition of a wooden *lajuq* (small tower-like enclosure) in the middle

30 Ibn Shaddad, *Al-Nawadir al-Sultaniyya wa-l-Mahasin al-Yusufiyya*, 36. He explains that the titles were conferred by the Fatimid caliph upon anyone who took the vizirate in Egypt, even if by force. The same text was copied by Abu-Shama, *Kitab al-Rawdatayn fi-Akhhbar al-Dawlatayn al-Nuriyya wa-l-Salahiyya*, Abu Su'ud Afandi, ed. (Cairo, 1870) 1:130.

31 Taj al-Din al-Subki, *Tabaqat al-Shafi'iyya al-Kubra*, ed. M.M. al-Tanahi & A.F.M. al-Hulu (Cairo, 1966) 5: 315. Al-Subki, who lived in the thirteenth century, explains that the title sultan should not be given to any one person unless he is the ruler of two countries. The ruler of one country is a king (*malik*), and his allegiance to a sultan is determined by the power relation existing between them at the time. Al-Subki uses the example of Nur al-Din to prove his point. When Nur al-Din's name was proclaimed on the *minbars* of Egypt and Syria together, he became deserving of the title of sultan. For an assessment of the concept of sultan at that time see, R. Stephen Humphreys, *From Saladin to the Mongols*, Appendix A, The Ayyubid concept of the sultanate, 365-69.

of it in which he sat and slept, and to which he only admitted those of whose loyalty he was sure.³²

His grand and ambitious defensive plan in his capital was not begun until 1176, after he had returned to Cairo from Syria a true sultan, that is, after he became the suzerain of both Syria and Egypt.³³ He ordered the encircling of the two cities of Cairo and Fustat by one defensive wall, and the construction of a citadel on a spur of the Muqattam that would constitute the strong point in the fortifications of the two cities. This citadel, which was named the Qal'at al Jabal (Citadel of the Mountain), was almost equidistant from the planned northern and southern ends of the walls, and it lay astride the walls so that its eastern side would face outside the fortifications toward the desert. (**Fig 1. 2 Reconstruction of the Original Fortifications' Plan**).

The chroniclers of the period present a logical but cliché-like reason for the joining of the two cities within one enceinte. Salah al-Din had decided that "one enceinte is easier to defend than two, and it needs only one garrison."³⁴ However, the addition of a citadel to this plan, which was intended from the beginning as his residence, was not necessarily defensive. The explanation for its construction is to be sought rather in the circumstances of the period and in Salah al-Din's own career. Modern biographers of Salah al-Din and scholars who studied the Citadel advance a number of explanations. One is the repeated attacks on Salah al-Din and his constantly expressed fear of pro-Fatimid plots which would be easier to carry through in the city of al-Qahira. Another is the lack of space for his growing entourage after he had divided the palaces of the Fatimids among his amirs

32 Abu-Shama, *Kitab al-Rawdatayn*, vol.1: pt II: 659-60; Ibn Wasil, *Mufarrij al-Kurub*, 2: 45.

33 Maqrizi, *Suluk*, vol. 1, pt. 1:85; Ibn Wasil, *Mufarrij al-Kurub*, vol. 2, 52; Abu-Shama, *Kitab al-Rawdatayn*, 1: 268.

34 Abu-Shama, *Kitab al-Rawdatayn*, 1: pt. II: 687, quoting 'Imad al-Din al-Isfahani; Maqrizi, *Khitat*, 2: 201. Another chronicler, the famous Hanbali 'alem, Sibt ibn-al-Jawzi, who was very outspoken and critical of the rulers of his time, and a bit biased toward Nur al-Din, reported the building of the walls and the Citadel, but commenting on them by saying, "he spent a fortune and nobody benefited from it," see, Sibt ibn-al-Jawzi, *Mir'at al-Zaman fi-Tarikh al-A'yan*, vol. I, pt. I, events of 495-589 (Hayderabad, 1951) 338. The same statement is repeated in Ibn Taghri-Bardi, *al-Nujum al-Zahira fi-Muluk Misr wa-l-Qahira* (hereafter *Nujum*) 12 vols. (Cairo, 1930-56) 6: 78.

and left only Dar al-Wizara for himself.³⁵ A third reason is the influence of urban planning in contemporary Syria, where Salah al-Din had served in Nur al-Din's army for the first part of his career, and where fortified towns, both Frankish and Islamic, almost always had a citadel built in or adjacent to them.³⁶

The chroniclers of the period agree that, in building his citadel, Salah al-Din intended to move the seat of government from al-Qahira to the new structure.³⁷ In this, he may have been following the precedent set by previous rulers of Islamic Egypt who founded new dynasties and who built new settings for their rule. The most notable of whom are the first Fatimid caliph of Egypt al-Mu'izz li-Din Allah and, before him, Ahmad ibn Tulun, the amir sent by the Abbasids to govern the country but who eventually proclaimed himself a semi-independent ruler and established a dynasty. The former ordered his general Jawhar who conquered the country for him to build the royal walled city of al-Qahira in 969, and moved to it two years later from his old capital al-Mahdiyya in Ifriqiyya (present-day Tunisia). The latter had constructed his enclosed complex in 876-79 on a flat site west of the Muqattam hills, after he had been governing the country for twelve years.

It is very plausible that the awareness of these models lay behind Salah al-Din's change of plan from building new walls for his capital to creating a new fortified base for himself and his army. Furthermore, building the citadel must have been perceived by all contemporaries of Salah al-Din as a sign of independence and elevated status, from a vizir and a general to a sultan whose realm encompassed both Egypt and Syria, in addition to the Jezira, Yemen, and Barqa. But choosing a citadel instead of a walled royal complex similar to the Fatimid al-Qahira as the seat of the dynasty was new to

³⁵ Casanova, *Histoire et description de la citadelle du Caire*; and Creswell, "Archaeological Researches in the Citadel of Cairo," advances these two reasons for the building of the Citadel.

³⁶ An early proponent of this explanation was Stanley Lane-Poole in his *Saladin and the Fall of the Kingdom of Jerusalem* (London, 1906) 119-20.

³⁷ Maqrizi, *Khitat*, 2: 201; Qalqashandi *Subh al-A'sha*, 3: 370, where he reports a story to that effect. A keen observer, the traveler Ibn Jubayr of al-Andalus who visited Cairo in 1182, says explicitly that Salah al-Din intends to live in the Citadel when it will be completed, see, Ibn Jubayr, *Rihlat Ibn Jubayr* (Beirut, 1964) 25.

Islamic Egypt. The influence of the Syrian urban model is usually adduced to explain Salah al-Din's preference, but a wider historico-cultural interpretation is that the militarization of taste, which was manifest in the building of fortresses as princely residences in Syria and the Jezira (northern Iraq), had taken place in Egypt with the coming of rulers who began their careers as soldiers.³⁸

In the eleventh century, Anatolia, the Jezira, and Syria became parts of the loosely-ruled Seljukid empire. With the disintegration of the empire in the following century, several local dynasties sprung up in the cities of these regions. Many of the founding amirs of these dynasties were originally generals in Seljukid armies and *atabegs* (composite word used to designate the guardian of a prince and the regent of his appanage) of some junior Seljuk princes. They were all Turkish-speaking, Sunni Muslim military men and accomplished horsemen who depended on war and conquest to expand their territories, especially against the Byzantines in Anatolia and northern Syria, and the Crusaders on the Syrian coast. They all chose to live in citadels and fortresses that they had built in or adjacent to their capitals. Thus, Aleppo, Damascus, Mosul, and many smaller Anatolian and Jeziran cities had castles constructed in them during the period between the eleventh and twelfth centuries.³⁹

Salah al-Din was born in 1138 in the citadel of Takrit in Iraq, where his father was the castellan in the service of an administrator of the Seljuks. He spent the first years of his childhood in the citadel of Baalbek, where his father had become the governor appointed by Zengi, the father of Nur al-Din, who had been the ruler of Mosul and was expanding his domains into Syria. He grew up in Damascus and, after 1154, entered the service of Nur al-Din as a professional horseman along with his father and uncle Shirkuh, who had

38 A discussion along the same line is provided in Oleg Grabar's analysis of Alhambra as a fortress, Oleg Grabar, *The Alhambra* (Cambridge, MA, 1978) 103-15.

39 To my knowledge, these smaller castles have not been studied as manifestations of a single phenomenon although they were all constructed by rulers who sprung from the disintegrating Seljuk empire in the same period. Historical and topographic information on these castles has been recently made available through the publication of 'Izz al-Din ibn-Shaddad, *Al-A'laq al-Khatira fi-Zikr Umara' al-Sham wa-l-Jazira*, vol. 3, pt. 1 and 2, *Tarikh wa-Tobographiat al-Jazira al-Suriyya (History and Topography of the Jezira)* ed.,Y. 'Abbara (Damascus, 1978).

become amirs in the Zengid army of Damascus.⁴⁰ Nur al-Din lived in the Citadel of Damascus and conducted his military actions against the Crusaders from there. It is from Damascus, and most probably by order of Nur al-Din, that Salah al-Din was attached to at least the second and third Egyptian expeditions led by his uncle Shirkuh. In the second expedition, he distinguished himself in holding out in Alexandria with a small number of troops against the combined forces of the Franks and the Fatimids, before a truce could be concluded. Shortly after the triumph of the third expedition, Salah al-Din succeeded his uncle as the vizir of Egypt.

Salah al-Din's world view, values, and tastes had developed within a military frame of reference in which the coveted position was that of an amir, and the choice residence was a citadel. In Fatimid Egypt, the situation was different. For almost two hundred years, the country had been ruled by a caliph who was the ultimate temporal and religious authority, and who presided over a mixed class of military and civilian aristocrats: men of the sword (*rijal al-sayf*) and men of the pen (*rijal al-qalam*). The caliph, his entourage, his administrators, and his army lived in the walled city of al-Qahira, built for that purpose on order of al-Mu'izz by his general Jawhar on the eve of the Fatimid conquest of the country. Although separate from Fustat, the old capital where common people lived, and surrounded by walls, al-Qahira was not really a citadel. Its walls were more symbolic than functional: they demarcated the caliphal domain but could not have withstood a serious siege. Its major axes constituted the main commercial thoroughfares linking the inhabited areas north and south of it, and were open to traffic in the daytime. Moreover, we really do not know for sure if taking up residence in it was forbidden to merchants and artisans.⁴¹

Starting with the vizirate of Badr al-Jamali, men of the sword rose to dominance and excluded their civilian counterparts from the government.

⁴⁰ Abu-Shama, *Kitab al-Rawdatayn*, 1: pt. II: 535-39.

⁴¹ S.D. Goitein, "Cairo: An Islamic City in the Light of the Geniza Documents," in I.M. Lapidus ed., *Middle Eastern Cities* (Berkeley, 1969) 80-96. In the second half of the Fatimid period, the city was opened to people to reside in it, Maqrizi, *Khitat*, 1: 364, states that Badr al-Jamali permitted the commoners to live in al-Qahira after he arrived to the deserted, dilapidated city in 1073.

They curtailed the power of the Fatimid caliph, but they always recognized his higher spiritual and legal authority. Al-Afdal, the son and successor of Badr al-Jamali, established his headquarters at Dar al-Wizara northeast of the caliphal Eastern Palace inside the walls of al-Qahira, which his father had rebuilt. We know very little about the architecture of this structure, which was later partly destroyed by the Mamluk sultan Baybars al-Jashankir in 1309 to be replaced by his *khanqah*, but it apparently was separated from the palace by a street open to traffic.⁴² Although the vizir, who was the effective ruler of the country, resided in Dar al-Wizara, the caliphal palaces remained the symbolic center of political power until the end of the Fatimid caliphate.

Salah al-Din, after having abolished the Fatimid caliphate and ascended the throne as sultan, became the highest military and political authority in the country, though he continued to acknowledge the religious authority of the Abbasid caliph in Baghdad. He needed a new center of government other than Dar al-Wizara, which was associated with the deposed dynasty and with the position in its last days as second-in-charge. It was normal that a new seat of government would enhance his image as sultan and founder of a new regime. His choice to build a citadel reflects his military taste and his conformance to the established tradition to which he belonged.

Thus, Salah al-Din planned his citadel both for defense and as a residence worthy of his elevated status and as a refuge away from the population of Cairo, of whose loyalty he was not sure, and away from the Isma'ili *fidawiyya* who represented an imminent threat. The Citadel should therefore be viewed as a stronghold in the fortified walls of the two cities of Misr al-Fustat and Cairo, as a sign of the coming of a new regime whose roots and preferences were military, and as a real and symbolic barrier between the

⁴² Maqrizi, *Khitat*, 1: 438-9 gives a summary of the history of this structure. The street onto which it opened is probably the one known today as Jamaliyya Street, where the *khanqah* of Baybars al-Jashankir is located. Dar al-Wizara seems to have been directly connected to that thoroughfare for we have a story about al-Sultan al-'Aziz, Salah al-Din's son, observing the street from a belvedere (*manzara*), see, Ibn Wasil *Mufarrij al-Kurub*, 3:38.

rulers and the ruled.⁴³ The division of the Citadel to a northern enclosure where the royal army was stationed, and a southern one for the residence of the ruler is most probably a later Mamluk invention. This may be proved by tracing the earliest stages of the Citadel's building as they can be reconstructed from the topography of the Citadel today and from medieval written sources.

The Plan of Salah al-Din's Citadel

The Citadel today is clearly divided into two enclosures which are called, following Casanova, the northern enclosure and the southern enclosure. They are separated by a curtain wall, the Qulla Wall (named after the *qulla*, which was probably a high tower), which is almost 150 meters (450 feet) long. (Fig 1. 3 Plan of the Basic Division of the Citadel). It is generally accepted that the northern enclosure was built by Salah al-Din or his Ayyubid successors. Creswell proved that almost all of its outer walls, towers, and salients, with the exception of a short stretch in the northwest, were built during the Ayyubid period.⁴⁴ The southern enclosure's boundaries, which were constantly redefined until the time of Muhammad Ali, are believed to postdate Salah al-Din's work.⁴⁵ This leaves us with the question of a starting date for the southern enclosure as a distinct unit. Casanova thinks that it was started after the fortified northern wall was finished during the time of Salah al-Din.⁴⁶ Creswell believed that Salah al-Din's original enceinte extended into the southern enclosure's boundaries.⁴⁷ It may be that the Citadel was not divided into two enclosures in the original plan, and that the Qulla Wall was built after Salah al-Din's time, and even, most probably, after the Ayyubid

43 This view is strongly emphasized in David Ayalon, "The Muslim City and the Mamluk Military Aristocracy," *Proceedings of the Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities*, vol. II (1968) 311-29, especially 324-5.

44 Creswell, M.A.E., 2: 1-39. It is arguable whether the walls and towers were built by Salah al-Din's lieutenant Qaraqush, or later by al-'Adil, or his deputy and son al-Kamil. What is relevant here is that the whole of the northern enclosure was completed in the early Ayyubid period. Neil MacKenzie, *A Topographical Study of Cairo Under the Ayyubids*, 116-27, accepted Creswell's conclusions in their totality.

45 Creswell, M.A.E., 2: 6.

46 Casanova, *Histoire*, 575-6.

47 Creswell, M.A.E., 2: 39.

period. This point may be elucidated by analyzing the report of al-'Imad al-Isfahani on the circumference of Salah al-Din's Citadel, in addition to discussing the structures in the southern enclosure which undoubtedly belong to Salah al-Din's original scheme.⁴⁸

The Report of al-'Imad al-Isfahani on the Citadel

Both Casanova and Creswell used in their discussion of the Citadel's circumference an important report by al-'Imad al-Isfahani, the secretary of Salah al-Din, that indicates the circumference of the walls around the cities of Cairo and Fustat and the Citadel as established by the engineers of Salah al-Din.⁴⁹ The recorded circumference of the Citadel, including its towers and bastions, was 3,210 Hashimite cubits which, according to Casanova's and Creswell's calculations equals 2,103.76 meters (1 Hashimite cubit = 0.656 meter). Another source gives the length of the Hashimite cubit as 0.611 meter⁵⁰, which gives a total of 1945 meters. Casanova measured the present northern enclosure's perimeter and noticed that it is 300 meters less than al-Isfahani's reported periphery. Creswell proved that Casanova's measurements are erroneous because they included towers and sections built after Salah al-Din. He subtracted the composite circumference of these later towers from the total circumference of Casanova, and came up with the correct periphery of the present northern enclosure as almost 1400 meters. This leaves a total length of between 545 and 700 meters (depending on which figure one uses for the Hashimite cubit) of Salah al-Din's enceinte to be accounted for. This span should be looked for inside the actual southern enclosure which today measures 1300 meters, double the circumference of the remainder of Salah al-Din's enceinte.

48 The same question was raised but not solved in the major modern studies on the Citadel: Casanova, *Histoire* 585-88; Creswell, M.A.E., 2: 38-9; MacKenzie, *A Topographical Study of Cairo Under the Ayyubids*, 117-21.

49 Casanova, *Histoire* 535-7; Creswell, M.A.E., 2: 39. Al-'Imad's report was copied by most Arab chroniclers of the Ayyubid period. See, Abu-Shama, *Kitab al-Rawdatayn*, vol.1, pt. II: 687; Ibn Wasil, *Mufarrij al-Kurub*, 2: 52-3; Maqrizi, *Suluk*, 1: pt. 1: 84. Abu-Shama seems to be the original source from which the other chroniclers copied.

50 Dia' al-Din al-Rayes, *Al-Khiraj fi-l-Dawla al-Islamiyya* (Cairo, 1957) 276.

If we accepted al-'Imad al-Isfahani's report as accurate, the discrepancy between it and the present-day measurements means that the southern enclosure was extended after Salah al-Din's time, perhaps more than once. This is very difficult to verify, since both Ayyubid and Mamluk chroniclers who recorded the building activities inside the Citadel are silent on the subject of walls' extension at any particular time. With the absence of any archaeological evidence, or even any topographic map of the Citadel recording differences of levels, the reconstruction of the initial plan of the enceinte will depend on indirect clues and remain conjectural.

The Surviving Works Attributable to the Ayyubid Period

The Spiral Well (Bi'r al-Halazon)

The well is firmly dated to the time of Salah al-Din, for all the known Arabic sources credit it to Qaraqush, presumably as part of the Citadel's construction.⁵¹ It is also known as Joseph's Well (after the Biblical Prophet Joseph and not Salah al-Din as was demonstrated by Casanova). It is located outside the northern enclosure. If the present Qulla wall is in its original position, then the well is outside Qaraqush's fortifications. This would be strategically nonsensical as the well was the main source of water for the entire Citadel in the event of a siege.⁵²

51 The earliest sources we have, which ascribed the Well to Qaraqush are: Abu-Shama (quoting al-'Imad al-Isfahani), *Kitab al-Rawdatayn*, vol. 1, pt. II: 687; 'Abd al-Latif al-Baghdadi, *al-Ifada wa-l- I'tibar fi-l-Umur al-Mushahada wa-l-Hawadis al-Mu'ayana bi-Ard Misr* (Cairo, 1869) 36; Sawirus ibn al-Muqaffa', *History of the Patriarches of the Egyptian Church* (H.P.E.C), vol. 3, Pt. 2, A. Khater & O.H.E. Burmester eds. (Cairo, 1970) Arabic Text, 88; Ibn Wasil, *Mufarrij al-Kurub*, 2: 53-4.

52 It is generally assumed that during the Crusader period a citadel would have all its vital services, including its water supply, within its walls, although I have found a reference to a Crusader's citadel whose well was outside its main gate. The commentator reports that this Citadel, which he calls Exerogorgo (?) and which he locates at a four-day distance from Iznik, fell to the "Turks" (Muslims) in 1096. He notices also that the reason for its fall is the fact that the Muslims, when they besieged it, cut the defenders' water supply, thus forcing them to surrender. This text, dated to somewhere between 1085-1099, is written by an unknown crusader and was given the title, *Gesta Francorum et Aliorum Hireosolimitanorum*. The reference is from the Arabic translation by Hasan Habashi, *'A'mal al-Faranja wa-Hujjaj Bayt al-Maqdis* (Cairo, 1958) 20.

The well itself, a masterpiece of medieval engineering, (**Fig 1. 4 Section Through the Well**) is surrounded by a wall and flanked on the northeast by a polygonal tower believed by Creswell to be of Ottoman construction.⁵³ A similar tower stands south of the well, and is joined to the first tower by a curtain wall of late construction. (**Fig 1. 5 View of the Two Towers and the Wall between them**) The rubble lying around it makes it very difficult to retrace the original plan of the area, but this apparent fortification of the well, illogical as it seems today, suggests that it may have once formed the edge of the enceinte, and that the towers may be reconstructions of earlier ones or additions to them. It remains, however, that the Spiral Well must have been dug inside the enceinte from the start.

The Carved Path

This path winds up from the site of the present Katkhuda Gate (the possible placement of the original Mamluk Gate of the Chain, or Bab al-Silsila) until it meets with the wall of the southern enclosure near the present-day the Bab al-Wastani (Middle Gate). (**Fig 1. 6 Description de l'Égypte's Plan Showing the Path**). In the Mamluk period, it ended at the Bab al-Sirr (Secret Gate) which opened into the southern enclosure facing the Great Iwan, and was used only by the sultan and the state guests. The area's configuration today is very confusing, for it was here that Muhammad Ali ended his artificial ramp for the new carriage road leading to the Citadel's Gate in 1825. The part of the path that remains is similar in its execution to the work done in the northern enclosure where the spur upon which the Citadel was built is cut away from the Muqattam hill by a ditch obviously carved at the same time as the construction of the towers above it, since the cut rock follows the curves of the towers. (**Fig 1. 7 View of the Northern Enclosure's Walls**). The northern enclosure work is dated to the period between the reigns of Salah al-Din and al-Kamil, and this should be the same period in which the Carved Path was made. The Path does not seem to be connected to the passage that leads to the Mudarraaj Gate, which formed, at

53 Creswell, M.A.E., 2: 39.

least from the Mamluk period to the coming of Muhammad Ali, the major entrance to the Citadel for Mamluks and ordinary people.⁵⁴

The Mudarraġ Gate

It is one of the two original gates of the Citadel. As shown on the *Description de l'Égypte's* map, it was originally reached by a set of steps carved in the rock (*daraj*), hence its name (See Fig 1. 6). Some of these steps were uncovered in the excavation of 1988. The gate and the barbican (*bashura*) behind it are easily datable to the period of the Citadel's first building on stylistic ground and from the foundation inscription fixed in its center.⁵⁵ (Fig 1. 8 View of the Foundation Inscription) The shape of the arch above its opening, the joggled voussoirs of its interior arches, and the disposition of tripartite engaged columns on the sides of the three alcoves inside its *bashura* are all characteristic of Ayyubid architecture. The inscription provides the definitive date (579 A.H./1183-84 A.D.) for the whole structure, which seems to be the date of completion of this part of the Citadel only during Salah al-Din's reign.

The area between the Mudarraġ Gate and the Carved Path has undergone many reconstructions since the Ayyubid period. It is still clear, though, that the path turned originally to the south, while the Mudarraġ Gate was reached from the route called Sikkat al-Shurafa on the *Description de l'Égypte's* map through the stairs that curved toward the north (See Fig 1. 6). This divided access to the Citadel was planned: the stairs for the common people who have to dismount before ascending it,⁵⁶ and the Carved Path apparently reserved for the sultan and high-ranking officials and foreign envoys who would come up on their horses. Qalqashandi speaks of a secret gate (*bab sirr*) for the sultan and his visitors which is reached from the side of

54 Maqrizi, *Khitat*, 2: 204; Qalqashandi *Subh*, 3: 371.

55 Reproduced in Max Van Berchem, *Corpus Inscriptorium Arabicarum*(C.I.A.) *Egypt* (Cairo, 1894) 1: 80-85; Gaston Wiet, *Repertoire chronologique de l'épigraphie arabe* (R.C.E.A.) 9: 123-24; Casanova, *Histoire*, 569-71; N. Rabbat, *The Citadel of Cairo*, Aga Khan Trust for Culture (Geneva, 1989) inside cover.

56 'Abd al-Rahman al-Sakhawi recorded the difficulty in ascending these steps, ca. 1450, for two old jurists (*fuqaha'*) who used to visit the son of the Sultan in the Citadel, Sakhawi, *Kitab al-Tibr al-Masbuk fi-Zayl al-Suluk* (Cairo, 1896) 82.

Cairo through a "winding road contiguous to the Citadel's *bahri* (facing the *Bahr*, the Nile, or northwestern) wall."⁵⁷ This could not mean anything other than the Carved Path. It is true that Qalqashandi, who was writing in the fifteenth century, does not specify that the path was cut by the Ayyubids, but the carving method is characteristic of the Ayyubid period.

The Reconstruction of Salah al-Din's Walls:

Creswell had already suggested that the buried length of walls between the Muqattam Tower and the Well of Joseph's Tower may be early Ayyubid. This wall extends south from the Muqattam Tower, which marks the corner of the northern enclosure, for a length of 65 meters, and then curves sharply to the west for a very short distance. Recent excavations have uncovered a thick wall continuing west from where the standing wall ends, which bears resemblance in its thickness and its method of construction to the method of Salah al-Din's period. (Fig 1. 9 Excavated Wall between the Well and the Muqattam Tower). The wall disappears again in the rubble south of the Spiral Well area. This portion of the wall was still above ground in the eighteenth century for it is recorded on the map of the *Description de l'Égypte*.⁵⁸

On the western tip of the southern enclosure, Creswell pointed to the area of the tower of the double-headed eagle as possibly of Ayyubid origin (See Fig 1. 6). The section of the wall between the Mudarraaj Gate and the tower upon which the double-headed eagle (whose origin and provenance remain a mystery) is fixed is definitely Ayyubid. (Fig 1. 10 Wall between the New Gate and the Double-Headed Eagle Tower). It most probably belongs to the original plan of the enceinte, since the wall skirts the Ayyubid Carved Path. The wall may have been rebuilt, or only raised, in later times, but its location has remained fixed. The upper part of the wall where the bicephalic eagle is fixed is apparently new. This, however, is only an encasement of an older tower

⁵⁷ Qalqashandi, *Subh*, 3: 370.

⁵⁸ *Description de l'Égypte*, plate. 26 for the map of Cairo and the Citadel, see the wall behind the word "Sour al-Sarayeh" on the Citadel plan; *Wasf Misr, al-Lawhat, al-Dawla al-Haditha*, pl. 26.

which stood in the same spot. The tower was round and it can be reached today from underneath the Police Museum. From the inside, the outer walls of the later polygonal encasement can be seen. There is enough textual evidence to support attributing the round tower to al-Zahir Baybars. The contention is that the bicephalic eagle was fixed somewhere near its present location on the top of a wall that was built as part of the original scheme. In this position, the eagle could have been seen from the lower gate of the Citadel, which is now called Bab al-'Azab.⁵⁹

The present wall continues in a southwesterly direction until it arrives to the tower marked on the French map as the Maison de Joseph, which is known today as the Rafrat Tower (See Fig 1. 6). This entire section appears to have been part of the original Citadel's walls. The end of the initial wall in this area, which should be at or around the Rafrat Tower, is difficult to fix.

More difficult to fix, however, is the connection between the end of this wall and the Spiral Well area, which would account for the rest of the original enceinte. The missing wall must have constituted the southwestern border of the original Citadel. The actual southern enclosure's boundaries must have been the result of an expansion process that took place after the original citadel was completed, if we are to believe the account of al-'Imad al-Isfahani. Later Mamluk reports may help in clarifying the process by which this area of the Citadel was enlarged, but they do not speak of the original border of the enclosure before the building of the royal palaces on its western and southern edges in the fourteenth century.

The first clue to reconstruct the missing section of Salah al-Din's original walls, though indirect, may be sought in the description of the Citadel in Maqrizi's *Khitat* or in Qalqashandi's *Subh al-A'sha fi-Sina'a al-Insha*. Both reports were analyzed in previous studies of the Citadel, and both were copied with distortion from an earlier description of Ibn Fadl-Allah al-'Umari. Maqrizi's text is very unclear, mostly because of inadvertent errors in his copying from 'Umari. The text reads, "this is the configuration of the

⁵⁹ Evliya Çelebi, *Seyahatnamesi*, ed. Mümin Çevik (Istanbul, 1984) 9-10: 385-86. He is the first to report the eagle around 1670. He states that the eagle would be seen immediately upon passing inside the gate.

Citadel is that it is built on a high outcrop (*nashz*) surrounded by a stone wall with towers and bastions which ends at the Ablaq Palace. From there on it connects [*tattasilu*, in the feminine form, which can only mean the citadel] with the quarters of the sultan (*al-dur al-sultaniyya*) by an arrangement unusual in the towers of citadels."⁶⁰

Casanova struggles with this text, and realizes that what it implies is that the walls of the Citadel stopped at the Ablaq Palace: a fact that would have destroyed the unity of the Citadel and jeopardized its defensibility.⁶¹ He explains this discrepancy by assuming that Salah al-Din's initial plan did not include this area of the southern enclosure. Both Casanova and Creswell maintain that Salah al-Din's original enceinte was the northern enclosure, whose periphery was completed during his reign. Creswell further observes that the structural unity in the northern enclosure's initial fortifications as he reconstructed them implies that it was an integrated project. He considers the building of palaces next to the enceinte an afterthought and an addition to the original plan, which was carried out and finished during the reign of al-Kamil.⁶²

Al-'Umari's text, from which Maqrizi copied without attribution, is more coherent. He says, "it is surrounded by a stone wall with towers and bastions until it reaches [*yantahi*, in the masculine form thus referring to the Citadel's wall] the newly-built Ablaq Palace of al-Nasir Muhammad, then from there on it connects with the quarters of the sultan (*dur al-mulk*) in an arrangement which is not like the ways of towers of citadels."⁶³

In this text, the reference is obviously to two different treatments of the exterior walls of the Citadel as observed by a high-ranking administrator in the early fourteenth century, during the reign of al-Nasir Muhammad who built the Ablaq Palace and most other royal structures. The walls of the Citadel [i.e. the northern enclosure] are reinforced by towers and bastions and

60 Maqrizi, *Khitat*, 2:204; Creswell, M.A.E., 2: 6; Casanova, *Histoire*, 576. The translation here differs from those of Casanova and Creswell in the rendering of the word *tattasilu*, which they had translated as to be linked without paying attention to the feminine form.

61 Casanova, *Histoire*, 535-7.

62 Creswell, M.A.E., 2:38; the same view is adopted by MacKenzie, 127.

63 Shihab al-Din al-'Umari, *Masalik al-Absar fi-Mamalik al-Amsar*, 140-1.

they stop at the Ablaq Palace, which was built shortly before the writing of al-'Umari's compendium *Masalik al-Absar fi-Mamalik al-Amsa*, from which the report was taken. The last sentence in 'Umari's account, which occurs in both Maqrizi's and Qalqashandi's reports, is confusing and syntactically incorrect. It may be read to mean that from the Ablaq Palace to the quarters of the sultan, a distance which virtually covers the eastern and southern sides of the southern enclosure, the external walls are not built in the usual method of fortified walls.

This reading of the sentence gives two indications. First, the walls between the Ablaq Palace and the quarters of the sultan (i.e. the quarters where the sultan's wives and servants were lodged) were not fortified with towers and bastions. This remark still applies today to the walls in the eastern and southern sides of the southern enclosure, although most of them have definitely been rebuilt since the fourteenth century. Second, these two groups of structures were built on the edge of the Citadel proper, thus the walls of the enceinte abutted their sides. What this sentence may be referring to is that the royal palaces of the fourteenth century were built outside the original enceinte.

Creswell has already remarked that the spur upon which the Citadel is constructed does not underlie its whole area, and that some parts of the platform were artificially raised.⁶⁴ The sentence of al-'Umari is perhaps pointing to this fact by indicating that the palaces of the sultans in the southern enclosure were built against the edge of the spur which formed the foundation of the original enceinte. This hypothesis can be sustained by examining the composition of the Citadel's wall south of the Rafrat Tower.

On the map of the *Description de l'Égypte*, the Maison de Joseph (# 84, T-4) is the Rafrat Tower. The curtain wall curves in south of this tower, perhaps because the rock foundation underneath it has this shape, then curves out after running in a straight line for a distance of 35 meters (See Fig 1. 6). At this point the external façade of the Citadel is composed of two (and possibly three) superimposed halls. This is where the Ablaq Palace most probably stood, and the two halls, which formed its foundations, have raised

64 Creswell, "Archaeological Researches in the Citadel of Cairo," 98.

its ground to the level of the original enceinte. The area encompassed in the walls from the Ablaq Palace to the wall south of the Muqattam Tower is where the private quarters of the sultan (*al-dur al-sultaniyya*) were situated. That these palaces in the time of al-'Umari constituted the western and southern edges of the southern enclosure may signify that they were the last extension of the Citadel. We know that al-Nasir Muhammad modified the organization of the southern enclosure *in toto* over thirty years of his rule. The structures that he added may have been founded on ground that was artificially raised to the level of the spur and incorporated in the Citadel's enclosure.

It may be, then, that Salah al-Din's original wall ended where the Ablaq Palace began. The building of the Ablaq Palace may have obstructed the angle at which the wall originally turned west to join the area of the Spiral Well. If we connect the end of the wall running southeast from the Rafrat Tower on the map to the tower behind the Spiral Well, a distance of about 175 meters, we would have completed the periphery of a smaller, hypothetical enclosure within the southern enclosure. Starting from the Mudarraǵ Gate to the Rafrat Tower and then joining the wall south of the Muqattam Tower, the circumference of this reconstructed enclosure is between 600 and 700 meters, depending on what parts are included in the area of the Mudarraǵ Gate. This may be the lost section of the Citadel's initial perimeter as indicated by al-'Imad al-Isfahani. **(Fig 1. 11 Proposed Circumference of the Initial Enclosure of Salah al-Din Marked on the Map of the *Description de l'Égypte*).**

Accepting this scheme as the original plan of Salah al-Din's enceinte solves a few logistical problems. First, in this reconstruction the Spiral Well is within the walls' enclosure where it should be. Second, the actual site of the mosque of al-Nasir Muhammad is also incorporated in the proposed enceinte. This inclusion resolves the problem of fixing the location of the Citadel's original congregational mosque. Reports on the construction of the Mosque of al-Nasir Muhammad in 1318 specify that the building replaced an older congregational mosque in the same site.⁶⁵ This is presumably the

⁶⁵ Maqrizi, *Khitat*, 2:213 and 325.

mosque that existed there in the beginning of the reign of the Mamluk sultan Aybak in 1250, when, we are told, the Friday sermons at the Citadel and in Misr were pronounced in the name of the Ayyubid al-Nasir Yusuf after it was thought that his army had defeated the Mamluk army.⁶⁶ In the beginning of Baybars's reign, the newly-installed Abbasid caliph, al-Mustansir Billah II, twice gave a sermon at the Citadel's mosque on the occasion of his nomination in 1261.⁶⁷ A citadel has to have a congregational mosque, and it is difficult to imagine that the initial plan of Salah al-Din did not provide for one, especially that the site reportedly had several preexisting mosques, of which one could have been appropriated for that purpose.⁶⁸

Maqrizi says that twelve mosques had been on the site of the Citadel before it was built, all presumably were incorporated in it. Of these mosque only the location of the mosque of Abu-Mansur Qasta in the northern enclosure, also known as the mosque of Sidi Sarya, is known. This mosque, still in use today, was not the congregational mosque of the Citadel at any point. It was more of a burial chamber with a little mosque above it. It became a Friday mosque in the Ottoman period when Suleiman Pasha incorporated it in his new religious complex in 1528. We have no information concerning the other mosques in the sources, except for the mosque of Shaqiq al-Mulk (a Fatimid prince)⁶⁹ and that of al-Rudayni, whose location is marked on the map of the *Description de l'Égypte*.⁷⁰ Casanova's

66 Maqrizi, *Suluk*, vol.1, pt. 2, 374; Ibn Taghri-Bardi, *Nujum*, 7: 7; Badr al-Din al-'Ayni (d. 1451), *'iqd al-Juman fi-Tarikh Ahl al-Zaman* (hereafter, *'Iqd al-Juman*) M.M. Amin ed. (Cairo, 1987) 41.

67 Ibn 'Abd al-Zahir, *al-Rawd al-Zahir fi-Tarikh al-Malik al-Zahir*, (hereafter *al-Rawd al-Zahir*, Khuwaiter) A.A. al-Khuwaiter ed. (Riyadh, 1976) 101, he was an eyewitness. Maqrizi, *Khitat*, 2: 302, & *Suluk*, vol.1, pt. 2, 450, in the events of 659/1261 when the first Abbasid caliph in Cairo, al-Mustansir Billah II, was installed; Ibn Taghri-Bardi, *Nujum*, 7: 111; al-'Ayni, *'Iqd al-Juman*, 296-97.

68 Abu-Shama, *Kitab al-Rawdatayn*, 1: 268, copied by Ibn Wasil, *Mufarrij al-Kurub*, 2: 52. Both report the text of 'Imad al-Din, our main eyewitness of Salah al-Din's period. See also Maqrizi, *Khitat*, 2:202-3; Qalqashandi, *Subh*, 3: 370.

69 Ibn al-Furat, *Tarikh*, K. Zurayk ed. (Beirut, 1942) 7: 274, a clerk was imprisoned in that mosque in 1283.

70 Al-Rudayni, a legal authority (*faqih*) and tradition transmitter (*muhaddeth*) died around 1145. He had resided in the mosque of Sa'd al-Dawla, the largest preexisting mosque on the hill of the Citadel, before moving to a mosque nearby that was named after him, see, Ibn al-

research has suggested an order of alignment for the mosques reported by Maqrizi, but we can in no way identify any one of them as the congregational mosque of the original Citadel.⁷¹ Be that as it may, one thing is certain: there was a congregational mosque in the place of the Mosque of al-Nasir Muhammad, whether it was a Fatimid mosque included in the Citadel or a newly built one for the service of the Citadel's occupants. The suggested original plan of the Citadel allows for the inclusion of that mosque inside the enceinte.

In the original plan of Salah al-Din, the Citadel depended on, and complemented, a system of defense that was designed to encircle the urban areas of al-Qahira and Misr al-Fustat with walls reinforced with towers at the crucial points, such as the Burj al-Zafar (Victory Tower) in the northeast, and Maqs Tower (which no longer exists) in the northwest on the shore of the Nile. Certainly, the ramparts, towers, and the moat cut in the rock around the northern, eastern, and southern sides of Salah al-Din's Citadel provided adequate protection from any external attack coming from any of these directions. The proximity of the two cities, al-Qahira and Misr al-Fustat, facilitated the provisioning of the Citadel with goods and supplies. The bringing of water from the Nile, in addition to the digging of the Spiral Well inside the enceinte, were intended to allow the Citadel to withstand long sieges. But most of these arrangements hinged on the inclusion of the whole area of Cairo, Misr al-Fustat, and the empty space between the two urban centers, in one defensive system (See Fig 1. 2).

The first phase of the Citadel's building was accomplished by Qaraqush before the completion of the larger enceinte's walls, as the foundation

Zayyat, *al-Kawakib al-Sayyara fi-Tartib al-Ziyara*, second edition (Baghdad, 1950?) 302. Qalqashandi, *Subh*, 3: 370, reports a story from a lost *Khitat* book of Ibn 'Abd al-Zahir, *al-Rawda al-Bahiyya al-Zahira fi-Khitat al-Mu'izziyya al-Qahira*, which indicates that al-Rudayni's Mosque existed among the Sultan al-Kamil's private palaces. See also, Ibn Iyas, *Bada'i' al-Zuhur fi-Waqa'i' al-Duhur* (hereafter *Bada'i'*) M. Mustafa ed. (Cairo, 1982) vol. 1, pt. 2, 398. The map of the *Description de l'Égypte*, pl. 26, has a note that *zawiyat al-Burdayni*, which was then ruined, stands north of # 75, which is called the Bayt al-Tarazi (House of the Tailor).

⁷¹ Casanova, *Histoire* (Arabic translation), 62-67.

inscription of the Mudarraġ Gate dated 579 A.H./1183-84 A.D. indicates. At that early date, the Citadel's defenses could not have depended on the proximity of the city to provide some security from outside attack, because the area to the west of the Citadel was scarcely urbanized. In the late Fatimid and early Ayyubid period, especially after the shrinking of the eastern parts of Fustat,⁷² the area around the Citadel was mostly covered by either cemeteries or heaps of rubble (*kiman*). The Citadel could never have sustained an attack if its western flank had remained unfortified. The part of the wall uncovered south of the Muqattam Tower, the fortifications around the Spiral Well, the Carved Path and the strong walls flanking it, which are all Qaraqush's works, confirm that the western part of the Citadel did not go unfortified. The missing parts of the initial enceinte cannot be reconstructed, but they should have had some measure of fortification: towers, moat and the like along them, planned as such from the beginning.

Al-Kamil in Egypt. The sultanate Acquires its New Center

Salah al-Din had meant the Citadel to become the seat of the Ayyubid Sultanate he was patiently constructing, but he had died in 1193 before either plan could be achieved. Before his death, he had divided his domains among his sons, and gave minor provinces to his brother al-'Adil and other nephews. In Egypt, his successor was his son al-'Aziz, who, according to some chroniclers, had lived in the Citadel for a while during his father's lifetime.⁷³ Al-'Aziz, however, moved to Dar al-Wizara upon ascending the throne. It appears that the Citadel was not yet ready to become the seat of the sultanate,

⁷² The usual view of the desertion of Fustat as a result of the great fire set by Shawar in 1168 hides the more sinister reality of the decline of the city's eastern flanks from the time of the Great Calamity (*al-Shidda al-'Uzma*) (1065-72) during the reign of al-Mustansir. See, W. Kubiak, "The Burning of Misr al-Fustat in 1168. A Reconsideration of Historical Evidence," *Africana Bulletin* (1976) No. 25, 51-64.

⁷³ Qalqashandi, *Subh*, 3: 370; Maqrizi, *Khitat*, 1: 364 & 2: 203. The report of Abu-Shama implies that the Citadel was finished during Salah al-Din's time, presumably in the date stated in the inscription on *Bab al-Mudarraġ*, for he says, or more correctly al-'Imad says, that Qaraqush "could not have accomplished all the magnificent works in the Citadel (building the walls, cutting the stone for the glacis, digging the moat, narrowing the road to it, and digging the Spiral Well) in the few years it took, if it was not for the divine help." It is to be noted that this list does not comprise any structure built inside the Citadel.

probably because construction still occupied most of its sites. The official seat of the kingdom of Egypt remained in Dar al-Wizara throughout the reign of al-'Aziz (1193-98) and the short interludes of al-Afdal and al-Mansur (1198-99), and even in the early years of al-'Adil's reign.⁷⁴ Moreover, Dar al-Wizara was also referred to as Dar al-Sultan (the Seat of the Sultan) in the early Ayyubid period, probably to indicate its change of function from the palace of the vizir to that of the sultan.⁷⁵

In the period between Salah al-Din's death and the ascendancy to the sultanate of his brother al-'Adil in 1199, what work was done at the Citadel, if any, is totally unknown to us.⁷⁶ Salah al-Din's two sons, al-'Aziz and al-Afdal, and his grandson, al-Mansur, who succeeded one another within that short and troubled time, were too busy with the intrigues, shifts of allegiance, and struggles between Ayyubid family members to assume control over the vast territories of the sultanate. The sultanate did not regain a semblance of unity until al-'Adil eventually rose to supremacy over his nephews, and brought all of Egypt, Damascus, and the East (the name given at that period to Ayyubid territories in the Jezira and Anatolia) under his control. Aleppo was the only kingdom to remain in the hands of a son of Salah al-Din. Al-'Adil divided his domains among his sons and some other members of the Ayyubid clan, while he retained the title sultan and the overall sovereignty. In 1200, he assigned his viceroyship (*niyaba*) in Egypt, the most coveted, most prominent office, and the direct way to the sultanate, to his eldest son al-Kamil Muhammad.⁷⁷ Al-Kamil seems to have taken an immediate interest in completing the Citadel after his investment with the rule of Egypt. He also sponsored the building of several palatial structures there.

74 Dar al-Wizara is explicitly named the seat of the kingdom during al-'Aziz's rule, Ibn Wasil *Mufarrij al-Kurub*, 3:38, and in the period of al-Afdal, *ibid*, 93, and during the period of al-'Adil, whenever he was in Cairo, *ibid*, p. 162 (601/1203), p. 207 (607/1209), and p. 226 (611/1213).

75 Maqrizi, *Khitat*, 1: 438; unknown author, *History of the Patriarches of the Egyptian Church* (H.P.E.C.), vol. 4, Pt. 1, A. Khater & O.H.E. Burmester eds. (Cairo, 1974) Arabic Text, 7, 16.

76 We can deduce from the brief reports we have that the work in the Citadel was neglected by the sons of Salah al-Din, see, Maqrizi, *Khitat*, 2: 203; Ibn Wasil, *Mufarrij al-Kurub*, vol. 2, 54.

77 On the rise of al-'Adil see, R. Stephen Humphreys, *From Saladin to the Mongols*, 87-123; P.M. Holt, *The Age of the Crusades*, 60-3.

The construction work may have been initiated by al-'Adil, and then entrusted to al-Kamil, for the Citadel was not unknown to the former: he had already supervised its construction when he was Salah al-Din's deputy in Cairo, as specified in the foundation inscription. In 1206, at the same time as his son was completing the palaces of Cairo's Citadel, al-'Adil ordered the rebuilding and the refurbishing of the Citadel of Damascus. This project may have been started to repair the damages caused to the citadel by earthquakes in 1200 and 1201, but it was most probably meant to strengthen its obsolete defenses and reorganize its interiors.⁷⁸ The work on the fortifications of the Citadel of Damascus was completed between 1206 and 1217, as attested by the many inscriptions on the walls of several towers.

Although the Citadel of the Mountain is larger and more monumental than that of Damascus, its construction attracted less attention from Ayyubid chroniclers. Moreover, if we can assume that no inscriptions on the towers of the Citadel of the Mountain had been lost, then, unlike the Citadel of Damascus, it has no Ayyubid inscriptions commemorating the works in it, aside from the foundation inscription.⁷⁹ This may be the result of differences in construction finances and division of labor. In Damascus, the sources tell us, al-'Adil assigned to each of his senior amirs the responsibility for building a new tower in the Citadel, a strategy that not only saved him large sums of money, but was also a political act. In Damascus, al-'Adil had with him all the prominent, and at the same time dangerously fickle or ambitious, Salahi amirs, who were formerly attached to his brother Salah al-Din (hence the title) and who were not necessarily in favor of his sultanate. He needed to keep them busy, and he compelled some of them, through sponsoring and supervising the construction of the towers, to give material proofs of their

⁷⁸ Ibn Wasil, *Mufarrij al-Kurub*, 3: 182; al-Rihawi, *Qal'at Dimashq*, 65-71; the accounts of a Damascene chronicler, the same Abu-Shama (d. 665/1266) who wrote a detailed chronicle of Damascus during his lifetime in addition to his more known work on the reigns of Salah al-Din and Nur al-Din, consist the main source of information for the rebuilding of the Damascus Citadel, see, Abu-Shama, *Al-Zayl 'ala-l-Rawdatayn*, 'Izzat al'Attar ed. (Cairo, 1947).

⁷⁹ We know only one Ayyubid inscription in the Citadel of Cairo: the foundation inscription of Salah al-Din. The Citadel of Damascus has at least seven inscriptions of the Ayyubid period remaining, of which six carry the name and titles of al-'Adil. See, al-Rihawi, *Qal'at Dimashq*, 276-78.

loyalty and submission.⁸⁰ Egypt, on the other hand, was more secure and farther from the stage of the action; reliable amirs left with al-Kamil were either junior amirs or simply more trusted.

This method of distributing responsibilities would be encountered again and again under the Ayyubids and the Mamluks in both Syria and Egypt, with the single exception of the Citadel of the Mountain. There, construction was apparently sponsored directly by the sultan's treasury and labour was supplied by Frankish prisoners.⁸¹ Although forbidden by the Qur'an,⁸² the use of war captives in forced labor was widely practiced during that period. A Muslim eyewitness, Ibn Jubayr, notices that the workers in Salah al-Din's constructions in Cairo, including the Citadel and the walls, were Frankish prisoners. He also adds that " the foreign prisoners are engaged so that those of the Muslims who might have been used in this public work are relieved of it all."⁸³ Egyptian sources corroborate this report. Maqrizi records that when Salah al-Din summoned Qaraqush to Acre to rebuilt its fortifications in 583/1187, the latter came with his "tools, animals, and prisoners."⁸⁴ Frankish prisoners were also used during the reign of al-'Adil II (1238-40), when, we are told, a new group of captives were chained and put to work at the Citadel.⁸⁵ We do not have similar reports for the large Syrian state projects. It was probably safer to send Frankish prisoners to Cairo and use them in public works there, than in Syria where they could conceivably have been rescued by an attack from their coreligionists in the Latin kingdoms.

80 R. Stephen Humphreys, *From Saladin to the Mongols*, 148; also previously noted by Jean Sauvaget in his "La citadelle de Damas," in *Syria*, vol. 2 (1930) 59-90 & 216-41, p. 226.

81 The examples are numerous, al-Kamil used prisoners in al-Giza in 618/1219, (H.P.E.C.) vol. 4, pt. 1: 38-9; al-Zahir Baybars used them in the reconstruction of the Rawda Citadel, which will be discussed in the next chapter, and in other major public works, such as the digging of canals in Cairo and Alexandria.

82 Qur'an, 76: 8-9.

83 Ibn Jubayr, *Rihlat Ibn Jubayr*, 25.

84 Maqrizi, *Suluk*, vol. 1, pt. 1: 126. Also, Maqrizi, *Khitat*, 2: 204, says that fifty thousand prisoners [presumably Frankish] were employed in the construction of the Citadel.

85 (H.P.E.C.) vol. 4, pt. 2, 96; also, 107, where it is reported that al-Salih Najm al-Din Ayyub sent the Frankish prisoners to work in the construction of his new citadel in the Roda Island.

There is another difference between al-'Adil's involvement in the building of the two citadels, which may indicate the varying degree of independence he granted to his two sons who ruled in the two cities. Al-Mu'azzam, al-'Adil's second son, was the ruler of Damascus at the time of its Citadel's rebuilding. Yet, we find only al-'Adil's name mentioned in its inscriptions. In fact, al-Mu'azzam's name does not appear in any inscription in Damascus during the lifetime of his father.

Does this reflect a general characteristic of al-'Adil's rule, namely a direct intervention in the affairs of the kingdoms forming his sultanate, which he has formally delegated to his sons? Or is it only applicable to Damascus because the city was the center of political activities and the residence of al-'Adil during most of his sultanate? R. Stephen Humphreys, basing his conclusion on epigraphic evidence from Damascus and Jerusalem, argues that it was only in that city that al-'Adil was personally engaged in the urban administration, while al-Mu'azzam appears to have been involved in projects in other cities that belonged to the kingdom of Damascus, such as Jerusalem.⁸⁶ We possess no similar clues to assess the role of al-Kamil in the administration of the kingdom of Egypt, but it appears that he was more independent in local affairs than al-Mu'azzam was in the kingdom of Damascus. In finishing the construction of the Citadel of the Mountain, al-Kamil seems to have been the sole decision-maker, for all the sources attribute its completion to him. From the start of his viceroyship, al-Kamil resided in the Citadel, presumably in order to supervise its construction. The reports on al-'Adil's visits to Cairo during his sultanate show that the Citadel had been the domain of al-Kamil, whereas his father always used to reside in Dar al-Wizara and conduct the affairs of the sultanate from there.⁸⁷

The Completion of the Citadel's Construction

During the interim before the viceroyship of al-Kamil, the larger project of fortifying the two cities of Misr al-Fustat and al-Qahira that started

⁸⁶ R. Stephen Humphreys, *From Saladin to the Mongols*, 148-53.

⁸⁷ Ibn al-Dawadari, *Kanz al-Durar wa-Jami' al-Gurar*, vol. VII, *al-Durr al-Matlub fi Akhbar Bani-Ayyub*, S. A. F. 'Ashur ed. (Cairo, 1972) 155.

under Salah al-Din appears to have been abandoned. This was not done immediately after Salah al-Din's death, but we do not know for how long the work was carried on.⁸⁸ It was apparently stopped after the death of Qaraqush in 1200, for this is the implication of Maqrizi's report on the city walls.⁸⁹ Despite later attempts to finish the work, the greater enceinte of the two cities was never completed. Later Ayyubids were prompted in periods of danger to resume the fortifying of areas from which the expected attacks would come, but they would neglect it again when the crisis had passed.⁹⁰ Eventually, the whole plan was dropped, perhaps by al-Kamil after he realized its infeasibility and the excessive financial burden it would impose on his budget. The development of the Citadel was affected by this change of focus: the abandonment of the original plan made the achievement of maximum defensibility for the Citadel a more urgent and more crucial enterprise. It was no longer part of a larger defense system, but had to be fortified on its own, and provided with its necessary and complimentary services.

This concern may have been the impetus for the enlargement and fortification of Qaraqush's towers, and the addition of new square towers in the northern and southern ramparts which are attributed to the time of al-

88 It is confirmed by the sources that the work on the walls of the city was not stopped by the date affixed on top of *Bab al-Mudarraġ* as the *terminus ad quem* for Qaraqush's work in the Citadel, see, Abu-Shama, *Kitab al-Rawdatayn*, 1: pt 1: 687. Abu-Shama is quoting al-'Imad al-Isfahani, the main eyewitness of the Citadel's building. See also, Maqrizi, *Suluk*, vol.1, pt.1, 126, in the events of 584/1188.

89 Maqrizi, *Khitat*, 1:380. MacKenzie, p. 103, translates the section in Maqrizi as referring to the halting of the work after the death of Salah al-Din, although the sentence starts by describing the work of Qaraqush, and said it was stopped because of his death, which seems to be referring to Qaraqush. Another chronicler, Ibn Wasil, says clearly that the work was not accomplished until after the death of Salah al-Din, see, *Mufarrij al-Kurub*, vol. 2, 53.

90 Creswell, M.A.E., 2: 55-59; MacKenzie, *A Topographical Study of Cairo Under the Ayyubids*, uses Maqrizi's report and other sources to discuss the extent of work done in the period after Salah al-Din, 111-14. Maqrizi, *Suluk*, vol. 1, pt. 1: 116, states that al-Muzaffar, Salah al-Din's nephew and deputy for a short period in Egypt, ordered in 581/1185 the construction of stone walls around the city of Misr, as if it was a separate project from the general fortification plan, later, pt. 1: 181, he reports an attempt of al-Afdal in 596/1199 to build the ramparts of the city against al-'Adil's impending attack from Syria (English translation in MacKenzie, 112). The unknown author of (H.P.E.C.) vol. 4, who appears from the text to have been an eyewitness, reports many short-lived attempts at new fortifications during the rules of al-'Adil, al-Kamil, and al-'Adil II, vol. 4, pt. 1, 20, 27, pt. 2, 75, 81.

'Adil, during the viceroyship of al-Kamil.⁹¹ This undertaking can only be seen as a plan to improve the defenses of the Citadel against organized attacks and sieges from outside, for otherwise al-Kamil did not extend its boundaries.

The situation on the western border of the Citadel remained unchanged during al-Kamil's reign; there seems not to have been any substantial building activities in the adjacent areas after the death of Salah al-Din. The Citadel was, and remained for the first half century of its existence, essentially unconnected to either al-Qahira or Misr al-Fustat, and vulnerable to attacks from the west. When the defensive walls of the city's enceinte did not reach the edges of the Citadel as planned, and the whole project was dropped, the reinforcement of the part where al-Kamil and his family lived and his treasury was deposited, obviously became more urgent. Al-Kamil probably strengthened the defenses of the southern and western sectors as he did in the northern and eastern sides, but this cannot be verified today. Moreover, al-Kamil moved some markets and created a maydan (hippodrome) west of the Citadel to provide additional measures of defense and separation instead of the incomplete enceinte, in addition to establishing real and symbolic barriers between the residence of the ruler and the city's population.

In 1206, al-Kamil completed the construction of the palaces in the Citadel and moved the seat of the sultanate to it. We have scattered references to the structures he erected, but we know very little about their nomenclature, forms, or locations. Ibn Sa'id al-Maghribi reported that al-Kamil "built in the Citadel palaces worthy of the sultanate, moved his treasury and private quarters there from the Dar al-Wizara, and lived in it during his reign," (1218-38).⁹² He added in the same passage that "the house where the Fatimid family was imprisoned was also in the Citadel," without specifying who constructed it or when. Maqrizi and Qalqashandi gave the

⁹¹ The detailed study of the towers and their possible dates are provided by, Creswell, M.A.E., 2: 1-39; also, MacKenzie, *A Topographical Study of Cairo Under the Ayyubids*, 127.

⁹² Ibn Sa'id al-Maghribi, *Al-Mugharrrib fi-Hilly al-Maghrib, al-Nujum al-Zahira fi-Hilly Hadrat al-Qahira*, H. Nassar, ed. (Cairo, 1970) 390-91.

same account, and credited al-Kamil with another structure, the Burj al-Ahmar (Red Tower).⁹³

Casanova, and MacKenzie after him, ascribed several other structures inside the Citadel to al-Kamil: the Iwan (which was the main audience hall), the Qulla Gate and the Secret Gate, a mosque, dove-cotes (*abraġ al-hamam*), the Hall of the Vizir (*Qa'a al-Sahib*), and a royal library (*khizanat al-kutub*).⁹⁴ There are no direct references attributing any of these structures to al-Kamil, and some of Casanova's conjectures can be interpreted in different ways. He seems to have based his reconstruction on the assumption that those structures mentioned in the sources before the rule of al-Zahir Baybars (1260-77) are to be credited to al-Kamil, although a quarter of a century separates the two reigns. Many structures could have been the work of al-Kamil's sons, or the early Mamluk sultans before Baybars. References exist to the continuation of unspecified work at the Citadel during the reign of al-Kamil's immediate successor, al-'Adil II,⁹⁵ although no specific structure is ascribed to him. Casanova's arguments only validate the attribution of the dove-cotes, the mosque, and the royal library to al-Kamil. A source Casanova did not know supports his contention concerning the crediting of the first Iwan at the Citadel to al-Kamil. Baybars al-Mansuri, writing in the early fourteenth century, calls the Iwan al-Kabir al-Kamili (of al-Kamil) in the reporting of the ceremony of recognition of the second Abbasid caliph, al-Hakim, at the Citadel in 1261, which could only mean that the structure was constructed by al-Kamil.⁹⁶

There is, however, another structure that should be added to the list of al-Kamil's constructions at the Citadel. This is a hall of justice (*dar al-'adl*),

93 Qalqashandi, *Subh*, 3: 370; Maqrizi, *Khitat*, 2: 204; Idem, *Suluk*, vol. 1, pt. 1, 202. They both copied their information from a lost book written by Ibn 'Abd-al-Zahir (620/1223-692/1292), *al-Rawda al-Bahiyya al-Zahira fi-Khitat al-Mu'izziyya al-Qahira*.

94 Casanova, *Histoire*, 592-99; MacKenzie, *A Topographical Study of Cairo Under the Ayyubids*, 127-34.

95 (H.P.E.C.) vol. 4, pt. 2: 96 & 119.

96 Casanova, *Histoire*, 592, (Arabic Translation) 89, uses an unspecified Coptic source to claim that the word Hiban used there is the same as iwan and should be considered a direct reference to al-Kamil's building. Baybars al-Mansuri in *Zubdat al-Fikra fi-Tarikh al-Hijra*, quoted in, al-'Ayni, *Iqd al-Juman*, 1: 348.

which is called in the sources the Dar al-'Adl al-Kamiliyya.⁹⁷ This structure seems to have been located in the narrow end of the northern enclosure where it meets the southern enclosure today. It was probably the first stage in the formation of the Citadel's administrative section since we know that, in the Mamluk period, this area contained many other administrative buildings such as the Viceregal Palace (*Dar al-Niyaba*) and the Hall of the Vizir (*Qa'a al-Sahib*). There is no mention of Dar al-'Adl al-Kamiliyya having been used as a palace of justice during al-Kamil's period, although the name implies that function. During the reign of al-Salih Najm al-Din Ayyub, al-Kamil's second son who wrested the throne from al-'Adil II, the structure appears to have been used as it was intended. This is deduced from a vague account stating that the sultan al-Salih delegated the authority to hold the sessions of justice in a specific but unnamed place to a triad of military men (*jund*), two of them must have lived in the Citadel. The first was the judge of the army (*qadi al-'askar*) and the second the preacher (*khatib*) of the Citadel's mosque, both must have resided in the Citadel in order to attend to their work.⁹⁸ The structure was apparently neglected after al-Salih's death for the sessions of justice were held in his madrasas in the Fatimid al-Qahira rather than at the Citadel during the rule of the first Mamluk Sultan al-Mu'izz Aybak (1250-57).⁹⁹ The Dar al-'Adl al-Kamiliyya seems to have been turned into a residence after the end of the Ayyubid period, for the references we have, which are all from Mamluk sources, speak of it as the living quarters of an amir who had official duties that required his permanent presence in the Citadel.¹⁰⁰

Al-Kamil also ordered the relocation of the markets of horses, donkeys, and camels to the vicinity of the Citadel, in the Rumayla, which became known as the Suq al-Khayl (Horse Market). He also established, in

97 Shihab al-Din Ahmad al-Nuwayri (d. 1331), *Nihayat al-Irb fi-Funun al-Adab*, Ms, 549 ma'arif 'amma, 32 vols, vol. 30, fol. 63, where he is reporting the disobedience of an amir who barricaded himself in the old Dar al-'Adl of al-Kamil (*Dar al-'Adl al-Kamiliyya*), which was then his residence in the Citadel.

98 (H.P.E.C.) vol. 4, pt. 2: 107; Ibn Wasil, *Mufarrij al-Kurub*, 5: 242, events of 637/1239.

99 Maqrizi, *Khitat*, 2: 208.

100 Nuwayri, *Nihayat al-Irb fi-Funun al-Adab*, vol. 31, fol. 99, another amir was living in Dar al-'Adl of al-Kamil in the year 1330.

1213, a maydan south of the Rumayla for military parades and training, almost on the same site of the parade ground built by Ibn Tulun more than three centuries earlier. For its upkeep, he built next to it three tanks to store water brought from the Nile.¹⁰¹ The reports on the establishment of the maydan and the Suq al-Khayl justifiably led Casanova, and after him MacKenzie, to credit al-Kamil with the building of the royal stables under the Citadel, probably next to the maydan, to benefit from its use as pasture for the horses. Contemporary chroniclers do not mention the stables as part of al-Kamil's additions, but it stands to reason that a sultan whose army depended totally on mounted troops and who chose to locate the seat of his sultanate in a citadel with a maydan next to it would also provide this citadel with stables for his horses and those of his guards and the army.

Thus, al-Kamil's plan fixed the Citadel's general configuration for centuries to come; the northern part became the fortified military enclosure; the southern part included the ceremonial and private quarters of the sultan; the area at the foot of the hill to the west of the southern part of the Citadel was devoted to various equestrian activities. It is very difficult to determine the location of al-Kamil's palaces on the present plan of the Citadel, but if the suggested circumference of Salah al-Din's Citadel is correct, then they should have been clustered in the northwestern part of the southern enclosure overlooking the Suq al-Khayl.

The Significance of the Citadel

At some unspecified time, al-Kamil is said to have contemplated the idea of transferring his treasury to the Citadel of Kerak in Transjordan because of its isolated and rugged location which lent it more security. He then decided to stay with family and treasury in the Citadel of the Mountain, after having strengthened its defenses. This concern for impregnability is often encountered at a time when princes were insecure in their positions

101 Qalqashandi, *Subh*, 3: 374; Maqrizi, *Khitat*, 2: 228. (H.P.E.C.) vol. 4, pt.1: 50, refers to the maydan next to the Citadel in conjunction with the celebrations after the circumcision of al-'Adil II in 624/1226. Ibn Sa'id al-Maghribi says that the land under the Citadel is dusty and has no green areas, which shows that he saw between 1206, when al-Kamil moved to the Citadel and 1213, the date given for the establishment of the maydan.

and fearful of contenders who might be covet their territories or their wealth. Even when external dangers were largely curtailed, security and defensibility remained the major elements in the choice of residence for the many competing Ayyubid princes and their dependent amirs in Syria and Egypt. A citadel provided protection for their families and belongings and refuge in dire times. Al-Kamil is reported to have kissed the threshold of his Citadel and said, "I saw my soul in my Citadel," which roughly means "I regained my peace of mind in my Citadel," upon coming back from a particularly risky campaign in Syria.¹⁰²

Furthermore, citadels came to represent to these princes the physical manifestation of their sovereignty, with the inclusion of palaces, administrative buildings, barracks, and stables inside them. All the little principalities that dotted the map of medieval Syria and Jezira had one or more citadels in their territories that functioned as the seat of their government and the residence of their rulers or their appointees. In this respect, the Cairo's Citadel did not differ from any Syrian citadel in the twelfth century, except in size and complexity of its functions because of the large region administered from it. Two contemporary Ayyubid citadels, the Citadel of Damascus and that of Aleppo, had a comparable volume of functions as seats of government, but not the same importance nor the same meaning.

Egypt had no citadels outside Cairo, save for the series of fortresses built or refurbished by Salah al-Din on the borders between the country and the Crusader Kingdom in Palestine, such as the Qal'at al-Jundi (Citadel of the Soldier) at the edge of the Sinai. Such citadels were solely military structures and had no independent amir, or even an appointed representative of the sultan, living in them and administering a region from them. All Egypt was ruled from the Citadel of the Mountain, with only minor amirs selected as governors (*walis*) to carry out the decisions of the center in the provinces. The implementation of this governing structure in Egypt may have been because the country was perceived by its people and their rulers alike as a clearly delimited entity with fixed natural boundaries which could not be

102 Sibṭ ibn al-Jawzī, *Mir'at al-Zaman fi-Tarikh al-A'yan*, vol. I, pt.I, 700.

subdivided into smaller entities.¹⁰³ This conception amplified the Citadel of the Mountain's significance as the center of political power in Egypt, where all the decisions concerning the governing of the country were taken. It also resulted in an added complexity to the functions that the Citadel was intended to fulfil in comparison to those expected from the Syrian citadels.

In the few years after al-'Adil's death in 1218, al-Kamil managed through a combination of alliances, campaigns, and diplomacy to assert himself as the supreme monarch over his brothers and cousins in Syria and Jezira, effectively deserving the title and prerogative of sultan. He organized his sultanate following the example of his father and his uncle before him: a confederation of Syro-Jeziran principalities ruled by family members and dependents, over whom he could exercise a substantial control from his capital in Egypt. This hierarchical structure headed by the sultan considerably enhanced the importance of the Citadel of the Mountain as the place where decisions were made concerning the whole Ayyubid realm. The paramount role of the sultan and his immediate entourage elevated the Citadel to the political, administrative, military, and symbolic center first of the Ayyubid, then of the Mamluk, sultanate. It thus fulfilled the initial plan of Salah al-Din thirty years after his death. From then on, the Citadel remained, with very short interruptions, the residence of the sultan and his court throughout the Ayyubid and Mamluk period.

The Citadel Under al-Salih Najm al-Din Ayyub

Although al-Salih Najm al-Din Ayyub (1240-1249) did very little regarding the architectural development of the Citadel, the circumstances of his rule, and the ways in which he dealt with them deeply affected its value for subsequent sultans. The sequence of events between al-Kamil's death and

103 This idea of a specific character of Egypt as an environmentally-defined entity, which resulted in an early development of national affinity in that land before the evolution of the whole concept in the modern time is the theme of many historical and analytical studies. See for example, 'Afaf Lutfi al-Sayyid Marsot, *A Short History of Modern Egypt* (Cambridge, 1986). A lengthy study of the character of Egypt, is Jamal Hamdan, *Shakhsiyyat Masr, Dirasa fi 'Abqariyat al-Makan* (Cairo, 1970). This point is especially discussed in the Introduction and the first two chapters.

al-Salih's seizure of control in Egypt and southern Syria led to his seeking more security in building a new, more isolated residence, thus reducing the role of the Citadel as the sultanate's political center in the short run. He also established a new military hierarchy to supplant the existing one, and staffed its commanding offices with his trusted mamluks. This development heralded the dying of a dynasty and the ushering in of a new period in which the rulers became closely identified with the Citadel of the Mountain.

Al-'Adil II had succeeded his father al-Kamil on the throne of Egypt in 1238, but was unable to contain the ambitions of his older brother al-Salih. In the following two years, al-Salih, originally invested by his father with the kingdom of the East (northeastern Syria and parts of the Jezira), managed to wrest the power from his brother and install himself as the new sultan in Cairo in 1240.¹⁰⁴ He added Damascus to his possessions in 1245 after a long and bloody series of conspiracies, campaigns, and betrayals. This development may seem at first to follow the expected path of the rise of an Ayyubid prince above the other ruling members of his family. But the climb of al-Salih caused an unusually vicious struggle among Ayyubid princes that destroyed the solidarity which had characterized the family's history. Consequently, the last vestiges of the system of collective sovereignty – regional ruling princes recognizing the ultimate authority of a sultan – that had been adopted by all the preceding great Ayyubid sultans – Salah al-Din, al-'Adil, and al-Kamil – withered away.

Al-Salih's character had as important a role in the turn of events as did the circumstances of the period. The sources present an image of al-Salih as an overly ambitious and very suspicious person, who was rendered even more embittered and alienated from his family by circumstances. He was noted for his heavy reliance on the Khawarizmian mercenaries in the beginning of his move toward the sultan's throne, and, afterward, on his purchased and trained Turkish guards, the mamluks, whose number by far surpassed the mamluks of his peers or predecessors. During the course of his reign, they became his most trusted soldiers, used to counter the plots against his person and his throne. He kept them apart from the rest of the army and

104 R. Stephen Humphreys, *From Saladin to the Mongols*, 264.

showered them with all kinds of favors. The political power that they acquired during al-Salih's reign, and the limiting of their loyalties to his person rather than his family, eventually induced them to drop their allegiance to the Ayyubid house after the death of their master, and to seize the government for themselves.

The Building of the Qal'at al-Bahr (Citadel of the Nile)

It is against this background that al-Salih's decision to build another citadel in Cairo may be best understood. In 1240, less than a year after he had ascended the throne of Egypt, he started buying properties in Misr Island (known today as Roda Island), in the middle of the Nile opposite the city of Misr al-Fustat. He then ordered the demolition of these properties to clear the ground for the building of a new citadel. The construction work lasted for three years, at the end of which the citadel was near enough to completion to allow al-Salih to move the seat of the sultanate in. In this context, the seat of the sultanate was not more than the place where the sultan resided, for its bureaucratic apparatus appears to have remained at the Citadel of the Mountain. Al-Salih Najm al-Din Ayyub, in choosing the site for his new residence, was apparently seeking seclusion from the city's population and even more from the old regime's amirs and the multitude of troops that resided in the Citadel of the Mountain, of whose loyalty he was suspicious.

Another possible reason for his move is reminiscent of the explanation usually given for the building of Samarra by the Abbasid caliph al-Mu'tasim in 836.¹⁰⁵ Al-Mu'tasim was forced to build his new town to house his Turkish guards and their families because the other regiments stationed in Baghdad and its citizens resisted the presence of the Turks in their midst. In Cairo, al-Salih was not obliged by a popular reaction to relocate his mamluks, but Mamluk sources refer to trouble caused by the mamluks in Cairo as a reason for his decision to build an isolated residence for them.¹⁰⁶ The population and non-mamluk army divisions did not organize any opposition, but

¹⁰⁵ David Ayalon, "The Muslim City and the Mamluk Military Aristocracy," 315-19.

¹⁰⁶ Ibn Iyas, *Bada'i' al-Zuhur*, vol. 1, pt. 1, 269.

resentment of the fast rise of al-Salih's Turkish mamluks was mounting and feelings were running high.

The Nile already presented a formidable barrier between the new citadel and the city, which al-Salih furthered by widening the rivulet that separated the island from the city shore and by shifting its inlet so that water could run in it year-round instead of only in the flood season. This natural obstacle was then complemented by a defensive wall reinforced by towers. Their number varies in the sources from seventeen to sixty, which is in any case a large number for the citadel's size and denotes a concern for defensibility. However, from conflating the accounts it becomes clear that the majority of structures inside the new citadel and along its walls, including the towers which overlooked the Nile, were either residential or pleasure constructions. The sources mention belvederes (*manazir*, singular *manzara*), porches (*maq'a'id* singular *maq'ad*), and residential halls.¹⁰⁷

Al-Salih Najm al-Din Ayyub, his family and servants, and his select *garde du corps*, whose number was estimated at one thousand, lived in the Citadel of the Nile for the remainder of his reign. The bulk of the Egyptian army apparently remained stationed at the Citadel of the Mountain, whose architectural development al-Salih does not appear to have totally neglected. At the height of his building at the Roda Island, he sponsored a new hall at the Citadel of the Mountain, the *Qa'a al-Salhiyya*, which remained one of its most monumental formal halls long after his death.¹⁰⁸ The location of this *qa'a* is unknown, but it should have been in the northern tip of the present southern enclosure. It could not have been in the central section, because it was reportedly used as a prison for an important amir in the Mamluk period

107 (H.P.E.C.) vol. 4, pt. 2, 117, specifies that the western side of the Citadel had *manazir* for the sultan and *maq'a'id* from the (old location) of the St. Jacob Church to the end of the walls. Maqrizi, *Khitat*, 2: 185, speaks about *manazir* in the Citadel.

108 Maqrizi, *Khitat*, 2: 212, states that *al-Qa'a al-Salhiyya* was the residence of the kings until it burned down in 1285; Khalil ibn Shahin al-Zahiri, *Zubdat Kashf al-Mamalik wa-Bayan al-Turuq wa-l-Masalik*, (hereafter *Zubdat*) Paul Ravaisse ed. (Paris, 1894) 86, the author, who was writing in the middle of the fifteenth century, specifies that the *Salhiyya* (the hall) was the setting for the sultan before the building of the Ablaq Palace (in 1311).

which would mean that it could not have been in direct communication with the sultan's private apartments situated there.¹⁰⁹

The Citadel of the Mountain appears to have remained functional, and even retained some of its symbolic significance. Al-Salih's move out must have affected its prestige, especially when he transferred the dockyards (*sina'a*) for various types of warships from Misr al-Fustat to the Roda Island and ordered his amirs to move their residences to the Giza shore opposite his new citadel, effectively stressing its primacy as the center of power.¹¹⁰ A strange symbolic rivalry must have ensued between the two citadels during that period. We notice from the sources that both citadels were considered centers of government; every time al-Salih's army succeeded in a campaign both were decorated for the victory celebration.¹¹¹

Although the Citadel of Roda had almost entirely disappeared less than a century after its building, its memory survived in the name of al-Salih's mamluks. This regiment of Salih's mamluks, mostly of Kipchak Turkish origin, were eventually called the Bahri mamluks, a name deriving either from their place of residence, the Qal'at al-Bahr, for *bahr*, which means sea in Arabic, is the name for the Nile in Egyptian parlance,¹¹² or it reflects another aspect of the Citadel's purpose which is only alluded to in Mamluk sources. The transfer of the dockyards to the island and the assembly of a standing fleet around the Roda Citadel, both decreed by al-Salih, were measures presumably taken to face up to a possible Frankish sea attack on the Delta cities.¹¹³ Ibn Iyas adds that al-Salih intended his Mamluks in the Citadel to staff the warships which would be sent in a counterattack.¹¹⁴ If this were the duty expected of the mamluks, then calling them the seamen (*al-Bahriyya*) was appropriate.

109 Al-Nuwayri, *Nihayat al-Irb fi-Funun al-Adab*, vol. 29, fol. 95; Maqrizi, *Suluk*, 1: pt. 3, 835. The event took place in 1297, thirteen years after the reported burning down of the same qa'a, which means that the qa'a was restored after the incident but not to its original function.

110 (H.P.E.C.) vol. 4, pt. 2, 137.

111 Ibn Wasil, *Mufarrij al-Kurub fi-Akhbar Bani Ayyub*, 5:339.

112 Maqrizi, *Suluk*, 1: pt. 2, 340, says that al-Salih named the Mamluks he housed in the new citadel, *al-Bahriyya*, because the citadel overlooked the Nile.

113 Maqrizi, *Khitat*, 2: 183.

114 Ibn Iyas, *Bada'i'*, vol. 1, pt. 1, 270.

These mamluks of the Nile were destined to become the real masters of the Citadel of the Mountain. Shortly after the death of al-Salih in 1249, they killed his son Turan-Shah, who had arrived from the Jezira to assume the rule and to lead the Egyptian army in the counterattack against the crusaders of Louis IX in Damietta. They then wrested the power from the Ayyubid house and established a sultanate that was to last for two and a half centuries (1250-1517). During this long period, their sultanate was ruled from the Citadel of the Mountain, just as Salah al-Din had intended.

Chapter Two.

The Citadel in the Early Mamluk Period (1250-1277)

The assassination of Turan-Shah in 1250 marked the end of the Ayyubid sultanate in Egypt, but it is not generally considered the starting point of the Mamluk period.¹¹⁵ The Salihi amirs who contrived to eliminate Turan-Shah did not seem to have any clear plan to rule. It took them several trials before they could solve the problem of governing without a legitimizing Ayyubid figurehead. In the meantime, Syria remained controlled by its Ayyubid princes for another decade. The most prominent of those princes, al-Nasir Yusuf (the great grandson and namesake of Salah al-Din) led many futile attempts to bring Egypt back to the Ayyubid fold. The Mamluks managed to hold to their recently-gained rule of Egypt, but it was not until the Mongol invasion of Syria in 1260, and the fall of the already decaying Ayyubid principalities there that they had their chance to prove their military and political superiority by defeating the Mongols, and to extend their hegemony to almost all the Ayyubid territories.

When the Salihi amirs convened to choose a sovereign after the killing of Turan-Shah, they settled on Shajar al-Durr, who was, like them, a

¹¹⁵ The historical background in this chapter, and the next, is based on several Arabic primary sources and modern scholarly works. General information, and data on the first decade of the Mamluk period can be gleaned from, Maqrizi, *Suluk*, 1: pt. 2, Ibn Taghri-Bardi, *Nujum*, vol. 7. The period of Baybars is covered by his two semi-official chroniclers Ibn 'Abd al-Zahir and 'Izz al-Din Muhammad ibn-Shaddad, and its last five years are reported in details in Ibn al-Furat, *Tarikh*, vol. 8, 1-113. Ibn 'Abd al-Zahir's *al-Rawd al-Zahir fi-Tarikh al-Malik al-Zahir*, was edited twice recently. First by S.F. Sadeque, under the title, *Baybars I of Egypt* (Dakka, 1956) with commentaries and English translation, but the manuscript she had used, that of the British Museum, is an incomplete one and breaks off in the events of the year 663. 'A.A. al-Khuwaiter edited a complete manuscript and published it under the same title (Riyadh, 1976). Khuwaiter also published a biography of Baybars with an analysis of his reign, *Baybars the First: His Endeavours and Achievements* (London, 1978). 'Izz al-Din Muhammad ibn-Shaddad, *Tarikh al-Malik al-Zahir*, is the most important source for Baybars' architectural works, but covers only the later period of Baybars' reign. The most recent and most comprehensive source on the history of the early Mamluk sultanate in the English language is, Robert Irwin, *The Middle East in the Middle Ages, The Early Mamluk Sultanate 1250-1382* (Carbondale, 1986). In addition to Irwin's analysis, this chapter relies primarily on Dorothea Krawulsky, "al-Intaj al-Thaqafi wa-Shar'iyat al-Sulta" in her introduction to al-'Umari, *Masalik al-Absar fi-Mamalik al-Amsar*, 15-44; David Ayalon, "Le régiment Bahriya dans l'armée Mamelouke," *REI* (1952) 133-41; P.M.Holt, "The Structure of Government in the Mamluk Sultanate," in P.M. Holt ed., *The Eastern Mediterranean Lands in the Period of the Crusades* (Warminster, 1977) 44-61; R.S. Humphreys, "The Emergence of the Mamluk Army," *Studia Islamica*, vol. 45 (1977) 67-99, vol. 46 (1977) 147-82. An important introduction to the Mamluk period in Arabic is, Sa'id A.F. 'Ashur, *al-'Asr al-Mamaliki fi-Misr wa-l-Sham* (Cairo, 1965).

slave of Turkish origin and first concubine and then wife of their late master al-Salih. She became the first and only sultana in Islamic history, who had all the prerogatives of rule accorded her. Coins were struck and Friday sermons (*khutbas*) were pronounced in her name as the mother of Khalil, the son she bore al-Salih, who died in infancy. Her reign did not last long. She was forced to relinquish the title under growing pressure less than three months after her investiture, though she maintained her hold on the government until she died. She appears to have balked at abdicating, for, we are told, a compromise was reached when she was talked into marrying a senior Salih amir, al-Mu'izz Aybak, to share power with her. Aybak eventually became sultan of Egypt (1252-57) after a short period of transition in which a minor Ayyubid prince was installed on the throne.

The Citadel in the Early Mamluk Period (1250-60)

Mamluk sources, though mostly disapproving of Shajar al-Durr's appointment on religious grounds, praised her strong, resolute character and wisdom, an opinion shared by her Salih amirs. They chose her as sultana partly because they appreciated her qualities and her loyalty to their deceased master, her husband al-Salih Najm al-Din Ayyub, and for the crucial role they expected her to play in the transfer of political power from the Ayyubids to themselves. A late Mamluk source includes among the reasons for her choice the fact that she controlled the Citadel of the Mountain,¹¹⁶ indicative that it remained the symbolic and effective center of the sultanate for the army and amirs of al-Salih, despite the fact that the Roda Citadel was still the residence of the Bahri mamluks, who played a major role in the assassination of Turan-Shah. The centrality of the Citadel of the Mountain in the sultanate's politics predated and outlasted the designation of the Roda Citadel as the seat of the sultan in the short period of al-Salih's reign. Throughout the Mamluk period, occupying the Citadel of the Mountain signified the *de facto* domination of the sultanate.

116 Ibn Shahin al-Malti (d. 1514) *Nuzhat al-Asatin fi-man Wulliya Misr min-al-Salatin*, M.K. al-D.'Ali ed. (Cairo, 1987) 67.

Another incident in the early Mamluk period further underlines the perception of the Citadel by rival Mamluk amirs as the crucial center of power in the sultanate. Soon after the investiture of al-Mu'izz Aybak with the sultanate in 1250, the Bahri Mamluk amirs led an uprising and forced him to share the rule with an Ayyubid prince who, they hoped, would be their entering wedge that would lead to domination. Their leader, Faris al-Din Aqatay al-Jamadar, started acting as an independent ruler, and even assumed a sultan's title, al-Malik al-Jawad. The exact relationship between Aybak and Aqatay is unknown to us, but we know that the latter was the main obstacle to Aybak's ruling alone. Aqatay sent to the Ayyubid lord of Hama in Syria asking for his daughter in marriage, which would have enhanced his prestige and reinforced his political standing. Aybak was tremendously alarmed, especially, we are told, when Aqatay asked his permission to live with the Ayyubid princess at the Citadel, implying that al-Mu'izz would move to the city.¹¹⁷ Aybak was torn between refusing Aqatay's demand, which would have increased the rift between the two and their opposing parties, or allowing him to move to the Citadel. The latter choice would "permit Aqatay to strengthen his hold on the Citadel, so it would be impossible for al-Mu'izz to evict him later, which would translate into Aqatay having the upper hand in ruling."¹¹⁸ It is obvious from this account that both princes were aware of the role that the Citadel played in validating the sultanship of the one who controlled it. This incident would set a precedent in Mamluk history: time and again, factions would fight over the Citadel in order either to uphold or to impose their leader in the sultanate.

117 Maqrizi, *Suluk*, 1: pt. 2, 388; Baybars al-Mansuri (d. 1325), *Al-Tuhfa al-Mulukiyya fi-l-Dawla al-Turkiyya*, A.H.S. Hamdan ed., (Cairo, 1987) 34; another chronicler, from a Mamluk origin too like Baybars al-Mansuri and an insider informant, Ibrahim ibn-Muhammad ibn-Aydamar, known as Ibn Duqmaq (d. 1408), *al-Jawhar al-Thamin fi-Siyar al-Khulafa wa-l-Muluk wa-l-Salatin*, (hereafter, *al-Jawhar al-Thamin*) S.A.F. 'Ashur, ed. (Makka, 1982 ?) 259, where he precises that Aqatay wanted the Citadel for himself.

118 Ibn Taghri-Bardi, *Nujum*, 7: 10-12. Maqrizi, *Khitat*, 2:383, reports the same worries of Aybak from Aqatay.

Works at the Citadel in the First Decade of Mamluk Rule

The Qa'at al-'Awamid (Qa'a of the Columns)

At the Citadel, Aybak and Shajar al-Durr appear to have occupied the structures left by the Ayyubids. Casanova attributed an important structure, the Qa'at al-'Awamid (Qa'a of the Columns) to Shajar al-Durr, but the source he used records only that she was responsible for some sort of a dais (*martaba*), or maybe a throne, in the qa'a.¹¹⁹ The first mention of this qa'a occurs in 1254, when al-Mu'izz Aybak posted three of his mamluks in its vestibule (*dihliz*) to kill Faris al-Din Aqtay.¹²⁰ This account indicates that the qa'a was probably among the principal reception halls of the Citadel which was accessible to amirs. We have a reference to another use for this qa'a in the early days of al-Zahir Baybars's reign which stresses its public character: when Baybars convened the notables of his sultanate to verify the pedigree of the first Abbasid refugee to his court, the meeting took place there.¹²¹ Such a use would emphasize the ceremonial aspect of Qa'at al-'Awamid, although it may just have originally been a distinct structure among a series of other

119 Casanova, *Histoire*, 602-3. His source is, Ibn Iyas, *Bada'i'*, vol. 1, pt. 1, 286, where he clearly says that *martabat khatun*, which is in Qa'at al-'Awamid, is attributed to Shajar al-Durr. The different meanings of the word *martaba* can be found in 'Abd al-Rahim Ghaleb, *Mawsu'at al-'Imara al-Islamiyya* (Encyclopedia of Islamic Architecture) (Beirut, 1988) 370.

120 Maqrizi, *Suluk*, 1: pt. 2, 390 & *Khitat*, 2:383; Ibn Iyas, *Bada'i'*, vol. 1, pt. 1, 291; Ibn 'Abd al-Zahir, *al-Rawd al-Zahir*, Khuwaiter, 53; Ibn al-Dawadari, *Kanz al-Durar wa-Jami' al-Ghurar*, vol. 8, *al-Durra al-Zakiyya fi-Akhbar al Dawla al-Turkiyya*, U. Haarmann, ed. (Cairo, 1971) 25. He reports the account of his own grandfather, who was one of the Bahri Mamluks, and says that Aqtay's killing took place in the *dihliz* of the treasury (*al-khizana*). There is no reason to doubt the accuracy of this account for it could only mean that Qa'at al-'Awamid was near the treasury. This is an expected location, since the sultan would have his treasury and his harem, his most precious belongings, in the same area so they can be defended together.

121 Maqrizi, *Khitat*, 2:301; Ibn Iyas, *Bada'i'*, vol. 1, pt. 1, 313; Ibn Kathir, *Al-Bidaya wa-l-Nihaya fi-l-Tarikh*, 13: 231, uses the term al-Iwan when he spoke about the hall in which the event took place, so does Ibn Taghri-Bardi, *Nujum*, 7: 109. A chronicler who was present at the ceremony states the same name, Qa'at al-'Awamid, Ibn 'Abd al-Zahir, *al-Rawd al-Zahir fi-Tarikh al-Malik al-Zahir*, Arabic Text in S.F. Sadeque, *Baybars I of Egypt* (Dakka, 1956) 35; so does another important chronicler, though not contemporaneous, Ibn Duqmaq, *al-Jawhar al-Thamin*, 181.

buildings forming in their totality al-Kamil's *al-dar al-sultaniyya*, or, *dar al-saltana*, which was the loose term applied to that sultan's undifferentiated palatial complex at the Citadel. The change of the qa'a's function happened at an unspecified time, for in the fifteenth century it appears to have become strictly reserved for the harem, and is listed as the private residence of the sultan's favorite wife.¹²² This may always have been one of its functions from the beginning, and its accessibility to amirs during Aybak's reign may have been due to the unusual status of Shajar al-Durr. It is possible that it was used as a reception hall of the ladies, since its dais was reportedly constructed by Shajar al-Durr, then it became a public ceremonial hall in Baybars's time before the building of the Iwan, and later it reverted to being a hall in the harem. The other possibility is that the original Iwan at the Citadel, built probably by al-Kamil, is one and the same as Qa'at al-'Awamid, which was added to the private palaces after Baybars built his new ceremonial Iwan. The ambiguity of Qa'at al-'Awamid's character, public or private, may have originated in the days when Shajar al-Durr was a recognized decision-maker in the sultanate, besides being the sultan's favorite, and later, his only wife.

The location of the qa'a is unknown. It was definitely in the southern enclosure, for the harem's complex to which it belonged was situated in the southwestern and southern parts of that enclosure. It should have been in the area closest to the public and ceremonial parts of the palatial complex so that to enter it an amir would not have to go through the private structures of the sultan's quarters. If the general locations of private and public spaces in later stages in the development of the palatial complex followed the space assignments that were established under al-Kamil, then we may infer a tentative location for the Qa'at al-'Awamid. It overlooked the Qarafa al-Sughra (Little Cemetery) to the southwest of the Citadel within the limits of the suggested original circumference of the Ayyubid Citadel. the Qa'at al-'Awamid must have become a central structure in the complex with the

122 Khalil b. Shahin al-Zahiri, *Zubdat*, 26; Sakhawi, *Kitab al-Tibr al-Masbuk fi-Zayl al-Suluk*, 209, reports that in 1448, al-Zahir Jaqmaq ordered the transfer of his favorite wife, given the title the Khawund al-Kubra (Grand Lady), from the Grand Qa'a, Qa'at al-'Awamid, to Qa'at al-Barbariyya, because she had lost her place as favorite of the sultan.

expansion of the southern enclosure to the south and to the west from the time of Baybars on.

The Reasons of Aybak's Neglect of the Citadel

During his seven-year reign, Aybak appears not to have built anything at the Citadel, but the sources which chronicle his period furnish a few clues on structures that undoubtedly existed before his reign, such as the Burj al-Ahmar (Red Tower) and the Burj al-'Afiya (Convalescence Tower). The first tower is explicitly ascribed to al-Kamil, and the second predates Aybak's reign for it was the tower in which al-'Adil II was confined during al-Salih's reign.¹²³ Aybak is noted for his neglect of his predecessors' architectural achievements. This may simply have resulted from the chaos of the period, but it seems more likely that it was a deliberate attempt on his part to efface the traces of the Ayyubids. For example, he abandoned al-Kamil's maydan at the foot of the Citadel of the Mountain, which soon fell out of use. He also deserted the Roda Citadel, and we are even told that he used part of the expensive construction materials in its structures, such as marble, wood and iron grilles, in the construction of his own madrasa in Rahbat Dar al-Mulk, which overlooked the Nile in Misr al-Fustat and probably faced the Roda Citadel across the Roda rivulet.¹²⁴

There are a few reports on this event that illustrate Aybak's general attitude toward monumental constructions, and may explain his reluctance to carry on such projects as existed at the two Citadels. Ibn Kathir, who had seen the long-vanished the Madrasa al-Mu'izziyya, commented that "although its span from the outside is of the best constructions, its interior space is not so impressive."¹²⁵ Aybak was probably trying to achieve

123 Qalqashandi, *Subh*, 3: 373, where he lists the Burj al-Ahmar among al-Kamil's structures at the Citadel. Maqrizi, *Suluk*, 1: pt. 2, 326, gives the name Burj al-'Afiya to the tower in which al-'Adil II was imprisoned before he was strangled; Ibn Duqmaq, *al-Jawhar al-Thamin*, 241, says that the tower was al-'Adil's, which may mean that al-'Adil II built it, and we know from other sources that work continued at the Citadel under al-'Adil II.

124 Al-'Ayni, *Iqd al-Juman*, 44. Ibn Duqmaq, *al-Intisar li-Wasitat 'Iqd al-Amsar*, 35, 53-4, 92-3. The madrasa and its endowed structures appear to have been either appropriated from or built instead of the structures of *Dar al-Mulk*.

125 Ibn Kathir, *Al-Bidaya wa-l-Nihaya fi-l-Tarikh*, 13:196; Ibn Taghri-Bardi, *Nujum*, 7: 14, reports a similar story, but instead of speaking about the façade, he says that the *dihliz* of this

monumentality without paying much attention to the interior of the madrasa which would not carry as weighty a message as would the façade. He may have felt compelled to endow the madrasa to conform to the practice expected from a Muslim ruler at that time, and to follow the examples of his Ayyubid predecessors. He found the easiest solution in appropriating its materials from the Roda Citadel, whose destruction would have accomplished two of his goals, besides the savings in reusing expensive building materials. The first and symbolic one is in keeping with the noted policy to erase the memories of the Ayyubids. The second is political in nature, and was more urgent than the first reason. Having been a senior Salihi mamluk, Aybak may have felt that the Roda Citadel represented a real danger for him as the center of a group of possible contenders to the throne,¹²⁶ the Bahri amirs. If he left them residing at the Citadel, he would be providing them with a power-base over which he could not have a direct control. His expropriation of the madrasa's site may also have been induced by the same interest in erasing the memories of previous rulers, for the structure stood in the place of the Dar al-Mulk which was an important palace initially built by the Fatimid vizir al-Afdal, but then used by al-Salih Najm al-Din Ayyub as a hospitality palace since it was near his Roda Citadel's palaces.¹²⁷ Having ignored, and even demolished, the Roda Citadel, al-Mu'izz Aybak could be expected to turn his attention to the Citadel of the Mountain, which was his seat of sultanate. Yet, there too, he appears to have been content with it as it was, and did not have the will, or time, to improve, change, or even preserve it.

madrasa is very wide and very long, while the structure itself is proportionally small. *Dihliz* in here may be understood as the anteroom or the court of the madrasa.

126 It is not known when the Bahri Mamluks left the Roda Citadel. Ibn Taghri-Bardi, *Nujum*, 7: 23, states that the Roda Citadel was deserted by the "Turks" in 649/1251 during Aybak's second year on the throne.

127 Ibn Wasil, *Mufarrij al-Kurub*, 5:334, where in the events of the year 641 al-Salih hosted a cousin of his in Dar al-Mulk.

The Burj al-Ahmar (Red Tower)

In 1257, Shajar al-Durr assassinated al-Mu'izz Aybak at the Citadel. The reports on her motives are very confused, but the underlying reason seems to have been her fear of losing her primacy in the sultanate, for Aybak had proposed to the king of Mosul that he marry the king's daughter. The mamluks of al-Mu'izz (*al-mamalik al-mu'izziyya*) wanted to kill her in revenge for their slain master, but her comrades (*khushdashiyya*),¹²⁸ the Bahri Mamluks, defended her. She was, however, dragged out of *dar al-saltana*, the vaguely defined structure which was located in the original, small southern enclosure, and then imprisoned in the Red Tower. Nor did her *khushdashs'* solidarity rescue her for long; she was eventually brought back from the tower to the *dar al-saltana* to be killed by the slave-girls of Aybak's first wife, and then her body was thrown into the moat behind the Citadel, on the Qarafa side, where it remained for three days before she was properly buried in her mausoleum (*qubba*).¹²⁹ Muhammad Ramzi, the researcher who wrote the comments for the modern edition of ibn Taghri-Bardi's *al-Nujum al-Zahira fi-Muluk Misr wa-l-Qahira*, identified the Red Tower as the one known today as the Muqattam Tower at the southern end of the Qulla Wall, but nothing in the sources supports this contention. The narrative of Shajar al-Durr's final tragedy does not shed any light on the location of the Red Tower, but a later reference makes Ramzi's assertion impossible. In reporting one of the fiercest fights for the throne in 1389, Ibn al-Furat says that the sultan Barquq and the caliph rode together down from the Citadel through the Bab al-Istabl (Gate of the Stables), which opened onto the maydan, and stopped in front of the Red Tower behind the Dar al-Dhiafa (Hospitality

128 *Khushdashiyya* is a frequently encountered term in Mamluk sources. Its immediate meaning is that the two mamluks were fellow-members of the same household, and mamluks of the same master. It signifies, however, both the collective name of the group and the loyalty among mamluks because of their past bond of servitude together. The word itself is an arabicized composite of two Persian words, *Khoja-Tash*, which means the comrade in service. See, Maqrizi, *Suluk*, 1: pt. 2, 388-89, the comments of M.M. Zyada, note 3; P.M. Holt, *The Age of the Crusades*, Glossary, 223.

129 Maqrizi, *Suluk*, 1, pt. 2, 403-4; Ibn Iyas, *Bada'i'*, vol. 1, pt. 1, 294-95; Ibn Taghri-Bardi, *Nujum*, 6:377-76; Ibn al-Dawadari, *Kanz al-Durar*, vol. VII, *al-Durr al-Matlub fi Akhbar Bani-Ayyub*, 384-85.

Palace).¹³⁰ This latter structure no longer exists, but it used to stand north of the Citadel either on the site of the Dar al-Mahfuzat (Archives), or further to the northwest.¹³¹ The scanty clues available in the sources make the latter site more plausible.¹³² This reading of Dar al-Dhiafa's position relocates the Red Tower somewhere along the western wall of the northern enclosure, and not on the southeastern indentation in the walls as Ramzi proposed. There is no tower on that wall today, but as indicated on the map of the *Description de l'Égypte*, there were two square towers between the Mudarraġ Gate and the northwestern corner of the northern enclosure, whose dilapidated remains were razed by Muhammad 'Ali in the nineteenth century. **(Fig 2. 1 Location of the Red Tower)**. Creswell has demonstrated that they both must have been built in the Ayyubid period, and that the original wall of the northern enclosure passed along them before the extensions undertaken in the late Mamluk period pushed it further out.¹³³ The Red Tower was then one of these two towers. The context of the events reported in the sources as having taken place in the Red Tower prompts identifying it with the larger tower behind the barbican of the Mudarraġ Gate.¹³⁴ This suggested location implies

130 Ibn al-Furat, *Tarikh*, vol. 9, pt. 1, 81.

131 William Popper, *Egypt and Syria Under the Circassian Sultans*, (Berkeley, 1955) map # 7, Cairo: citadel, where he vaguely locates the palace in the north of the Citadel, basing his reconstruction on Ibn Taghri-Bardi's *Nujum*.

132 Ibn al-Furat, *Tarikh*, vol. 9, pt. 1, 82 says in passing that the *shaykh* Nizam al-Din was buried in his *khanqah*, the Nizamiyya, over the high place (*sharaf*), next to the Palace of Hospitality. This will push the location of the Palace further northwest than the Archives building. Sakhawi, *Kitab al-Tibr al-Masbuk fi-Zayl al-Suluk*, 45, 343, reports the building of the mausoleum and madrasa of Qanibay al-Jarkasi, and specifies that it was near Dar al-Dhiafa. This madrasa still exists today (# 136 on the 1952 Map of Islamic Monuments of Cairo) although it is dated to the year 1503, while Sakhawi put the building in 1442.

133 Creswell, M.A.E., 2: 31-3, and Fig. 13.

134 Maqrizi, *Khitat*, 2:205, speaks about the main gate of the Citadel, known collectively as the Mudarraġ Gate, the Gate of Sarya, and the Gate of the Darfil, for they were situated along the same path, as reachable from underneath Dar al-Dhiafa, which should be understood as a level lower than that of the palace. Casanova's explanation of the disposition of the gates around the steps leading to the Mudarraġ Gate clarifies the arrangement described by Maqrizi, see, Casanova, *Histoire*, Arabic version, 105. During the first reign of al-Nasir Muhammad, a fight between the amirs ended in the siege of the Citadel, and al-Nasir climbed to the Red Tower to speak with the amirs who were blocking the entrance, presumably near the Mudarraġ Gate, see, Nuwayri, *Nihayat al-Īrb fi-Funun al-Adab*, vol. 29, fol. 78; Baybars al-Mansuri *Al-Tuhfa al-Mulukiyya*, 140; Maqrizi, *Suluk*, 1: pt. 3, 800.

that there was no separating wall between the military and the palatial parts of the Citadel until Baybars's time, for no source speaks of such a barrier between the Red Tower and the *dar al-saltana*, which was presumably in the present-day southern enclosure. The tower seems to have fallen into disuse shortly after Aybak's death, for it was in a dilapidated stage, and was renovated by Baybars with ashlar stone sometime after 1260.¹³⁵

The Reign of al-Zahir Baybars (1260-77)

Aybak was succeeded by his son al-Mansur 'Ali (1257-59), who went down in history as an insignificant and transitional ruler. A mamluk of his father, al-Muzaffar Qutuz, took over the sultanate under the pretext that the approaching Mongol threat needed a stronger and older sultan to stand up to it. Qutuz marvelously fulfilled his promise and led the Mamluk army of Egypt to a victory over the Mongol army left in Syria by Hülegü at the battle of 'Ayn Jalut (Spring of Goliath) on September 3, 1260, which turned out to be a decisive date for the Mamluk state. Qutuz did not live long enough after his victory to savor his newly acquired prominence, for a group of his amirs killed him in Salihyya on his way back to Cairo. The leader of the conspirators was the Bahri amir, al-Zahir Baybars al-Bundaqdari, who was a close collaborator of Faris al-Din Aqatay, the amir that was slain by Qutuz on Aybak's order eight years earlier. Baybars was soon recognized as the new sultan by the vicegerent who was left behind by Qutuz at the Cairo Citadel, Aqatay al-Musta'rib, and who reportedly talked the other amirs into swearing the oath of allegiance to him.

Al-Zahir Baybars (1260-1277) is regarded as the real founder of the Mamluk sultanate. Modern historians inaccurately term the whole first part of the Mamluk period (1250-1382) as the Bahri period, although the Bahriyya did not become the masters of the state until the coming of Baybars in 1260.¹³⁶

¹³⁵ 'Izz al-Din Muhammad ibn-Shaddad (d. 1285), *Tarikh al-Malik al-Zahir*, A. Hutait, ed. (Wiesbaden, 1983) 341.

¹³⁶ David Ayalon repeatedly, and correctly, made the point that, for the Mamluk chroniclers themselves, the first period is called the Turkish state (*dawlat al-turk*) which describes more accurately the character of the state, D. Ayalon, "Le régiment Bahriya dans l'armée

Aybak was a senior Salihi amir, but most probably not a Bahri one, and his reign was dominated by several opposed, and competing, groups of mamluks beside the Bahriyya, such as the Mu'izziyya (attributed to al-Mu'izz Aybak, who was their *ustaz*),¹³⁷ and the 'Aziziyya (the mamluks of al-'Aziz, the Ayyubid ruler of Aleppo). Qutuz was a Mu'izzi amir, and the Bahri amirs were not favored during his short reign. Thus, Baybars was the first Bahri sultan of the Mamluk state. He organized its military system, reformed its administration, and initiated its economic recovery and eventual progress. He conceived of the best way to provide the Mamluk system with an Islamic legitimizing apparatus, namely a caliph. Baghdad had fallen to the Mongol troops of Hülegü in 1258, and the Abbasid Caliphate there was eradicated after the killing of the caliph, al-Musta'sim Billah. Baybars took advantage of the dispersal of some Abbasid family members and brought one of them to Cairo. The latter was recognized as caliph, with the regnal title of al-Mustansir II, and was in turn required to delegate his political authority to Baybars, and to invest him not merely with Syria and Egypt, which he actually held, but also with the eastern provinces, the Hijaz and the Yemen, together with all future conquests. This diploma of investiture recognized Baybars not only as the sultan of Egypt and Syria, but as the universal sultan of Islam, the deputy of the universal caliph, and the leader of Jihad.¹³⁸ Even when al-Mustansir was

Mamelouke," 133-41, idem, art. *Bahriyya*, *EI* 2, vol. 1, 944. Aybak was a mamluk of al-Salih long before the constitution of the Bahri regiment, and became his master taster (*jashankir*) when al-Salih was still the deputy of his father in the East (Jezira and north Syria), see, Ibn Taghri-Bardi, *Nujum*, 7: 4. For the circumstances of the first decade of Mamluk rule in Egypt until the ascendancy of Baybars, see, Robert Irwin, *The Middle East in the Middle Ages*, 26-41.

137 *Ustaz* in the Mamluk context designates the owner and the master of a mamluk, and the head of a military household. Amirs, who start their career as mamluks in an amirial or royal household, used to start buying mamluks and forming their own household as soon as they attained the position of amir. P.M. Holt, *The Age of the Crusades*, Glossary, 225. The relationship between an *ustaz* and his mamluk may be sometimes likened to that of a father and his son, with all the implications of bonds, intra-responsibility, and interdependency. Al-Mansur Lajin (1296-98), who advanced his own mamluk Mangutimur above the rest of the great amirs, was killed because he was liable to his mamluk's actions. Ibn Taghri-Bardi commented on Lajin's and Mangutimur's assassination by saying "the wicked son brings damnation on his father," *Nujum*, 8:99.

138 S.F. Sadeque, *Baybars I of Egypt*, Arabic Text, 36-41, for the *khutba*'s text; an abbreviated version can be found in Maqrizi, *Suluk*, 1, pt. 2, 477-79. On the Mamluks and the question of

slain in an ill-fated campaign against the Mongols in 1261, Baybars brought another Abbasid to Cairo and recognized him as caliph, with the title of al-Hakim. From this point on, until the fall of Egypt to the Ottomans in 1517, the Abbasid caliphs were kept in Cairo with no real political role to play. They were, however, employed as legitimizing figureheads in ceremonies of investiture with the sultanate throughout the Mamluk period, and even, in some instances, as tools in the hands of Mamluk sultans to bestow religious recognition on their allies' rules elsewhere in the Islamic world.¹³⁹

Al-Zahir Baybars was the first sultan of Egypt, since the time of Salah al-Din, whose reign is recorded in detailed chronicles. He belonged to a special class of sultans who combined jihad, justice, and care for their subjects, and for whom medieval Islamic historiography reserved a prominent place in its portrayal of the paradigmatic Muslim ruler. This glorified representation was not limited to historical writings, but appeared also in the form of epics and tales that developed in the popular lore concerning the same sultans. Until today, we have songs and stories that celebrate the heroism and justice of Nur al-Din, of Salah al-Din, and of Baybars. This may produce a distorted and unbalanced picture of the period and of Baybars's actions, but at least in one aspect, that of his building activities, it resulted in a multitude of details that surpass in their scope and range those available for earlier rulers' enterprises. Baybars is credited with a considerable number of structures all over his sultanate's cities. He enlarged, arranged, and

jihad, see, Emmanuel Sivan, *L'Islam et la Croisade, Idéologie et Propagande dans les Réactions Musulmanes aux Croisades* (Paris, 1968) 165-84. An illuminating analysis of the role of the resurrected caliphate and the leadership of jihad in providing the legitimization for the Mamluks, see, Dorothea Krawulsky's introduction to al-'Umari, *Masalik*, 15-37.

¹³⁹ M. Chapoutot-Remadi, "Une institution mal connue: le Khalifat abbaside du Caire," *Cahiers de Tunisie*, vol. XX (1972) 11-23. On the newly defined relationship between the caliph and the sultan after the Mamluk revival of the Abbasid caliphate in Cairo, and the invented religious and legal rationale for what was enforced by the Mamluks, see, Badr al-Din ibn Jama'a (d. 1333), *Tahrir al-Ahkam fi-Tadbir Ahl al-Islam*, published by Hans Kofler under the title "Handbuch des Islamischen Staats und Verwaltungsrechtes von ibn-Jama'a," *Islamica* 6-7 (1934) 257-59. Ibn Jama'a's legal opinion was quoted, without naming him, by Khalil b. Shahin al-Zahiri, *Zubdat*, 89, he lists the Muslim rulers who sought investitures from the caliph in Cairo, and adds that the title sultan should be given only to the ruler of Egypt because of his direct investiture by the legitimate caliph.

refurbished the Citadel of the Mountain, which regained, under him, its place as the center of a sultanate that encompassed both Egypt and Syria. He endowed it with many royal structures worthy of his new status.

Our best sources for his constructions are the accounts of his two contemporaries, Ibn 'Abd al-Zahir (1223-92) and 'Izz al-Din ibn Shaddad (1216-85). Second in importance is Ibn Shakir al-Kutubi who, in his obituary of Baybars, gives a shorter list of his structures with slight differences from Ibn Shaddad. Al-Kutubi's compilation was copied with many distortions by Ibn Taghri-Bardi, the fifteenth-century chronicler. These sources allow the compilation of a detailed list of his works in and around the Citadel, which advances the reconstruction of its architectural development considerably, although none of the mentioned structures exists today.

Baybars is the sultan who introduced new and fundamental changes to the structures of the Mamluk sultanate, which were until his reign duplicating those of the Ayyubids. The origins of this restructuring may be partly traced to Baybars's admiration of Mongol practices,¹⁴⁰ but it was adopted mostly to mold a highly centralized hierarchy of Mamluk amirs among whom the sultan was to become the apex. Baybars is responsible for the establishment of several new offices in the government that were, for the first time in Egypt, assigned to men of the sword (*rijal al-sayf*) where civilians

140 Ibn Taghri-Bardi, *Nujum*, 7: 182-86; Maqrizi, *Khitat*, 2:221. A very revealing remark, attributed to Baybars, shows his perception of the ethnic affinity between the Kipchaqs, or Turks in general, and the Mongols, see Qalqashandi, *Subh*, 8:37, where Baybars is reported to have told the emissaries of the French king that "thanks to God, no more war is to take place between the Mamluks and the Mongols, who are, after all, of the same ethnic background, and they should not let each other down." Was it wishful thinking? Or was it a ruse? Either way, the sentence carries a conviction besides its obvious political purpose. The influence of Cengiz Khan's legal code, the *Yasa*, on the Mamluk state structures, which is recognized but whose dimensions are not yet fully analyzed, was repeatedly reviewed and debated in modern scholarship. An extreme, and somehow fanciful, view that took the Mamluk sultanate as an outpost of the Mongol state is, A.N. Poliak, "Le caractère colonial de l'état mamelouke dans ses rapports avec la Horde d'Or," *REI*, IX (1935) 231-48. A reassessment with many references and a long discussion that brought the question back to the realm of unproven hypotheses is David Ayalon, "The Great Yasa of Cengiz Khan. A Reexamination," *Studia Islamica*, vol. 33 (1971) 97-140 (pt. A), vol. 34 (1971) 151-80 (pt. B), vol. 36 (1972) 113-58 (pt. C1), vol. 38 (1973) 107-56 (pt. C2); further evidence from hitherto unpublished Mamluk sources was collated in, D. Little, "Notes on Aitamis, A Mongol Mamluk," *History and Historiography of the Mamluks* (Collected Studies) (London, 1986) # 6.

would have been normally employed.¹⁴¹ His most trusted *rijal al-sayf* were, as expected the Bahri amirs, who were his *khushdashs* and shared with him the same *ustaz*, al-Salih Najm al-Din Ayyub. They were the ones who accompanied him in the years of wandering in Syria (1250-59), when Egypt was controlled by Aybak and after him Qutuz. He promoted them, granted them wealth and favors, and even set up a special bureau (*diwan*) for them. They formed his immediate entourage, and were, we are told, "the guardians of his Citadel in his presence and absence."¹⁴²

The Revival of the Roda Citadel

At the beginning of his reign, Baybars seems to have been exploring alternatives to accommodate his great amirs, and to house the various regiments of his Army of Egypt. The amirs and their mamluks formed integral parts of Baybars's army. He needed to oversee their actions, and at the same time keep them away from the heart of the sultanate, the Citadel, where they could execute a coup d'état more easily. For some time, he thought of reviving the function of the Roda Citadel, which had lain deserted since the time of Aybak. In 1261, he ordered the amir Jamal al-Din Musa b. Yaghmur, his master of the household (*ustadar*), to refurbish the Citadel and to rehabilitate its qa'as. He also distributed the towers of the Citadel among the amirs, and made each of them responsible for rebuilding his assigned tower. They were required to establish their households, their storehouses (*buyutat*, singular *bayt*) and their stables there.¹⁴³

Baybars wanted to use the Citadel for two purposes. The first of which, housing the regiment of Jandariyya, (probably the mamluks attached to the office of *jandar*, the sword bearer, the executioner, and also the head of the sultan's security guards) was in keeping with the Citadel's original use under al-Salih Najm al-Din Ayyub when Baybars's own regiment of Bahriyya was

141 P.M. Holt, *The Age of the Crusades*, 90-8; S.F. Sadeque, *Baybars I of Egypt*, 69-73; Ibn Shaddad, *Tarikh al-Malik al-Zahir*, 239-44, 311; Ibn Taghri-Bardi, *Nujum*, 7: 182-87, gives a detailed review of Baybars' administrative innovations.

142 Ibn 'Abd al-Zahir, *al-Rawd al-Zahir*, Khuwaiter, 74. English version in P.M. Holt, *The Age of the Crusades*, 91.

143 S.F. Sadeque, *Baybars I of Egypt*, Arabic Text, 29; Ibn Taghri-Bardi, *Nujum*, 7: 192, note # 7; Qalqashandi, *Subh*, 3: 373; Maqrizi, *Khitat*, 2: 184; Maqrizi, *Suluk*, vol. 1, pt. 2, 445.

lodged there. The second purpose was to create centralized barracks for the great amirs' troops, as distinguished from barracks for the royal troops at the Citadel of the Mountain. This plan was dropped before its completion, without any reason given in the sources.¹⁴⁴ It is possible, however, that Baybars realized the threat involved in creating a power base for his amirs in a citadel over which he had no direct control.

He had to devise another plan in which the amirs and their troops would be quartered, supervised, and, at the same time, maintained away from his own residences. It is probably at this juncture that Baybars conceived of the complex plan of creating a series of gradual barriers of which the royal palaces would be the center. He built residences for the closest and most trusted great amirs inside the Citadel, thus starting a practice that will reach its most elaborate level under al-Nasir Muhammad. He established palaces for other great amirs, and encouraged the rest to build palaces on their own, in areas adjacent to the Citadel. The reason for this interest was not discerned by the period chroniclers. At a later date, Ibn Taghri-Bardi grasped a single aspect of it when he states that Baybars "feared that his mamluks might interfere in the affairs of the city's population if they resided among them."¹⁴⁵ This remark does not exist in the older sources from which Ibn Taghri-Bardi compiled his data. It might have been prompted by the state of affairs when Ibn Taghri-Bardi was writing in the fifteenth century, and the people of Cairo were constantly harassed and over-burdened by the amirs and mamluks who lived among them. But the notion of separation itself may well have been Baybars's. It provided the impetus to develop the residential palatial area around the Citadel, not on account of an expected friction between amirs and population, but to secure the sultanate's center and creating an additional barrier, the princely one, between the royal and the urban spheres. Clearly the idea of having the amirs within close range of the Citadel, and still removed

144 Ibn 'Abd al-Zahir, *al-Rawd al-Zahir*, Khuwaiter, 125, records the punishment of two Bahri mamluks by sending them to work at the site of the Roda Citadel; Ibn Shaddad, *Tarikh al-Malik al-Zahir*, 347, says that the Citadel building was not completed, in page 343, he reports that Baybars used the debris of al-Salih's belvederes (*manazirs*) of the Roda Citadel to furnish new constructions.

145 Ibn Taghri-Bardi, *Nujum*, 7: 191.

from its enceinte was the underlying purpose. It reciprocated the other development initiated by Baybars in centralizing the *iqta'* system.

Unlike his predecessors, Baybars did not grant hereditary fiefs. He replaced the old system of fiefs by revenues from fiefs allotted to Mamluk amirs but controlled by the sultan's administration. Thus his amirs were no longer semi-autonomous lords. They did not reside on their franchised lands, and had to depend on his central government to assess the revenues from the lands endowed to them.¹⁴⁶ The new structure of the Mamluk hierarchy was well established by then, and with all its inherent impediments, it lasted for more than two centuries.

Baybars's Works Around the Citadel

Baybars plan of housing his amirs around the Citadel of the Mountain led to an urban expansion south of the Fatimid al-Qahira so that the neighborhoods of the mosque of Ibn Tulun, the Birket al-Fil (Pond of the Elephant), and the east-west Shari' al-A'zam (Grand Street) became new residential districts.¹⁴⁷ **(Fig 2. 2 Reconstruction of the Citadel's Surroundings in Baybars's Period)**. The sources refer several times to palaces and religious endowments that were built by amirs whose names appear during Baybars's rule and located in these districts. The areas adjacent to the Citadel from the west, around al-Kamil's maydan, were also refurbished, as Baybars constructed a few structures there. He turned an old mausoleum (*turba*) at the foot of the southern enclosure into a palace of justice (*dar al-'Adl*), and established several stables for his steeds, and those of his son, and his closest mamluks' horses around the maydan and in the fringes of the horse market, in addition to a few other functional structures.

146 S.F. Sadeque, *Baybars I of Egypt*, 70; D. Ayalon, "The System of Payment in Mamluk Military Society," *JESHO*, 1: 37-65, 257-96.

147 Ibn Shaddad, *Tarikh al-Malik al-Zahir*, 359-60; Ibn Taghri-Bardi, *Nujum*, 7: 196-97; Ibn Shakir al-Kutubi (d. 1362) *Fawat al-Wafiyyat wa-l-Zayl 'Alyha*, Ihsan 'Abbas ed., (Beirut, 1973) 242.

Dar al-'Adl al-Zahiriyya

Maqrizi, in two different statements, says that al-Zahir Baybars built, or renovated, the Dar al-'Adl in 661/1260.¹⁴⁸ Ibn Shaddad speaks only of a *tablakhana* (Popper translates it as drummery, which is the place where the military band would play at specific times during the day)¹⁴⁹ that Baybars built for his son al-Malik al-Sa'id across from Dar al-'Adl under the Citadel, without attributing the second structure to him. Ibn 'Abd al-Zahir reports in 1262 that Baybars ordered the establishment of the Dar al-'Adl under the Citadel and the renovation of its building,¹⁵⁰ suggesting that the structure existed prior to Baybars but was remodeled and used by him as the palace of justice. Casanova proved that the structure under the Citadel was, according to his source, a collective tomb (*turba*) of a family of princes, Bani al-Muhtar. He assigned its refurbishing and transformation into the Dar al-'Adl to al-Kamil without any historical basis.¹⁵¹ The sources we have today refute this ascription, for al-Kamil's Dar al-'Adl was inside the Citadel, whereas that of Baybars was outside, at the foot of the southern enclosure facing the horse market. Baybars should be considered the patron who restored the structure, which was probably in disrepair like many other Fatimid remains, and put it to a new use. He is credited in the sources with sitting in his Dar al-'Adl on Mondays and Wednesdays, unlike his Ayyubid and Mamluk predecessors who delegated this duty to their deputies. After Baybars's death, his Dar al-'Adl was abandoned in favor of the Great Iwan inside the southern enclosure of the Citadel which was rebuilt three times by Qalawun and his two sons and successors, Khalil and al-Nasir Muhammad. Baybars's structure became known as the Dar al-'Adl al-Qadima (the old), and was occasionally used for

148 Maqrizi, *Khitat*, 2: 205, 213; Maqrizi, *Suluk*, vol. 1, pt. 2, 501.

149 William Popper, *Egypt and Syria Under the Circassian Sultans*, map # 7, Cairo: citadel.

150 S.F. Sadeque, *Baybars I of Egypt*, Arabic Text, 90.

151 Casanova, *Histoire*, (Arabic translation) 103-4; Nuwayri, *Nihayat al-'Irb fi-Funun al-Adab*, vol. 30, fol. 63, speaks of *Dar al-'Adl al-Kamiliyya* (of al-Kamil) as overlooking the *durqah* of the Citadel (in the Qulla Gate).

court sessions presided over by high-ranking administrators.¹⁵² It was eventually converted into a *tablakhana* during the reign of al-Nasir Muhammad.

The site of this Dar al-'Adl is difficult to ascertain today, after the major changes in the topography of the area under Muhammad 'Ali, when the new carriage route was completed in 1825. According to Maqrizi, the *tablakhana*, or Baybars's Dar al-'Adl, was located between the two gates: Bab al-Silsila (Gate of the Chain, possibly the present Katkhuda Gate) and the Mudarraaj Gate. This Mudarraaj Gate is probably the last, and closest to the present-day road, Sikket al-Mahjar, of a series of gates that were collectively named either Mudarraaj Gate or the Citadel Gate.¹⁵³ Maqrizi and Ibn Taghri-Bardi indirectly corroborate the report of Shafi' ibn 'Ali, the chronicler cited by Casanova, about the Dar al-'Adl having originally been a mausoleum, by recording the discovery of buried bodies under the structure when it was rebuilt as a *tablakhana* in 1322.¹⁵⁴ The site of the Dar al-'Adl should have been high enough to accommodate the sitting of the sultan in the royal stand under the awning (*suffah*) he put there to review the parades that took place in the maydan and horse market. The troops in these parades would enter through the Qarafa Gate (of the city walls not that of the Citadel) to the maydan and then pass by the sultan under his awning to head toward the Bab al-Nasr (Victory Gate) in the northern wall of al-Qahira through the mountain road.¹⁵⁵ This was the normal route for the royal processions (*al-mawakib al-sultaniyya*) on the occasion of the accession of a new sultan which started from the Citadel to Bab al-Nasr through the desert road outside the city,

¹⁵² Ibn al-Furat, *Tarikh*, vol. 7, 259; Maqrizi, *Suluk*, vol. 1, pt. 3, 712; report the assessment of a poll-tax (*jawali*) from non-Muslims in 1283 as having taken place in the Dar al-'Adl under the Citadel, under the supervision of a high-ranking administrator, the vizir.

¹⁵³ Casanova, *Histoire*, (Arabic translation) 105-6. This succession of gates will be further discussed in the chapter on al-Nasir Muhammad's work.

¹⁵⁴ Unknown author, *Beitrage zur Geschichte der Mamlukesultane in den Jahren 690-741*, K.V. Zetterstéén ed. (hereafter Author Zetterstéén) (Leiden, 1919) 173, the author, though unknown, is a contemporary to al-Nasir Muhammad; Maqrizi, *Suluk*, vol. 2, pt. 1, 236; Ibn Taghri-Bardi, *Nujum*, 9:74.

¹⁵⁵ Ibn Shaddad, *Tarikh al-Malik al-Zahir*, 59, 71, 277-79; al-'Ayni, *Iqd al-Juman*, 376, 408; Maqrizi, *Suluk*, vol. 1, pt. 2, 501; Ibn 'Abd al-Zahir, *al-Rawd al-Zahir*, Khuwaiter, 210.

before cutting through the city from Bab al-Nasr to Bab-Zuwayla and back to the Stable Gate of the Citadel through al-Darb al-Ahmar and the horse market. (Fig 2. 3 Route of the Royal Procession across Cairo). Dar al-'Adl, then, was under the Citadel, on the side of the road named Sikket al-Rumayla on the map of the *Description de l'Égypte*. It was probably above the *zawiyat* of Hasan al-Rumi (built in 1522) which still stands today. The endowment deed (*waqf*) of Hasan ibn Ilyas ibn 'Abdallah al-Rumi, the patron of the *zawiyat*, dated to 1535 still survives, and it provides a few details that would clarify the location of al-Nasir Muhammad's *tablakhana* (Baybars's Dar al-'Adl). The *waqf* states that the *zawiyat* stands below (*sifl*) the *tablakhana* of the Citadel.¹⁵⁶ This should be the same *tablakhana* of al-Nasir, for there is no mention of any building of a new *tablakhana* in the late Mamluk or early Ottoman periods. Al-Nasir's *tablakhana* was still in use, or misuse, at the end of the fifteenth century when a dispute between the amirs, fought around the Citadel as usual, made the *tablakhana* a strategic place to hold.¹⁵⁷ The *waqf* specifies the location of the *zawiyat*, in lines 34-5, as being situated between the Mudarraaj Gate to the east (read northeast), and the Chain Gate to the west (read southwest), exactly the site given in the report of Maqrizi on the *tablakhana*.

Other Buildings Around the Maydan

Baybars is not recorded to have rebuilt the maydan at the foot of the Citadel, known in different names as the Maydan al-Qal'a (Citadel Maydan),

156 *Awqaf* 1079, *Waqf* of Hasan b. Ilyas al-Rumi, dated 8 Shawwal, 941/1535, line 21. Reference from M. Hussam al-Din 'Abd al-Fattah, *Mantiqat al-Darb al-Ahmar* (the district of al-Darb al-Ahmar), unpublished Master's Thesis, submitted to Asyut University (Nov. 1986), 311. I am grateful to Mrs. L. Ibrahim and Mr. 'Abd al-Fattah for making a copy of the thesis available to me.

157 Muhib al-Din ibn al-Shihna (d. 1504 or 1510) *Al-Badr al-Zahir fi-Nasrat al-Malik al-Nasir Muhammad b. Qaytbay*, Omar Tadmuri ed. (Beirut, 1983) 82-4, where he describes the fight between the supporters of the son of Qaytbay, Muhammad, and a great amir and usurper, Qansuh, around the Citadel in 1496. The *tablakhana* had been refurbished by Sudun Amir Akhur (Amir of the stables) in the first decade of the fifteenth century, who added a second floor above it, for it was originally an enclosure without a roof, Maqrizi, *Khitat*, 2: 213. Maqrizi went on to say that Sudun's addition was strategically sound, for the *tablakhana* stood in front of the Ashrafiyya Madrasa (built in 1375) which could have been used as a holdout from which to shoot at the Citadel.

the Qaramaydan (Black Maydan), or the Maydan al-Akhdar (Green Maydan). His *furusiyya* exercises, the backbone of Mamluk military training, and polo-games (*al-kura*) were relocated to other maydans: the Maydan al-Zahiri, which he established southwest of al-Qahira, in the present-day area of Bab al-Luq, and Maydan al-Qabaq, built in the area east of the Citadel which later became the Qarafa al-Kubra (Great Cemetery).¹⁵⁸ At the Qaramaydan area, however, in the southern end of the maydan, between the two gates of the walls, he constructed a large stable for his son's and his mamluks' horses, a well, and a cistern. This area was replanned by al-Nasir Muhammad, when he reorganized the Citadel and its surroundings in the first four decades of the fourteenth century. From the reports on that rebuilding, we know that al-Nasir Muhammad demolished the Shadiya (or Sariya) Gate, probably built by Qaraqush along with the walls that reached the Citadel at the southern end of the original maydan, to include the gate's area in the enlarged maydan.¹⁵⁹ The stables of Baybars were obviously razed in the process.

Another of Baybars's works in the maydan area is indicative of the growth of the Citadel itself. At an unspecified date, he erected a watercourse (*qastal*) to bring water from the well of Dar al-Baqar, opposite the Sayf al-Islam gardens, to another well near the Chain Gate (which no longer exists but is marked on the Green plan of the Citadel drawn in 1896), and from there to the main well of the Citadel, probably the one near the Spiral Well. The watercourse was surrounded with a high wall, which probably means that it was raised like an aqueduct, and Baybars's royal titles were inscribed in gold on its surface.¹⁶⁰

¹⁵⁸ On Mamluk maydans, see, David Ayalon, "Notes on the Furusiyya Exercises and Games in the Mamluk Sultanate," *Scripta Hierosolymitana* 9 (1961) 31-62, Baybars's two maydans, 38-9.

¹⁵⁹ Nuwayri, *Nihayat al-Īrb fi-Funun al-Adab*, vol. 30, fol. 80; Ibn al-Dawadari, *Kanz al-Durar wa-Jami' al-Ghurar*, vol. 9, *al-Durra al-Fakhir fi-Sirat al-Malik al-Nasir*, H.R. Roemer ed. (Cairo, 1960) 282. In 1313, the Shadya Gate was replaced by a new gate, presumably outside of the new maydan's borders. On the *Description* map we still find two gates in the southern side of Qaramaydan, the Qarafa Gate (section 2, # 15) and 'Arab Yasar Gate (section 2, # 22), which may be the rebuilding of al-Nasir's gates. Today, only the inaccurately rebuilt gate of Qaytbay exists in the area.

¹⁶⁰ Ibn Shaddad, *Tarikh al-Malik al-Zahir*, 342. The report is confusing but it nevertheless elucidates an important aspect of providing the Citadel with water.

The well of Dar al-Baqar (House of Oxen), or rather the tower with the waterwheel (*saqiah*) on its top, still stands today behind the madrasa of Sultan Hasan (1356-61). It is the same *saqiah* mentioned in the *waqf* of Sultan Hasan under the name the Bir al-Naqqala (Carrying Well) that takes the water to the sultan's stables across the horse market.¹⁶¹ **(Fig 2. 4 Plan of the Bir al-Naqqala).** Dar al-Baqar, as its name indicates, was some sort of stable for the oxen used to turn the royal *saqiahs*, before it was turned into a palace and horse stable by al-Nasir Muhammad.¹⁶² Its name survived until the Ottoman period as Hadrat al-Baqar, the street behind the madrasa of Sultan Hasan, known today as Sikket al-Mudaffar (a distortion of *al-Muzaffar*, from the dome of Sinjar al-Muzaffar, built there in 1322).¹⁶³ The *saqiah* of Dar al-Baqar must have been built at an earlier date, most probably by the Ayyubid prince Sayf al-Islam, Salah al-Din's brother, or one of his descendants, to provide water for their gardens. The gardens of Sayf al-Islam, which were called the gardens of 'Abbas in Fatimid times, were appropriated by Salah al-Din's family along with most other Fatimid properties. They lay to the west of the madrasa of Sultan Hasan and extended toward the no longer extant Birket al-Fil (Pond of the Elephant) (See Fig 2. 2). They are known to have been bought by Baybars from the last Ayyubid who inherited them and later divided into building lots.¹⁶⁴

Baybars's watercourse project must have been started after his acquisition of the gardens of Sayf al-Islam. Parts of the path that the watercourse may have taken still can be seen along the southwestern façade of the madrasa of Sultan Hasan in the form of the stone corbels that must have carried a stone channel above. To reconstruct the parts of this watercourse that crossed the Rumayla is impossible, but we have another clue that allows us to reconstruct the end of that channel on the side of the Citadel. The *waqf* of Hasan al-Rumi states that the entrance vestibule contained a

¹⁶¹ *Awqaf* 881, *Waqf of Sultan Hasan b. al-Nasir Muhammad*, dated 15 Rabi' al-Akhir, 760/1359, page 20, line 11.

¹⁶² Maqrizi, *Khitat*, 2: 68.

¹⁶³ 'Ali Pasha Mubarak, *al-Khitat al-Tawfiqiyya al-Jadida* (Cairo, 1969) 2:43-44; M. Georges Salmon, *La Kal'at al-Kabch et la Birket al-Fil* (Cairo, 1902) 113-14, and map.

¹⁶⁴ Maqrizi, *Khitat*, 2: 364, 476; Ibn Shaddad, *Tarikh al-Malik al-Zahir*, 279-80.

channel (*majrah*), built before the *zawiyat*, that carried the water to the Citadel's Chain Gate.¹⁶⁵ That all this was undertaken to provide the Citadel with an additional source of water shows how quickly it was expanding, especially its palatial side which this new water supply served.

By the time Baybars died, the areas to the north, west, and southwest of the Citadel had become for the first time parts of Cairo's urban fabric. This development must have been intentional, as were its repercussions on the nature of the relationship between the Citadel and the city. There are enough reasons to believe that this was the original plan contemplated by al-Kamil, and probably even started by him, especially when he ordered the transfer of the animal markets to the vicinity of the Citadel and constructed his maydan. Although the built-up areas were still further to the west during the Ayyubid period, as Ibn Sa'id al-Maghribi reported,¹⁶⁶ al-Kamil did not fortify the parts of the Citadel facing toward the city in the same way he did the parts facing toward the desert, probably because he anticipated the eventual urban growth that would connect the city with the Citadel.

Al-Zahir Baybars's Buildings in the Citadel

The topography of the Citadel was modified during Baybars's reign. It is not possible from the limited sources available to reconstruct the process of transformation chronologically, but its results are discernible and indicative of a preconceived plan. Baybars appears to have been the first to decide to divide the Citadel into two distinct enclosures, which were then subdivided again into smaller and more specialized areas. Thus, the northern enclosure seems to have been enriched with many new *qa'as* for different administrative functions, all crowded in its western end, around the Rahbat

¹⁶⁵ *Awqaf* 1079, *Waqf* of Hasan al-Rumi, line 25-26. Maqrizi, *Suluk*, 2, pt. 1, 123, attributes similar works to al-Nasir Muhammad in the same site, but calls the preexisting well, the Bi'r al-Zahiri (Well of al-Zahir) which further proves the ascription of the idea of providing the royal stables with their new source of water to Baybars.

¹⁶⁶ Ibn Sa'id al-Maghribi, *al-Mugharrrib fi-Hilly al-Maghrib, al-Nujum al-Zahira fi-Hilly Hadrat al-Qahira*, 390-91. He wrote in the first decade of the thirteenth century that "the land under the Citadel was dusty and had no built-up or green areas."

al-Qal'a (Citadel Square), to which the passageway of the Mudarraġ Gate led.¹⁶⁷ The enclosure's eastern side remained allocated for the lodging of the mamluks who formed the royal Army of Egypt. The southern enclosure started to take the shape that it would later assume, where the semipublic and ceremonial structures faced the administrative complex across from the Qulla Wall, whereas the royal palaces occupied the edges. Baybars extended the royal section of the southern enclosure to the west and south to accommodate the new structures he added. In this extension he was exploiting a commanding view of the capital to the northwest and southwest. This direction of expansion was not new; rather it was in line with the original location of the palatial structures within the enceinte of the whole Citadel. The originality in it appears to be more in the emphasis on visual contact with the city below the hill rather than in the expansion itself.

The Qulla

No source refers to any sultan building the Qulla Wall which separates the two enclosures today, but Baybars is credited with building a *qulla* (the word means a high place, but its closest equivalent in the castle's terminology in English is "the keep"). In 1286, Qalawun demolished Baybars's *qulla* and built another structure in its place, while in 1320, al-Nasir Muhammad rebuilt the Qulla Gate, enlarged its vestibule (*durkah*), and added a second door to it.¹⁶⁸ There are many references to the Qulla Gate prior to al-Nasir's rebuilding, and they all indicate that its function was to control access from the Citadel proper to the sultan's palatial complex.¹⁶⁹ The location of the original gate, and the whole curtain wall could not have been far from the

167 Al-'Umari, *Masalik*, 141; Qalqashandi, *Subh*, 3: 372; Maqrizi, *Khitat*, 2:204. For the new qa'as, which will be elaborately studied later, Ibn Shaddad, *Tarikh al-Malik al-Zahir*, 341.

168 Maqrizi, *Khitat*, 2: 212, reports the rebuilding of Qalawun; Ibn al-Furat, *Tarikh*, vol. 8, 38, but he calls Baybars' structure a qubba (dome) rather than a qulla. Author Zetterst en, 169, where the author describes the new door, built by al-Nasir, as the door outside the Qulla Gate.

169 Casanova, *Histoire*, (Arabic translation) 135-36, where he lists a few references from Ibn Taghri-Bardi to clarify the location of the original Qulla Gate; Maqrizi, *Khitat*, 2:212; Ibn Taghri-Bardi, *Nujum*, note # 1, where Ramzi discusses the position of the original Qulla Gate, which will be supported by the later discussion of the same gate.

present-day one, for the joining of the two enclosures is predicated by the general configuration of the Citadel. (Fig 2. 5 View of the Qulla Gate Today).

Ibn al-Furat inadvertently gives a few clues to the position of the Qulla Gate in the early Mamluk period.¹⁷⁰ His text implies that there was a considerable distance between the first and the second doors of the gate, which may have stood at the two ends of a vestibule. It also suggests that al-Nasir Muhammad cleared the area between the gate and the eastern gate of his mosque after the reconstruction of the latter in 1318, which could mean that the initial Qulla Gate led into a maze of structures and vestibules between it and the original mosque of the Citadel in the southern enclosure, rather than to the open space that still exists today. Inside the second door were at least one stone bench for the master of the household (*ustadar*) and the supervisor of the palaces (*nazir al-buyut*) and another vestibule that led to the royal wardrobe (*firashkhana*).

The complexity of this area's configuration supports the contention that the Qulla Gate was added after other structures were already in place. Since Baybars had built a *qulla* there, it may have been meant to provide the sultan, his family, and his bodyguards with a last refuge in case of attack. It is plausible that the sultan was as wary of an outside assault as he was suspicious of an inside insurrection, and that his choice of location for his *qulla* reflects this double threat. It follows that the *qulla* would be accompanied by a curtain wall that separates the military and administrative parts of the Citadel from the sultan's domain. This step fits nicely with the proposition that Baybars created a series of barriers to accommodate the functions of the hierarchy of his Mamluk amirs, after he had decided to drop the idea of using the Roda Citadel for that purpose.

A certain overall plan of organization that may have dated from the time of al-Kamil emerges from this discussion. The undivided, and much smaller, Ayyubid Citadel may have been arranged in a way as to have the sultan's domain facing towards the city and the military area towards the

170 Ibn al-Furat, *Tarikh*, K. Zurayq & N. Ezzedine eds. (Beirut, 1939) vol. 8, 109, in the events of 1291, he speaks of al-Ashraf Khalil's vizir and his vicegerent walking together across the gate, and gives us the little indirect information on the configuration of the gate then. The same report, though truncated, is given by Maqrizi, *Suluk*, 1, pt. 3, 762.

desert. The two were separated by the Citadel Square, which lay at the western end of the present northern enclosure. This vast square reportedly extended between the two main gates of the Citadel. It stands to reason that the square would form the point of entrance to the Citadel, and the divider afterward to direct traffic to its appropriate destination, whether the barracks or the palaces. The Qulla Wall appears to have been erected parallel to the long side of the Citadel Square further to demarcate the two spheres of action. In the wall's center stood the Qulla Gate, which was intended to be the sole entrance for the commoners and soldiers to the sultan's southern enclosure during the day. It was closed at night to isolate the palaces from the outside: a custom that may have been copied from Fatimid practices in the Eastern Palace in Cairo.

This suggests that both major gates of the Citadel had to be located in the northern enclosure. Al-'Umari, whose text was copied by Maqrizi and Qalqashandi, says that the first, the Mudarraaj Gate, is turned towards Cairo, while the second leads towards the Qarafa, but he does not specify their locations.¹⁷¹ The Mudarraaj Gate, which still stands, does open into the northern enclosure, whereas the gate facing it on the Citadel plan, known today as the Bab al-Jabal (Mountain Gate), is in the southern enclosure. (**Fig 2. 6 Reconstruction of the Citadel's Division Under Baybars**). Casanova only says that the original Qarafa Gate stood somewhere near the Mountain Gate, without trying to solve the problem of its location in the northern or southern enclosure. Creswell had used the fact that the Mountain Gate is outside the northern enclosure today to assert that the original Qarafa Gate was the arched doorway that he had discovered in the 1920s under the rubble between the two half-round towers together called the Matar Tower.¹⁷²

The location of the original Qarafa Gate is still undetermined. The Matar Tower is far to the west, implying that the Rahbat al-Qal'a (Citadel Square) covered more than half the northern enclosure's surface, which is unlikely. Moreover, the same textual indices that Creswell used to refute the idea that the Qarafa Gate and the Mountain Gate were the same can as easily

171 Al-'Umari, *Masalik*, 141; Maqrizi, *Khitat*, 2:204; Qalqashandi, *Subh*, 3: 371.

172 Creswell, M.A.E., 2: 38.

be used to reject his contention. The textual clues would favor locating the missing Qarafa Gate somewhere around the present site of the Mountain Gate. The whole area between the Suffah Tower in the northern enclosure and the Mountain Gate, including the Muqattam Tower, was built over more than once, most extensively in 1785 (see Fig 2. 6). Creswell has proved through formal analysis that the Muqattam Tower could not have been built before the introduction of artillery, that is, the end of the fifteenth century, and probably later.¹⁷³ In fact, this tower could be the one built by Ibrahim Pasha, who was the governor (*wali*) of Egypt in 1525 before he assumed the position of the Great Vizir for Suleiman the Magnificent, for Evliya Çelebi, who lived in the Citadel ca. 1670, attributes to him a round and large tower. From Çelebi's convoluted description, and other Ottoman Egyptian chroniclers, we can situate the Tower of Ibrahim Pasha, as Çelebi calls it, on the site of the Muqattam Tower at the end of the Qulla Wall; its two round towers flanking its gate were renovated by the same governor.¹⁷⁴ The wall of the northern enclosure extends into the southern one for a short distance passed the Muqattam Tower, before it changes in profile and stone size. Creswell had noted that this part of the curtain wall is different from the rest of the northern enclosure walls and that it has no gallery. It is also higher and thicker than both its extension further to the southwest, which joins the small tower south of the Spiral Well, and the wall of the southern enclosure, which runs due south from it. At the juncture, the Mountain Gate abuts the wall in perpendicular, marking the beginning of the wall extending south. The Mountain Gate in its actual location, form, and orientation may have been constructed, along with its vestibule and the wall next to it, by Yakan

173 Creswell, M.A.E., 2: 8.

174 Evliya Çelebi, *Seyahatnamesi*, ed. Mümin Çevik (Istanbul, 1984) 9-10: 384. Ahmad Chalabi al-Hanafi al-Masri (d. 1737), *Awdah al-Isharat fi-man Tawala Misr al-Qahira min-l-Wuzara' wa-l-Bashat*, A.R. Abdel-Rahim ed. (Cairo, 1978) 105. Çelebi attributes to the same wali a Qulla Tower, and likens it to the Galata Tower in Istanbul. But from his description and from the map of the *Description de l'Égypte*, (# 62, *Burj Khaznet Qulla* or *Burj al-Inkishariyya*) it becomes clear that this latter tower is a later addition in the middle of the northern enclosure, different from Baybars's Qulla Tower, and it was probably removed by Muhammad 'Ali when he built his three Palaces of the Haram (the present-day Military Museum).

Pasha in 1785 when he constructed his palace there.¹⁷⁵ (Fig 2. 7 View of the Present-Day Mountain Gate). The original Qarafa Gate may have been anywhere along this section of the wall. The Qulla wall's end may have been further to the west to accommodate the Qarafa Gate within the northern enclosure. Ibn al-Furat's text suggests such an interpretation, but it is impossible to prove or disprove it with the available archaeological evidence.

Baybars's Works in the Northern Enclosure

From the rare references that mention Baybars's structures inside the Citadel, it is possible to deduce that a few of them were in the administrative area at the western end of the northern enclosure. It is even arguable that they were situated there in order to provide bases for the office-holding amirs within the administrative area, which, according to al-'Umari, formed the northern and eastern borders of the Citadel Square (See Fig 2. 6). These structures were a large house (*dar*) for Baybars's son al-Malik al-Sa'id, with a few small qa'as next to it for the prominent *jamadariyya*,¹⁷⁶ a qa'a for Bilik al-Khazindar, a house for amir Sunqur al-Ashqar, three connected qa'as for amir Baysari, and a square stand (*mastaba*) in the middle of the square facing the gate [probably the Mudarraaj Gate] covered with a canopy.¹⁷⁷

The house of al-Malik al-Sa'id Berke Khan was built in the Citadel Square, near the [Mudarraaj] Gate, with windows overlooking the square. Its site was not occupied by any structure before, for there was a big depression (*jura*) in its place.¹⁷⁸ Baybars filled it up by constructing sixteen vaults, which

175 Casanova, *Histoire*, 716-17; Inscription in Max Van Berchem (C.I.A.) Egypt, 1: 94.

176 A *jamadar* is usually the sultan Wardrobe Master, which was one of the ceremonial offices in the Mamluk court. The duties of its holder extended beyond taking care of the sultan's wardrobe. Qalqashandi, *Subh*, 5:459. The *jamadariyya* appear to have been constituted in a separate regiment from early on, perhaps even from the time of al-Salih Najm al-Din Ayyub.

177 Ibn Shaddad, *Tarikh al-Malik al-Zahir*, 341.

178 It is not clear whether this depression was dug by order of Baybars, or if it had been existing there already. Maqrizi says that in 663/1264, Baybars ordered the digging of the hole to burn the Zimmis (Christians and Jews) in it, Maqrizi, *Suluk*, 1: pt. 2, 640. Another source implies that the depression was already there and that Baybars eventually built al-Sa'id's house above it, Mufaddal ibn Abi al-Fada'il, *al-Nahj al-Sadid wa-l-Durr al-Farid fi-ma Ba'd Tarikh ibn al-'Amid* (hereafter *al-Nahj al-Sadid*) E. Blochet ed., in *Patrologia Orientalis* (Paris, 1919-20) 12: 477.

presumably formed the basement upon which he erected the house. This basement was turned into a cistern by plastering its interior surface with *khafiqi* (an Egyptian waterproof mortar); water was brought there by an unidentified waterwheel (*saqiah*) outside the Citadel, perhaps the Saqiah of Dar al-Baqar.¹⁷⁹ The house remained in use after Baybars and al-Malik al-Sa'id's time, and seems to have been allocated regularly to one of the office-holding great amirs.¹⁸⁰

The Residences of the Amirs

Bilik al-Khazindar was a Zahirī mamluk (attributed to al-Zahir Baybars) who was appointed in 1268 to the prestigious post of the sultan's vicegerent (*na'ib al-saltana*) in Egypt, a position second only to the sultan. According to Ibn Shaddad, the qa'a built by Baybars for Bilik had a large iwan and on top a gallery (*riwaq*) supported on four wooden ornamented pillars, which suggest that this was simply a canopy. This structure may have been the precursor of the Vicegerency Palace (*Dar al-Niyaba*) which was built, according to Maqrizi, by Qalawun for his vicegerent Husam al-Din Turantay in 1288.¹⁸¹ If it is the same structure, it would be very difficult to decide whether Qalawun rebuilt Baybars's qa'a or only renovated it. The latter alternative is more plausible since we encounter in later sources a few references to the Tabaqa al-Husamiyya (apartment of Husam al-Din Turantay) which was on top of the Dar al-Niyaba, and seems to have been considered a separate unit.¹⁸² Qalawun may have added this second-floor apartment for

179 Ibn Shaddad, *Tarikh al-Malik al-Zahir*, 341; Ibn Taghri-Bardi, *Nujum*, 7:190, who does not specify what the basement was used for, although his report seems to have been copied from Ibn Shaddad.

180 Mufaddal ibn-Abi al-Fada'il, *al-Nahj al-Sadid*, 14:613; Baybars al-Mansuri, *Zubdat al-Fikra fi-Tarikh al-Hijra*, vol. 10, S.M. Elham ed., *Kitbuga und Lagin* (Freiburg, 1977) Arabic text, 28. Both report that Amir Taghji, who was one of the foremost amirs during the sultanate of al-Mansur Lajin (1296-98) used to live in the house of al-Malik al-Sa'id next to the Dar al-Niyaba (Vicegeral Palace).

181 Casanova, *Histoire*, (Arabic translation) 136-37; Maqrizi, *Khitat*, 2:214-15; al-Yusufi (d. 1358) *Nuzhat al-Nazir fi-Sirat al-Malik al-Nasir* (hereafter, *Nuzhat al-Nazir*) A. Hutait ed. (Beirut, 1984) 348, where he mentions the date of the building and attributes it to Qalawun.

182 Nuwayri, *Nihayat al-ʿIrb fi-Funun al-Adab*, vol. 30, fol. 100, a religious recital is recorded to have taken place in the apartment of Husam; *ibid*, vol. 31, fol. 8, speaks of the Manzara al-Husamiyya (Belvedere of Husam); *ibid*, vol.31, fol. 74, where Amir Almas is assigned *Dar al-*

his vicegerent to an already existing structure, that of Baybars, and opened the window (*shubbak*) in its first floor that Turantay is reported to have regularly sat in (that is, on the large window sill looking outside) when he presided over official hearings.

Throughout the first Mamluk period, the Dar al-Niyaba remained the organizational focus of the administrative area around which other structures intended to house other state functions were erected. It was in the southeast (*qibli*) side of the vestibule (*durqah*) of the Qulla Gate, probably on the border of the Citadel Square, since its window overlooked the open square. Subordinate administrative structures were constructed next to it, such as the Qa'at al-Sahib (Vizir's Hall), the Bayt al-Mal (Treasury), the Diwan al-Jaysh (Army Department), and the Qa'at al-Insha' (Chancery Hall).¹⁸³

Shams al-Din Sunqur al-Ashqar and Badr al-Din Baysari al-Shamsi were probably the two most devoted Bahri *khushdashs* of Baybars.¹⁸⁴ Building the two structures for them at the Citadel may have been an attempt by Baybars to keep them around him, partly in their capacity as members of the informal advisory group and partly to watch them closely for any signs of disloyalty, since, according to the Mamluk system, their claims to the throne equalled his. These two factors defined the proximity of an amir's residence and the freedom of accessibility to the sultan's palaces at the Citadel this amir would enjoy for the rest of the Mamluk period. The location of Sunqur al-Ashqar's house is unknown, but we have a passing enumeration of its

Niyaba as residence, except for the Qa'a of Husam, which was left out. The different usages to designate one space may refer to the architectural components of the apartment on the roof of the Vicegeral Palace. The iwan in the first floor remained the most important and ceremonial feature of the structure until later, in the second reign of al-Nasir Muhammad, Baybars al-Mansuri *Al-Tuhfa al-Mulukiyya*, 187, 191.

¹⁸³ Al-'Umari, *Masalik*, 143; Qalqashandi, *Subh*, 3: 371; Maqrizi, *Khitat*, 2:205.

¹⁸⁴ Ibn Shaddad, *Tarikh al-Malik al-Zahir*, 290, lists these two amirs on top of Baybars' supporters. Baysari also may have been his companion from the beginning of their careers as mamluks. They were brought together from their native land into the slave-markets of the Ayyubid capitals and then met again in Cairo. Ibn Duqmaq, *al-Jawhar al-Thamin*, 287, calls Sunqur and Baysari "Baybars' two wings."

architectural components.¹⁸⁵ It had an iwan, a *majlis*, and a *hurmiyya*. Although this is minimal information, it still provides some clues to the architecture of princely and royal residences.

The iwan is both the most frequently encountered and most misunderstood term in medieval Islamic architecture. Its meaning expanded from its Persian origin as an open audience hall to the many metamorphoses it had acquired in different classes of Islamic architecture. In a Mamluk qa'a, it is simply the space opening onto the central space of the qa'a, usually through an arch. The *majlis*, on the other hand, normally has a T-shaped plan, with a deep room in the center flanked by two smaller spaces. It is separated from the central space of the qa'a by a wall having usually three doors to correspond to the *majlis* division.¹⁸⁶ (Fig 2. 8 Typical Plan of a *Majlis*).

The word *hurmiyya*, definitely an architectural term, is not explained by any of the authors who have dealt with the terminology of Mamluk architecture.¹⁸⁷ It appears in Ibn Shaddad's text where the word *durqa'a* (which literally means the entry to the qa'a) would have been expected, for

185 In addition to Ibn Shaddad's list, Sunqur al-Ashqar's house is recorded, with no details, in Ibn 'Abd al-Zahir, *al-Rawd al-Zahir*, Khuwaiter, 330; Maqrizi, *Suluk*, 1, pt. 2, 570, where he specifies that the house was built in the year 666/1267.

186 Hazem Sayed introduced the distinction between the *majlis* as an undistinguished sitting hall and a typologically particular space. The T-shaped space with a portico and three doors may even have been a specific category of *majlis*, the one known as *hiri*, after the city of al-Hira in the Jezira. Sayed's concise argument not only proved this point but also sketched a chronology of the development of residential spaces in Cairo from *majlis*-based to iwan-based qa'a between the years 1150-1400, see, Hazem Sayed, *The Rab' in Cairo: A Window on Mamluk Architecture and Urbanism*, unpublished PhD Dissertation, MIT (Sep 1987) 119-55. I am thankful to Hazem Sayed for permitting me to use his dissertation.

187 In a passing remark on a *waqf* dated to the year 1475, Jean-Claude Garcin, following a reference of M.M. Amin, defines a *qa'a hurmiyya* as that between two levels. Jean-Claude Garcin, "Habitat médiéval et histoire urbaine à Fustat et au Caire," in Jacques Revault et al., *Palais et maisons du Caire, l'époque mamelouke* (Paris, 1982) 206 and reference 2. They seem to have read the word *hurmiyya* as *haramiya* which would mean that the origin of the word is the dialectical Syrian term *harami*, which means thief, referring to the status of the hall as stolen between the two levels. There is another term in the architectural vocabulary of the period which conveys a similar meaning, *mustarraqa*, which is usually understood as mezzanine. It, too, is derived from a verb that means to steal, *saraqa*. For the different derivations of the root h-r-m and the origin of *harami* see, J.G. Hava, *al-Fara'id al-Duriyya, 'Arabi/Inglisi* (Beirut 1986) 120. I favor the reading of the word *ashurmiyya*, especially that the origin of the dialectical *harami* is Syrian not Egyptian.

the latter is usually the space that both iwan and *majlis* must have opened onto. It may be that *hurmiyya* meant the central space for a specific type of qa'a and thus was the equivalent of *durqa'a*, which may have been a more general word. Ibn Shaddad uses *hurmiyya* several times to list the component of qa'as from Baybars's time, and the word *durqa'a* does not appear in these descriptions.

The etymology of the word *hurmiyya* is hard to determine, but may have derived from the word *haram*, which has many architectural connotations. One of these meanings is the center of a house, and it was sometimes applied to designate the central courtyard,¹⁸⁸ the only meaning that can be assigned to the word in this context. The term does appear in a few *waqf* documents, but the context in which it is used is not clear. It seems to designate a type of qa'a that is called the Qa'a al-Hurmiyya, rather than a part of the qa'a as Ibn Shaddad's descriptions suggest. In one *waqf*, that of sultan al-Muzaffar Baybars al-Jashankir (1308-10), the qa'a known as the Hurmiyya is described as having one iwan and a *durqa'a*, the former roofed, the latter open (*kashf*),¹⁸⁹ It could be that a *hurmiyya* is a qa'a with only one sitting space, which opens onto the central space.

Another *waqf* contradicts this proposition. In the *waqf* of sultan al-Ashraf Barsbay (1422-38), a *qa'a hurmiyya* is described as having two iwans and a *durqa'a*, the most common *qa'a* arrangement.¹⁹⁰ The text does not specify whether the central space of this *qa'a* is roofed or open. It should be stressed that the two qa'as mentioned in the two *waqfs* are older than the *waqfs* themselves. In fact, the qa'a in Baybars al-Jashankir's *waqf* belonged to a palace known as that of al-Khulani, who is mentioned as one of the lesser amirs who followed Baybars and his companions when they left Aybak in Egypt and went into exile in Syria in 1254.¹⁹¹ The qa'a in Barsbay's *waqf* was

¹⁸⁸ 'Abd al-Rahim Ghaleb, *Mawsu'at al-'Imara al-Islamiyya*, 130-131, where he reports also another possible origin of the word, *hurr*, which also means the center of the house.

¹⁸⁹ *Awqaf* 22/4, Waqf of Sultan Baybars al-Jashankir, dated 26 Shawwal 707/1307, in Hazem Sayed, *The Rab' in Cairo: A Window on Mamluk Architecture and Urbanism*, 326.

¹⁹⁰ *Awqaf* 880, Waqf of sultan al-Ashraf Barsbay, several dates, first 15 Jamada al-Akhir 827/1423 and last 24 Rajab 841/1437, 67, lines 2, 8, 9.

¹⁹¹ Maqrizi, *Suluk*, 1, pt. 2, 392.

part of the palace of Salar, who was the vicegerent of the sultanate until 1309, the *terminus ad quem* for the building. The two qa'as, then, were more or less contemporaneous to Baybars's qa'as at the Citadel.

A *qa'a hurmiyya* is probably a place whose central space, or *durqa'a*, is open to the sky. Ibn Shaddad may have been using the term *hurmiyya* to designate the open central space itself, whereas later *waqf* uses expanded the word's meaning to refer to a *qa'a* whose central space is unroofed. The two examples found in *waqf* documents belong to the period of Baybars, and that the term *hurmiyya* is not encountered in descriptions of later Mamluk *qa'as*. The general tendency in the development of the Cairene *qa'a* was toward the reduction of the central space, and its roofing by a cupola.¹⁹² The *qa'a* of Sunqur al-Ashqar, and other similar contemporary *qa'as*, appear to belong to a transitional *qa'a* sub-type, in which the *durqa'a* was still too large to be roofed.

Ibn Shaddad says about Baysari's structure that it was made of three contiguous *qa'as* with all their dependencies (*huquq*) and an apartment (*tabaqa*) above the *tishtakhana* of the Citadel. This reductive description offers us a clue as to the location of this structure and maybe that of Sunqur al-Ashqar, which would fit the proposed hierarchical arrangement of residences at the Citadel. The *tishtakhana* literally means the house of the washbasin, and it was used to store bowls, basins, cushions, and carpets.¹⁹³ It was one in a series of other royal storehouses (*al-buyut al-sultaniyya*) that were situated in the area of the Qulla Gate, probably on its western side after al-Nasir's rebuilding, inside the southern enclosure. These included the *tishtakhana*, the *hawa'ijkhana*, (the pantry), the *firashkhana*, (the tent-room), and the royal kitchen.¹⁹⁴ These structures were razed in 1318 when al-Nasir

¹⁹² The process is discussed in Jean-Claude Garcin, "Habitat médiéval et histoire urbaine à Fustat et au Caire," 170-75; A more recent and more complete analysis is, Hazem Sayed, "The Development of the Cairene Qa'a: Some Considerations," *Annales Islamologiques*, 23 (1987) 31-53.

¹⁹³ Qalqashandi, *Subh*, 4:10-11.

¹⁹⁴ Maqrizi, *Khitat*, 2:205; Qalqashandi, *Subh*, 4: 10-13. A compilation of the functions of all of these services, in addition to the other royal stores that existed elsewhere at the Citadel can be checked in A. M. Majed, *Nuzum Dawlat Salatin al-Mamalik wa-Rusumahum fi-Misr*, (Institutions and Ceremonials of the Mamluks in Egypt), vol.2, *Court Ceremonials* (Cairo, 1982) 18-33.

Muhammad enlarged and monumentalized the mosque of the Citadel. The texts state that the area that was cleared for the rebuilding was the qibla side of the mosque;¹⁹⁵ thus, the storehouses could have been anywhere on the southeast wall of the mosque, but they most probably were on the eastern end closer to the actual Qulla Wall. The already mentioned citation in Ibn al-Furat, which indicates that the door of the old *firashkhana* was once on the site of the gate to al-Nasir's mosque, means that the storehouses were located closer to the northeastern side of the mosque than to its strict qibla side. Baysari's building was connected to the *tishtakhana*, and even extended above its first floor, which suggests that this princely residential structure was erected on the side of the Citadel Square that is closer to the sultan's domain, and perhaps inside the second door of the Qulla Gate that separated the two enclosures of the Citadel (see Fig 2. 6).

Baybars's Works in the Southern Enclosure

In the southern enclosure, inside the royal part of the Citadel delimited by the Qulla Wall, Baybars built his ceremonial and most monumental structures, in addition to some functional and service ones. He erected the Dar al-Dhahab (House of Gold), which appears to have been his private reception hall. He constructed two *tibaqs* (plural of *tabaqa*, a word that, in this context, means an apartment usually situated on the upper level of a building housing mamluks in training)¹⁹⁶ overlooking the court outside the Citadel's mosque, and opening onto the area of the Iwan. He also renovated the Burj al-Zawiya (Tower of the Corner) near the Citadel's Bab al-Sirr (the Secret Gate), extended corbels out of its sides and built a dome on its top, with

¹⁹⁵ Casanova, *Histoire*, (Arabic translation) 118; Maqrizi, *Khitat*, 2: 325; Nuwayri, *Nihayat al-Īrb fi-Funun al-Adab*, vol. 30, fol. 118; Author Zetterstéen, 167.

¹⁹⁶ Laila Ibrahim, "Middle-Class Living Units in Mamluk Cairo: Architecture and Terminology," *AARP*, 14 (Dec 1978) 26-28, where she discusses the different meanings of *tabaqa* in the Mamluk context; Abd al-Latif Ibrahim 'Ali, "Wathiqat al-Amir Akhur Kabir Qaraquja al-Hasani," (hereafter, *Wathiqat Qaraquja Majallat Kuliyat al-Adab* (Journal of Faculty of Literature, Cairo University) vol. 18, pt. 2 (Dec 1956) 184, note 3, for a definition of the *tabaqa* of the mamluks.

another *tibaq* next to it. Baybars's major ceremonial building was a great dome that was erected in the Rahbat al-Habarej (Court of al-Habarej).

The Dar al-Zahab (House of Gold)

Ibn Shaddad, al-Kutubi, and Ibn Taghri-Bardi speak of a House of Gold among Baybars's structures at the Citadel. Ibn Shaddad calls it a qa'a, and tells us that Baybars himself named it Dar al-Dhahab (House of Gold), perhaps in reference to the by then proverbial Bayt al-Dhahab of Khumarawayh (884-96), the son and successor of Ibn Tulun, or Qa'at al-Dhahab of the second Fatimid caliph al-'Aziz (975-96), which was the principal ceremonial hall at the Eastern Palace.¹⁹⁷ Ibn 'Abd al-Zahir mentions only the Dar al-Jadida (New House) as a royal structure built by Baybars at the Citadel, and specifies that it was completed in 1265, a date corroborated by both Maqrizi and Shafi' ibn 'Ali, the latter of whom calls the structure the Qa'a al-Zahiriyya, and describes it as highly and lavishly ornamented.¹⁹⁸ From the concurrence of dates of building and locations among the sources, we can agree with Casanova that all these names referred to one and the same structure, which was located near the Secret Gate overlooking the Horse Market.¹⁹⁹ Casanova deduced from his sources that al-Zahir's house and the one he built for his son al-Malik al-Sa'id used to stand opposite each other across from the big depression (*jura*). He relied in his reconstruction of the structures' location on a manuscript of Ibn Taghri-Bardi's chronicle at the *Bibliothèque Nationale* in Paris in which the distorted text could be understood as he interpreted it. The published edition of *al-Nujum al-Zahira*, and the older sources, make it clear that al-Malik al-Sa'id's house was in the northern enclosure, whereas Dar al-Dhahab was in the southern.

¹⁹⁷ Maqrizi, *Khitat*, 1: 316, for Bayt al-Dhahab of Khumarawayh, and 385 for Qa'at al-Dhahab of al-'Aziz. For a discussion of the role these and other period palaces must have played as precedents in the development of Mamluk residential architecture, see, Jean-Claude Garcin, "Habitat médiéval et histoire urbaine à Fustat et au Caire," 165-67.

¹⁹⁸ Ibn Shaddad, *Tarikh al-Malik al-Zahir*, 340; Ibn 'Abd al-Zahir, *al-Rawd al-Zahir*, Khuwaiter, 246; Maqrizi, *Suluk*, 1, pt. 2, 544; Maqrizi, *Khitat*, 2: 212.

¹⁹⁹ Casanova, *Histoire*, (Arabic translation) 79-81.

The site cannot be positively fixed; we only know it was "near" (*'ind*) the Bab al-Sirr, and all the places listed in the reference have as well disappeared. The Bab al-Sirr must be the gate leading to the square in front of the Great Iwan, mentioned in Ibn 'Abd al-Zahir's report, for this is the only gate that might have commanded the view over the horse market (*suq al-khayl*). Although the expression *bab al-sirr* means "the secret gate," the gate in front of the Iwan was neither secret nor the only *bab al-sirr* at the Citadel. The term is common in the sources and *waqf* documents, and probably denoted simply a private door in a discreet part of the structure, used by the owner as opposed to the main door which admitted guests.²⁰⁰ The Citadel's several secret gates, apparently used by the sultan, high amirs, and officials, and normally kept closed.²⁰¹

The Bab al-Sirr in front of the Iwan was the main one, and it was the ceremonial entry to the palatial complex on official occasions. It was most probably located at some point along that wall near the present-day al-Bab al-Jadid (the New Gate), and was removed by Muhammad 'Ali when he rebuilt the whole area in the 1820s. The map of the *Description de l'Égypte* shows a gate that opened into the palatial complex, opposite the Iwan. It is called Bab Chirk, meaning a "trap door," a name that may be a hold over from the days when it was used as the private gate of the sultan.²⁰² The map of the *Description* does not show any structure, or ruins of a structure, on either side of Bab Chirk, but to the northwest of the Gate along the wall of the southern enclosure, # 85 designates "subterranean stores."²⁰³ These badly ruined

²⁰⁰ The definition of Bab al-Sirr, based on Mamluk legal documents, can be found in Abd al-Latif Ibrahim 'Ali, "Wathiqat al-Amir Qaraqaja," 226, note 17; Mona Zakarya, *Deux palais du Caire médiéval*, 112; Hazem Sayed, *The Rab' in Cairo: A Window on Mamluk Architecture and Urbanism*, 125, 460.

²⁰¹ Al-'Umari, *Masalik*, 144, says that the sultan has many secret gates; Qalqashandi, *Subh*, 3: 371-72, lists the Secret Gate in front of the Iwan among the three gates of the Citadel.

²⁰² Casanova, *Histoire*, (Arabic translation) 90; Creswell, *M.A.E.*, 2: 36; Ibn Taghri-Bardi, *Nujum*, 8:172, note # 1, & 9:181, note # 3, where Ramzi tentatively identifies Bab al-Sirr with Bab Chirk, and gives the story of Muhammad 'Ali's rebuilding of the area and the blocking of the old gates. He, however, makes a mistake in asserting that Bab al-Sirr (Bab Chirk) is the same as the one known as Bab al-Sab' Hadarat, which as we will see in the discussion of al-Nasir Muhammad's works was in a totally different location.

²⁰³ *Description de l'Égypte, état moderne*, planches, tome premier, map of Cairo.

underground spaces are still accessible today from underneath the Police Museum. Two qa'as still remain, with a passageway (*dihliz*) between them. The windows of the larger qa'a overlook the Carved Path, and may have had a view on the horse market. Although it is impossible to assert that this was the qa'a of Baybars, its existence underground proves that the sub-surface level of that side of the southern enclosure may yield more undiscovered structures, and the Dar al-Dhahab should be one of them (See Fig 2. 6).

Ibn Shaddad says that the Dar al-Dhahab consisted of a *majlis*, an *iwan*, two *suffahs*, and a *hurmiyya*, and was surmounted by a single *tabaqa* which had a *tayyara* over the qa'a's *badhahanj*. This description needs clarification before it can be used to enhance our understanding of the architecture of royal qa'as in the early Mamluk period. This qa'a was similar to that of Sunqur al-Ashqar in its arrangement of the two sitting elements, *iwan* and *majlis*, on both sides of the central *hurmiyya*. It differs in that it had two *suffahs*, small shallow alcoves, reminiscent of the smaller side iwans that existed in the original biaxial plan of a Cairene qa'a. The two *suffahs* of Baybars's qa'a could have been two simple alcoves, or more elaborate arrangements of multiple-arches, usually three, supported on slender columns on each side of the *durqa'a* that would be found in similarly ornate Mamluk qa'as, albeit later in date.²⁰⁴ **(Fig 2. 9 View of the Main Hall in the Palace of Bashtak with Arcades on the Sides).**

The *tabaqa* in Ibn Shaddad's description probably referred to a simple room on an upper floor. He does not say how the *tabaqa* and the qa'a's *badhahanj* (wind catcher or ventilator) were related. In a Mamluk qa'a it is usually in the form of an open shaft rising above either one of the iwans or one of the *martabas* or the nooks (*khaza'in*, pl. of *khizana*) on the sides of the iwans.²⁰⁵ The side of the *badhahanj* facing the direction of the desirable wind

²⁰⁴ A general definition of a *suffah* in a medieval qa'a is a shallow alcove, see, Hazem Sayed, *The Rab' in Cairo*, 145, note 212; Mona Zakarya, *Deux palais du Caire médiéval*, 149, gives the definition of the partly-ornamental partly-functional of the three-arched *suffah*. Her definition, however, is based on later *waqf* examples.

²⁰⁵ 'Abd al-Latif Ibrahim 'Ali, "Wathiqat al-Amir Qaraqaja," 228, note 22; Mona Zakarya, *Deux palais du Caire médiéval*, 115. A recent study on the ventilators of Cairo analyzed all available data from medieval sources, see, David A. King, "Architecture and Astronomy: On the Ventilators of Medieval Cairo and Their Secrets," *JAOS*, 104/1 (1984) 97-133.

was open, and covered with a wooden grille. The cover of the shaft slopes back so as to direct the refreshing air inside and downward. The sentence could mean that the *tabaqa* was constructed above the *badhahanj*, for the word *tayyara*, which means "the one flying over," usually signifies the room on top of the whole structure. However, a room above the wind-catcher could obstruct the circulation of air, and there are no examples of such an arrangement among the surviving *badhahanjs* or in *waqf* descriptions. Another, more plausible interpretation, though one that makes the sentence redundant, is that the *badhahanj*'s surface is itself the *tabaqa tayyara*, or that the *tabaqa tayyara* occupied the part of the roof behind the *badhahanj*. Be that as it may, the text does indicate that the qa'a had a ventilator, and that its roof had relatively little other construction.

In his short sentence, Ibn Shaddad is actually presenting a description of a space that belonged to one of the dominant variants of the qa'a type in the period 1250-1300. According to Hazem Sayed's graphs, which indicate the percentage of five different variants of the qa'a type built in medieval Cairo, the one with one *majlis* and one iwan represented 33% of the total.²⁰⁶ **(Fig 2. 10 Types of Residential Units Built in Cairo from 1150 to 1400 According to Sayed)**. Both qa'as of Baybars and Sunqur al-Ashqar properly fit the general formal characteristics of that variant at that stage of development. Having an iwan and a *majlis* on both ends of a qa'a is the transitional stage between the double-*majlis* qa'a, which prevailed in the Fustat houses of the early Fatimid period, and the double-iwan qa'a which became the norm in Cairo's residential architecture from the fourteenth century on. In this regard the qa'as of the Citadel appear to conform to the general trends in Cairene residential architecture. They may have been more monumental than ordinary residential qa'as, either in their overall volumes, or their roof heights, or the size of their spaces. But there is no indication of that in the available sources. Remains of almost contemporary princely qa'as around the Citadel and elsewhere in Cairo do show a tendency to volumes grander than those of later residential qa'as from the Circassian period, but we have no

²⁰⁶ Hazem Sayed, *The Rab' in Cairo*, graphs, 154-55; idem, "The Development of the Cairene Qa'a: Some Considerations," 44.

basis for comparison with contemporary average Cairene qa'as, of which no examples remain.²⁰⁷

The Burj al-Zawiyya (Tower of the Corner)

Baybars is credited with the renovation of a tower referred to in Mamluk sources as the Burj al-Zawiyya (Tower of the Corner). Ibn Shaddad and al-Kutubi locate this tower near the Secret Gate of the Citadel. Ibn Taghri-Bardi says it was near the Bab al-Qal'a (Gate of the Citadel, presumably meaning the Mudarraaj Gate). This tower is most likely the one that was recently excavated in the northern corner of the southern enclosure, especially since the latter's location is in a bend in the wall that constitutes a right angle or corner (*zawiya*). It is probably the same one called on the map of the *Description de l'Égypte*, the Burj al-Shakhs (Tower of the Person) (# 86), which stands at the angle where the western wall of the southern enclosure veers sharply to the southeast. An Ottoman source locates the [Burj] al-Shakhs near the upper gate (*al-bab al-fuqani*) which is the Ottoman name of the original Secret Gate of the Citadel.²⁰⁸

This tower, which was recently uncovered in the renovation work done at the Citadel, is possibly the only partly surviving structure of Baybars. It is round in section and its upper frieze of carved lions is the only part showing above the actual ground level. The frieze is divided into eight segments, each section consists of two lions passant in relief flanked by projecting statues of the head, chest, and the two forepaws of an animal that

²⁰⁷ The question of monumentality in Mamluk architecture in general is discussed in a groundbreaking, though a bit outdated, article by R. Stephen Humphreys, "The Expressive Intent of the Mamluk Architecture in Cairo: a Preliminary Essay," *Studia Islamica*, 35 (1972) 69-119. The development of Mamluk qa'as in residential architecture is traced in Alexandre Lézine, "Les salles nobles des palais Mamelouks," *Annales Islamologiques*, 10 (1972) 149-205; Jacques Revault, "L'architecture domestique du Caire à l'époque Mamelouke," in Jacques Revault et al., *Palais et maisons du Caire, I- époque mamelouke*, 39-125; Laila A. Ibrahim, "Residential Architecture in Mamluk Cairo," *Muqarnas*, vol. 2 (1984) 47-59. The issue of formal monumentality in Mamluk architecture is succinctly discussed in Hazem Sayed, *The Rab' in Cairo*, 35-54.

²⁰⁸ Mustafa Ibrahim, *Waqā'i' Misr al-Qahira Bayn 1100 wa 1150*, MS H.O.38, Vienna National Library (copy at Creswell Library, AUC, Cairo) 123.

most probably represents a lion as well.²⁰⁹ (Fig 2. 11 View of the Carved Lions' Frieze). The lions are not identical but they are of similar sizes and of the same carving style. Al-Zahir Baybars used the lion passant as his *rank* (the word roughly means emblem),²¹⁰ and adorned many of his buildings with representations of it, such as the Qanatir al-Siba' (Bridge of the Lions). There is hardly any doubt that this tower was built by him as well, although it has no inscription identifying the patron.

There is in fact a Burj al-Siba' (Tower of the Lions) mentioned in the sources, but not attributed to Baybars, or to anyone else. Its approximate location according to the texts, is that of the discovered tower, near the Secret Gate.²¹¹ The Burj al-Siba' of the texts was repeatedly used to confine the caliphs, al-Hakim (1261-1302) and his son and successor al-Mustakfi (1302-40), and their families in it whenever they happened to be used by the unsuccessful party in the chronic struggles for the sultanate. There is a mention of one of these instances in Ibn Taghri-Bardi's chronicle where he calls the places in which the caliph and his families were lodged in 1302, the Dar al-Salihiyya and the Dar al-Zahiriyya.²¹² The overwhelming majority of sources speak only of the Tower of the Lions as the dwelling place of the caliph at the Citadel, and one of these sources goes so far as to name it the

²⁰⁹ Many arguments have been raised as to whether the animals represented in Baybars' rank are lions or other felines. The argument of the meaning of Baybars' name, Bay-Bars, the master panther, as the origin of his rank's selection is still unsolved. The Arabic word used to signify Baybars' rank is *sab'*, which is not exactly confined to lion, but to lions and wolves, which would permit extending the representation, see, Abu Hilal al-'Askari (d. after 1004) *Kitab al-Talkhis li-Ma'rifat Asma' al-Ashya'*, Izzat Hasan ed. (Damascus, 1970) vol.2, 644.

²¹⁰ Qalqashandi, *Subh*, 4: 61-62; Ibn Taghri-Bardi, *Nujum*, 7: 4, where he discusses the origin of Aybak's rank; Maqrizi, *Khitat*, 2: 147, where he reports the story of al-Nasir's removal of Baybars' lions because he did not like seeing the rank of another sultan on monumental structures; the same story is reported by al-Yusufi, *Nuzhat al-Nazir*, 264. Al-Ashraf Khalil also removed the rank of Baybars from several structures in Damascus, especially from the walls of its Citadel, see, Abu-Shama, *Al-Zayl 'ala-l-Rawdatayn*, 237, he also cites two distiches that further clarify the meaning of rank by differentiating between the rank itself and the emblem inside it.

²¹¹ Nuwayri, *Nihayat al-Īrb fi-Funun al-Adab*, vol. 31, fol. 63 & 79, where Nuwayri specifies that Burj al-Siba' is near the Secret Gate of the Citadel.

²¹² Ibn Taghri-Bardi, *Nujum*, 8: 148.

Burj al-Khalifa (Tower of the Caliph).²¹³ If Ibn Taghri-Bardi's terminology is to be trusted, the difference in the place names may imply that there was a residence, the Dar al-Zahiriyya that was named after its builder al-Zahir Baybars, inside the Tower of the Lions. This may constitute an indirect proof that the tower was also built by Baybars. The other name used by Ibn Taghri-Bardi, the Dar al-Salihiyya, may refer to the qa'a of al-Salih Najm al-Din Ayyub, which was supposed to be near the walls overlooking the maydan.

Baybars is reported to have "enveloped" or "covered" (*ghashsha*) the Tower of the Corner with two covers or coats (*ghisha'in*, dual of *ghisha'*), which is a difficult sentence to interpret, except that the uncovered tower furnishes a clue for the explanation. The shaft of the discovered round tower is hidden from the northwest and northeast behind straight walls which intersect at an acute angle following the Carved Path that led up to the Secret Gate of the southern enclosure. The lower parts of these walls are definitely either Ayyubid or Mamluk in style, although their upper parts may have been rebuilt by Muhammad 'Ali. The original walls may have been the two added "coats" of Baybars. The report on the Tower of the Corner states also that Baybars extended corbels (*rawashin*, plural of *rawshan*) out of his tower. These may have been the lions' sculptures protruding from the uncovered tower. He is also said to have constructed a dome on top of the tower, whose ceiling he ornamented. Adding domes on top of preexisting towers is a practice that will be encountered several times. Later reporters in the Ottoman and pre-modern periods speak of the view of the Citadel's many domes above its towers.²¹⁴ The underlying purpose seems to have been to exploit a view, especially in the Mamluk period when many new

²¹³ Maqrizi, *Suluk*, 2, pt. 2, 403, where he reports that the caliph al-Mustakfi was brought to Burj al-Siba', and his cousin to another unspecified tower, just like his father al-Hakim who had been housed there. Shams al-Din al-Shuja'i, *Tarikh al-Malik al-Nasir Muhammad b. Qalawun al-Salihi wa-Awladahu*, (hereafter, *Tarikh al-Malik al-Nasir*) vol.1, Barbara Schäfer, ed. (Wiesbaden, 1977) 92, calls the tower in which the caliph lived in the Citadel, Burj al-Khalifa.

²¹⁴ Evliya Çelebi, *Seyahatnamesi*, 9-10: 384-85; Fig. # 68 in *Description de l'Égypte, état moderne*, planches, tome premier, drawn by Conté, shows three towers on the southern wall of the northern enclosure with conical domes on their tops; Zuheir al-Shayeb, *Wasf Misr, al-Lawhat, al-Dawla al-Haditha*, pl. 68.

constructions at the Citadel were oriented towards the views of the city and the Nile.

The Dome of Baybars at the Citadel

Perhaps the most monumental of Baybars's structures, the Qubba (Dome) is mentioned in all the sources which recorded his constructions at the Citadel. It was supported by twelve colored, marble columns. It was profusely ornamented, and figures of the sultan and his amirs were represented on its surfaces (*suwwirat*, which could mean to paint but it is preferable at this stage to use the verb represent).²¹⁵

Three of the four sources that give the location of the Qubba situate it in a court named the Rahbat al-Habarej (?) (Court of Habarej). These references, instead of giving us a clue to the site of this structure, confuse matters considerably, for the court's name is not found in any other source. The word *habarej* does not have any known meaning and it does not seem to have been a toponym, which would have at least proved that the orthography is correct.

One hypothesis would be that *habarej* is a copyist's error. The earliest chronicler in whose book the word first appears, Ibn Shaddad, is the only candidate. He could not have copied it from another source, because he was a contemporary of Baybars and known to have solely relied on personal observations in his chronicling of Baybars's rule.²¹⁶ There is only one surviving copy of the manuscript, and it is said to have been handwritten by him. His account was summarized by the other two chroniclers, al-Yunini and al-Kutubi, who reported Baybars's constructions at length and in whose texts the word *habarej* also occurs. Both authors were Syrian scholars of the fourteenth century who may have totally relied on Ibn Shaddad's book

²¹⁵ Ibn Shaddad, *Tarikh al-Malik al-Zahir*, 340; al-Kutubi, *Fawat al-Wafiiyyat wa-l-Zayl 'Alyha*, 1: 242; Ibn Kathir, *Al-Bidaya wa-l-Nihaya fi-l-Tarikh*, 13: 275; Ibn Taghri-Bardi, *Nujum*, 7:190. The editor of Ibn Taghri-Bardi's book mentions also the reference in Qutb al-Din al-Yunini (d.1325-6) *Zayl Mir'at al-Zaman*.

²¹⁶ See the editor's introduction to Ibn Shaddad chronicle, *Tarikh al-Malik al-Zahir*, 24-7.

without either having seen the Citadel or having had a firsthand knowledge of its toponymy.²¹⁷

The fourth chronicler, Ibn Taghri-Bardi, still copying his information from Ibn Shaddad or one of the later Syrian authors, is the only one who corrected what seems to be a misspelling of the court's name. The editor of Ibn Taghri-Bardi's published text writes that the two manuscripts used in editing the work had the word *kharej* instead of *Habarej*.²¹⁸ *Kharej*, (outer), for the Rahbat al-Kharej (Outer Court) is probably the accurate reading. Ibn Taghri-Bardi, who was Egyptian and the son of an important Mamluk amir, had access to the Citadel, and may have corrected the misspelling in the sources from which he compiled his book depending on his expert knowledge of the Citadel's toponymy. Although this appears to solve the problem, Ibn Taghri-Bardi's correction may have been anachronistic, for he was a fifteenth-century historian reporting events of the thirteenth century. Locating this court for our reconstruction also remains a problem, for we have no reference to an "Outer Court" in the Citadel at any period. One could prove, however, that this elusive court was the main court of the Citadel, called in later sources the Rahbat al-Iwan (Court of the Iwan), by tracing the development of the building of audience halls during the period between Baybars and al-Nasir Muhammad (1260-1341).

Ibn al-Furat relates among the events of the year 1284 that Qalawun ordered the demolition of the Qubba of Baybars to build a new Qubba in the court, without specifying which court.²¹⁹ Ibn 'Abd al-Zahir, who wrote a

²¹⁷ Biographies of both scholars can be found in Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalani, *al-Durar al-Kamina fi-A'yan al-Mi'a al-Thamina* (Hyderabad, 1929-32), for al-Kutubi, vol. 3, 451-52, for al-Yunini, vol. 4, 382. Concise English biographies can be found in, Donald Little, *An Introduction to Mamluk Historiography, An Analysis of Arabic Annalistic and Biographical Sources for the Reign of al-Malik an-Nasir Muhammad ibn Qala'un* (Wiesbaden, 1970), for al-Yunini, 57 and for al-Kutubi, 67.

²¹⁸ Ibn Taghri-Bardi, *Nujum*, 7:190, and note # 1, where the editor reports that the name he used in both manuscripts was Rahbat al-Kharij, and that he corrected it by using al-Yunini's and al-Kutubi's texts.

²¹⁹ Ibn al-Furat, *Tarikh*, vol. 8, 38; Maqrizi, *Khitat*, 2: 212, states that Qalawun demolished the Qulla of Baybars and built his Qubba in its place in Shawwal 685 H, which is the same date given by Ibn al-Furat for the demolition of the Qubba of Baybars. The concurrence of the dates in these reports permits the correction of the spelling of al-Qulla in Maqrizi's sentence. I think the mistake resulted from the printed text of Maqrizi which has Qulla where it should

eulogistic chronicle of Qalawun's reign similar to the one which he wrote for Baybars, states that Qalawun's Qubba was in the Rahbat al-Hamra (Red Court).²²⁰ This is the second name used to designate what appears to be the same court, since Qalawun's Qubba replaced that of Baybars. Similar to the case of the Rahbat al-Habarej, the name Rahbat al-Hamra is not encountered in other sources. Al-Ashraf Khalil restored, or perhaps rebuilt, the structure attributed to his father (the sources are very unclear about the extent of work achieved during his short reign). This last structure was in turn destroyed in 1311 by Khalil's brother and successor, al-Nasir Muhammad, to be replaced by his famous Iwan al-Nasiri, which was concurrently called Dar al-'Adl. The location of this last Iwan is known to us. It is marked on the map of the *Description de l'Égypte*, where it is labeled *le Palais de Joseph*. From it we can note that the court in which the Iwan stands is actually the one known generally as the Rahbat al-Qal'a (Court of the Citadel). This court was bordered by the mosque of al-Nasir, and in earlier time by the original mosque of the Citadel, from the southeast and the Iwan from the northwest. It was almost in the same site as the court presently extending to the northeast of the mosque of Muhammad 'Ali. It appears that this location was always occupied by the main court in the Citadel. What may be deduced from this reading is that the Iwan of al-Nasir stood at the same place as the Qubba of Baybars, and that the Court of al-Habarej could only have been the Court of the Citadel. **(Fig 2. 12 Plan of the Court and Location of the Iwan).**

Part of the confusion can be attributed to the interchangeability of the two words *iwan* and *qubba* in our sources. These two words normally denoted architectural elements: the first a hall opened at one end, the second any kind of dome. Yet, both words may, in some instances, have been used to designate the whole structure. This usage is often encountered in Islamic commemorative architecture where the word *qubba* signified the funerary

have Qubba, when it reports Qalawun's replacement of Baybars' structure. This should be differentiated from the Qulla, also built by Baybars on the wall separating the two enclosures of the Citadel, which was not rebuilt until the time of al-Nasir Muhammad.

²²⁰ Ibn-'Abd al-Zahir, *Tashrif al-Ayyam wa-l-'Usur fi-Sirat al-Malik al-Mansur*, Murad Kamil ed. (Cairo, 1961) 139.

structure of an amir or a pious man, which usually had a dome over the tomb. In the palatial context, the usage is less frequent. Arabic chronicles present several examples where palaces were called after the most important element in them: the iwan in which royal audiences took place,²²¹ or the dome that, in this context, seems to have symbolized authority and domination. Thus we find mentions of the legendary Iwan Kisra, the palace of Sassanian kings in ancient Ctesiphon, and of the Iwan al-Kabir (Great Iwan) which was the main ceremonial unit in the Fatimid Eastern Palace.²²² Similarly, we have references to the Umayyad and the Abbasid Qubba al-Khadra (Green Dome) as the caliphal palace in Damascus and Baghdad, and to the palace known as the Qubba in Palermo in Norman Sicily, or even the famous Qubbat al-Hawa (Dome of the Winds) which was built by an Abbasid governor of Egypt on the hill upon which the Citadel was later constructed, and which was used as a pleasure pavilion by all subsequent rulers of the country until the end of the Tulunid period.²²³

At the Citadel of the Mountain, the two terms, iwan and *qubba*, appear to have been alternately used to designate the main ceremonial hall in the Mamluk palatial complex. This structure, reconstructed at least four times in sixty years, featured a dome and iwans as constant components at every stage of reconstruction. In our sources, its appellation did not stabilize on the

²²¹ For the different denotations of the word iwan, see, Oleg Grabar, "Iwan", *EI2*, vol. IV, 287-9.

²²² In every Arabic lexicon until the present day, the word iwan is mentioned in connection with Iwan Kisra, see, A.A. al-Bustani, *Al-Bustan* (Beirut, 1927) 1: 85; E.W. Lane, *Arabic-English Lexicon* (Edinburgh, 1863) book 1, pt. 1, 129. These persistent references suggest that this particular monument might have represented the archetype for iwans in the medieval collective memory, see, N. Rabbat, "The Iwans of the Madrasa of Sultan Hasan," *ARCE Newsletter*, No. 143/144 (Fall/Winter 1988/89) 5-9. For the Fatimid Iwan, see, Maqrizi, *Khitat*, 1:388.

²²³ The palace renovated by Mu'awiya in Damascus south of the Great Mosque, known only through texts, was known as the Khadra' (Green), or also as the Qubba al-Khadra' (Green Dome), Ibn Kathir, *Al-Bidaya wa-l-Nihaya fi-l-Tarikh*, 9:143, where the author explains that the palace of Mu'awiya was called the Green Dome after the Dome he built in it. In Baghdad, the center of the Round City of Abu Ja'far al-Mansur was occupied by the palace known as the Qubba al-Khadra' (Green Dome), see, K.A.C. Creswell, *A Short Account of Early Muslim Architecture*, revised and supplemented by James W. Allan (Cairo, 1989) 239; Jacob Lassner, *The Topography of Baghdad in the Early Middle Ages* (Detroit, 1970) 141-6. For the Sicilian al-Qubba, see, Alexandre Lézine, "Les salles nobles des palais Mamelouks," 70, and references listed in note 3. For Qubbat al-Hawa, see, Maqrizi, *Khitat*, 2: 202.

name Iwan until the third rebuilding under al-Ashraf Khalil ibn Qalawun around 1290.

The structure known as the Iwan al-Qal'a (Iwan of the Citadel) is mentioned in the sources from the time of al-Zahir Baybars on. He, however, is not credited with its building, nor are any of his predecessors. Baybars could not have been the builder of the initial Iwan, for the structure is first recorded in the reporting of his crowning ceremony, which happened in 1259,²²⁴ before he could have built anything. The most probable builder of this structure would be al-Kamil, for he is the sultan credited with most major structures at the Citadel prior to Baybars.²²⁵ The second most important ceremony in Baybars's reign, the verification of the pedigree of the claimant to the Abbasid caliphate in 1260, took place in the Iwan according to two chroniclers, or in the Qa'at al-'Awamid (Hall of the Columns) according to the majority of chroniclers. We can safely dismiss the two accounts that assigned the ceremony to the Iwan as either mistakes in compilation, since neither chronicler was a contemporary to the occasion, or as resulting from ignorance of the Citadel's topography in that period, or both. The first of these authors, Ibn Kathir was a Damascene who may have confused both halls. The second, Ibn Taghri-Bardi, may have expressly changed the names as he may have rejected the possibility of the Hall of the Columns having been a public hall. To him, the structure was firmly established as a qa'a of the harem, and the memory of its use as a reception hall two centuries before his writing, during the lifetime of Shajar al-Durr, may have vanished.

If we assume that major ceremonies were supposed to be held in the public audience hall, then we may wonder why a critical event such as the recognition of the first Abbasid caliph in Egypt took place in a qa'a that belonged to the sultan's private palaces? The reason was possibly that the

²²⁴ S.F. Sadeque, *Baybars I of Egypt*, Arabic Text, 18; Ibn al-Dawadari, *Al-Durra al-Zakiyya fi-Akhbar al Dawla al-Turkiyya*, 63; Maqrizi, *Suluk*, 1, pt. 2, 438; Ibn Taghri-Bardi, *Nujum*, 7: 102.

²²⁵ In fact one of the most knowledgeable chroniclers in questions related to the terminology of the Citadel, Baybars al-Mansuri, calls the Iwan, *al-Iwan al-Kabir al-Kamili* (of al-Kamil) when he reports the ceremony of recognition of the second Abbasid caliph, al-Hakim, at the Citadel, in 1261, al-'Ayni, *Iqd al-Juman*, 1:348, on the authority of Baybars al-Mansuri from his still unpublished, *Zubdat al-Fikra fi-Tarikh al-Hijra*.

Iwan was under reconstruction. In fact, all our sources state that, after the killing of the first caliph al-Mustansir in 1261, another Abbasid claimant was produced and recognized as caliph in 1262 in a ceremony at the Great Iwan of the Citadel.²²⁶ This may mean that the Iwan's construction was completed between the two dates, although no source confirms that. We know that Baybars built a "Qubba" supported on twelve columns. We know it was located in the Citadel's court. Its date of building is unknown to us. The Qubba may have been an addition to, or a part of the Iwan. In fact, Ibn al-Dawadari, who generally speaks of Baybars holding audiences in the Iwan, says in one instance that Baybars "sat in *al-iwan wa-l-qubba* with the newly appointed caliph,"²²⁷ not long after the latter's confirmation ceremony at the Hall of the Columns, implying that the two words refer to a single structure. Maqrizi offers us another clue by stating, when reporting the celebration of the circumcision of Baybars's second son Najm al-Din Khadr in 1273, that "Baybars sat in the seat of his sultanate in the Qubba al-Sa'ida."²²⁸ Other references always assigned the seat of the sultanate to the Iwan of the Citadel. Thus, it is possible from the few mentions we have to conjecture that the building that Baybars erected as the Qubba is one and the same as the Iwan of the Citadel. The alternation between the two terms, *iwan* and *qubba*, may signify that both architectural elements were prominent in the conception of the structure either spatially or ceremonially. In reviewing the later reconstruction of the Citadel Iwan, we would find that, in every stage, the structure seems to have had a dome in its center that rested on columns with iwans or porticos on the sides.

The walls of the Qubba's interior were covered with a cycle of princely scenes. Ibn Shaddad says that the scenes represented Baybars and his amirs and retinue in the day of the procession (*mawkib*). Instead of proceeding to

²²⁶ Ibn-'Abd al-Zahir, *al-Rawd al-Zahir fi-Sirat al-Malik al-Zahir*, 141; Ibn al-Dawadari, *Al-Durra al-Zakiyya fi-Akhbar al Dawla al-Turkiyya*, 63; Ibn Kathir, *Al-Bidaya wa-l-Nihaya fi-l-Tarikh*, 13: 236, he calls it al-Iwan al-Kabir (the Great, maybe meaning that there were more than one ceremonial iwan); Ibn Duqmaq, *al-Jawhar al-Thamin*, 186; Maqrizi, *Suluk*, 1, pt. 2, 477; Ibn Taghri-Bardi, *Nujum*, 7:119.

²²⁷ Ibn al-Dawadari, *Al-Durra al-Zakiyya fi-Akhbar al Dawla al-Turkiyya*, 73 for the reference to the Iwan and Qubba, 63, 94, & 303 where he mentions only the Iwan.

²²⁸ Maqrizi, *Khitat*, 2:112.

describe the scenes, he cites parts of a poem by a certain Abu al-Fityan Ibn Hayyus which he says almost depicts the representations on the Qubba's walls. It is a very meager source of information to rely upon: a poetical quotation written in praise of a structure used to describe another structure that belonged to a different time and place. But given the lack of information on figural ornamentation in Mamluk palaces, the poetry does furnish a few clues to the composition and the topic represented. It goes like this

And you behold the birds of the air upon its sides
Some in flight, others perching
And racehorses whose hooves never leave the ground
As though they gallop beneath their riders
Then those who hurl thunderous blows that do no harm
And those who wear *yalmaqs* ²²⁹ that cannot be removed
A group of them have drawn their shining blades, and
another
Has drawn his bow, whose arrow has no target
And cannot leave the bow
And his snares are always fatal for the birds²³⁰

If the themes described in this quotation are admitted to correspond to the scenes in Baybars's Qubba truthfully, then Ibn Shaddad's account does not tell us everything. He says that Baybars had his figure and those of his courtiers represented as in the procession. Obviously, the scenes depicted by Ibn Hayyus are hunting scenes. The persons portrayed may have been meant to be Mamluks, for they are the ones that usually wore *yalmaqs*, or coats of Mongol origin. The existence of birds perching implies that there were also trees, probably in the background of the hunting scenes. Two methods of bird hunting are recorded: the bow and the snare. There is an image that may not have belonged to a hunting scene, unless we assume that a detail is missing from the poetry. We are not told if the men who drew their blades were chasing or killing animals. Unfortunately, we have no clue as to whether these scenes were composed in a manner similar to hunting scenes in other

²²⁹ A *yalmaq* is a word of Persian origin, it means "a furred coat of the Tartars (Mongols)," see, J.G. Hava, *al-Fara'id al-Duriyya, 'Arabi/Inglisi*, 904.

²³⁰ I am grateful to my friends Shawkat Toorawa and Michael Cooperson for their help in understanding and translating the poem.

media, such as metalwork or miniature painting. (Fig 2. 13 A Hunting Scene from the Baptistère de Saint Louis).

Figural representations in Islamic architecture, though not very common, are reported in many regions and different periods. We know that Baybars's Qubba was not the first structure endowed with figural representation in Egypt,²³¹ and not even the only one of his constructions at the Citadel to receive such surface treatment. Ibn 'Abd al-Zahir tells us that the Dar al-Jadida (New House) had also representations of soldiers depicted on its surfaces.²³² The chronicler recited a poem of his own composition to praise the structure, in which it is apparent that representations in architecture were not foreign to him. Moreover, Ibn 'Abd al-Zahir alludes to a difference between Baybars's choice of representation and those of his predecessors, in which Baybars's qualities as a fighter and a leader of armies are stressed. From the known themes of the Islamic princely cycle, Baybars is said to have preferred scenes of horsemen and warriors to surround him in his qa'a, unlike the rulers before him who chose to portray themselves among singers and in drinking settings, possibly a direct reference to Fatimid and Tulunid precedents.

The Citadel at the End of Baybars's Reign

Al-Zahir Baybars was the third sultan of Egypt who had a lasting impact on the development of the Citadel. Salah al-Din al-Ayyubi started its construction, but never lived in it. Al-Kamil made it the seat of the Ayyubid sultanate. Baybars, apparently after a short period of hesitation, decided to designate it as the center of the Mamluk sultanate. He divided it into two enclosures, rearranged its interior spaces to conform to the new Mamluk structures of the state and the army, endowed it with stately structures worthy of his sultanate, and encouraged the urban expansion around it so as the residential areas reached its western side across from the maydan during his

²³¹ Laila A. Ibrahim, "Residential Architecture in Mamluk Cairo," 52, collected references of precedences in royal structures from Egyptian annalistic sources.

²³² Ibn-'Abd al-Zahir, *al-Rawd al-Zahir fi-Sirat al-Malik al-Zahir*, 246, again the verb used in the poem is *sawwar* (to paint).

reign. He also strengthened some of its defences, provided it with additional water supplies via cisterns and watercourses, and enlarged the equestrian structures at its foot by adding a few stables around the maydan. He, however, seems to have favored, for his *furusiyya* exercises, the new maydan he had built on newly recovered land in al-Bourji (the present Bab al-Luq) from which the Nile had receded in the thirteenth century. The list of belvederes (*manazir*) he is reported to have built around the Maydan al-Zahiri shows that some of these structures were even more monumental than the ones he built at the Citadel.²³³ This preference could have been prompted only by economic considerations, with no intention at creating a competing center of power to the Citadel. The building of a maydan may have been the best solution to stabilize the land gained from the Nile, and by the same token to appropriate it for the sultan. There is another factor, an environmental one, that determined the building of the maydan near the Nile. That is the transportation of water to keep the grass alive in the scorching heat of Cairo. We know that under al-Ashraf Khalil and al-Nasir Muhammad, the Qaramaydan under the Citadel regained its supremacy over the other maydans scattered around Cairo. But this did not happen until a steady supply of the Nile water was brought through the aqueduct. This was not available during al-Zahir's reign. In fact, we are told that al-Nasir Muhammad turned the Maydan al-Zahiri into a garden (*bustan*), before zoning its land for urban development, because the Nile had receded further since the time of Baybars, which probably made the task of watering it very costly.²³⁴

Like Salah al-Din and al-Kamil, Baybars died and was buried in Damascus, although he had prepared a mausoleum for himself in Cairo. He was, like his two predecessors, a man of action and a fighter. We are told that "people in his time were constantly interested in weapons, in training, and in

²³³ Ibn Shaddad, *Tarikh al-Malik al-Zahir*, 342-3. Baybars built around the maydan a *qubba* and two monumental qa'as for himself, and twelve qa'as for his courtiers and amirs and for some state-functions.

²³⁴ Maqrizi, *Khitat*, 2: 117, 198; Ibn Taghri-Bardi, *Nujum*, 7:191, note # 6, and 9:37, note # 1.

furusiyya exercises."²³⁵ This trait not only appeared in the predominant behavioral pattern of his mamluks and soldiers, but also in his choice of buildings, their exterior appearance, and interior surface articulation. Most of the structures he built at the Citadel, except for the Qubba, were functionally necessary, and the little we know about their arrangements and plans does not reflect any interest in pomp or monumentality. We are also told that unlike other rulers, he opted to have only scenes of warriors and hunters depicted on the walls of his two audience halls at the Citadel, the Qubba and the New House. Baybars did in fact organize the Citadel and build new structures in it, but it had to wait for al-Nasir Muhammad to monumentalize it and adorn it with lavish palaces and courts.

²³⁵ Ibn Shaddad, *Tarikh al-Malik al-Zahir*, 317; Maqrizi, *Khitat*, 2:111; Maqrizi, *Suluk*, vol. 1, pt. 2, 512.

Chapter Three.

The Citadel in the Early Qalawunid Period (1277-1310)

Modern scholars consider Mamluk rule in Egypt and Syria to have been more of a meritocracy among the amirs belonging to the upper echelon of the army than a hereditary system. But they also recognize that the system was too complex and unclearly formulated to be confined to one clear-cut definition.²³⁶ A typical Mamluk procedure of accession required the successful contender to secure the accord of the members of a junta made up of commanding amirs who, at least theoretically, all had equal claims to the throne. This procedure applied when a sultan died, or was killed, without having had the time to designate an heir, as when Baybars assumed the sultanate after the assassination of Qutuz. Otherwise, the natural tendency of every sultan was to appoint his son as his successor, and to do his best to secure that succession. Almost immediately after the passing of that sultan, the tension inherent in the Mamluk system would manifest itself. A struggle would follow between the great amirs, who usually were khushdashs or former mamluks of the deceased sultan, to wrest the sultanate from the decreed successor. The strongest among them, and the one who had managed to procure the consensus of the majority, ended by removing the reigning son and installing himself as sultan. The same cycle would repeat itself again after his death.

The Reigns of Baybars's Two Sons (1277-79)

Baybars had done everything possible to ensure the passing of the sultanate to his son al-Malik al-Sa'id Baraka Khan (named after his maternal grandfather, the Turkoman Khawarizmian chieftain Berke Khan). He had named him co-sultan in 1264, when Baraka Khan was only four, educated him in matters of ruling under the supervision of Bilik al-Khazindar, and later married him to the daughter of Amir Qalawun al-Alfi, whose preeminence among the Salihi amirs was by then unmistakable, in the hope

²³⁶ P.M. Holt, *The Age of the Crusades*, 138-50; Robert Irwin, *The Middle East in the Middle Ages*, Introduction; David Ayalon, "Aspects of the Mamluk Phenomenon," *Der Islam*, vol. 53 (1976) 196-225 (pt. 1), vol. 54 (1977) 1-32 (pt. 2); Dorothea Krawulsky, Introduction, *al-'Umari, Masalik*, 45-8.

of securing the latter's support and allegiance. In spite of all these preemptive steps, Baraka Khan's reign lasted barely two years (1277-79) after his father's death. It was precisely the father-in-law, Qalawun, who led the dissatisfied amirs in deposing Baraka Khan and installing his younger brother Badr al-Din Salamish in his stead. Qalawun wanted the throne for himself. He had intended for Salamish to serve as a figurehead in the transitional period which was necessary to please the Zahiri amirs (of al-Zahir Baybars) who held the major castles and towns of the sultanate.²³⁷ Eventually, after he had removed the most influential among the Zahiri amirs from their positions, he deposed Salamish and installed himself as sultan a few months later.

No development seems to have taken place at the Citadel during the short reigns of Baybars's two sons. Al-Malik al-Sa'id Baraka Khan had had his name attached to a number of structures in and around the Citadel, but these had all been built by his father during his lifetime, possibly as another means, this time visible, to assert the continuity of sovereignty in the family. Thus, we read about a house of al-Malik al-Sa'id in the Citadel, a place under the Citadel near Baybars's Dar al-'Adl for the military music band (*tablakhana*) attached to his troops, and stables for his horses near the walls of the city north of the Citadel, in addition to other halls and service structures in different locations around Cairo.²³⁸ Casanova had noted that the annals of Baraka Khan's rule contain a reference to a structure at the Citadel, the Rafrat Tower, that was otherwise attributed to a later sultan.²³⁹ The actual attribution to al-Ashraf Khalil is that of the *rafrat* (the word seems to mean a light roofed structure, something like a pergola) not of the tower carrying the same name. From the reference to al-Ashraf Khalil's building of the *rafrat* in 1292, it becomes obvious that the Rafrat Tower predated the added structure. In fact, the old core of this tower could have been part of the original

²³⁷ Ibn al-Furat, *Tarikh*, vol. 7, 147-8; Maqrizi, *Suluk*, vol. 1, pt. 2, 656; Ibn Taghri-Bardi, *Nujum*, 7: 288. It appears from these accounts that this tactic was guessed, and even accepted, by Qalawun's contemporaries.

²³⁸ Ibn Shaddad, *Tarikh al-Malik al-Zahir*, 341-45.

²³⁹ Casanova, *Histoire*, (Arabic translation) 106; Ibn al-Furat, *Tarikh*, vol. 7, 145; Maqrizi, *Suluk*, vol. 1, pt. 2, 654. Both reported the story of Baraka Khan talking to the amirs who encircled the Citadel from the top of the Rafrat Tower which overlooked the Stables. Maqrizi, *Khitat*, 2: 212, says that *al-Rafrat* was built by Khalil.

enclosure of Salah al-Din's Citadel. Its orientation and location seem to have been deliberately chosen to visually dominate the approach from a major thoroughfare, the Khatt al-Saliba al-Kubra (Great Crossing), which existed since the Ayyubid period, and which by the Mamluk period formed the administrative borderline between the two cities of al-Qahira and Misr al-Fustat.²⁴⁰ A *rafrac* could have been built atop that tower from early on to take advantage of the view, thus giving it the name Rafrac Tower. Al-Ashraf Khalil may just have replaced the old *rafrac* with a new one, seemingly more monumental so that it drew Maqrizi's attention who thought it worth recording among Khalil's works at the Citadel.

The Significance of the Word *Khassakiyya*

During the reign of Baraka Khan we encounter for the first time in the sources the term *khassakiyya* amirs or mamluks. This term provides an important clue to the hierarchical organization of space inside the Citadel. The *khassakiyya* were the most trusted royal mamluks who constituted the sultan's immediate entourage and from whose ranks new amirs were chosen. They ranged in number from forty under al-Nasir Muhammad to around a thousand during the reign of al-Ashraf Barsbay (1422-38), to 1200 *khassakiyya* during the reign of Qansuh al-Ghuri (1501-16).²⁴¹ We have no mention of their number before al-Nasir Muhammad.

²⁴⁰ Maqrizi, *Khitat*, 1: 360. Al-Saliba al-Kubra was the street leading from the Mosque of Ibn Tulun to the area of Suq al-Khayl. It was named the crossing (*al-saliba*) because it was the intersection between the north-south Grand Street (*al-Shari' al-A'zam*) and the major west-east street, also called *al-Shari' al-A'zam*, coming from the Nile. See, M. Georges Salmon, *Études sur la topographie du Caire, la Kal'at al-Kabch et la Birkat al-Fil*, MMIFAO, 7 (Cairo, 1902) 106-7.

²⁴¹ On *khassakiyya* see, David Ayalon, "Studies on the Structure of the Mamluk Army," *BSOAS*, 15 (1953) 203-28 (pt. 1), 213-16; Idem, art. "Khassakiyya" in *EI* second edition, vol. 4, 1100; Ibn Taghri-Bardi, *Nujum*, 7: 179-80, note # 4; Robert Irwin, *The Middle East in the Middle Ages*, 62-3; P.M. Holt, *The Age of the Crusades*, Glossary 223, he calls them the Mamluk of the Privy Chamber which is a misleading approximation. For the number of *khassakiyya* during al-Ghuri's rule see, Ibn Iyas, *Bada'i' al-Zuhur fi-Waqa'i' al-Duhur*, vol. 5, 6, though it appears that by the late Mamluk period the word came to denote the Sultanian Mamluks in general.

Ibn Shahin al-Zahiri, writing in the middle of the fifteenth century, is the only author who gives an administrative definition of the term.²⁴² According to him, *khassakiyya* were the select royal mamluks who functioned as the sultan's bodyguards and pages and who would carry out sensitive royal missions. Modern scholars have based their definition of *khassakiyya* on his text, although it appears that the institution has evolved in a way that would render the use of his explanation for the early period somewhat anachronistic. Linguistically, *khassakiyya* appears to be a distorted form of the Arabic word *khassa*, which was generally used to denote members of the upper class in a society, or the privileged group around some leading figure (initially it used to be around the caliph) depending on the context. Though the term is particular to the Mamluk period, and later to the Ottoman, groups similar to the *khassakiyya* may have existed in earlier Islamic dynasties, such as the Ghaznavids, Seljuks, and the Atabeks of Mosul and Syria from which the Mamluks may have copied the concept. Scenes of courtly ceremonials depicted on portable art objects, belonging to the Mamluk and earlier periods, have been viewed by some scholars as representing the *khassakiyya* or their nameless, earlier equivalents. The presence of these office-holders in the scene was interpreted as a sign of kingship.²⁴³

But, from the references to the *khassakiyya* during the short reign of Baraka Khan, and later throughout the reign of the Qalawunid dynasty, it becomes evident that not all of the *khassakiyya* held positions at the court, whether these positions were real or ceremonial. In fact, Ibn Shahin al-Zahiri clearly states that in his time the *khassakiyya* numbered in the hundreds, but only around forty of them had ceremonial titles; the rest had no assigned official positions.

²⁴² Khalil b. Shahin al-Zahiri, *Zubdat*, 115-16.

²⁴³ Estelle Whelan, "Representations of the *Khassakiyah* and the Origins of Mamluk Emblems," in P. Soucek, ed. *Content and Context of Visual Arts in the Islamic World* (Philadelphia, 1988) 219-43, esp. 220. This argument, however, ignores the special quality of the Mamluk system where every amir, *khassakiyya* primarily, could have had a claim to rule. Whelan's analysis is pervasive, but her application of the word *khassakiyya*, with its specific Mamluk usage, to the designation of a royalty prerogative in the medieval Middle East is anachronistic.

Another contradiction in modern definitions has been in establishing the place of residence and training of the *khassakiyya* before their manumission. Robert Irwin relegates them to the Citadel's barracks, while Estelle Whelan asserts that they were raised in the sultan's court. Both of them agree, however, that the *khassakiyya* lived in the sultan's palatial complex at the Citadel after their official emancipation. Textual evidence suggests that only a handful of *khassakiyya* used to be trained in the sultan's court, and those were called *kuttabiyya* (from having gone to *al-Maktab*, which is the classroom for the sultan's sons and the few select mamluks). Other *khassakiyya* were handpicked by the sultan after their manumission at the end of their training in the barracks with the rest of the mamluks.²⁴⁴

Those mamluks who became Baybars's *khassakiyya*, and eventually formed the entourage of Baraka Khan, lived at the palatial complex in the southern enclosure, though their exact places of residence are not mentioned. It appears that the distinctive attribute of *khassakiyya*, throughout the Mamluk period, is the fact that they lived inside the southern enclosure near the sultan's residence. This becomes clearer in the text of Ibn Fadl-Allah al-'Umari, which explains the meaning of being a *khassaki* (singular of *khassakiyya*) as a function of the place of residence at the Citadel. He indicates that mamluks who were removed from the *khassakiyya* lost their prerogative and had to move to the northern enclosure where they became residents of the outside (of the palace) (*barrani*).²⁴⁵ Furthermore Qalaqashandi, in his

²⁴⁴ Mufaddal ibn-Abi al-Fada'il, *al-Nahj al-Sadid*, 14: 300; Ibn al-Furat, *Tarikh*, vol. 7, 95; Maqrizi, *Suluk*, vol. 1, pt. 2, 644. They specifically say about Kundak al-Saqi, one of Baraka Khan's *khassakiyya* and his appointed vicegerent, that he went with him to *al-Maktab*, which is depicted as a mark of distinction among the *khassakiyya*.

²⁴⁵ Al-'Umari, *Masalik*, 143; copied by Qalaqashandi, *Subh*, 3: 373; Maqrizi, *Khitat*, 2: 205, though copied the same sentence dropped the mention of the *khassakiyya*, but he added a sentence which shows that by his time (early fifteenth century) the residences' division at the Citadel as organized by al-Nasir Muhammad had elapsed. So probably the denotation of *khassakiyya* as residents of the palatial complex was no more valid. Nuwayri, *Nihayat al-'Irb fi-Funun al-Adab*, vol. 31, fol. 75, gives an example of an amir, Tashtimur Hummus-Akhdar, who was banished by al-Nasir Muhammad from the southern enclosure to a house annexed to Dar al-Niyaba in the northern enclosure, after he was imprisoned for a week on false accusation. This amir was then demoted from a *khassaki* to a *barrani*. Another example is that of Sayf al-Din al-Abubakri who was banished to the city in 1320, and whose house was demolished and rebuilt as *tibaq* for the *khassakiyya*, Maqrizi, *Suluk*, vol. 2, pt. 1, 208.

encyclopedic manual for the chancery's functionaries, explains that the word *barrani* was the equivalent of *khurjiyya* (from *kharij*, the outside) in the designation of mamluks, and that this was the opposite of *khassakiyya*, who were also called *juwwani* (those of the inside, antonym of *barrani*) mamluks.²⁴⁶

Al-'Umari's remark and Qalqashandi's definition, dating to the fourteenth and fifteenth century respectively, probably apply to Baraka Khan's period as well. A *khassaki* was then a Mamluk soldier (*jundi*), or a Mamluk amir, who for reasons related to his belonging to the sultan's immediate entourage resided in the southern enclosure. Thus, this title was a sign of the mamluk's closeness to the sultan, not only in the sense of intimacy,²⁴⁷ but also in the physical proximity of his residence. Great amirs, or Umara' Mi'a wa-Muqaddamin Alf (Amirs of Hundred and Commanders of Thousand), who were *khassakiyya* as well, had separate structures, or small palaces, allocated to them as residences inside the southern enclosure. They also had their own palaces outside the Citadel in the city of Cairo.²⁴⁸ Young *khassakiyya*, who were awaiting their promotion to the rank of amir and their reception of fief (*iqta'*), were lodged in the *tibaqs* inside the southern enclosure, and did not have their own palaces in the city. This conclusion would explain Baybars's building of two *tibaqs* in the Court of the Citadel, between the Mosque and the Iwan, and another *tibaq* near the Tower of the Corner, and his renovation of several *tibaqs* near his House of Gold.²⁴⁹ They were intended to house the *khassakiyya*, because they were located inside the palatial complex, as opposed to the qa'as he built in front of the

²⁴⁶ Qalqashandi, *Subh*, 3: 376 & 4: 56; Maqrizi, *Suluk*, vol. 1, pt. 2, 686, note # 3, explanation by M. Zyada, the editor of Maqrizi's text; William Popper, *Egypt and Syria Under the Circassian Sultans*, 15:85, for the *khassakiyya* amirs, and 88 for the *khassakiyya* mamluks.; Ibn al-Furat, *Tarikh*, vol. 7, 207, furnishes further evidence when he speaks in the same sentence of the *juwwani* mamluks and the *barrani* amirs who contrived against Qalawun in 1281.

²⁴⁷ The intimacy was reflected also in a preferential system of payment, whereby *juwwanis* were always paid more than *barranis*, Ibn Duqmaq, *al-Jawhar al-Thamin*, 424.

²⁴⁸ Thus we can see the two palaces that were built by Baybars at the Citadel for Sanqar al-Ashqar and Baysari al-Shamsi as palaces for *khassakiyya*. At least Baysari is known to have had a major palace in Cairo which was his own residence, Maqrizi, *Khitat*, 2:69-70. In the fourteenth century, dual residences for great amirs became the norm.

²⁴⁹ Ibn Shaddad, *Tarikh al-Malik al-Zahir*, 341, for the list of the *tibaqs* built by Baybars.

Qarafa Gate, and the ones he built next to the House of al-Malik al-Sa'id in the northern enclosure, which were to lodge the mamluks who were office-holders, such as old *jamadariyya*. The former were eventually called the outsiders (*barraniyya*) when the system was codified in the chancery's manuals of the fifteenth century.

Clearly, a distinction must have existed earlier between different groups of the sultan's mamluks according to the different tasks they performed. Mamluks forming the sultan's retinue must have been established at least from the time of al-Salih Najm al-Din Ayyub, whose army depended heavily on mamluk troops. Those, however, were not called *khassakiyya*. Whatever name they may have been given, whether *khawwas* or *bahriyya* (maybe the term *bahriyya* initially signified belonging to the sultan's closest group of pages) it did not connote the relationship between their place of lodging and the sultan's palaces. The emergence of the term *khassakiyya* during the reign of Baybars's son may be used to strengthen the ascription of the Citadel's division into northern and southern enclosures by building the Qulla wall to Baybars. It took the physical division of the Citadel into two domains to start the identification of the mamluks with the enclosure in which they lived, inside (*juwwa*) the sultan's domain or outside it (*barra*). This must have happened not long before Baraka Khan's reign, when the word *khassakiyya* first appeared in the texts.

The Reign of al-Mansur Qalawun (1279-90)

When amir Qalawun assumed the throne, he took the regnal title al-Mansur (the Victorious).²⁵⁰ Unlike most of his Mamluk and Ayyubid predecessors, al-Mansur Qalawun became sultan late in life, after he had acquired a large number of well-trained mamluks, and after he had mastered the political game through several decades of amirship. He swiftly proceeded

²⁵⁰ In addition to the sources listed in the previous chapter for the history of the Mamluks, the reign of Qalawun is covered in Ibn-'Abd al-Zahir, *Tashrif al-Ayyam wa-l-'Usur fi-Sirat al-Malik al-Mansur*, whose only surviving manuscript covers only five years of Qalawun's reign. Two later sources deal with the whole reign, Ibn al-Dawadari, *Kanz al-Durar wa-Jami' al-Ghurar*, vol. 8, *al-Durra al-Zakiyya fi-Akhbar al Dawla al-Turkiyya*, and Ibn al-Furat, *Tarikh*, vols. 7&8.

to establish his control over the different centers of the sultanate by appointing his own mamluks, the Mansuris who were raised in his household, as governors. He consequently established an efficient, loyal, and durable power base. He went down in history as the only Mamluk sultan who managed to create a dynasty, for the rule remained in his family for more than a century after his death.²⁵¹ Moreover, his tomb became the pledging point for newly nominated amirs who swore their oaths of allegiance there, like it used to be done over the tomb of his *ustaz* al-Salih Najm al-Din Ayyub. But Qalawun's memory surpassed that of his *ustaz*. Unlike al-Salih Najm al-Din Ayyub whose tomb was the traditional pledging point only for as long as his Salihi mamluks were alive, Qalawun's tomb maintained an aura of sanctity among the Mamluks for decades after his death.

Though he had not built many structures in his lifetime, al-Mansur Qalawun became one of the few Mamluk sultans whose names were persistently associated in the public memory with a major architectural project. He is remembered until today for the complex he constructed in 1283-84 in the center of Fatimid Cairo, the Bimaristan al-Mansuri, which included a madrasa, a hospital (*bimaristan*, which is an unusual endowment at the time), and a *qubba* (here the word is used in its familiar, funerary connotation).

A tentative explanation of this enduring reputation is based on three factors related to the project itself, which, combined, provided for its lasting appreciation. The first is the monumentality of the complex and its prime location in the center of al-Qahira, which makes it a constant component of the image of the city for the inhabitants. The second factor is based on the two unusual functions, the first fulfilled by the *bimaristan* which was open and free for all, and the second is that of the *qubba* which remained for a long

²⁵¹ It is interesting to note here that Mamluk chroniclers, certainly reflecting Mamluk concepts of family and mamluk bonds, considered the reigns of usurpers, such as Kitbugha and Lajin, as a continuation and not an interruption of the dynastic rule. They explain this by the fact that both usurpers were Mansuri amirs. This should remind us of the difficulties that face us in our attempt to fathom the life of the mamluks, when even their rationalization is imbued with the specificities of the Mamluk system. See, Ibn Taghri-Bardi, *Nujum*, 7: 326.

time the place in which Mamluk amirs publicly declared their loyalty to their sultans. The third has to do with the *waqf* endowment of the complex, which was among the largest in the history of Egypt, and which, unlike many other *waqfs*, withstood long periods of unrest, stayed almost intact, and kept on yielding enough revenues for the proper maintenance of the buildings.²⁵² Qalawun's fame as patron of this great architectural project may have been the reason behind the erroneous ascription of the Mosque of the Citadel to him, when the true builder of that structure was his son al-Nasir Muhammad. This confusion started at some date early in the Ottoman period,²⁵³ and lasted until late in the nineteenth century. Early maps of the Citadel, including that of the *Description de l'Égypte*, dated to the year 1801, and that of Grand Bey, dated to the year 1868, carried this misnomer.

The Citadel During the Reign of Qalawun

At the Citadel, Qalawun is reported to have added a few structures. They are the Qubba al-Mansuriyya (Dome of al-Mansur), the Burj al-Mansuri (Tower of Qalawun), and the Dar al-Niyaba (Vicegerency Palace). He is also credited with the introduction of a new practice, which, in addition to having altered the function of the Citadel's defenses, gave us the frequently used term to designate the second period of the Mamluk sultanate: the Burji period.

Mamluk sources are unanimous in ascribing to Qalawun the establishment of a special regiment of royal mamluks (*al-mamalik al-sultaniyya*) whom he quartered in the towers (*abraj*, plural of *burj*) of the Citadel, and gave them the name of the Mamalik al-Burjiyya (Mamluks of

²⁵² The *waqf* of the Bimaristan al-Mansuri was published by M.M. Amin as an appendix to the first volume of al-Hasan ibn Habib, *Tazkirat al-Nabih fi-Ayyam al-Mansur wa-Banih* (Cairo, 1976) 295-396, Amin discusses the importance of the large endowment in maintaining the complex functional, 308-9. Also, M.M. Amin, *al-Awqaf wa-l-Hayyat al-Ijtima'iyya fi-Misr* (Cairo, 1980) 155-75, where he pretty much repeats the same assessment, sometimes verbatim.

²⁵³ See, for example, Mustafa Ibrahim, *Waq'a'i' Misr al-Qahira Bayn 1100 wa 1150*, 157, where he names the mosque after Qalawun when reporting an event that took place in 1711.

the Towers).²⁵⁴ These mamluks appear to have been chosen solely on the basis of their ethnic background: most were Circassians, a few were either Armenian or Greek or As (Abkhazi, a people from the southern Crimean area).²⁵⁵ Their selection to become Burjiyya does not seem to have involved an elevation in status. They were not destined to become *khassakiyya*, which was the first step towards advancement in the Mamluk hierarchy.

Khassakiyya were primarily chosen from among Kipchak Turks and Mongols, the favored races in the Bahri period. The mamluks belonging to these two ethnic groups were distinguished from others in the type of assignments they were given. In the reign of Qalawun's son and successor, al-Ashraf Khalil, they were made cupbearers (*suqat*, plural of *saqi*) and *jamadariyya*. Burji Circassians were assigned positions among the *silahdariyya*, the *jumaqdariyya* (of *jumaqdar*, ax-bearer), *jashankiriyya* (of *jashankir*, taster), and *ushaqiyya* (of *ushaqi* or *jift*, stable-attendant). It is unclear whether the *khassakiyya*'s positions were regarded as higher, or more favored and more rewarded, than those of the Burjiyya, but several hints support such an idea.²⁵⁶ The *khassakiyya* were housed in special qa'as, rather than in towers.²⁵⁷ These qa'as, presumably in the southern enclosure, were

²⁵⁴ Maqrizi, *Suluk*, vol. 1, pt. 3, 756; Ibn Duqmaq, *al-Jawhar al-Thamin*, 308; Ibn Iyas, *Bada'i' al-Zuhur fi-Waqa'i' al-Duhur*, vol. 1, pt. 1, 362; D. Ayalon, "Studies on the Structure of the Mamluk Army," pt. 1, 223; idem, art. "Burdjiyya" in EI second edition, vol. 1, 1324-25, and references.

²⁵⁵ All sources agree on the Circassians as having been a distinct group among the Burjiyya, then they list either Ass, Maqrizi, *Suluk*, vol. 1, pt. 3, 756; or Greeks, Ibn Duqmaq, *al-Jawhar al-Thamin*, 308; or Armenians, Maqrizi, *Khitat*, 2: 214, though only a few pages later he says that they were As, *Khitat*, 2: 241.

²⁵⁶ It is rather obvious that stables attendants (*ushaqiyya*) would be in a lower status than the rest of the office-holders. *Silahdariyya* and *jumaqdariyya* had a constant role in processions to surround the sultan and possibly guard him. *Suqat*, *jamadariyya*, and *jashankiriyya* could not have a real function, for the duty ascribed to any of their office requires but one person. In a cursory survey of titles of higher amirs in the mid Bahri period, we can notice that most of them were cupbearers (*suqat*). This may have been a result of their belonging to the *khassakiyya*. See, L.A. Mayer, *Saracenic Heraldry* (Oxford, 1938) 10; W. Leaf & S. Purcell, *Heraldic Symbols, Islamic Insignia and Western Heraldry* (London 1986) 73. Both note that the most frequently encountered *runuk* on Mamluk objects are those of the *saqi*, followed by the *silahdar*, *jamadar*, and *dawadar* (inkwell-bearer, scribe). If this were not the result of coincidence in the survival of art objects, it could be construed to indicate that these amirs office-holders were the richer, and thus the most favored.

²⁵⁷ Maqrizi, *Khitat*, 2: 214.

given fancy names, the Dhahabiyya (Golden) and the Zumurudiyya (Emerald-like), possibly as a reflection of their status.

Towers at the Cairo Citadel, like anywhere else, were intended primarily as strongholds in the overall defense system. From early on, however, they were used as fortified residences, mostly on a temporary basis, or as prisons for amirs and high officers. Qalawun was the first sultan to use a number of them as permanent quarters for his Burjiyya mamluks. This decision may have been prompted by security concerns, or was due to a condition of overcrowding in the Citadel. Both interpretations are plausible. Circassian mamluks were not truly trusted by the rest of the mamluks, especially the Kipchaks who constituted the ruling elite from whose ranks the sultans came in most of the Bahri period.²⁵⁸ This may have been the prime reason for separating them from the rest of the royal mamluks and for housing them in the towers where they could be better contained.²⁵⁹ The sultans' suspicions were ironically confirmed more than a century later, when a Burji Circassian, al-Zahir Barquq (1382-89, 90-99), abolished the Qalawunid dynasty and installed the Circassians in power for the remainder of the Mamluk period.

The second explanation can be linked to the rapid increase in the purchase of mamluks by the Bahri sultans in the second half of the thirteenth century. Al-Salih Najm al-Din Ayyub, the founder of the Bahriyya regiment from whose ranks the future Mamluk sultans sprang, was able to amass less than a thousand Kipchak Mamluks during his sultanate. Baybars is reported

²⁵⁸ David Ayalon, "The Circassians in the Mamluk Kingdom," *JAOS*, 69/3 (1949) 135-47; idem, art. "Cerkes" in *EI* second edition, vol. 2, 21-25, "Mamluk Period," 23-4, and references there.

²⁵⁹ There are many references in the period sources that show that the Mamluks were locked in their *tibaqs*, whether *qa'as* or towers, at night. A direct reference to the locking up of the Burjiyya as having been a regular practice is Nuwayri, *Nihayat al-Īrb fi-Funun al-Adab*, vol. 29, S.M. Elham ed., *Kitbuga und Lagin* (Freiburg, 1977) Arabic text, 80-81. Annals of 698/1298 when reporting the assassination of sultan Husam al-Din Lajin, who had asked the main conspirator, Kurji, who was also the head of the Burji Mamluks (*Muqaddam al-Burjiyya*), if he had locked them up. The same story is in Maqrizi, *Suluk*, vol. 1, pt. 3, 856; Ibn Taghri-Bardi, *Nujum*, 8: 102. Ibn Taghri-Bardi adds a note that gives us a clue as to the development of the Burji Mamluk regiment when he says that they had become known in his time as the Mamluks of the *Tibaq*. The *tibaqs* in question must have been the ones built by al-Nasir Muhammad in the main square in the southern enclosure.

to have acquired four thousand, mostly Kipchaks. Qalawun doubled their numbers and did not restrict himself to one ethnic group. He then selected 3,700 of his non-Kipchak mamluks to form the Burjiyya regiment. Al-Ashraf Khalil is said to have wanted to raise the number of his royal mamluks to ten thousand.²⁶⁰ The sources report no building activity at the Citadel to match the surge in Mamluk purchase in this short period. Qalawun may have been forced to use the towers as residences for his Burjiyya for lack of space.

Using the towers for permanent lodging would not have been possible before Qalawun's time, for it would have jeopardized their defensive role. That role, however, ceased to be important when it became clear that Cairo would no longer be threatened by either Crusader attacks, like those that prompted the building of the Citadel in the first place, or Mongol assaults following the two defeats inflicted on their armies in Syria (1260 and 1281). The concurrence of the urgent need of space with the diminishing strategic value of the towers, in addition to the appreciation of their capacity as controllable lodgings, made the towers the logical choice for Qalawun to domicile his Burjiyya mamluks. The shortage of space to quarter the swelling numbers of mamluks was to become chronic. Qalawun's two sons, al-Ashraf Khalil and al-Nasir Muhammad, on many occasions, replaced structures that they razed at the Citadel by new *tibaqs* for the mamluks.

.c3.The Dar al-Niyaba (Vicegerency Palace)

Virtually all the sources of the period credit Qalawun with the building of the Dar al-Niyaba (Vicegerency Palace) for his vicegerent (*na'ib*) Husam al-Din Turantay al-Mansuri in 1288. As it has been already shown, the structure should be credited to Baybars who had built it initially for his *na'ib*, Bilik al-Khazindar. The work of Qalawun was probably limited to renovating Baybars's structure, and opening in its first floor the window (*shubbak*) that Turantay is reported to have sat in regularly (that is on the large window sill)

²⁶⁰ Maqrizi, *Khitat*, 2: 214; Robert Irwin, *The Middle East in the Middle Ages*, 69-70.

when he presided over official hearings.²⁶¹ Unless we read the word *shubbak* in this context to mean some sort of a niche in the wall, the setting described suggests that the attendants and petitioners would have to stand outside around the window, while clerks surrounded Turantay inside the qa'a of the first floor.

Al-'Umari speaks of a ceremony which was held regularly in the Dar al-Niyaba as having been a scaled-down reproduction of the royal biweekly ceremony (*al-mawkib al-sultani*, the word *mawkib*, which literally means procession, was used in Mamluk sources to denote ceremonial settings as well).²⁶² Since vicegerency was abolished midway through al-Nasir Muhammad's third reign in 1326, which is approximately the time when al-'Umari was writing, we can deduce that the latter is describing the ceremonial as it was established in earlier periods. Therefore, this practice should be dated to the period of Qalawun. The assertion is based precisely on the insistence of the sources in crediting Qalawun with a structure that certainly existed prior to his rebuilding. This mistaken ascription may be read as a sign not of the importance of Qalawun's architectural additions, which were not distinguished by themselves, but of the changes introduced by him to Dar al-Niyaba's function and perception, so that the memory of Baybars's initial work was erased. The qa'a Baybars had built for Bilik al-Khazindar seems to have been used only as a residence for the *na'ib*, and no ceremonial function had been attached to it in Baybars's time. Qalawun must have instituted the condensed procession and banquet (*simat*) as one of the vicegerent's duties and privileges. This new function may have prompted the building of the *shubbak* to provide a focal position in the hall for the seating of Husam al-Din Turantay when he customarily led the mini-banquet.

²⁶¹ The same confusing vocabulary is going to appear later on when some sources attribute to one or the other of the sons and successors of al-Nasir Muhammad the building of *Dar al-Niyaba*, which was reportedly razed by their father in 1327, most probably not totally, Maqrizi, *Khitat*, 2: 214-15.

²⁶² Al-'Umari, *Masalik*, 107 & 116; copied by Qalqashandi, *Subh*, 4: 16-17; Maqrizi, *Khitat*, 2: 215. Both added details on the changes of the rules in the Circassian period. On the word *Mawkib*, see, P. Sanders, art. "Marasim," EI second edition, vol. 6, 518; idem, art. "Mawakib," EI second edition, vol. 6, 849-52.

The Burj al-Mansuri (Tower of Qalawun)

Qalawun is also recorded to have built a huge tower next to the Bab al-Sirr al-Kabir (Great Secret Gate) in 1283, and erected atop of it some "rooms with a view" (*mushtarafat*, plural of *mushtaraf*, which does not seem to have any specific architectural meaning except that it is a room which overlooks something) whose walls were covered with marble. The *mushtarafat* of Qalawun belong in the same category with Baybars's dome above the Tower of the Corner and al-Ashraf Khalil's *rafraf* above the Rafraf Tower. Building halls on top of towers was apparently a royal privilege. It was intended to take advantage of the view, and perhaps to connote the royal residence's supremacy by raising it above the other buildings in the Citadel and by making it visually commanding of the city. Qalawun is supposed to have moved to these *mushtarafat* a year later. This report is transmitted by Qalqashandi and Maqrizi on the authority of Ibn 'Abd al-Zahir – presumably from his lost book on the topography of Cairo, *al-Rawda al-Bahiyya al-Zahira fi-Khitat al-Mu'izziyya al-Qahira*, since his extant chronicle of Qalawun's reign mentions neither the construction of the tower nor the transfer of the residence.²⁶³ Nor are these events reported in any other chronicle of Qalawun's reign, including Maqrizi's own *Kitab al-Suluk*. Yet, in 1315, during the reign of al-Nasir Muhammad, most of our sources record the burning of the Burj al-Mansuri and the *tibaqs* next to it.²⁶⁴ This latter tower could only have been the one reported earlier. The identification of the group of mamluks who lived in the *tibaqs* near it varies from one source to the other: *silahdariyya* (of the *silahdar*, the arms-bearer) according to Nuwayri, and *jamadariyya* (wardrobe masters) according to Maqrizi. Both groups were, however, among the *khassakiyya* whose job was to surround the sultan in ceremonial processions, which suggests that the *tibaqs* were

²⁶³ Qalqashandi, *Subh*, 3: 370; Maqrizi, *Khitat*, 2: 204. Although Ibn 'Abd al-Zahir's annals of Qalawun's reign, *Tashrif al-Ayyam wa-l-'Usur fi-Sirat al-Malik al-Mansur*, are not complete, the years in question, 1283-4, are covered in it, and no mention of the building of the tower is to be found.

²⁶⁴ Nuwayri, *Nihayat al-Īrb fi-Funun al-Adab*, vol. 31, fol. 90, he calls the *tibaqs* next to it, Tibaq al-Silahdariyya; Author Zetterstéén, 163, says only the *tibaqs* of the mamluks without specifying their occupation; Maqrizi, *Suluk*, vol. 2, pt. 1, 157 calls them *jamadariyya*.

inside the palace complex. This reference may be used to infer that Qalawun's tower opened onto the palatial complex as well.

Although this tower has apparently been heavily damaged after the fire and possibly replaced by another, unreported structure, it is still possible to propose a site for it. The Great Secret Gate mentioned in the accounts is most probably the same private secret gate in the southern enclosure at the end of the Carved Path. Therefore, the tower must have been located somewhere along the eastern wall of the enclosure's tip overlooking the Carved Path between Baybars's Tower of the Corner and the still extant, nameless, round tower, which was called the Burj al-Tabbalin (Tower of the Drummers) by the writers of the *Description de l'Égypte*.²⁶⁵ (**Fig 3. 1 Plan of the Northern Tip of the Southern Enclosure**). This last name may have been an echo of an older, Mamluk name, the Burj al-Tablakhana (Tower of the Drummery), whose first appearance in the sources dates to the year 1389, and whose builder is not recorded.²⁶⁶ It is possible that the Burj al-Mansuri was in the same location as the later Burj al-Tablakhana. It could have been rebuilt after its burning and assigned the new function of housing the military band (*tablakhana*), or it might have just been called after the structure bearing the same name, the *tablakhana*, which stood on the slope of the hill south of it. This last Mamluk tower was replaced at an unspecified date with another tower, because, according to Creswell, the tower standing there today next to the Bab al-Wastani (Middle Gate) could not have been constructed before the days of artillery (late fifteenth century), and most probably belongs to the Ottoman

²⁶⁵ E. Jomard, "Description de la ville et de la citadelle du Kaire, accompagnée de l'explication des plans de cette ville et de ses environs, et de renseignements sur la distribution, ses monuments, sa population, son commerce et son industrie," *Description de l'Égypte, état moderne*, tome deuxième, vol. 18, 113-535, 351; reproduced in Casanova, *Histoire*, (Arabic translation) 189. The whole section of the *Description*, written by Jomard on Cairo and the Citadel, was recently translated and published in Arabic with notes by Ayman F. Sayyed, *Wasf Madinat al-Qahira wa-Qal'at al-Jabal* (Cairo, 1988) 230. He does not, however, discuss neither the history nor the name of the Tower.

²⁶⁶ Ibn al-Furat, *Tarikh*, vol. 9, pt. 1, 81, where he reports that Sultan Barquq ordered the display of his banners on the Burj al-Tablakhana al-Sultaniyya. Casanova, *Histoire*, (Arabic translation) 205, makes the connection between the Tablakhana of al-Nasir Muhammad and the naming of this tower after it for its proximity to the proposed location of the former. The tower itself could have been turned into a *tablakhana* during the reign of Barquq, who is known for having changed the functions of many structures in the Citadel.

period.²⁶⁷ (Fig 3. 2 View of the Bab al-Wastani and the Tower). This hypothesis is very difficult to ascertain, for we have neither archaeological evidence nor textual reference to the structure that preceded the actual tower. Furthermore, Creswell raises the still-unsolved question concerning the chronology of works on the northwestern wall of the Citadel, between the Burj al-Tablakhana and the proposed location of the Red Tower, which makes any observation on any part of it very tentative.

The Qubba al-Mansuriyya or the Iwan al-Mansuri

Qalawun's most important addition at the Citadel was the Qubba al-Mansuriyya, which was apparently the same structure called the Iwan al-Mansuri in later sources. As it was already shown, Ibn al-Furat says that Qalawun ordered the building of his Qubba to replace Baybars's Qubba al-Zahiriyya, which he had ordered razed in 1286. It is very difficult from the wording of this report to know whether the demolition of Baybars's Qubba was total or partial, as Mamluk sources tend to be vague in their general usage of building terms.²⁶⁸ Ibn 'Abd al-Zahir, who held high chancery positions under Baybars, Qalawun, and al-Ashraf Khalil and who was a semiofficial court historian for both Baybars and Qalawun, does not mention the demolition of Baybars's Qubba at all when he reports the building of Qalawun. His account of the Qubba al-Mansuriyya's construction was included in a panegyric to Qalawun, similar to the one he had written earlier to eulogize Baybars's years. This put him in a delicate position, and he probably thought it best to ignore the demolition of Baybars's Qubba, rather than try to justify an action that must have been solely prompted by Qalawun's desire to erase his predecessor's memory. This problem did not exist for Ibn al-Furat, who was chronicling events that happened more than a century before his lifetime.

²⁶⁷ Creswell, M.A.E. 2:31-2, who asserts that the construction technique of the Tower puts it in the early Ottoman period.

²⁶⁸ This has been noted by Casanova, *Histoire*, (Arabic translation) 109, who reported the apparent interchangeability of the verbs *bana, ansha'*, and *'ammar* in Mamluk sources to designate either building or rebuilding. Basing myself on very tentative readings from the same Mamluk sources, I would suggest that *ansha'* was mostly used when a building is started from scratch by a certain patron, while the two other verbs were applied indiscriminately.

From the few mentions we have, it is possible to conjecture that the buildings of both Baybars and Qalawun belonged to the same general type: a centrally-domed structure, where the dome is resting on arches supported by columns, surrounded by either iwans or porticos on the four sides. Qalawun's Qubba appears to have been only a more grandiose version of Baybars's, which reportedly had twelve colored, marble columns. Ibn 'Abd al-Zahir tells us that the Qubba al-Mansuriyya had ninety-four small and large columns, not counting those on the porticos (*riwaqat*, plural of *riwaq*, which may have been in the form of side iwans, that is alcoves, or just arcaded porticos, or a mixture of both).²⁶⁹ This number, if true, must have included all the columns in the Qubba, both structural and decorative, not just those supporting the dome. Decorative columns could be numerous, especially if we remember that double-arched windows were usually supported on columns (seen for example in the other Qubba al-Mansuriyya in Qalawun's complex in Bayn al-Qasryn). (Fig 3. 3 View of the Interior of the Qubba al-Mansuriyya in Bayn al-Qasryn from Ebers).

The building of the Qubba al-Mansuriyya and the tearing down of the Qubba al-Zahiriyya can be ascribed to Qalawun's desire to be the patron of this most visible, and most public, structure in the palatial complex, for, otherwise, he did not demolish any of the other structures Baybars had built. Both the sons and successors of Qalawun, al-Ashraf Khalil and al-Nasir Muhammad rebuilt this same audience hall within the next half century, presumably because they, too, wanted to have their own names attached to it. By the time Khalil demolished his father's hall in 1293, the sources were calling it the Iwan al-Mansuri instead of the Qubba al-Mansuriyya. From then on, the structure's name changed in the sources from the Iwan al-Mansuri to the Iwan al-Ashrafi, and later to the Iwan al-Nasiri, following the different stages of rebuilding. Afterward, however, the structure became known solely as the Iwan.

The sources do not offer any explanation for their switch from the usage of the word *qubba* to the word *iwan* to designate the Citadel's monumental throne hall. The prevalence of the latter over the former may

²⁶⁹ Ibn-'Abd al-Zahir, *Tashrif al-Ayyam wa-l-'Usur fi-Sirat al-Malik al-Mansur*, 139.

have been related to a contemporary architectural development elsewhere in Cairo. With the completion of Qalawun's funerary Qubba in Bayn al-Qasryn in al-Qahira, which was also known as the Qubba al-Mansuriyya, using the term *qubba* for his throne hall at the Citadel would have caused some confusion. But the more historic explanation is that the connotation of the word *qubba* had evolved in such a way that it was abandoned in secular terminology in Egypt around that period to migrate to the domain of commemorative architecture. In secular architecture in the Islamic lands, as elsewhere, a dome was a prerogative of the rulers,²⁷⁰ whereas in funerary architecture it signaled a burial place for an important figure. The use of domes in both secular and commemorative architecture obviously served the same purpose as a symbol of preeminence and sovereignty.²⁷¹ But in medieval Cairo, with its many domed mausolea for religious and public figures, the funerary connotations of the word *qubba* had become dominant and may have obscured its original association.

The word *iwan* replaced it in designating the throne hall at the Citadel specifically because its connotations remained fairly consistent throughout the medieval period. Architecturally, an *iwan* was either a hall open at one end, or a palace. The *iwan* itself, as a component of a structure, seems to have conveyed, in most cases, a memorial value as the place of honor. Similarly, the image of *iwan*, as a palatial whole, seems to have been connected to the concept of kingship, like the legendary *Iwan Kisra*, and the more recent and local Great *Iwans* of the Tulunids and Fatimids. Thus, the structures of both

²⁷⁰ Besides the architectural examples which abound from early on in Islamic architecture, the Mamluks, probably following the precedent of the Fatimids, popularized the royal connotation of the dome by including it in one of their insignia, the *Jitr* (Persian *Chatr*) or the *Qubba wa-l-Tayr* (Dome and the Bird) which used to be carried above the sultan in processions, Al-'Umari, *Masalik*, 98; Qalqashandi, *Subh*, 3: 473, 4: 7-8. The symbol was first discussed by Mrs. R.L. Devonshire, "An Egyptian Mameluke Feature in a Persian Miniature," *Apollo* 14/83 (Nov 1931), translated by M. 'Akkush, "al-Qubba wa-l-Tayr Aw Mithal min-Rusum al-Mulk wa-Alatahu fi-Dawlat al-Mamalik bi-Misr Kama Waradat fi-Surat Farisiyya," *al-Muqtataf* (Jun 1932) 46-51.

²⁷¹ See EI second edition, vol. 5, 289-96, art. "Kubba," by E. Diez, where the secular connotation of the word is overlooked. Yet, in non-Islamic and pre-Islamic traditions the connotations of the dome are mostly related to kingship. The Islamic tradition was connected to these traditions in more ways than is known to us so far. The latest contribution on the subject is, Oleg Grabar, "From Dome of Heaven to Pleasure Dome," *JSAH*, 49/1 (March 1990) 15-21.

al-Ashraf Khalil and al-Nasir Muhammad were called Iwans in the sources and not *qubbas*, though at least the latter is reported to have had a huge dome in its center, because they both conveyed the image of royal grandeur.

The Use of Glass Mosaic with Architectural Scenes

Ibn 'Abd al-Zahir says that the walls of the *riwaqs* in the Qubba al-Mansuriyya at the Citadel had depicted on them the likeness (*sifat*) of each of Qalawun's castles (*husun*, pl. of *husn*) and citadels (*qila'*, pl. of *qal'a*) surrounded by mountains, valleys, rivers, and seas. This composition brings to mind the remaining fragmentary scenes in the newly uncovered qa'a at the Citadel, and the complete and renovated scenes in the funerary dome of al-Zahir Baybars (the Qubba al-Zahiriyya) in Damascus, which depict urban and rural idealized scenes in fanciful settings similar to those in the nearby Umayyad mosque, but of a slightly lower quality. **(Fig 3. 4 Views of the Mosaic of the Qubba al-Zahiriyya in Damascus)**. Both structures belong to the same period, and both had their scenes executed in mosaic. Thus, although Ibn 'Abd al-Zahir does not specify how the scenes in Qalawun's Qubba were executed, it may be inferred that they, too, were done in mosaic. We know that mosaic techniques were revived in the late Ayyubid and early Mamluk period and then disappeared again by the mid-fourteenth century for unknown reasons. Their revival is thought to have been instigated by the restoration of Umayyad monuments in Damascus and Jerusalem, undertaken at that period, which required the repair of existing mosaic panels.²⁷² But the use of mosaic was not restricted to restoration projects. Its novelty and opulence have prompted Mamluk rulers to use it in their own structures, such as in Baybars's funerary dome and in the no-longer-extant qibla wall of the mosque of Tankiz constructed outside Damascus in 1317.²⁷³ At the same

²⁷² Michael Meinecke has argued that the revival of mosaic techniques was the result of an effort by Baybars to restore the mosaics of Jerusalemite monuments, "Das Mausoleum des Qala'un in Kairo: Untersuchungen zur Genese der Mamlukischen Architekturdekoration," *Deutsches Archäologisches Institut, Abteilung Kairo, Mitteilungen*, vol. 27 (1971) 47-80, see pp. 63-9.

²⁷³ This is how al-'Umari explains the connection between the mosaic made for the repair of the Umayyad Mosque and that used in the Mosque of Tankiz. He also differentiates between

time mosaic techniques were introduced to Egypt, and were applied in several new commemorative and palatial Cairene structures.²⁷⁴ The few remaining examples in Cairo, including the mihrab of Qalawun's madrasa in his complex at Bayn al-Qasryn, show that in Cairene commemorative architecture the application of mosaic was limited to the mihrabs' conches and spandrels of arched windows. They were purely decorative vegetal and floriated representations.

The scenes in Qalawun's Qubba, the Citadel's qa'a, and Baybars's mausoleum in Damascus, however, were more than just decorative. Aside from being told that the scenes in Qalawun's Qubba represented his citadels and castles, we have no reference to the meaning of the extant mosaic panels in the other two structures. The same problem exists for their prototypes on the walls of the Umayyad mosque's arcades, executed five centuries earlier, and repaired several times after. A few of the mosque's mosaic scenes, spread around the porticos of its court (*sahn*), were uncovered from under a layer of stucco and renovated in the 1930s. They depict richly and lavishly decorated structures set in natural surroundings with trees and a golden river. (**Fig 3. 5 A Mosaic Panel at the Umayyad Mosque**). The structures in these few scenes do not seem to represent real architecture. They differ among each other, however, suggesting that, at least each represented a distinct locale. The

the old and new mosaic, and praises the old. See, Ibn Fadhl-Allah al-'Umari, *Masalik al-Absar fi-Mamluk al-Amsar*, vol. 1, Ahmad Zaki Pasha ed., (Cairo, 1924) 193.

²⁷⁴ The Mamluk mosaic examples have never been systematically recorded or studied. Louis Hauteœur & Gaston Wiet, *Les mosquées du Caire* (Paris, 1932) vol. 1, 116, list some Mamluk religious examples; Meinecke, "Das Mausoleum des Qala'un in Kairo," 67-9, discusses the Syrian examples. The examples that I surveyed are in a chronological order as follows:

- 1: The conch of the mihrab in the Dome of Shajar al-Durr (1249).
- 2: The panels in the cornice of the Dome of Baybars in Damascus (1277).
- 3: The conch and spandrels of the mihrab of the Madrasa of Qalawun (1285).
- 4: The panels in the cornice of the qa'a at the Citadel (between 1290-1311).
- 5: The spandrels of the mihrab of the Taybarsiyya Madrasa next to al-Azhar Mosque (1309).
- 6: The conch of the mihrab and the arches above the windows in the Aqbaghawiyya Madrasa, next to al-Azhar Mosque (1334-1340). I did not survey two examples: the band in the niche of the Mihrab of Lajin in the Ibn Tulun Mosque (1296) and the mihrab of the Mosque of Sitt Miska (1339). Both are reported in Creswell, M.A.E. 2: 138, 226, plate 81 for Lajin's Mihrab.

mosaic scenes, as they stand today, are devoid of inscriptions, and we have no contemporary written sources to explain their significance. Most modern scholars who have dealt with them have based their findings on formal analysis and have come up with a number of elaborate interpretations. Some have used Qur'anic associations to see in them paradisaical connotations.²⁷⁵ Others adduced cosmographical interpretations.²⁷⁶

Medieval Arabic sources do not offer elaborate explanations for these scenes, although every author who wrote about the mosque noticed the mosaic revetments. An Egyptian chronicler from the fifteenth century, abu al-Baqa' al-Badri, presents what may be termed a Mamluk interpretation of the Umayyad mosque's scenes. He attributes to an unspecified historian the information that the mosque's mosaics depict the Ka'ba's likeness (*sifat*), set above the mihrab, and the likenesses of cities and villages, each represented with the wonders (*'aja'ib*) that distinguish it, distributed around the Ka'ba to the right and left, the whole amid blossoming trees and orchards.²⁷⁷

Al-Badri has two probable sources, the geographer al-Muqqadasi (tenth century) and the cosmographer al-Qazwini (thirteenth century), who say that the scenes depict cities and villages, without identifying any of them.²⁷⁸ Al-Badri differs from his predecessors in two critical respects. First, he specifies that the central part of the scenery is a representation of the holiest Islamic center, the Ka'ba. Second, he implies a certain differentiation between the other represented places based on what he terms as their distinct wonders (*'aja'ib*). These could not be other than the unexplainable architectural details we see today in separate scenes, which al-Badri relegates to the category of

²⁷⁵ The last contribution on the subject, and one of the most elaborate is Klaus Brisch, "Observations on the Iconography of the Mosaics in the Great Mosque at Damascus," in P. Soucek ed., *Content and Context of Visual Arts in the Islamic World* (Philadelphia, 1988) 13-20. See a discussion of the different current interpretations in Richard Ettinghausen & Oleg Grabar, *The Art and Architecture of Islam: 650-1250* (London and N.Y., 1987) 42-45.

²⁷⁶ See, for example, Georges Marçais, art. "Fusayfisa" EI second edition, vol. 2, 955-57.

²⁷⁷ Abu al-Baqa' al-Badri, *Nuzhat al-Anam fi-Mahasin al-Sham* (Beirut, 1980) 25.

²⁷⁸ Ahmad Taymur Pasha, *al-Taswir 'Ind al-'Arab*, 4, reported the story of al-Badri and its probable origin from al-Muqqadasi's *Ahsan al-Taqa'im fi-Ma'rifat al-Aqalim*, M.J. de Goeje ed. (*Bibliotheca Geographorum Arabicorum*, vol. 3) (Leiden, 1906) 157. The other probable source is Zakariyya al-Qazwini, *Kitab Athar al-Bilad wa-Akhbar al-'Ibad*, Ferdinand Wüstenfeld, ed. (Göttingen, 1848) 137.

'aja'ib and assumes that they function as additional characterizations of their locales. For him, the accuracy of representation does not seem to have been important as long as the scenes suggested different cities arranged in a certain order around the Ka'ba. Thus, al-Badri sees in the mosaics an iconographic depiction of the countries of Islam. His interpretation of these fanciful architectural representations brings the scenery down from an eschatological realm to a political one.

From what we know about the explanations of the Umayyad mosque's mosaics prior to al-Badri, it is evident that he is not reporting the initial intentions of their Umayyad makers from some missing source. Nor is he repeating the earlier medieval interpretations we know from Muqqadasi and Qazwini. His report may have been reflecting current Mamluk interpretations of this type of scenes. Such a logical, mundane interpretation may have been a medieval reading of an Umayyad imagery that had become cryptic by then. It may have originated in the Mamluk period when the methods of representation and themes of the Umayyad mosque's mosaics seem to have been taken over by the Mamluk sultans and amirs and applied in their structures.

The revival of mosaic techniques introduced into the Mamluk repertoire not only a new medium, but also the Umayyad imagery that had initially been developed for its use. Mamluk craftsmen were either too inexperienced to indulge in the creation of a new set of images, or too appreciative of the old ones to divert from them.²⁷⁹ Mamluk patrons, too, obviously admired the mosaic scenes well enough to commission similar ones for their structures. But they had specific messages in mind, namely political ones, that they wanted to convey through their mosaic scenes. When these patrons applied the mosaic decoration to their structures, the range of possible meanings they could confer on the idealized scenes was limited to the subjects depicted: buildings and their natural surroundings. Thus, probably, the idea of reading into the stylized architectural scenes

²⁷⁹ The first explanation is more plausible, since the inferior quality of imitation in repaired scenes and in new ones, noticed even by the contemporary historian al-'Umari, vol. 1, 193, suggests that the craftsmen did not master the new medium well enough to venture into new compositions.

political messages, such as the one reported by Ibn 'Abd al-Zahir for the Qubba al-Mansuriyya, was developed. This interpretation pertains also to the scenes around Baybars's funerary dome, and the fragments in the qa'a unearthed at the Citadel. Thus, the scenes of these three structures belong to the same category in which a technique of representation was revived, its imagery resurrected, but the messages read in the imagery were given contemporary meanings. These scenes must have been iconographic, whence sultans boasted visually of their conquests and domains in one space of representation.

The Reign of al-Ashraf Khalil (1290-93)

Qalawun's designated heir and co-sultan, his first son al-Salih 'Ali, died in 1288, two years before his father. Qalawun is reported to have mistrusted his second son al-Ashraf Khalil to the point that he refused to sign his diploma of investiture (*kitab al-'ahd*) which was drafted by the chancery after the death of al-Salih 'Ali. Khalil, nonetheless, became sultan after his father's sudden death in September 1290 in his camp near Cairo where he was preparing to lead an attack on the Crusader port city of Acre in Palestine. Unlike Baraka Khan, whose accession bears some similarities to that of al-Ashraf Khalil, the latter proved to be an able, though too ambitious, ruler. During his short reign (1290-93), he managed to complete the mission started more than a century earlier by the sultan with whom he shared the same honorific title, Salah al-Din, and cleared the Syrian coast of Crusaders. His energies were not just focused on his military campaigns. He had many plans for the restructuring of the economy of his sultanate. He is said to have contemplated a redistribution of lands and revenue by initiating a new survey of agricultural land (*rawk*), which would have changed the structure

of the Mamluk army and state, and which was later accomplished under his brother and successor al-Nasir Muhammad.²⁸⁰

Al-Ashraf Khalil's Interest in Building

Contemporary chroniclers, especially the Syrians, complain about the extent of destruction al-Ashraf Khalil inflicted upon the fortresses of his realm. He ordered the dismantling of the coastal fortresses of Palestine which had been recaptured from the Crusaders. He destroyed some castles in the interior Syrian plain, such as the castle of Shawbak. Even in the two capitals of his sultanate, Damascus and Cairo, Khalil razed several structures in their citadels.²⁸¹ But if we examine the data available on these actions, we may find an explanation and a justification for each of them. The reason usually stated for the demolition of the ex-Crusader castles, to prevent a seaborne attack from Europe, may have been the pretext for a long-term economic policy. Khalil may have wanted to render these port-cities unattractive and unsafe for international trade. His plan is believed to have been to redirect the east-west trade from Syrian ports to Egyptian ones, the latter being firmly under his control. The dismantling of the Citadel of Shawbak in 1292 may have been related to its partial destruction in the earthquake of the same year, or it could have been a political move to prevent its use as a stronghold for rebellious bedouins, with whom he was having troubles at the time.

Khalil had a different attitude toward the citadels of the three largest cities in his realm, Cairo, Damascus, and Aleppo, than what the reports we possess would lead us to believe. Contrary to what the chroniclers say that he neglected them, he appears to have been directly involved in their refurbishing. He did not have time to accomplish all the projects he had started, but what he did finish is indicative of his interest in building. In Aleppo, Khalil completed the Citadel's reconstruction started under Qalawun

²⁸⁰ On al-Ashraf Khalil's reign see, Ulrich Haarmann, art. "Khalil" in EI second edition, vol. 4, 964-5, and references; Robert Irwin, *The Middle East in the Middle Ages*, 76-82.

²⁸¹ Muhammad ibn Ibrahim al-Jazari (d. 1339) *Jawahir al-Suluk fi-l-Khulafa' wa-l-Muluk*, Dar al-Kutub al-Misriyya, MS # 7575H, fol. 164; Nuwayri, *Nihayat al-Īrb fi-Funun al-Adab*, vol. 29, fol. 72; Author Zetterst en, 23, repeats the words of al-Jazari verbatim. They report the demolition in Syrian Castles, and criticize it.

by the *na'ib* Qarasunqur al-Mansuri, after it had been neglected for 32 years since its dismantling by Hülegü's forces in 1260. Khalil's name and titlature, and the date 1292, are inscribed on its main gate.²⁸² In Damascus, his *na'ib* Sanjar al-Shuja'i was engaged in building several structures inside the Citadel, which, judging by their names, were richly ornamented, ceremonial spaces: a monumental wooden baldachin or canopy (*tarima*), a dome called the Qubba al-Zarqa' (Blue Dome) because it was covered with blue tiles, and a qa'a, called the Qa'a al-Dhahab (Qa'a of Gold), probably after the gilded plaques that covered its ceiling.²⁸³

Furthermore, available biographical data on a number of his amirs reveal their involvement in large-scale constructions commissioned by al-Ashraf Khalil. 'Alam al-Din Sanjar al-Shuja'i had originally made his fame under Qalawun as construction supervisor (*shadd*), first of the mausoleum of Umm al-Salih, Qalawun's wife, near the mausoleum of Sitt Nafisa in Cairo, and second of the *bimaristan* al-Mansuri in 1283-84.²⁸⁴ Aybak al-Afram, the amir-*jandar* who was sent to demolish the citadel of Shawbak in 1292, had been responsible for many large-scale constructions, fortifications, and water works from the reign of Baybars on.²⁸⁵ Both had become experienced masters of public works, and both were eventually entrusted by al-Ashraf Khalil to carry out building projects in the Citadel of Cairo and around it. Al-Shuja'i was left in the Citadel in 1293 to rebuild the structures whose demolition

²⁸² Inscription in Ernest Herzfeld, (*C.I.A.*) *Syrie du Nord, deuxième partie* (Cairo, 1955) tome 1, vol. 1, 89-90. References in M. Raghib al-Tabbakh al-Halabi, *I'lam al-Nubala' bi-Tarikh Halab al-Shahba'* (Aleppo, 1924) vol. 2, 337-8; Jean Sauvaget, *Alep* (Paris, 1941) vol. 1, 167-8.

²⁸³ Al-Hasan ibn Habib, *Tazkirat al-Nabih fi-Ayyam al-Mansur wa-Banih*, vol. 1, 140; Ibn Kathir, *Al-Bidaya wa-l-Nihaya fi-l-Tarikh*, 13: 323 & 327; Maqrizi, *Suluk*, 1, pt. 3, 774; al-Rihawi, *Qal'at Dimashq*, 153-56, where he discusses the buildings and proposes locations for them.

²⁸⁴ Ibn-'Abd al-Zahir, *Tashrif al-Ayyam wa-l-'Usur fi-Sirat al-Malik al-Mansur*, 55; Nuwayri, *Nihayat al-'Irb fi-Funun al-Adab*, vol. 29, fol. 28.

²⁸⁵ 'Izz al-Din Aybak al-Afram, amir-*jandar*, who died in 1295, was reported to have supervised the reconstruction of the Crac des Chevaliers (*Husn al-Akrad*) after its storming by Baybars in 1271, and a palace north of the Aleppo Citadel, see, Ibn Taghri-Bardi, *Nujum*, 7: 151, 156. On his career, see, Robert Irwin, *The Middle East in the Middle Ages*, 38 and references.

Khalil had ordered.²⁸⁶ His name is connected in particular with the rebuilding of the Iwan of Qalawun at the Citadel, which became known as the Iwan al-Ashrafi (after al-Ashraf Khalil) following its reconstruction.

Al-Afram was associated with another major project that was started by Khalil but was not finished in his reign: the building of the intake tower that was intended to bring water from the Nile to the Citadel over the walls of Salah al-Din which were to be used as an aqueduct. Al-Afram was only able to complete the well and the water-wheels at the river intake; they were used later by al-Nasir Muhammad.²⁸⁷ Khalil planned to increase the water supply at the Citadel presumably anticipating further construction and possibly an enlargement of its surface area. Had he lived longer, his plans for the Citadel might have altered its development. As it was, he left an architectural legacy that included at least two palatial structures, the Qa'a al-Ashrafiyya or the Qasr al-Ashrafi (as Maqrizi calls it in one instance) and the Iwan al-Ashrafi, a royal pergola (*rafraf*), and possibly lesser service buildings.

The Qa'a al-Ashrafiyya

Al-Ashraf Khalil built the Qa'a al-Ashrafiyya in 1292, and inaugurated it on the occasion of the circumcision of his younger brother Muhammad and his nephew Musa.²⁸⁸ It is not known whether he intended his qa'a as a private reception hall, as his brother al-Nasir Muhammad meant his Ablaq Palace to be. Khalil died before he could put it to use. The Qa'a al-Ashrafiyya remained in use throughout the reign of al-Nasir Muhammad, the only structure of his predecessors that he did not demolish and rebuild. He seems

²⁸⁶ Al-Jazari, *Jawahir al-Suluk fi-l-Khulafa' wa-l-Muluk*, fol. 209, states that Shuja'i was rebuilding what Khalil ordered to be razed at the Citadel.

²⁸⁷ Nuwayri, *Nihayat al-Īrb fi-Funun al-Adab*, vol. 30, fol. 80; al-Shuja'i, *Tarikh al-Malik al-Nasir Muhammad*, 95. Other, later chroniclers attribute the whole project to al-Nasir Muhammad, but Nuwayri was an eyewitness.

²⁸⁸ Ibn al-Furat, *Tarikh*, vol. 8, 169; Maqrizi, *Khitat*, 2: 211. Doris Behrens-Abouseif, "The Citadel of Cairo: Stage for Mamluk Ceremonial," *Annales Islamologiques*, 55 identifies al-Ashrafiyya as the qa'a built by al-Ashraf Sha'ban (1363-77) on the authority of one passing remark by Ibn Iyas (vol. 1, pt. 2, 183). There are no other references to Sha'ban's building of a qa'a, and the rest of our Mamluk sources are anonymous in their attribution of the Citadel's the Qa'a al-Ashrafiyya to al-Ashraf Khalil.

to have put it to several uses, all of them temporary. Early in his rule, the qa'a may have been the sultan's private throne room, whereas the Iwan was the public hall. Later on, after the building of the Ablaq Palace in 1313, which became the private throne hall, the Qa'a al-Ashrafiyya was relegated to lesser uses. Al-Nasir forced his great amirs to sleep in it in the event of a crisis early in his third rule in 1311 in order to control their moves.²⁸⁹ He invited visiting dignitaries to reside in it during their stay in his court.²⁹⁰

After al-Nasir's death, the qa'a's functions changed again. It seems to have become the favorite base for a number of powerful amirs who succeeded each other as the effective decision-makers in the sultanate while the weak sons and grandsons of al-Nasir nominally reigned (1341-82). At least three of these amirs are reported to have taken up residence in the Qa'a al-Ashrafiyya. One was Qawsun, who became the vicegerent for al-Ashraf Kuchuk, the second son of al-Nasir Muhammad who succeeded his father (1342). The second was Aljaybugha, a *khassaki* amir and a confidant of al-Muzzafar Hajji (1346-7); and finally Shaykhu who was the great amir (*amir kabir*) during the sultanate of al-Nasir Hasan (1347-51, 1354-61).²⁹¹

At the end of the Bahri period, the qa'a had become the de facto quarters of the *amir kabir*, which had become the favorite title of those strong amirs who controlled the sultan and the sultanate regardless of their office-titles.²⁹² As such, the Qa'a al-Ashrafiyya replaced the Dar al-Niyaba, or the hall of the vicegerent in the northern enclosure where vicegerency audiences used to be held. The qa'a's association with the vicegerency became so prominent that a later Burji chronicler, al-Khatib al-Jawhari al-Sayrafi, states

²⁸⁹ Maqrizi, *Suluk*, vol. 2, pt. 1, 92; Ibn Taghri-Bardi, *Nujum*, 9: 26.

²⁹⁰ Maqrizi, *Suluk*, vol. 2, pt. 1, 128, reports that an Arab chieftain was lodged in the Qa'a in 1313; al-Yusufi, *Nuzhat al-Nazir fi-Sirat al-Malik al-Nasir*, 205, reports that al-Nasir invited the bedouin chieftain Muhanna to lodge in al-Ashrafiyya in 1334.

²⁹¹ For Qawsun residence in this qa'a, see, Ibn Taghri-Bardi, *Nujum*, 10: 21; Ibn Duqmaq, *al-Jawhar al-Thamin*, 369. For Aljaybugha, see, Ibn Taghri-Bardi, *Nujum*, 10: 166-7. For Shaykhu, see, Maqrizi, *Khitat*, 2: 314; Ibn Duqmaq, *al-Jawhar al-Thamin*, 398.

²⁹² Maqrizi, *Suluk*, vol. 3, pt.1, 212, says that the amir kabir Aljay al-Yusufi used to hold his office at the Qa'a al-Ashrafiyya on Mondays and Thursdays (the usual days of the service); also, *Suluk*, vol. 3, pt.1, 324, Barquq, who lived in the stables when he was the stables' master (*amir akhur*), started holding his biweekly audiences in the Qa'a al-Ashrafiyya after he had become the *amir kabir* under sultan Mansur 'Ali II.

that the Qa'a al-Ashrafiyya was the residence of the vicegerent in the old days (he most probably means the days of the Qalawunid dynasty).²⁹³ Powerful amirs, who manipulated the Qalawunid epigones of al-Nasir Muhammad, took up residence in the qa'a to be close to the royal palaces. This would have been a crucial matter for these amirs, especially at night, when the Qulla Gate that separated the two enclosures would be closed. Had they been living in the Dar al-Niyaba in the northern enclosure, they would have been cut off from the palatial complex after sunset, and would have had no control over the royal mamluks who resided in their *tibaq* s inside the southern enclosure. Later on, the qa'a's status among the royal palaces appears to have dwindled, for it was used as a prison for lesser amirs, and eventually as a *tibaq* for the *khassakiyya*.

The Location of the Qa'a al-Ashrafiyya

The location and general characteristics of this qa'a may be reconstructed from the collation of several texts. It was raised above a basement (*qabu*), that seems to have been either used as the royal buttery (*sharabkhana*), or was adjacent to it.²⁹⁴ The Qa'a al-Ashrafiyya overlooked the maydan and the royal stables,²⁹⁵ with which it communicated through a secret gate.²⁹⁶ It faced the site of the madrasa of Sultan Hasan, which was built later between 1356 and 1361, across the maydan, and its roof was as high as its minaret.²⁹⁷ On the functional level, it obviously did not belong to the sultan's private quarters, since it was accessible to amirs and dignitaries.

²⁹³ Al-Jawhari al-Sayrafi, *Nuzhat al-Nufus wa-l-Abdan*, 2:10.

²⁹⁴ Ibn al-Furat, *Tarikh*, vol. 9, pt. 1, 169; Maqrizi, *Suluk*, vol. 3, pt.2, 682

²⁹⁵ A reported conversation between two of Qawsun's mamluks indicates that the window of al-Ashrafiyya overlooked the Palace of Qawsun across from the maydan, parts of which are still standing to the southwest of the Madrasa of Hasan, see, al-Shuja'i, *Tarikh al-Malik al-Nasir Muhammad*, 184; Maqrizi, *Suluk*, vol. 2, pt. 3, 589.

²⁹⁶ The door was blocked by the amir Mintash who led a short-lived rebellion against the sultan Barquq in 1390, during which he controlled the Citadel for a few weeks. See, Ibn al-Furat, *Tarikh*, vol. 9, pt. 1, 190; Maqrizi, *Suluk*, vol. 3, pt.2, 696-97; Ibn Duqmaq, *al-Jawhar al-Thamin*, 477.

²⁹⁷ Khalil b. Shahin al-Zahiri, *Zubdat*, 31-2, reports the story of a "Frank" who came to Egypt, converted to Islam, and showed his skill as trapezist by walking on a rope between the

The qa'a must have been situated somewhere along the western wall of the southern enclosure, for this is the only side of the Citadel that overlooks the Maydan, and in which a structure can possibly be connected to the minaret of Sultan Hasan. (Fig 3. 6 Western Part of the *Description de l'Égypte's* map). This wall extends between the Tower of the Corner (# 86, T-4, on the *Description de l'Égypte's* map, identified as Burj al-Shakhs) and the protruding tower (# 84, T-4, labeled the House of Yusuf Salah al-Din). This last name clearly designates some palatial structure that the French cartographers thought was built by Salah al-Din along this wall. E. Jomard, who was attached to the French expedition, provides a brief description of this structure in his essay on Cairo. He speaks only of monumental well-hewn stone walls, covered from the inside by ornaments, mosaics, and gilded paintings, and a number of vaults, which were dilapidated beyond reconstruction. He adds that there was another qa'a in the same palace which had twelve granite columns that supported a dome inscribed with gilded writing.²⁹⁸ It is very difficult from this short account to delimit the boundaries of the "palace" Jomard is speaking about, and to know how many other qa'as it contained. The second qa'a with the granite columns recalls the name Qa'at al-'Awamid (Qa'a of the Columns), and it may be inferred here that Jomard is in fact describing the elusive pre-Mamluk Qa'a of the Columns attributed to either al-Kamil or al-Salih Najm al-Din Ayyub.²⁹⁹

The *Description de l'Égypte's* House of Salah al-Din had been identified by modern scholars as the Ablaq Palace of al-Nasir Muhammad. They gathered several reports by European visitors, Maillet (1692-1708), Thompson (1734), Niebuhr (1761), Jomard (1801), and Viscount Valentia (1809), and read them all to refer to the same palace, although they did not

minaret of Sultan Hasan and the roof of the Tabaqa al-Ashrafiyya (by the fifteenth century the qa'a had become a *tabaqa*).

²⁹⁸ E. Jomard, "Description de la ville et de la citadelle du Kaire" 352; Ayman F. Sayyed, *Wasf Madinat al-Qahira wa-Qal'at al-Jabal*, 232.

²⁹⁹ This information indirectly corroborates the location that was proposed in Chapter Two for this qa'a, on the edge of the original southern wall of the southern enclosure.

necessarily all describe the same structure.³⁰⁰ Maillet and Niebuhr are clearly speaking of the Ablaq Palace, but Jomard and Viscount Valentia appear to be describing another qa'a. Pre-nineteenth-century local Egyptian chroniclers record that al-Nasir Muhammad's Ablaq Palace was turned during the Ottoman period into the place where the cloth cover (*kiswa*) for the Ka'ba was sewn. Maillet, Niebuhr and Pococke noted this practice in their reports on the palace, but neither Viscount Valencia nor Jomard speak of it. Label # 75, U-4, on the map of the *Description de l'Égypte* is called the Bayt al-Tarazi (House of the Tailor), which is perhaps a reference to the use of the structure there for the sewing of the *kiswa*, and by inference to the Ablaq Palace. The structure next to # 75 on the map is called the stairs of the Sab' Hadarat (Seven Hadarat),³⁰¹ which led from the palace level to the maydan, passing through the stables. The existence of a set of stairs leading to the stables corresponds to the description of the Ablaq Palace as connected to the maydan by a set of stairs, and makes it more plausible to propose the site of the Ablaq Palace to be further south from the location of the house of Salah al-Din, around the house of the Tailor and the Seven Hadarat.

Thus, the house of Yusuf Salah al-Din was not the site of the Ablaq Palace. It was, most probably, the location of the Qa'a al-Ashrafiyya for this is the only Mamluk palatial structure other than the Ablaq Palace which was located in this section of the Citadel. A major factor in its confusion with the Ablaq Palace in later accounts may have been that the latter's fame eclipsed the former. But, we know that the Qa'a al-Ashrafiyya remained functional until at least the middle of the fifteenth century, and probably later. There are no reports of its demolition at any period, and there are no compelling reasons to reject the possibility that European visitors may have been describing it. The qa'a probably remained standing, but neglected, until the major renovations undertaken by Muhammad 'Ali in the 1820s, when he

³⁰⁰ Casanova, *Histoire*, (Arabic translation) 127-31; Creswell, M.A.E. 2: 261-3.

³⁰¹ The only meaning that could be given to *hadara* is that of a ramp. Casanova *Histoire*, (Arabic translation) 132 believes it to mean something similar to qa'a, in reference to the seven qa'as that al-Nasir Muhammad is reported to have constructed for his harem. His contention is linguistically untenable.

razed all standing structures and created a terrace overlooking the city behind the site of his mosque.

This proposed location of the Qa'a al-Ashrafiyya adjoins the Rafrat Tower, whose crowning *rafrat* was also ascribed to al-Ashraf Khalil.³⁰² The Rafrat Tower raises a series of problems in its dating and its history, although its location is fairly well established. Maqrizi states that al-Nasir Muhammad demolished his brother's *rafrat* and built a new tower next to it in 1312 that overlooked the stables, and to which he transferred the mamluks, presumably the *khassakiyya*, for the tower is inside the southern enclosure. Ibn Taghri-Bardi says that al-Nasir Muhammad demolished the tower built by his brother and built his Ablaq Palace in its place. He then built another *rafrat* above it (it is not clear from the text whether it refers to the palace or the tower before it was demolished), and another tower next to it, to which he transferred the mamluks. Casanova located al-Nasir Muhammad's tower and proved the dating to be correct by discovering an inscription that was put there after al-Nasir's first pilgrimage in 1313.³⁰³ This inscription slab is fixed on the curtain wall next to the tower, rather than on the tower itself, but it could have been moved to this position at a later date, perhaps when Muhammad 'Ali rebuilt the fortifications. The plan of the tower's upper level (the only accessible level today) would clarify the relationship between the tower of Khalil and that built by al-Nasir Muhammad. **(Fig 3. 7 Plan of the Upper Level of the Rafrat Tower)**. It reveals a complete vertical break in the tower's walls that goes down to the ground level, showing that the protruding section in the plan is a later addition to the original square. The references should be understood, then, as meaning that al-Nasir demolished only the *rafrat* built by his brother, and not the whole tower, and then built an addition to the tower adjacent to it, not separate from it.

Since the *rafrat* of Khalil and the Qa'a al-Ashrafiyya were apparently connected, it may be suggested that they were parts of the same complex, with the *rafrat* either adjacent to or on top of the qa'a. They formed the semipublic

³⁰² Maqrizi, *Khitat*, 2: 212; Ibn Taghri-Bardi, *Nujum*, 9: 179. The Rafrat Tower probably predated Khalil's structure, as discussed at the beginning of this chapter.

³⁰³ Casanova, *Histoire*, (Arabic translation) 120; Max van Berchem, (C.I.A.) *Egypt*, 1: 88.

palace of the sultan, which constituted the transitional unit between the harem, or the private quarters of the sultan located to the south and east of the *rafrac*, and the Iwan al-Ashrafi, or the public audience hall directly to the east. This could be inferred from two references, in addition to the already-reported assertion by Jomard that the qa'a he saw was part of a larger palace. First, when Baybars al-Jashankir usurped the throne in 1308, he is reported to have ridden his horse from the Qulla Gate to the royal palaces, and then sat on the throne in the palace above the Burj al-Tarima (Tower of the Baldachin).³⁰⁴ Just as pergola and baldachin, *Rafrac* and *tarima*, are used synonymously, so they may have referred to the same light-weight wooden structure, and thus the Burj al-Tarima was the same as the Rafrac Tower, and the hall in which Baybars al-Jashankir sat was in the Rafrac Tower. The second reference is from the same period, when al-Nasir was still sultan in his second reign (1298-1308). He is reported to have sat by the *shubbak* of the royal *rafrac* (usually *shubbak* means window, but in the context of the *rafrac*, it probably signifies the opening in the structure which overlooked the stables).³⁰⁵ This is definitely the one built by Khalil, which al-Nasir demolished a few years later.

The Qa'a's Architectural Description and Decorative Program

In excavations undertaken in the present-day Sahat al-'Alam (Place of the Flag) in 1985, a Mamluk qa'a was discovered.³⁰⁶ It stands within the shaded boundaries of "the house of Yusuf Salah al-Din" on the *Description de l'Égypte's* map, a short distance to the north of the Rafrac Tower. The longitudinal side of its plan is almost parallel to the side of the tower. **(Fig 3. 8 Site Plan of the Excavated Qa'a)**. It was identified by the Egyptian Antiquities

³⁰⁴ Ibn al-Dawadari, *al-Durr al-Fakhir fi-Sirat al-Malik al-Nasir*, 158.

³⁰⁵ Maqrizi, *Suluk*, vol. 2, pt.1, 34, 35; Nuwayri, *Nihayat al-İrb fi-Funun al-Adab*, vol. 30, fol. 43, speaks only of the window without naming the structure, but makes it clear that this was the place where al-Nasir sat regularly for private audiences.

³⁰⁶ The preliminary report on the excavation was published by M. al-Hadidi & F. 'Abd al-'Alim, "'A'mal Tarmim al-Qasr al-Ablaq bi-Qal'at Salah al-Din" in *'Alam al-Athar (Archaeological Review)*, an occasional section in *'Alam al-Bina'*, vol. 26 (April 1986) 4-16.

Organization as the Ablaq Palace of al-Nasir Muhammad. But, given the available evidence, it is most probably the Qa'a al-Ashrafiyya.

In its present, incomplete form, the discovered qa'a is composed, like many qa'as of that period, of two iwans with a *durqa'a* in the middle. (**Fig 3. 9 Plan of the Qa'a al-Ashrafiyya**). The *durqa'a* is a rectangle measuring 14.25 by 12.7 meters. Its floor level is 10.5 meters lower than the actual ground level of the southern enclosure. The span of the larger, northwestern iwan is 10.5 meters; the smaller, southeastern iwan is 9.65 m. The floors of both iwans are raised by 30 cm. above the floor of the *durqa'a*. The riser of the single step on both sides is adorned with alternating black, red, ochre, and white stripes of marble. The floor of the the qa'a was also paved with marble in geometric patterns. The depth of the northwestern iwan could not be determined since the digging had to be stopped for fear of breaking the walls of the Citadel proper, so we do not know whether there were any windows or doors in the back of that iwan. (**Fig 3. 10 The Northwestern Iwan of the Qa'a al-Ashrafiyya**). The smaller iwan is almost a square 10 meters on a side. Its back is buried under rubble so that it is impossible to tell whether or not it opened onto some other structure behind it. (**Fig 3. 11 The Southeastern Iwan of the Qa'a al-Ashrafiyya**). In the center of the *durqa'a*, a marble, octagonal fountain was found almost intact. Two doors are located adjacent to the ends of the larger iwan on either side of the *durqa'a*. The northern door leads to a spiral, stone staircase in a circular shaft that presumably went all the way to the roof of the qa'a. The same door opens also onto the beginning of a passageway that leads north. The opposite door, the southern one, opens onto another passageway that runs east-west, parallel to the side of the qa'a, whose level is four steps lower than that of the qa'a. Obviously the passages on either side connected the qa'a with other structures or perhaps courtyards, but it is impossible at this stage of excavation to suggest what these connections were. As it stands today, the qa'a only indicates the existence of further remains of the Mamluk palatial complex in this area, which is believed to have been totally razed by Muhammad 'Ali.

The qa'a is important for the many indices it provides for the architectural relationship between royal and princely or secular qa'as in the city during the Bahri Mamluk period. It also represents the only example we

have of the surface articulation of a royal qa'a. Although the upper part of its walls had disappeared, and with them the section that most probably would have had the inscription band (*tiraz*) encircling the walls with the name of the patron and date of building, the remaining walls still reveal traces of its original rich decoration. The walls were built with large stone blocks cut to various heights, averaging almost five meters, and with burned brick above. The walls were covered from the inside with a layer of plaster, upon which a marble dado was fixed from the floor level to the end of the stone construction. From the few fragments remaining, the dado seems not to have been uniformly articulated around the qa'a. It was arranged in rectangular panels, of varying widths, framed within narrow bands of contrasting colors. This was a very common treatment in Mamluk decoration, and was usually confined to the place of honor in a structure, such as the qibla wall in a mosque. In some places, the dado had intricately ornamented white slabs, with reliefs of vegetal interlacing patterns. But in other places it had plain, colored marble slabs, with the same black, red, ochre, and white colors dominating. **(Fig 3. 12 Fragment of a Marble Slab with a Vegetal Motif)**. Above the dado, a continuous frieze, made of small trilobed niches, ran around the walls, even above the doors. The little arches were supported on marble colonnettes with gilded capitals. The niches were filled with panels of marble mosaics in geometric patterns. The spandrels of the arches were covered with marble reliefs of vegetal scrolls similar to the ones found in the dado. **(Fig 3. 13 Views of the Arched Niches)**. Above this, another large frieze ran around the walls; it was made of panels of glass mosaics. Judging from the two fragments remaining, one on the southern side of the *durqa'a* and the other on the northern side of the small iwan, the scenes were crude representations of kiosks, gardens, trees with mother-of-pearl fruits, and rivers reminiscent of those in the Umayyad mosque of Damascus, but also of those in the more recent Qubba al-Zahiriyya in Damascus. **(Fig 3. 14 the Mosaic Panel in the Qa'a Compared with One from the Qubba al-Zahiriyya)**. The uncovered part of the walls above the glass mosaics is stripped down to the brick level, without any trace of decoration. But the existence of longitudinal slits, repeated at regular intervals, suggests

that the walls were covered with wooden panels, fixed by nails into wooden wedges pushed inside the slits.

Architecturally, the Qa'a al-Ashrafiyya does not present any unusual features, or unexpected arrangements of its components. With its two iwans and *durqa'a* with two *suffahs* on its sides, it belongs to the type that became dominant in the beginning of the fourteenth century in Cairene religious and secular architecture, and that took over the place of qa'as with the *majlis/iwan* combination.³⁰⁷ The Citadel's qa'a, in spite of its huge dimensions, is simpler in plan than any of its contemporaneous Bahri Mamluk princely qa'as, and approaches in its simplicity the plans of the much smaller qa'as of upper-class administrators and religious men.³⁰⁸ But the similarities with the city's qa'as are limited to the general arrangement of its plan. In the composition and profusion of its surface articulation, this qa'a is truly exceptional. To be sure, none of the surface treatment is unique to this qa'a: each can be found alone or in different combinations in other standing examples of Cairene Bahri architecture. The only exception is the glass mosaics for which we have only textual references to precedents in Cairo, but actual Mamluk antecedents in Damascus. However, this is the only known Bahri qa'a whose surface seems to have been entirely covered with successive forms of decorations. This singular treatment was probably meant as a sign of royal splendor. The other distinctive aspect is the architectural representations of the glass mosaic panels. Clearly, these scenes belong to the series of mosaic depictions already discussed, and, like the scenes of the Qubba al-Mansuriyya and the Qubba al-Zahiriyya, they should be read as having been iconographic.

³⁰⁷ Hazem Sayed, "The Development of the Cairene Qa'a: Some Considerations," 44. Development of qa'as traced in Creswell, M.A.E. 2: 264; Alexandre Lézine, "Les salles nobles des palais Mamelouks," 149-205.

³⁰⁸ Jacques Revault, "L'architecture domestique du Caire à l'époque Mamelouke," in Jacques Revault et al., *Palais et maisons du Caire, l'époque mamelouke*, 49-74, for the amirial qa'as, 75-90, for the upper-class qa'as.

The Four Granite Columns

The 1985 excavation uncovered four granite shafts lying one next to the other to the east of the Qa'a al-Ashrafiyya. The report of the Egyptian Antiquities Organization ascribed them to the Great Iwan of al-Nasir Muhammad, which is known to have had granite columns supporting its roof. Epigraphic evidence on the shafts themselves refutes this ascription and links them to the Qa'a al-Ashrafiyya.

The four shafts have a continuous exaltation inscribed on them. The first column has *'izz li-mawlana al-sultan*, the second *al-a'zam al-malik al-Ashraf*, the third *sultan al-Islam wa-l-muslimin*, the fourth, *'azz Allah ansaruhu*.³⁰⁹ (Glory to our master the sultan – the greatest al-Malik al-Ashraf – sultan of Islam and Muslims – may God bestow glory on his supporters). (Fig 3. 15 Inscription on the Second Shaft). These inscriptions indicate that the four columns were a complete set, rather than belonging to a larger group that formed the colonnades of a structure. They must have originally been arranged in a way that allowed the text to be read consecutively, either aligned or in a square. This means that they constituted either the supports of an arcade, a portico, or possibly a *maq'ad*, or perhaps the four supports on the four sides of a *durqa'a*. They could have belonged inside the *durqa'a* of the adjacent the Qa'a al-Ashrafiyya, although its present state does not show any trace of the expected columns' bases. They may have been set up outside the qa'a to form the entrance portico, or perhaps they belonged to another structure nearby and were pulled to the location from which they were uncovered when Muhammad 'Ali's workers were trying to fill the ground under the terrace they were building on top of the Mamluk palatial complex's debris. The excavation's report supports this last interpretation as it states that the columns were at a shallow depth and were laid horizontally next to each other.

³⁰⁹ See M. al-Hadidi & F. 'Abd al-'Alim, "'A'mal Tarmim al-Qasr al-Ablaq bi-Qal'at Salah al-Din," 10.

However, had the columns belonged to the Great Iwan of al-Nasir Muhammad, we would expect them to be inscribed with his own honorific title, al-Nasir, especially that we are told that he had not used the columns of an older structure at the Citadel but brought them from the Roda Citadel's site.³¹⁰ Instead, we find the word al-Ashraf in the inscription which indicates that the patron of the structure to which these shafts belonged was a sultan with that honorific title. This does not immediately imply that the patron in question was al-Ashraf Khalil; many later Mamluk sultans bore the same title. One of them, al-Ashraf Qaytbay (1468-96), is reported to have carried out extensive works in the palatial complex, including the refurbishing of the Great Iwan.³¹¹

The style and method of the exaltation furnish further clues to decide between al-Ashraf Qaytbay and of al-Ashraf Khalil. Praising the sultan by the formula that starts with Glory to our master (*izz li-mawlana al-sultan*) has been standardized in Mamluk titulatures by al-Nasir Muhammad, but was periodically used by previous sultans, including al-Ashraf Khalil. The word the greatest (*al-a'zam*) is rarely used in the Mamluk context, but was very widespread in twelfth and thirteenth-century Anatolian titulatures. The word *ansaruhu* (his supporters) seems to have been a precedent to the word *nasruhu* (his victory) which was standard on all Mamluk sultans' titles from al-Nasir Muhammad on. It appears on many inscriptions belonging to al-Ashraf Khalil or to his amirs.³¹² Had the exaltation belonged to a late Qalawunid or a Circassian sultan, the word most likely to be used would have been *nasruhu*. Thus, the combination of the title al-Ashraf, the occurrence of *al-a'zam* and *ansaruhu* would suggest the period of al-Ashraf Khalil for this

³¹⁰ Maqrizi, *Khitat*, 2: 184, the columns for the Citadel on the Roda Island were brought by al-Salih Najm al-Din Ayyub, who also did not have the honorific al-Ashraf among his titles.

³¹¹ 'Ali ibn Dawud al-Khatib al-Jawhari al-Sayrafi, *Inba' al-Hasr bi-Abna' al-'Asr*, H. Habashi ed. (Cairo, 1970) 400; Ibn Iyas, *Bada'i' al-Zuhur fi-Waqa'i' al-Duhur*, vol. 3, 329.

³¹² The title appears in the waqf document of al-Ashraf Khalil, see, Axel Moberg, Zwei Ägyptische Waqf-Urkunden aus dem Jahre 691/1292, *Le Monde Oriental*, vol. 12 (1918) 22; also, in the inscription on the gate to the Citadel of Aleppo dated to 1292, see, Ernest Herzfeld, *Matériaux pour un Corpus Inscriptionum Arabicarum, Deuxième Partie: Syrie de Nord*, tome 1, vol. 1, texte (Cairo, 1955) 89-90.

inscription, and thence make it inevitable to conclude that these columns belonged to the adjacent Qa'a al-Ashrafiyya.

The Iwan al-Ashrafi

Al-Ashraf Khalil rebuilt, or perhaps only renovated, his father's audience hall under the supervision of Amir 'Alam al-Din Sanjar al-Shuja'i in 1293.³¹³ It is very difficult to assess the extent of the work accomplished by al-Shuja'i, since most chroniclers mention the Iwan al-Ashrafi only when they report its destruction by al-Nasir Muhammad in 1311-12.³¹⁴ From the meager details that could be gleaned from the references, it seems that no major structural or spatial changes were introduced to the Iwan that essentially remained as Qalawun had built it. In at least one respect, however, Khalil's Iwan differed radically from his father's, that is in the subject of its decoration. Qalawun's Iwan had scenes of citadels and castles, probably executed in mosaics on its walls; Khalil's Iwan, Ibn al-Dawadari reports, had representations of his amirs, each with his own emblem (*rank*) above his head.³¹⁵ No other chronicler repeats this story, but Maqrizi, in an unconnected entry, says that Khalil had his amirs represented on the walls of the *rafraf*, that he attributes to him. If these two reports are taken at face value, they would lead us to conclude that Khalil had adopted a pattern of representation in both his structures, the Iwan and the *rafraf*, namely depicting the images of his amirs. But a close scrutiny of Maqrizi's report reveals that he is probably confusing references. He appears to be describing

³¹³ Ibn al-Dawadari is the one who offers the most direct reference for he reports in the events of 693/1293 that "al-Iwan al-Ashrafi was completed by Amir 'Alam al -Din al-Shuja'i," Ibn al-Dawadari, *Kanz al-Durar wa-Jami' al-Ghurar*, vol. 8, *al-Durra al-Zakiyya fi-Akhbar al Dawla al-Turkiyya*, 345; Maqrizi, *Khitat*, 2: 206; Ibn Iyas, *Bada'i' al-Zuhur fi-Waqa'i' al-Duhur*, vol.1, pt. 1, 378, states specifically that Khalil is the builder of al-Iwan al-Ashrafi and al-Qa'a al-Ashrafiyya, thus preventing any confusion between the two structures.

³¹⁴ Baybars al-Mansuri *Al-Tuhfa al-Mulukiyya*, 232; Author Zettersteen, 156; al-Shuja'i, *Tarikh al-Malik al-Nasir Muhammad*, 113; Ibn al-Dawadari, *Kanz al-Durar wa-Jami' al-Ghurar*, vol. 9, *al-Durr al-Fakhir fi-Sirat al-Malik al-Nasir*, H.R. Roemer ed. (Cairo, 1960) 238; Maqrizi, *Suluk*, 2, pt. 1, 149.

³¹⁵ Ibn al-Dawadari, *al-Durra al-Zakiyya fi-Akhbar al Dawla al-Turkiyya*, 345; Maqrizi, *Khitat*, 2: 213, says that Khalil had his amirs and *khassakiyya* represented on the walls of the other structure he attributes to al-Ashraf Khalil, the *rafraf*.

the Iwan al-Ashrafi under the heading the *rafrac*, whose description is lost to us. This is not unusual for Maqrizi, who, in many instances in his *Khitat* mixed up data or recorded contradictory information on several structures, as Casanova remarked.³¹⁶ The confusion in this case is clear when Maqrizi says that the *rafrac* was high, with a decorated dome raised over columns, that it has representations of amirs, and that it was the favorite audience hall of the sultans until it was demolished by al-Nasir Muhammad and rebuilt in 1312. All these properties apply more to the Iwan than to the *rafrac*, which is a light structure. A dome is what distinguished the Qubbas of both Baybars and Qalawun, and the later Iwan of al-Nasir Muhammad. A dome can be expected in the Iwan of al-Ashraf Khalil as well. The contemporary historian Ibn al-Dawadari says that the amirs' representations were in the Iwan, not in a *rafrac*. Finally, the strongest evidence is furnished by the concurrence of dates of building and demolition. In fact, Maqrizi is the only chronicler who records the structure razed by al-Nasir Muhammad in 1312 as the *rafrac*; every other reporter calls it the Iwan.³¹⁷

Figural Representations in Mamluk Palaces

The report on al-Ashraf Khalil's Iwan again raises the fascinating, and difficult, question of figural motifs in Mamluk palaces and their meanings. Although the information on this subject is only textual, it is still possible to suggest themes and techniques, connections and influences, and, more important, causes and meanings for the few mentioned examples. The reported representation of amirs in al-Ashraf Khalil's Iwan recalls the similar treatment in Baybars's Qubba where the sultan and his amirs and retinue were depicted in the day of the procession (*mawkib*). These two sets of images could be grouped in one category, the figural motif, which seems to have alternated in the early Bahri royal iconography with the other topos of

³¹⁶ Casanova, *Histoire*, (Arabic translation) 58-9, 72-3.

³¹⁷ Maqrizi, *Suluk*, vol. 2, pt. 1, 118, reports in the events of 1312 the demolition of the *rafrac*. All the other chroniclers, already cited, reported the demolition of the Iwan al-Ashrafi the year before. Maqrizi pushes the date on the Iwan's demolition to 1315. In this he is also followed by Ibn Taghri-Bardi, who, however, does not mention the *rafrac*.

representation: the urban one, where cities, castles, and citadels of the sultanate were set in some natural surroundings. As discussed earlier, the architectural scenes were most probably borrowed from Umayyad, Syrian precedents composed in mosaic.³¹⁸ The figural representations in Mamluk palaces could not have been connected to the same Syrian prototypes, and their medium of representation could not have been glass mosaic: the revived Umayyadizing tradition did not contain figural representations in either its technical or its conceptual repertoire.

Textual references to figural representations in the palaces of Muslim rulers in the regions that were later incorporated in the Mamluk sultanate are abundant. We also have a fair idea of the media and methods used, the evidence for which is both archaeological and textual.³¹⁹ Maqrizi reports that Khumarawayh (884-96), the son of Ibn Tulun, had the walls of a *majlis* in his palace covered with larger-than-life-size, painted, wooden reliefs depicting him and his favorite concubines and singers. The hall was called the Bayt al-Dhahab (House of Gold) because of the jewelry and golden crowns that were affixed on the wooden representations to give them a real appearance.³²⁰ In the Fatimid period, we can cite at least two media of figural representation used simultaneously in the decoration of the caliphal palaces. The first is wood carving, as evidenced in the famous panels with representations of all the themes of the princely cycle, which originated from the Fatimid Qasr al-Gharbi (Western Palace) and were recovered from the *bimaristan* of al-Mansur Qalawun.³²¹ The second is paintings on the walls, of which we have

³¹⁸ Regional styles and interconnections between different styles in the Mamluk period have been the subjects of some scholarly interest. See, Terry Allen, "The Concept of Regional Style," in his *Five Essays in Islamic Architecture* (California, 1988) 91-110. Of great interest is the work of Michael Meinecke, "Mamluk Architecture, Regional Architectural Tradition: Evolutions and Interrelations," *Damaszener Mitteilungen*, vol. 2 (1985) 163-75.

³¹⁹ For textual references, see, Ahmad Taymur Pasha, *al-Taswir 'Ind al-'Arab*, Z. Hasan ed. (Cairo, 1942) 2-11, where he collected a fair number of poetry examples and historical references.

³²⁰ Maqrizi, *Khitat*, 1:316-17.

³²¹ The remaining examples, displayed in the Islamic Art Museum in Cairo were studied by Edmond Pauty, *Catalogue du Musée Arabe: les bois sculptés jusqu'à l'époque ayyoubide* (Cairo, 1931) 48-50, pl. 46-58. They were recently analyzed by Sabiha Khmeir in her PhD dissertation at SOAS, which was not available to me. She made the startling discovery of further Fatimid

no actual Fatimid remains but a fair number of accounts refer to the application of figural painting, depicting different topics, mostly related to pleasure and entertainment, in caliphal and vizirial palaces.³²²

In the Ayyubid period, the evidence is scantier. We have one historical and poetical reference to the application of figural representation in a palace in the Citadel of Aleppo.³²³ The palace, built by the Ayyubid sultan al-Zahir Ghazi the son of Salah al-Din in 1193, has long disappeared without a trace. It was named initially the Dar al-Dhahab (House of Gold), and the Dar al-'Awamid (House of Columns), and was attributed to Nur al-Din ibn Zengi. Later on, it was rebuilt twice by al-Zahir Ghazi, and became known as the Dar al-Shukhus (House of Figures) because of the numerous representations of people in it. The images described in a poem recited on the occasion of its inauguration relate directly to the usual repertoire of courtly scenes: hunts, horsemen, entertainment and drinking, and the like. Unfortunately, we are not told how these images were executed.

Both Ayyubid and Fatimid scenes could be considered among the thematic prototypes of the images depicted on the walls of Baybars's Qubba at the Citadel. The latter, however, differed from their suggested prototypes in the restricted range of their topics. According to Ibn Shaddad's and Ibn 'Abd al-Zahir's descriptions, the scenes of Baybars, unlike those of his predecessors, excluded images of pleasure, drinking, and entertainment from the cycle, and used only views of hunting and royal processions. This restriction of topics was intentional on the part of Baybars, who was very austere and whose

decorative panels on the ceiling of what appears to have been an iwan of a larger qa'a of the Western Palace which was incorporated into the *bimaristan*.

³²² Maqrizi, *Khitat*, 1: 486-7, reports the figures of poets painted on the walls of the gallery (*manzara*) of Birket al-Habash, built by the Fatimid caliph al-Amir Bi-Ahkam Allah; Maqrizi, *Khitat*, 2:318-19, speaks of figural representations in the palace of the Fatimid vizir al-Yazuri. See also, Richard Ettinghausen, "Painting in the Fatimid Period: A Reconstruction," *Ars Islamica*, 9 (1942) 112-13.

³²³ 'Izz al-Din Muhammad Ibn Shaddad, *Al-'A'laq al-Khatira fi Zikr Umara' al-Sham wa-l-Jazira*, D. Sourdel ed. (Damascus, 1953) vol. 1, pt. 1, 25-6; Muhib al-Din Muhammad ibn al-Shuhna (active around 830/1426) *Al-Durr al-Muntakhab fi-Tarikh Mamlakat Halab*, Joseph E. Sarkis, ed. (Beirut, 1909) 52-3; Kamel al-Ghazzi, *Nahr al-Dhahab fi-Tarikh Halab* (Aleppo, 1920) 2:26.

favorite pastime was not drinking parties but hunting and *furussiyya* exercises. The same limitation seems to have been implemented in the decoration of objects commissioned by him. The absence of the scenes of pleasure from a princely cycle on the Baptistère de Saint Louis was recently used as evidence to attribute it to Baybars.³²⁴ **(Fig 3. 16 Representations on the Exterior of the Baptistère de Saint Louis).**

The images in Khalil's Iwan were even further removed from the pre-Mamluk prototypes. They were different in composition and possibly in meaning, although they, too, represented amirs and *khassakiyya*. The one sentence that describes them is amply clear that the figures were not put together in composed settings, rather each figure, representing one amir, was set alone. Each amir was reportedly identified by his emblem (*rank*), which was inscribed above his head. From the way they were arranged, these images seem to have belonged to another convention of representation altogether.

The Jeziran Examples

Estelle Whelan points to another parallel convention of figural representations in the Jezira, or upper Mesopotamia, which may have provided the models for Khalil's figures. Unlike the Fatimid and Ayyubid examples, and their own precedents in Umayyad and Abbasid palaces, the Jeziran ones did not depict composite scenes, but rather single standing figures, which differed from each other only in the attribute of their office: one figure with a sword, another with a bow and arrow, another with a napkin and a beaker, and so on. Whelan discussed two specific examples. The first is the stone niche from the Gu' Kummet at Sinjar, which she dates around 1240, and the second is the stone bridge over the river Tigris built by the Artuqid ruler of Hisn Kayfa Qara Arslan (1148-67). **(Fig 3. 17 the stone niche from the Gu' Kummet at Sinjar).** In both examples, figures are carved in relief, in the first on raised, rectangular stone slabs, and in the second inside trilobed arched panels. Whelan interprets the figures as representations of the *khassakiyya* of the ruler of these two principalities, and

³²⁴ Doris Behrens-Abouseif, "The Baptistère de Saint Louis: A Reinterpretation," *Islamic Art*, vol. 3 (1988-89) 3-13.

sees in the whole composition a symbol of sovereignty. The rulers, absent from either composition, are viewed as having implied their princely status by representing their *khassakiyya*. Whelan grouped these compositions where each figure stands by itself within its own frame with the composite scenes depicted in other media, such as the Baptistère de Saint Louis, where pages, each identified with an attribute of their office, are represented in attendance around a ruler.³²⁵

Yet, the two Jeziran compositions are markedly distinct from the scenes with figures surrounding a ruler in his court. They seem to stand as representatives of a convention other than the one of courtly scenes, and thus should be understood separately. Furthermore, there exist two surviving examples that share the same representational characteristics with the discussed Jeziran cases which were not covered by Whelan, and which may alter our understanding of the themes and the techniques pertaining to this tradition.

The first is a door in the court of the monastery of Mar Bahnam (St. Bahnam), outside Mosul, the most important city of the Jezira, that has almost an identical composition to that of the Sinjar's niche: a frame of trilobed arched niches, linked by knotted loops. **(Fig 3. 18 The Door of the monastery of Mar Bahnam)**. The little arched frames in Sinjar were alternately filled with figures of ceremonial office-holders and stylized arabesques. The ones in the monastery have identical figures of standing monks, their heads covered with capuche-like hoods, alternating with similar, rigid arabesques. The door is framed by an inscription band in Syriac, which contains only undated, Biblical invocations. It is very difficult to date the door's frame, but its building should fall between 1164, the date inscribed on the altar, and 1295, the date commemorating the coming of the Mongol Khan Bidou to the monastery, which is affixed on the wall opposite the door. The interlacing frame that forms the little arches ends in the central arch with

³²⁵ Estelle Whelan, "Representations of the *Khassakiyah* and the Origins of Mamluk Emblems," 221-25.

a protruding feline head.³²⁶ The Sinjar niche has neither writing nor feline sculpture. But there are two other known examples from the city of Mosul that belong to the same decorative type which have Qur'anic inscriptions framing the band of arched niches. These last two examples, the door to the mausoleum of Imam al-Bahir and that of the *qubba* of Imam 'Awn al-Din ibn al-Hasan, are devoid of figures, and have only variations of the arabesque arrangement inside the arched niches. **(Fig 3. 19 The Door to the Mausoleum of Imam al-Bahir)**. Both examples are datable to the period of al-Malik al-Rahim Badr al-Din Lu'lu', who ruled Mosul independently between 1233 and 58.³²⁷ The door of the monastery of Mar Bahnam belongs to the same time, and Whelan dates the Sinjar niche's to the same period as well.

These four surviving examples of doors framed with decorated, interlaced, and arched niches seem to belong to a local Jeziran architectural pattern that appeared in the middle of the thirteenth century, and was applied to different types of buildings: secular and commemorative, Islamic and Christian. Like other set patterns of decoration with figures in other Islamic periods and locales, however, the figures were eliminated from the composition when the pattern was adapted to an Islamic religious or funerary structure.³²⁸ Thus the figural motifs disappeared from the framed door with the niches when it was applied in the two mausolea of Shi'ite imams in Mosul, built by Badr al-Din Lu'lu', whereas the Christian convent and the palatial niche used them: each adapting the representations to its own context to convey the appropriate message.

³²⁶ Suleiman al-Sayegh, *Tarikh al-Mawsil*, vol. 3, *Nafa'is al-Athar* (Juniyeh, Lebanon, 1956) 108-18.

³²⁷ A photograph of the door of Imam al-Bahir's Mausoleum is published in, Suleiman al-Sayegh, *Tarikh al-Mawsil*, vol. 3, *Nafa'is al-Athar*, 116; photograph of 'Awn al-Din's door, in 'Ala' al-Din al-'Ani, *al-Mashahid zat al-Qibab al-Makhrutiyya fi-l-'Iraq* (Baghdad, 1982) 327. Both published originally by Sarre and Herzfeld in their survey of the architecture of the Jezira, see, Whelan, "Representations of the *Khassakiyah* and the Origins of Mamluk Emblems," 237, note 28. All these doors have been stylistically connected together.

³²⁸ This was noticed from as early as the decorative triangles of the Umayyad palace of Mshatta, where the triangles corresponding to the back of the mosque were devoid of animal figures, although they resembled the rest in every other detail. Henri Stern, "Les origines de l'architecture de la mosquée omeyyade," *Syria* 28 (1951) 272-3.

The second example, this one badly damaged, belongs to the period of Badr al-Din Lu'lu' as well. It is in fact his own palace in Mosul, called now the Qara Seray, of which only the remains of two qa'as are still standing. On the walls of one of these qa'as ran an inscription band with the name and titlature of Badr al-Din Lu'lu', under which ran a series of seated figures inscribed in relief within circles of 20 cm in diameter (entirely lost around the middle of the twentieth century).³²⁹ These figures may have numbered a hundred, and are said to have been identical as if they were pressed on the stucco from the same mold.³³⁰ But even this last remark was made when the figures have already started to erode. Like the figures in the frames with niches, these figures may have had the same general appearance but their differences resided in small details. It is very difficult to see in them only a decorative pattern, and they must have had an iconographic role. The readily available meaning, and the one found in Mosuli metalwork and manuscript illumination at that period, is that these figures represented the attendants of Lu'lu' in what appears to have been his audience hall in his palace. **(Fig 3. 20 Manuscript Cover Representing Badr al-Din Lu'lu' and Attendants)**. Thus, the general connotation adduced by Whelan holds true for the palace of Lu'lu'— the figural reliefs were attributes of sovereignty.

This example and the statuettes on the stone bridge of Hisn Kayfa demonstrate that the use of figural representations in separate frames was widespread in Mosul and its surroundings, and was neither technically nor stylistically limited to the Mosuli pattern of stone framed doors with trilobed niches. The appearance of the monks on the Mar Bahnam monastery's door may have been a Christian adaptation of a secular theme in a local tradition, rather than the opposite. All the other examples represented court members and may have signified princely status. Whether they specifically depicted *khassakiyya*, as Whelan suggested, is debatable, unless the term is redefined to include only those who held ceremonial offices at the court. The application

³²⁹ Reported in Niqula Siyufi, *Notes historiques et explications sur les inscriptions de la ville de Mossoul*, S. Dewachi ed., (Baghdad, 1956) # 541-42; reproduced in Max van Berchem, "Monuments et inscriptions de l'atabek Lu'lu' de Mossoul," *Opera Minora* (Genève, 1978) 2: 659-72.

³³⁰ C. Niebuhr, *Voyage en Arabie et en d'autres pays circonvoisins*, (Amsterdam, 1776) 2:292.

of the word *khassakiyya* to name the court attendants in Mesopotamia is anachronistic, because the word was coined under the Mamluks of Egypt to denote a special relationship between the sultan and his favorite mamluks.

The Mosuli Connection

The mode in which the amirs of Khalil were represented in his Iwan may have been similar to those of the Jeziran examples, and most probably closest to the images in the hall of Lu'lu'. The medium used in depicting the images is unknown, but they could have been either paintings or reliefs on stucco. Stone carving would have compelled the chroniclers to use a verb other than *sawwar* to report the representations. The important point here is that Khalil's figures belonged to a convention that coexisted with, but differed from, the one to which the scenes in Baybars's Qubba belonged, though the two were probably related in the messages implied by their themes. The convention of arranging figures in composite scenes of courtly activities was pan-Islamic, and had its roots in Classical, Byzantine and Sassanian imagery.

The convention of solitary figures set in individual frames appeared after the coming of the Seljuk Turks and the ensuing Atabek dynasties in the eleventh to the thirteenth century. In fact, solitary figures in interior decoration, whether in carved stone or stucco, are recorded only in Mosul and its surroundings, and only in Lu'lu's period, who had usurped the throne from the last Zengid Atabek of Mosul. There are no known equivalents anywhere else in the Islamic world up to that period. They seem to have been either a local development of the wider Islamic school of figural motifs, or a direct derivative of one aspect of the figural heritage of the area, which has a mixture of Byzantine and Sassanian models and motifs. The north Jeziran region, Mosul and surroundings, seems to have been the stage of a resurgence of figural representations that were applied in every medium, from coins, to manuscript illumination, to metalwork, and finally to architecture.³³¹ It is very plausible – and in fact at this point it is the only

³³¹ On the variety of themes and figures used in Jeziran coinage of the twelfth and thirteenth century and their links with ancient Classical and Byzantine models see Helen Mitchell

possibility – that the school of Mosul offered the models, and perhaps the craftsmen, for solitary figural motifs in architectural decoration in later Mamluk applications, of which we have the reference to Khalil's Iwan, and other examples may have gone unnoticed.

The architectural connection between Mosul and Cairo cannot be proved directly, but an already established link in metalwork strengthens its plausibility. Some of the richly decorated objects, replete with figural representations, which belong to the Ayyubid and Mamluk periods were produced by Mosuli craftsmen, who left their signatures on them.³³² The topics depicted on these objects were diverse, but the majority were courtly scenes which mixed pleasure settings and horsemanship. Some also had solitary princely figures inscribed in framed medallions either repeated or alternating with the composite scenes.³³³ The themes and techniques are believed to have originated in the Iranian world and were brought west to Anatolia and Mesopotamia with the Seljuks. Their transfer to Egypt, via Syria, followed the establishment of the Atabek states in Syria and Mesopotamia. Mosuli metalworkers, who constituted a majority of the metal artists known to us, had taken up work for several Atabek (Zengid and Artuqid) and Ayyubid princes in Mesopotamia, Syria, and even Egypt. After 1261, when Mosul was stormed and destroyed by the Mongols, more Mosuli metalworkers had immigrated to Syrian and Egyptian cities where they could find patrons among the wealthy and powerful Mamluk amirs. Thus the Mosuli style was directly introduced to the Mamluk realm, where it adapted

Brown, "Some Reflections on the Figured Coinage of the Artuqids and Zengids," in, Dikran Kouymjian ed. *Near Eastern Numismatics, Iconography, Epigraphy and History, Studies in Honor of George C. Miles* (Beirut, 1974) 353-58.

³³² Estelle Whelan, "Representations of the *Khassakiyah* and the Origins of Mamluk Emblems," 223-25; Mosuli craftsmen are listed in, Suleiman al-Sayegh, *Tarikh al-Mawsil*, vol. 3, *Nafa'is al-Athar*, 80-82; Esin Atil, *Renaissance of Islam: Art of the Mamluks* (Washington, D.C., 1981) 50-53.

³³³ See, for example, a bowl made by the Mosuli Ibn al-Zayn, in the Louvre, # MAO 331, and his basin, Louvre # LP 16, which belonged to the Baptistère de St. Louis, or the basin in the Victoria and Albert Museum, # 740-1898; Esin Atil, *Renaissance of Islam: Art of the Mamluks*, 68-79, for photos, descriptions, and references.

to the new context's requirements and incorporated the additional features specific to the Mamluk heraldic system.³³⁴

We can finally say that the early Bahri sultans Baybars, Qalawun, and Khalil appropriated all the available techniques of figural representations from the preexisting repertoires of Egypt, Syria and Mesopotamia. They put them all to use in their palatial architecture at the Citadel, each choosing his favorite mode of representation according to his own taste. Thus we have the figural representations in Baybars's Qubba, which were most probably painted, and which belonged to the secular, classical repertoire. We have the reported architectural scenes in Qalawun's Qubba and in the Qa'a al-Ashrafiyya at the Citadel, and the remaining ones in Baybars's mausoleum in Damascus. All of them used the revived Umayyad mosaic technique and imagery. We have also the amirs figures in Khalil's Iwan, which may have belonged to the transposed Mosuli tradition, and may have been executed in stucco. The use of these themes was a royal prerogative. This is evident from the absence of figural or architectural representations in princely structures. The decision on any particular technique or medium may have been a personal choice of the sultan, or a result of availability or knowledge of extant examples, but the reasons behind the depiction of horsemanship, processions, hunts, and representations of amirs or of territorial possessions and conquests must have been identical.

These images could not have been used solely for decorative purposes. They had messages to convey. The iconography of these images in the royal palaces was a reflection, and a condition, of the political and military contexts of the Mamluk state at that period. The three sultans, Baybars, Qalawun, and Khalil were laying down the rules and establishing the structural hierarchy of the newly imposed Mamluk system in Egypt and Syria. They functioned within the confines of a concept of rule according to which they relied on their personal mamluks to maintain their supremacy among the other strong amirs. The three sultans had distinguished themselves in the field of jihad against Crusaders, Mongols, and Armenians. The images in their structures

³³⁴ See the discussion of the Mosuli style in Mamluk metalwork in D.S. Rice, "Inlaid Brasses from the Workshop of Ahmad al-Dhaki al-Mawsili," *Ars Orientalis*, vol. 2 (1957) 283-326.

visualized, publicized, and emphasized their military conquests and their Mamluk environment, in which their *khassakiyya* amirs played an important role in the still clan-like structure of the Mamluk state. The fact that they used various transposed modes and techniques to decorate their structures is indicative of their independence of any strong and binding cultural tradition, which permitted them to choose from several extant, and available ones. The same is apparent in their borrowing from other organizational, political, and judicial systems to construct their own, whence they adapted some from the Fatimid customs, others from the Abbasids, and still others from the Mongols, especially under Baybars who is told to have been an admirer of the Mongol codes of behavior and punishment.

The practice of decorating palaces surfaces with figural representation was abandoned in the period of al-Nasir Muhammad (early fourteenth century), and decorative, emblematic, and iconographic inscriptions replaced it. Al-Nasir Muhammad was known more as a diplomat and a master of bargaining than as a fighter and army leader. But his character and political methods would have explained the disappearance of war scenes from the cycle not the entire cycle of figural representations. The shift to epigraphic surface articulation, and the elimination of representational decoration, should be viewed as a function of the weakening of the military function of the state and its ruling elite, and the gradual acculturation of the mamluk Turks to the more conservative, literate, and iconoclastic tastes of upper-class Egyptians and Syrians.

The Citadel at the End of Khalil's Reign

All palatial structures reviewed thus far were located within the confine of the original Ayyubid southern enclosure. The sultans up to the time of al-Nasir Muhammad restricted themselves to improving the Citadel within its ramparts and providing it with the needed structures to turn it into a functioning center for the sultanate. Baybars, Qalawun, and Khalil endowed the complex with a few monumental and sumptuous units: the House of Gold, the series of Qubbas and Iwans, and the Qa'a al-Ashrafiyya. None of the new structures was situated in the harem, which must have

remained as it was planned by al-Kamil, when the whole palatial structure was called *al-dar al-sultaniyya*, or, *dar al-saltana*, without any apparent distinction between the public and the private domains.

The three Mamluk sultans, however, with their construction of the new reception halls, may have wanted to make the separation between the two domains clearer and firmer, functionally and architecturally. We encounter in the sources the term Bab al-Sitara (Gate of the Curtain) for the first time at the end of Baybars's rule.³³⁵ Bab al-Sitara signified the threshold of the sultan's private quarters where his harem were lodged and symbolically veiled behind the curtain (*sitara*), which may or may not have existed literally. The real gate that was located in that area was called the Bab al-Sa'at (Gate of the Hours), but the significance of this second name is not easy to decipher.³³⁶ The whole private area, and the rest of the Citadel as well, were eventually reorganized and rebuilt by al-Nasir Muhammad, who added a number of qa'as to the harem and extended its outer borders beyond the limits of al-Kamil's initial palatial complex. Khalil may have been the initiator of this large-scale refurbishing project, but he was not able to accomplish it for the time at his disposal was cut short by his assassination.

³³⁵ Ibn al-Dawadari, *al-Durra al-Zakiyya fi-Akhhbar al Dawla al-Turkiyya*, 676; Mufaddal ibn-Abi al-Fada'il, *al-Nahj al-Sadid*, 14: 453.

³³⁶ Mufaddal ibn-Abi al-Fada'il, *al-Nahj al-Sadid*, 14: 580, says clearly that Bab al-Sitara was from inside Bab al-Sa'at when reporting the execution of al-Shuja'i; Ibn Taghri-Bardi, *Nujum*, 11: 72, speaks of an event that makes it clear that the gate's name was *Bab al-Sa'at*. See also Casanova, *Histoire*, (Arabic translation) 120.

Chapter Four

Al-Nasir Muhammad's First Period 1311-22

The last quarter of the thirteenth century witnessed a series of extraordinary military victories, territorial acquisitions, and the achievement of political maturity by the Mamluk state. But, between 1293 and 1310, the state went through a long stretch of turmoil, instability, and slow growth. These two decades were characterized by continuous internecine struggles among the great amirs, and a fast turnover of sultans. After the death of Khalil, his brother al-Nasir Muhammad came back to the throne twice, once in 1298 and again in 1310, while three of his father's Mansuri amirs usurped it in the intervals. Clearly, this was not a period for urban or architectural accomplishment, which requires a minimum level of stability and prosperity.

The sultanate at the Beginning of the Fourteenth Century

Al-Ashraf Khalil was slain outside Cairo in 1293 by a group of dissatisfied amirs led by his vicegerent Badr al-Din Baydara. Baydara, and most of his supporters, were killed shortly afterward by another group of loyalists. The latter, undecided about whom among them to promote to the sultanate, compromised by choosing Muhammad, the eight-year-old second son of Qalawun, and maneuvered to control him rather than working out their differences in the open. Muhammad was declared sultan in December 1293 and was given the title al-Nasir.³³⁷ The two most prominent amirs among the loyalists, al-Shuja'i and Kitbugha, became vizir and vicegerent respectively, and each plotted against the other to dominate the sultanate. The clash was not long in coming; al-Shuja'i lost the struggle and paid with his life.

³³⁷ The historical background of al-Nasir Muhammad's period is based on: Nuwayri, *Nihayat al-Irb fi-Funun al-Adab*, vol. 30-31; Shams al-Din al-Shuja'i, *Tarikh al-Malik al-Nasir Muhammad bin Qalawun wa-Awladahu*, Baybars al-Mansuri, *Al-Tuhfa al-Mulukiyya fi-l-Dawla al-Turkiyya*; Ibn al-Dawadari, *Kanz al-Durar wa-Jami' al-Ghurar*, vol. 9, *al-Durr al-Fakhir fi-Sirat al-Malik al-Nasir*; Maqrizi, *Suluk*, vol. 1, pt. 3, vol. 2, pts 1& 2; Ibn Taghri-Bardi, *Nujum*, vol. 8,9,10. An insightful chronicle, albeit incomplete in its present published form, for it covers only five years of al-Nasir's reign, is al-Yusufi's *Nuzhat al-Nazir fi-Sirat al-Malik al-Nasir*, see also, Donald P. Little, "The Recovery of a Lost Source for Bahri Mamluk History: al-Yusufi's *Nuzhat al-Nazir fi-Sirat al-Malik al-Nasir*," *JAOS*, vol. 94 (1974) 42-54. A concise summary is, Robert Irwin, *The Middle East in the Middle Ages, The Early Mamluk Sultanate 1250-1382* (Carbondale, 1986) chptrs. 5,6,7.

Soon afterward, Kitbugha used the old excuse of the need for a mature ruler to manage the troubled affairs of the state to depose al-Nasir and send him back to the harem at the Citadel. Kitbugha, initially a Mongol captive and a Mansuri amir, installed himself as sultan with the title al-'Adil. He was sustained in his endeavor by an adventurous amir, Lajin, who, as one of the main conspirators against Khalil, had been in hiding for some time after the latter's assassination. Lajin represented a faction of amirs whose support Kitbugha needed, and so he was appointed vicegerent.

In 1296, Lajin wrested the sultanate from Kitbugha, and declared himself sultan under the title al-Mansur, perhaps in echo of his master al-Mansur Qalawun. Chroniclers of the period noticed Lajin's unusual behavior when it came to dealing with the ex-sultan, who had been his benefactor and *khushdash*. Instead of summarily executing him, as would have been expected, he sent him into a respectable exile as the governor of Hama in Syria. He also sent the adolescent al-Nasir Muhammad to the Citadel of Kerak in Jordan, probably to diminish the possibility of a coup led or inspired by him. Two years later, Lajin himself was assassinated at the Citadel, most probably while sitting in the Qa'a al-Ashrafiyya.³³⁸

The amirs who killed him were second-rate officers who had taken advantage of the absence of the great amirs to carry out their crime. Two of them aspired to become the next sultan-vicegerent team, but were defeated and eliminated by the troops of the great amirs. A junta of six amirs of one hundred took over the day-to-day governing of the state. As usual there were contenders to seize the sultanate among these amirs, but none of them could muster enough support to overcome his opponents. The committee tried solving the impasse by recalling al-Nasir Muhammad from Kerak and installing him as sultan a second time when he was thirteen years old.

³³⁸ No chronicler speaks specifically of the Qa'a when reporting the killing of Lajin. Some call it simply the Qasr al-Kabir (Great Palace), Ibn Iyas, *Bada'i' al-Zuhur fi-Waqa'i' al-Duhur*, vol. 1, pt. 1, 398; others call it the Qasr al-Juwwani (Inner Palace), Ibn Taghri-Bardi, *Nujum*, vol. 8, 100. Both names were applied to the Ablaq Palace, which was built 14 years after this event. The Qa'a al-Ashrafiyya was the only palace that would have fulfilled a similar function for the Ablaq Palace and was close to the harem, thus the suggestion, see also the discussion of the word *qasr* at the end of this chapter.

The two strongest amirs who emerged at the beginning of al-Nasir's second reign were Sayf al-Din Salar and Rukn al-Din Baybars al-Jashankir. The first became the vicegerent of al-Nasir, while the second was appointed *atabek al-'asakir*, which is approximately the head of the army. The confrontation between them was soon to follow, but Salar was a wiser man than his predecessors, and he let Baybars have the upper hand without risking losing his position in a showdown.

Midway in the second reign of al-Nasir Muhammad, in 1303, a powerful earthquake struck the Mamluk territories. It destroyed many large structures in Cairo and cracked many of the minarets of its mosques. This was the first test of the willingness of the rulers to assume responsibility for major renovation projects. Al-Nasir Muhammad and his amirs divided the affected mosques, and took it upon themselves to rebuild them.³³⁹ This precedent was to be followed in the third reign of al-Nasir, when the sultan and his amirs would not only respond to emergency but would also initiate large urban projects.

On the external front, this second reign faced a renewed Ilkhanid Mongol threat. The Mamluk army had to defend itself twice, in 1299 and 1301, against the Ilkhanids, under sultan Mahmud Ghazan. The first invasion was successful; the Mamluks were defeated and Syria fell under Mongol rule. This occupation turned out to be short lived, however, the Mamluks, without a fight and by a mixture of luck and attrition, were able to recapture Syria less than a year later. The second attempt against the Mamluk realm was disastrous for the Mongols. Their army was routed in a battle not far from Damascus, led by al-Nasir Muhammad. The next year, Ghazan died and the Mongol threat was much diminished, and eventually eliminated for the rest of the fourteenth century.

³³⁹ Mufaddal ibn-Abi al-Fada'il, *al-Nahj al-Sadid*, 20:89; Maqrizi, *Suluk*, vol. 1, pt. 3, 944. Ibn Iyas, *Bada'i' al-Zuhur fi-Waqa'i' al-Duhur*, vol. 1, pt. 1, 416-17, says that al-Nasir ordered each of the amirs to restore the mosque of which he was the supervisor (*nazir*). This is not corroborated by earlier reporters, and it is very difficult to imagine how the amirs could have been the supervisors of major congregational mosques such as al-Azhar or al-Hakim mosques.

At that time Baybars al-Jashankir's and Salar's control over the sultanate became unbearable for the ambitious, yet powerless, al-Nasir Muhammad. He fled back to Kerak in 1308, and abdicated the sultanate.

Baybars immediately took advantage of the situation and acceded to the throne under the title al-Muzaffar. Salar managed to keep his position in the power transition, and remained vicegerent. Al-Nasir Muhammad was not sitting idly at Kerak. He was sending out envoys to the Mansuri amirs, who were the governors of the Syrian provinces, soliciting their help. Eventually he succeeded in his vigorous movement to regain his throne. This could be explained partly by al-Muzaffar's inability and hesitation as sultan to act and partly because of his bad luck, as the economic and climatic conditions during his tenure were unfavorable, but mostly because al-Nasir had recovered his popularity among his father's amirs, the Mansuris, who, in 1310, joined him with their troops in his march on Damascus, and then Cairo. Baybars acceded to pressure and fled the Citadel. Al-Nasir Muhammad came back to lead the sultanate for the third time. Now a mature man twenty-five years of age and experienced in politics, al-Nasir Muhammad was to remain sultan for the next thirty-one years. His third reign, stable and prosperous, proved to be the golden age for the Mamluk state.

In his long reign, al-Nasir Muhammad maintained stability through a mixture of diplomacy, cunning, and ruthlessness. Unlike his predecessors, al-Nasir was a better negotiator and diplomat than a fighter and leader of armies. He preferred alliances and clientage bonds, and, at times, relied on *fidawiyya* to assassinate his political opponents. He used limited military force only on rare occasions to reach a prominent position among the rulers of his time. He had his name pronounced in the Friday *khutba*, and sometimes struck on coins, in different regions in North Africa, Nubia, and Anatolia without sending in his troops (both acts were considered signs of recognition of sovereignty).³⁴⁰

On the home front, he not only controlled the internal affairs of the state, he effectively became the state. He kept a tight grip on the actions of his amirs. On the slightest sign of disobedience, he would confiscate their

³⁴⁰ Maqrizi, *Suluk*, vol. 2, pt. 2, 536-37; Ibn Taghri-Bardi, *Nujum*, 9: 176.

property, and, in many instances, eliminate the old and powerful among them, regardless of their loyalty.³⁴¹ Al-Nasir created a new circle of great amirs who, in addition to being his former mamluks, became his relatives. He systematically married them off to his slave-girls and, later on, to his daughters, as a means of strengthening the bonds that tied them to him. Consequently, al-Nasir became known for the awe, and even fear, he inspired among the mamluks, which he induced with his authoritarian manner, unforgiving nature, and vengefulness. He had weakened their financial power by ordering a new survey (*rawk*) of *iqta'* land in Egypt early in his third reign (1314-15), at which completion he reduced their land holdings, and allocated a larger chunk of the cultivable land of the Delta than before to the privy purse (*khass*). Later in his reign, he abolished many executive posts in the administration, such as the vizirate and the vicegerency, and assumed the functions attached to them. Still later, he took an interest in finances and tried to augment his revenues by manipulating a few lucrative trades to his own account, by involving himself in industry, and by the rearing of livestock.³⁴² All of these acts resulted in an effective and visible presence of the sultan in every aspect of the sultanate's

³⁴¹ Maqrizi, *Khitat*, 2: 306; Ibn Taghri-Bardi, *Nujum*, 9: 210-11, quoting al-Safadi. This mistrust of amirs did not apply only to those of his predecessors, mainly the Mansuris of his father and the Burji *khushdashs* of Kitbugha, but also to his own mamluks. By the time of his death, he had created a council of close amirs that was made of a collection of handpicked individuals, who were not meant to create any obstacles in the transfer of power to his designated heir. This did not work as smoothly as he had planned, but the sultanate, nevertheless, remained in his progeny for forty years. Laila Ibrahim, in a verbal communication, drew my attention to a clever tactic by which al-Nasir effectively prevented the usurpation of the throne from his designated heir by appointing as regents his two most influential amirs, Qawsun and Bashtak, who had no right, within the extant restrictions of the Mamluk system, to become sultans themselves. Both were originally free men who were bought by the sultan from themselves and raised to the highest ranks. Both had no chance of attaining the throne because neither of them was a real mamluk nor a son of a sultan. The two of them, as apparent from a reported dialogue, realized that, and were limited in their maneuvering to manipulating the sultan. See, Ibn Taghri-Bardi, *Nujum*, 10: 19-20, for the conversation between the two.

³⁴² This activity, in addition to its influence on his relations with different groups in his sultanate, had an impact on the topography of the Citadel and the nomenclature of some of its components. This would become apparent in the discussion of *al-Hosh*.

functioning. As such, he surpassed all his predecessors in Mamluk Egypt, who were extreme autocratic rulers themselves.

Prosperity was bound to occur as a consequence of the long years of political calm. It was further enhanced by the sound economic practices of the sultan. He redistributed the agricultural lands in what is believed to have been a more productive mode. He involved himself in the repair, improvement, and expansion of irrigation systems and waterways in many provinces, especially in Giza, south of Cairo and in the Delta. He also encouraged trade with the east, and was constantly concerned about the safety of trade routes. Chronicles of his period are full of accounts of the embassies he received at his court and the envoys he sent to friendly rulers to negotiate the exchange of goods. Some of his political alliances could indeed be traced to his interest in keeping the trade routes functioning.

The Expansion of Cairo Under al-Nasir Muhammad

Perhaps more than anywhere else, the prosperity experienced during al-Nasir's reign was reflected in the expansion and embellishment of the city of Cairo in the first half of the fourteenth century. By the time of al-Nasir's death in 1341, Cairo had more than doubled in size and had spread into areas that had been until that time farmland, desert, or land recovered from the receding Nile. This natural process had started in the eleventh century, and was considerably accelerated in the beginning of the fourteenth century, which exposed large tracts that became available for urban development. It also resulted in increasing the distance between the city and its main source of drinking water. Al-Nasir and his amirs responded to both the opportunity to expand and the need for water. **(Fig 4. 1 Recession of the Nile and Expansion of Cairo under al-Nasir Muhammad).**

Midway through his reign, al-Nasir dug a new canal, the Khalij al-Nasiri, to divert water from the Nile to a new urban center he had established in the town of Siryaqus, north of Cairo. New quarters formed along this canal and on the major thoroughfares that cut it perpendicularly and linked it with the city's old quarters. More urban districts sprang up in other areas reclaimed from the receding Nile, such as al-Luq and al-Maqs; in the former

hippodromes that existed to the north and east of al-Qahira; in the northern quarter of al-Husayniyya, which was first urbanized by al-Zahir Baybars for the Mongol immigrants (*wafidiyya*); and especially in the areas surrounding the Citadel's hill. In the two districts situated between the Citadel and Fatimid Cairo, the Darb al-Ahmar and the Saliba al-Kubra and its extension towards the Nile, the many monumental palatial and religious buildings erected during his reign left no land vacant.³⁴³

This urban expansion, which would not be attained again in Cairo until the mid nineteenth century,³⁴⁴ was not haphazard. Al-Nasir Muhammad had a keen interest in controlling and directing the growth of his capital. His means of achieving this were both direct and indirect. He sponsored several projects aimed at providing new zones for building, new sources for drinking water, or new community structures such as mosques and hammams, so as to create new foci of urbanization around which people would build their residences. Chroniclers of the period point to al-Nasir as the first sultan who established a special department for building (*diwan al-'ama'ir*) as a means of coordinating between the multitude of architectural projects in which he was engaged.³⁴⁵ He also encouraged his amirs to

³⁴³ Jean-Claude Garcin, "Habitat médiéval et histoire urbaine à Fustat et au Caire," 162-5; Janet Abu-Lughod, *Cairo: 1001 Years of the City Victorious* (Princeton, 1971) 27-36 for the development of Cairo until the end of the Bahri period; John Alden Williams, "Urbanization and Monument Construction in Mamluk Cairo", *Muqarnas*, vol. 2 (1984) 33-45.

³⁴⁴ The paucity of data makes the explanation of the urban decline of Cairo after the brilliant period of growth under al-Nasir very speculative. David Ayalon had blamed it squarely on the shortsightedness and megalomania of al-Nasir Muhammad's urban program, in his "The Expansion and Decline of Cairo under the Mamluks," paper presented at the 29th Congrès International des Orientalistes, Paris (1973). This view was criticized by Jean-Claude Garcin, "Habitat médiéval et histoire urbaine à Fustat et au Caire," 163. Ayalon, who focuses primarily on Mamluk documents to the detriment of a broader view of events, tends to explain Mamluk phenomena according to Mamluk internal developments. This was noticed by Dorothea Krawulsky, Introduction, al-'Umari, *Masalik al-Absar*, 67, where she rejects Ayalon's interpretation of the decline of the Halaqa regiment under al-Nasir. The decline of Cairo, which was congruent with the downfall of the Egyptian economy in the second half of the Mamluk period, is more complicated than to be blamed solely on internal political factors and still needs to be thoroughly studied. A new, well-balanced synthesis of the Egyptian economy's plight in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries is found in, Janet Abu-Lughod, *Before European Hegemony, The World System A.D. 1250-1350* (New York, 1989) 224-47.

³⁴⁵ Shams al-Din al-Shuja'i, *Tarikh al-Malik al-Nasir Muhammad*, 113-14; Ibn Taghri-Bardi, *Nujum*, 9: 178-98; Maqrizi, *Khitat*, 2: 306; Maqrizi, *Suluk*, vol. 2, pt. 1, 130.

construct their social and religious philanthropic structures in designated areas, and he even absorbed some of the cost of building. In numerous cases, he was involved in the whole process of building palaces for his *khassakiyya* amirs, from choosing the location to furnishing the completed structures.

Like every other aspect of government, al-Nasir Muhammad's actions in the fields of urbanization and architectural patronage were matters of personal choice and personal inclination. But since he had almost abolished the distinction between his affairs and the sultanate's interests, his involvement should be viewed as representing the general policy of the state. In fact, he managed to create a climate of interest in building induced by his own example all over the sultanate. This is illustrated not only in his support of his amirs' construction activities in Cairo, but also in the work of his governors in the Syrian provinces. The best example is that of his favorite viceregent, Tankiz al-Husami, the governor (*nai'b*) of Damascus for most of his sultanate (1312-40), who was also known for his interest, and active involvement, in building. Damascus underwent an urban revival under Tankiz's rule such as it had not seen since the time of Nur al-Din ibn Zengi. It may be argued that the development of medieval Cairo and Damascus owes much to the efforts and visions, and perhaps the personal interests, of these two individuals.

Al-Nasir Muhammad's Work at the Citadel

Though al-Nasir Muhammad was involved in the urban revitalization and expansion of his capital, and in its endowment with many religious and palatial structures throughout his reign, yet his most tangible architectural legacy was at and around the Citadel. The majority of the monuments attributed to him – and they were more than those ascribed to any other Mamluk sultan, with the possible exception of al-Ashraf Qaytbay (1468-1496) – were situated inside the Citadel's palatial complex. Al-Nasir Muhammad was responsible for the replanning, monumentalization, and expansion of the Citadel. His involvement encompassed more than ordering and financing projects. He was reported in many instances to have supervised the work on the building sites himself.

Al-Nasir's work at the Citadel may be divided into two periods. The first stretched from the early, or formative, years to the point in time when he became secure in his third reign (1310-25). He apparently had a plan in mind to remodel the Citadel from the day he came back from Kerak that he was executing step by step; and with which he became satisfied around 1325. Then, in the last eight years of his rule (1333-1341), he embarked on a new plan of a different scope and aim which was probably not completed by the time of his death. **(Fig 4. 2 Location of the Structures of al-Nasir Muhammad at the Citadel).**

Less than a year after he assumed the sultanate for the third time, al-Nasir Muhammad started by demolishing the Iwan of his brother Khalil in 1311, and built a smaller one. Then he mounted water-wheels on the intake tower built by amir Aybak al-Afram in the reign of Khalil, and repaired and cleaned the aqueduct to increase the fresh water supply at the Citadel. He simultaneously enlarged the maydan underneath the Citadel and surrounded it with walls, which marked the new boundaries of the royal domain. In 1312-13, al-Nasir went to Syria and then to the Hijaz to perform the Hajj. Upon his return, he launched a monumentalization program of the palatial complex. He razed his brother's *rafrac*, and possibly the adjacent Rafrac Tower as well, and added a new tower at the visually most crucial spot in the Citadel, which dominated the approach from the Saliba of Ibn Tulun. He immediately followed with his Ablaq Palace, which also overlooked the maydan and the city beyond, and which was inaugurated in 1314. Al-Nasir's fury of construction slowed down a bit, and the next major project was not undertaken until 1318. In that year, he ordered the demolition of the old mosque at the Citadel, which was an Ayyubid legacy, and incorporated several structures around it in the rebuilding of a new mosque, the Nasiri Mosque, which was larger and more opulent than the old one. Two years later, in 1320, he rebuilt the court leading to the Qulla Gate, and added a new door inside that gate. In 1322, he remodeled the old palace of justice of Baybars under the Citadel, and turned it into a place for the royal *tablakhana*, or the music band. At that point, he seemed satisfied with his reorganization of the Citadel, and turned his attention to another major complex of villas, religious

structures and a maydan he established in the village of Siryaqus, north of Cairo in 1325.

A decade later, al-Nasir Muhammad returned to rebuilding the Citadel and its surroundings. In 1333, he ordered the demolition of the Iwan he had rebuilt in 1311, and the razing of several structures around it, to reconstruct the whole anew. This time the Iwan was more monumental than before. He refurbished the harem's qa'as, including the Hall of the Columns, and added a series of qa'as to the south of the original harem that came to be known as the Qa'at al-Sab'a (Seven Qa'as) although their number may have been less than seven.³⁴⁶ All the while, he appears to have been interested in building small palaces in the southern enclosure for the nine *khassakiyya* amirs, whom he had married off to his daughters. Some of these palaces were new constructions. Others were old structures adapted to the new functions. Next came the rebuilding and enlargement of the mosque in 1335, for which al-Nasir also razed a few structures, among them the old kitchen and its dependencies, which he rebuilt in stone vaults, reportedly for fear of fire. His next project was a direct result of his newly developed interest in animal husbandry. He founded a new enclosure (*hosh*) for the animals in the area south of his palatial complex to which he brought cows, sheep, and birds.

The last project at the Citadel in which al-Nasir was involved indicates that he was, until late in his reign, planning another expansion of the palaces' area, or possibly only refurbishing it. In 1341, he wanted to increase the fresh water supply again. The new water project would have included the digging of a new canal from the Nile, the construction of a new aqueduct, and a series of deep wells, which would have elevated the water to the hill of al-Rasad, not far from the Citadel, from which it would have been directed to the Citadel and surroundings. He died before he could finish it, and the project was neglected after him, though some of the wells that were dug remained in

346 The symbolism of the number seven in Egyptian Islamic architecture is still to be deciphered. We encounter the seven qa'as, elsewhere than the Citadel (Maqrizi, *Khitat*, 2: 59), the seven domes (a Fatimid series of domes in the desert near Cairo that apparently only numbered six, Maqrizi, *Khitat*, 2: 459), the seven hadarat at the Citadel, and the seven qa'as' tower in Damietta (Mufaddal ibn-Abi al-Fada'il, *al-Nahj al-Sadid*, 20:180), among other appellations using the number seven.

use until the fifteenth century. To these last few years of his reign also date most of the palaces he had built for his favorite amirs outside the Citadel: in the horse market area, in Hadarat al-Baqar, around the Birket al-Fil (Pond of the Elephant), and in the Kabsh, which is a little spur overlooking the Birket al-Fil.³⁴⁷

The Present Remains of al-Nasir's Works at the Citadel

Not surprisingly, the only building that has survived to this day almost unchanged is the mosque of al-Nasir Muhammad. All his other major structures slowly decayed over a period of five centuries after the passing of the Bahris until they were completely razed by Muhammad 'Ali in the early nineteenth century to make room for his new additions. The general assumption was that Muhammad 'Ali had so consistently destroyed the extant older structures that no traces of them could be excavated today. This hypothesis not only lacks any textual evidence that asserts the thoroughness of Muhammad 'Ali's refurbishing program, but also ignores the rise in ground level over time which may have buried, and thus preserved, some of the structures before Muhammad 'Ali's time.

Excavations in 1985 and 1988, in the modern Place of the Flag, warranted the rejection of the old hypothesis, and the search for other remains that were hitherto unaccounted for which may shed more light on the topography of the Mamluk Citadel. In addition to the Qa'a al-Ashrafiyya with its wealth of surface decoration, discovered almost by chance in 1985, another excavation unearthed a section of wall that most probably belonged to the back wall of the Great Iwan of al-Nasir, as it could be verified from the map of the *Description de l'Égypte's* site of the Divan or Palais de Joseph. Other recent findings include the four monolithic granite columns from the site of the Qa'a al-Ashrafiyya, and other shafts and capitals dispersed around the terrace located to the northeast of Muhammad 'Ali's Mosque.

³⁴⁷ The works of al-Nasir Muhammad are conveniently summarized in Ibn Taghri-Bardi, *Nujum*, 9:179-90; Maqrizi, *Suluk*, vol. 2, pt.2, 540-45. References are collected and organized in a number of recent Egyptian theses, see, for example, 'Ali Suleiman al-Miliji, *'Ama'ir al-Nasir Muhammad (the Buildings of al-Nasir Muhammad)*, Master's Thesis, School of Archaeology, Cairo University (1975) 71-91.

The excavations conducted by the Egyptian Antiquities Organization were limited to the western section of the southern enclosure. Much may be found in the southern section, or the old harem, and in the central part behind the walls of the mosque and next to the Well of Joseph. In some spots it is not necessary to dig in order to reach Mamluk strata. The initial ground levels or basements of some Mamluk structures are still accessible from the actual ground level of the Citadel through the few surviving stairs. Muhammad 'Ali apparently used the old foundations in some locations to erect his own structures on top of them, and saved the stairs for access.

This was noted from the plan of the Citadel drawn by the British Lt. Colonel Green in 1896,³⁴⁸ where it is shown that the small terrace to the southwest of the mosque of Muhammad 'Ali is supported on a series of underground vaults that were marked "ruined" on the map. **(Fig 4. 3 the Map of Lt. Colonel Green)**. There are two superimposed, huge vaulted halls that span the distance between the western wall of the court of the mosque of Muhammad 'Ali and the outer wall of the reception quarter (*salamluk*) of the Bijou Palace, which was burned down in the 1970s. In fact, the whole exterior length of the harem's periphery may still retain some remains of the initial lower levels of the Mamluk palaces, which all reportedly overlooked the exterior.

Two other sections of the southern enclosure provide further information on the layout of the Mamluk palatial complex and the links between its various components. The first is the area marked "ruined" on the Green plan and the Egyptian cadastral maps of the 1930s, south of the mosque of al-Nasir Muhammad, where the dilapidated tower of the Bir al-Sab' Sawaqi (Well of the Seven Fountain) which was the terminus of the aqueduct that brought the Nile water to the Citadel, is still standing. The second is the area under the present Police Museum on the northern tip of the southern enclosure, around the upper level of the Tower of the Corner. All these new data, which still need to be studied, may be helpful in the

348 This map was published in the *Comité de Conservation des Monuments de l'Art Arabe, Exercice 1896, Fasc. 15.*, 145, folded map. It offers invaluable information on the water supply system in the Citadel as it was at the end of the 19th century. This map is used in this study as a base map for the reconstruction.

reconstruction of the topography of the Mamluk Citadel. Though they do not furnish us with more than meager clues to the architecture of the period, because its underground structures are so ruined, they clarify and substantiate the information gathered from textual sources on the Mamluk palatial complex.

The Work of al-Nasir Muhammad in the First Period (1311-22)

In the discussion of the works undertaken at the Citadel by al-Nasir Muhammad after his return in 1310, it is important to distinguish between the program of the first period (1311-22) and that of the second period (1333-41), because differences exist between them both in the scope and in the opulence, style, and monumentality of the structures constructed. At the very beginning of his rule, some of al-Nasir's projects, both necessary repairs and impulsive whims, seem to have been introduced independently of his overall development plan. Soon, however, al-Nasir Muhammad embarked on a long-term project of additions, modifications, and monumentalization, that would turn the Citadel in general and the palatial complex in particular into a royal city that could accommodate the functions of the Mamluk administration and its army, which he was concurrently reorganizing.

Although he certainly did have a program for the changes, he seems to have been the only one who knew what it was, an attitude to be expected from this suspicious and calculating sovereign. These characteristics had become more pronounced by the last third of his reign, and were accompanied by a taste for extraordinary luxury coupled with a malicious greed which led him to extract money from every possible source. This heavily influenced the scope and quality of the new projects at the Citadel, many of which reflect the seasoned statesman and the megalomaniacal absolute ruler that al-Nasir had become. A few seem to have been directly related to the growth of the sultan's retinue, harem, and dependents, while still others may be traced to the sultan's growing interest in profitable projects.

The First Rebuilding of the Great Iwan

Al-Nasir Muhammad's first work in the Citadel was the building of a new Iwan, after he had demolished that of his brother al-Ashraf Khalil in 1311.³⁴⁹ This hastily executed work does not appear to have been a part of the Citadel's restructuring. Baybars al-Mansuri says that al-Nasir ordered the reconstruction of the Iwan built for his brother by al-Shuja'i because he hated the darkness (*ghils*) of its space and the additional buttresses, or perhaps simply the cumbersome supports (*arkan*) erected after the earthquake of 1303, depending on our interpretation of the sentence. He goes on to say that al-Nasir "enlarged the square in front of the Iwan and brought more light to its court" (*wassa'a sahatuhu wa nawwara bahatuhu*) to make the structure seem wider.³⁵⁰ It is conceivable that the strengthening of supports may have been executed in a rush after the earthquake, and may have adversely affected the form of the Iwan, though no other source says so, and some contradict Baybars al-Mansuri's report in one detail. Nuwayri and the anonymous author of the source edited by Zetterstéen, who were both, like Baybars al-Mansuri, eyewitnesses say that the new Iwan was smaller than the old one,³⁵¹ thus the reason for rebuilding the Iwan was not to enlarge it. The other reason advanced by Baybars al-Mansuri, that the supports hastily added after the earthquake needed to be replaced, would still be a valid, though not a complete, explanation. Baybars al-Mansuri provides yet another reason when

³⁴⁹ Nuwayri, *Nihayat al-Irb fi-Funun al-Adab*, vol. 30, fol. 66; Author Zetterstéen, 156, specifies that it took five months and eight days to complete the reconstruction; Ibn al-Dawadari, *al-Durr al-Fakhir fi-Sirat al-Malik al-Nasir*, 238; Maqrizi, *Suluk*, vol. 2, pt. 1, 107; Ibn Taghri-Bardi, *Nujum*, 9: 51.

³⁵⁰ Baybars al-Mansuri, *Al-Tuhfa al-Mulukiyya fi-l-Dawla al-Turkiyya*, 232-3.

³⁵¹ Nuwayri does not say directly that the new Iwan was smaller than the old one, but at one point in his narrative, when he is reporting the filling up of the underground prison (*al-Jubb*) at the Citadel, he says that the debris used in the process was that of the Iwan after its rebuilding on a smaller scale, Nuwayri, *Nihayat al-Irb fi-Funun al-Adab*, vol. 31, fol. 95. Maqrizi, *Khitat*, 2: 189, says the same thing about the filling of the *jubb*, but the date 1329 makes it very difficult to understand how the debris of the Iwan remained in its place for eighteen years.

he says that al-Nasir hated the Iwan built by al-Shuja'ī for his brother. Al-Nasir may have wanted to demolish it because it carried the memory of previous sultans and the two earlier humiliating periods of his reign, when he did not have power but only the title.³⁵² Al-Ashraf Khalil had visually left his mark on the Iwan by adorning it with the representations of his amirs, most of whom were, by 1310, either dead or in disfavor with al-Nasir Muhammad. Erasing these reminders was at least one reason behind the decision to demolish the Iwan of al-Ashraf.

When al-Nasir Muhammad returned to the throne in 1310 as a mature, but mistrustful and vindictive man, the first two years of his reign were characterized by drastic shifts of power that he orchestrated to ensure his throne. He was very clever in switching alliances in order to pit the strong amirs against each other and eventually to eliminate most of them, even the ones who supported his cause. He replaced them with his own mamluks, whom he began promoting to princely ranks in the first week of his third reign. All along these steps, he systematically weakened the authority of many of the top-ranking officers in the sultanate by assuming some of their duties himself.

Nowhere is this more apparent than in the redefinition of the duties of his vicegerent. At the end of 1310, al-Nasir discovered a plot against his life, masterminded by some of his great amirs, and headed by his vicegerent Baktimur al-Jukandar (the Polo-Master). He swiftly rounded up the suspects, and eventually, in 1311, managed to trap and imprison his strong and menacing vicegerent and install in his place the harmless Baybars al-Mansuri.³⁵³ At the same time, al-Nasir started regularly to hold the sessions

³⁵² It is important here to invoke the meaning of the Arabic word, *sultan*, which means power or authority or hegemony, and which was used to denote the supreme military ruler of the different medieval Islamic states that still recognized the spiritual and legal authority of the Abbasid caliphs of Baghdad, and, since the time of al-Zahir Baybars, of Cairo. Many chroniclers have noted the zeal with which al-Nasir was building his autocratic rule after the two first reigns in which he had only nominal authority.

³⁵³ Baybars al-Mansuri himself reports a story about how he was perceived by the other amirs as a weak and obedient amir, *Al-Tuhfa al-Mulukiyya fi-l-Dawla al-Turkiyya*, 215, where Salar accused him of being like the "old horse which leads the sheep to be slaughtered and comes back safe," when Baybars was dispatched to Sarkhad to bring him to what turned out to

for the dispensation of justice in the Great Iwan. Shortly afterward, he rebuilt the structure and elevated the event of *dar al-'adl* to a formal ceremony where all the important amirs of the realm had to be seated around him in a strict hierarchical order.³⁵⁴ He was undoubtedly clipping the vicegerent's authority when he decided to preside over the *dar al-'adl* sessions himself, for this used to be an important aspect of the latter's duties during the reigns of Qalawun, Khalil, and his first two reigns.³⁵⁵

In his struggle to maintain his throne during his first two reigns, al-Nasir Muhammad enjoyed great support among the *rifraff* (*al-harafish* or *al-'amma*) of Cairo and Damascus. The chroniclers offer many examples of the *'amma*, who were generally believed to be impassive to government changes, supporting al-Nasir Muhammad. They attacked the mamluks of Salar and Baybars al-Jashankir who besieged the sultan in his palace at the Citadel in 1307.³⁵⁶ They cheered him when he rode in Damascus and later in Cairo before he got back to his throne in 1310.³⁵⁷ They pelted and stoned his opponent Baybars al-Jashankir when he fled the Citadel.³⁵⁸ Al-Nasir Muhammad was interested in strengthening this popular support by appearing as a ruler concerned with the fair application of justice, although his rule, and the whole structure of the Mamluk state, depended almost exclusively on the foreign-born military class.³⁵⁹ It is from within these two

be his death. Baybars's blind obedience did not save him from the wrath of al-Nasir Muhammad; he was eventually imprisoned between 1312-17 in the Citadel of Kerak.

³⁵⁴ Baybars al-Mansuri, *Al-Tuhfa al-Mulukiyya fi-l-Dawla al-Turkiyya*, 231, 233-4, gives an elaborate description of the event and lists the names of the amirs who were required to sit around the sultan; Nuwayri, *Nihayat al-Irb fi-Funun al-Adab*, vol. 30, fol. 66; Author Zetterstéen, 158, reports another activity that was instituted in the Iwan, the review of the troops.

³⁵⁵ Al-'Umari, *Masalik al-Absar*, 116-17; Maqrizi, *Khitat*, 2: 215; Qalqashandi, *Subh*, 4: 16-17. Both copied al-'Umari with a few additions.

³⁵⁶ Maqrizi, *Suluk*, vol. 2, pt. 1, 34-35.

³⁵⁷ Maqrizi, *Suluk*, vol. 2, pt. 1, 68; Baybars al-Mansuri, *Al-Tuhfa al-Mulukiyya fi-l-Dawla al-Turkiyya*, 204.

³⁵⁸ Baybars al-Mansuri, *Al-Tuhfa al-Mulukiyya fi-l-Dawla al-Turkiyya*, 199; Ibn Taghri-Bardi, *Nujum*, 8: 244; Maqrizi, *Suluk*, vol. 2, pt. 1, 71.

³⁵⁹ Hayat al-Hajji, *The Internal Affairs in Egypt During the Third Reign of Sultan al-Nasir Muhammad B. Qalawun* (Kuwait, 1978) 78-9, noted the political importance of al-Nasir's

sets of considerations, dominating the Mamluk hierarchy and pleasing the populace, that his decision to rebuild the Great Iwan as a visible indication of his political consolidations should be seen.

Another motive, which also stems from the changes introduced by al-Nasir Muhammad, is functional in nature. Since he was engaged in restructuring the ceremonials around him, the old Iwan may have been inadequate for the *dar al-'adl*, and other processions, as he designed them.³⁶⁰ The conditions seem to have changed again during al-Nasir Muhammad third reign, for he rebuilt the Iwan a second time in the later part of his reign (1333). For this second rebuilding, we have more architectural data from the Mamluk sources and, more important, the invaluable plan and views of the Iwan left by the *Description de l'Égypte*, which permit an architectural analysis of the structure that is not possible for the majority of al-Nasir's other monuments.

The Rebuilding of the Maydan and the Reactivation of the Aqueduct

In 1312, al-Nasir Muhammad ordered the rebuilding and enclosing of the maydan under the Citadel.³⁶¹ This project should be considered the beginning of his program to restructure the Citadel, for it involved the creation of a clearly defined buffer zone between the palatial complex and the city to the west, and the separation of the royal stables and the hippodrome from the horse market to the north. This was achieved by the erection of a

decision to attend the sessions of addressing grievances, but she went on to advance an improbable reaction of the amirs to this decision. Although this book is one of the rare English publications specifically dealing with the reign of al-Nasir Muhammad, I agree with Robert Irwin who says that it should be used with caution, if it is used at all.

³⁶⁰ Ibn Taghri-Bardi, *Nujum*, 9: 180, noted the elaborate rituals introduced by al-Nasir in the Iwan, and detected the important function of these rituals as inspiring awe among envoys of foreign rulers, who were more common in al-Nasir's court than any Mamluk sultan before him.

³⁶¹ Nuwayri, *Nihayat al-Irb fi-Funun al-Adab*, vol. 30, fol. 80; Author Zetterstéen, 159, Ibn al-Dawadari, *al-Durr al-Fakhir fi-Sirat al-Malik al-Nasir*; 245; Mufaddal ibn-Abi al-Fada'il, *al-Nahj al-Sadid*, 20: 221; Maqrizi, *Suluk*, vol. 2, pt. 1, 123; Ibn Taghri-Bardi, *Nujum*, 9: 51; Ibn Iyas, *Bada'i' al-Zuhur fi-Waqa'i' al-Duhur*, vol. 1, pt. 1, 441-2.

stone wall around the maydan on three sides, south, west, and north. Some of the western parts with their crenellations still exist.³⁶²

The new maydan was not constructed in exactly the same place as the old one. Al-Nasir probably moved it slightly to the south so that the Gate of the Stable, which originally opened onto the maydan, now became its northern limit. Since the dimensions of a maydan were more or less fixed to accommodate the polo game (*al-akra*), the replanning and move south necessitated the inclusion of the old Qarafa Gate (which should be differentiated from the southern major gate of the Citadel that had the same name because it overlooked the Southern Qarafa) into the new maydan and the removal of a number of tombs that formed the edge of the Great or Southern Qarafa. A new gate further south of the original location, which carried the same name, had to be constructed to replace the old one as the entrance to the Qarafa. Another gate, the Gate of Shadiyya, or perhaps Sariyya, to the east of the Qarafa Gate in the old walls of the city built by Salah al-Din, was demolished as well, and replaced by a new one nearby.³⁶³

The location of the maydan is given on the map of the *Description de l'Égypte*, where the position of the Qarafa Gate is marked (# 15, Y-4), though the gate itself was rebuilt by al-Ashraf Qaytbay in 1484 as specified by its foundation inscription.³⁶⁴ The Shadiyya Gate of al-Nasir Muhammad may have been the one named on the map the Bab 'Arab Yasar (Gate of 'Arab Yasar) (# 22, X-4), after the squatter development of the same name that grew haphazardly to the south of the Citadel in later periods. Al-Nasir is reported to have ordered his amirs to take part in the filling in of the maydan with the special kind of black soil, named *al-Ibliz*. This is perhaps the origin of the name Qaramaydan (Black Maydan in Turkish) encountered in later sources

³⁶² Ibn Taghri-Bardi, *Nujum*, 10:31-2, note 3, where M. Ramzi explains that the area behind the western wall of the maydan is called Under the Walls (*Taht al-Sur*) because of the maydan's walls, which still can be seen behind the low structures today.

³⁶³ Nuwayri, *Nihayat al-Irb fi-Funun al-Adab*, vol. 30, fol. 80; Ibn al-Dawadari, *al-Durr al-Fakhir fi-Sirat al-Malik al-Nasir*; 282, reports the demolition of the Shadiyya Gate as an afterthought to the rebuilding of the maydan; Maqrizi, *Khitat*, 2: 229.

³⁶⁴ Ibn Iyas, *Bada'i' al-Zuhur fi-Waqa'i' al-Duhur*, vol. 3, 330. The Gate used to have the *rank* of Qaytbay until it was demolished in the 1970s for a new highway, and then unprofessionally and inaccurately rebuilt recently.

and on the map of the *Description de l'Égypte*.³⁶⁵ Al-Nasir also planted trees in the maydan, presumably along its edges, dug a number of wells, and equipped them with water-wheels (*sawaqi*) for its irrigation.

This project not only marked the border between the city and the royal domain, but also led to the development of the areas west of it, where eventually the stables and palaces for the favorite amirs of al-Nasir Muhammad were constructed. The first palace was a rebuilding of an existing structure, the House of Oxen (*Dar al-Baqar*), which was initially a stable for the oxen employed in turning the royal water-wheels in the maydan.³⁶⁶ Shortly after the completion of the maydan, in 1313, al-Nasir rebuilt the stable as a palace for Taqtimur al-Dimashqi, who was among his first mamluks to be promoted to the rank of amir in 1311. This palace, which was soon named after another of al-Nasir's favorite amirs, Tashtimur Hummus-Akhdar (the nickname means green chickpeas, for this amir was fond of this popular dainty), appears to have become the nucleus of a group of monumental palaces that al-Nasir had built for his close amirs over the last ten years of his reign along the north-south line running west of the maydan.

Another project that was undertaken concurrently with the maydan's rebuilding is the activation of the aqueduct, neglected for some time.³⁶⁷ Al-Nasir Muhammad was not the first sultan to bring water from the Nile to the Citadel, a distance of approximately three miles. He had used for that purpose the same route used by his predecessors: the southern and eastern walls of the city of Misr al-Fustat, built by Qaraqush after 1176.³⁶⁸ The top of these walls, known as Salah al-Din's Walls, was used for a water channel that was most

³⁶⁵ The Black Maydan was a name carried, interchangeably with other names, by at least two Mamluk maydans, Maqrizi, *Khitat*, 2: 145, 386, 463 calls the maydan of al-Zahir which existed in the location of the Northern Qarafa, *al-maydan al-Aswad*, the Black. The only plausible explanation for the popularity of this name is the use of *ibliz* to fill the ground of all maydans in Cairo, which gave them a distinctive black color.

³⁶⁶ Maqrizi, *Khitat*, 2: 68; Maqrizi, *Suluk*, vol. 2, pt. 1, 130-31; the structure's location, as was already discussed in chapter 2, was fixed to the south-west of the Mosque of Sultan Hasan, 'Ali Pasha Mubarak, *al-Khitat al-Tawfiqiyya al-Jadida* (Cairo, 1969) 2:43-44.

³⁶⁷ Maqrizi, *Khitat*, 2: 229-30; Maqrizi, *Suluk*, vol. 2, pt. 1, 124.

³⁶⁸ Shams al-Din al-Shuja'i, *Tarikh al-Malik al-Nasir Muhammad*, 95 & 113, is clearer than Maqrizi in his wording and tells us that the aqueduct (*majrah*) was built on top of the walls (*sur*) from the Nile to the Citadel.

probably constructed by al-Kamil when he moved to the Citadel.³⁶⁹ Creswell found that the portion of the walls that was discovered by 'Ali Bahgat in 1919 in the site of Fustat had a groove carved in its upper surface, in which probably water flowed to the Citadel. He consequently clarifies the meaning of the chroniclers' reports by showing that the same walls that ran under the arches along the whole length of al-Nasir Muhammad's aqueduct were used as a support.³⁷⁰

The project, however, should not be completely credited to al-Nasir Muhammad. Casanova and Creswell, as well as Su'ad Maher, basing their analysis on Maqrizi's text, attribute the water intake tower built on the Nile shore to him. But two reliable fourteenth-century chroniclers, Nuwayri and Shuja'i, say that the tower was built by the amir Aybak al-Afram for al-Ashraf Khalil near the Bab al-Qantara (Gate of the Bridge).³⁷¹ This may prove that Khalil intended to enlarge the Citadel but was killed before he could put his plan into effect.

Al-Nasir put the tower to use by mounting four saqiahs on its opening that emptied the water into four different channels carried by the walls. The water was then collected in another well tower on the way to the Citadel and then raised again to the aqueduct level by three saqiahs which emptied into three channels. The last water tower at the end of the aqueduct was near the Citadel, and could have been the tower that still exists outside the walls to the south of the harem. There the water was raised once more and brought inside the Citadel to the reservoir of the Bi'r al-Sab' Sawaqi (Well of the Seven Saqiahs), to the southwest of the Spiral Well, to be distributed to the various fountains in the palatial complex and the mosque inside the

³⁶⁹ Casanova, *Histoire*, (Arabic translation) 145.

³⁷⁰ Creswell, *M.A.E.* 2: 258-9.

³⁷¹ Nuwayri, *Nihayat al-Irb fi-Funun al-Adab*, vol. 30, fol. 80, is very clear in attributing the intake to al-Ashraf Khalil; Shams al-Din al-Shuja'i, *Tarikh al-Malik al-Nasir Muhammad*, 95, does not mention al-Ashraf Khalil, but says that the original intake had the rank of al-Afram on it, before al-Nasir took it off as was his habit of effacing the names of other patrons from their buildings. It is interesting to note that the water tower was built in a piece of land that was leased by al-Afram himself. Such an act would have increased the value of the land, and could be used as another example for proving the difficulty of distinguishing between personal interests and state affairs, Maqrizi, *Khitat*, 2: 159.

southern enclosure. These two towers, the one outside the Citadel on the aqueduct path and the Well of the Seven Saqiahs within it, are to be credited to al-Nasir Muhammad. The means and structures by which water was brought from the Nile to the Citadel before al-Nasir Muhammad remain unknown. His aqueduct remained in use throughout the Mamluk period until the beginning of the sixteenth-century, when sultan Qansuh al-Ghuri built a new aqueduct and a new intake tower on the Nile shore much to the north of the old tower. The last part of al-Nasir's aqueduct was incorporated in the new aqueduct built by al-Ghuri, but the intake tower and more than half the arches of the aqueduct have disappeared.³⁷²

At the same time as he was refurbishing and enlarging the aqueduct, al-Nasir Muhammad also renovated the tank – or the well, depending on the source one consults – attributed to al-Zahir Baybars near the *zawiyat* of Taqi al-Din Rajab al-Bustami, and added a watercourse (*naqqala*) to it that carried the water to the Bi'r al-Istabl (Stable's Well).³⁷³ The location of the well tower could be fixed in reference to the *zawiyat* of Taqi al-Din Rajab al-Bustami which still stands on the hill (*suwwa*) opposite the road and the steps that ascended to the main gate, the Bab al-Mudarraġ, of the Citadel. Al-Nasir Muhammad seems to have been engaged in replanning the area at that time, for he had built the *zawiyat* for this Persian Sufi shortly before the construction of the watercourse.³⁷⁴ In this project, al-Nasir was repeating the same process undertaken by al-Zahir Baybars half a century earlier, when he increased the quantity of water available to the stables before he enlarged them and endowed them with new structures. When all the water projects

³⁷² Creswell, M.A.E. 2: 255-59 for a review of the aqueduct and the stages of its building. The history of the aqueduct is summarized, with no additional information to that provided by Creswell for our period, in Su'ad Maher, "Majra Miyah Fum al-Khalij," *Egyptian Historical Review*, vol. 7 (1958) 134-57.

³⁷³ Maqrizi, *Khitat*, 2: 230, calls the work attributed to Baybars tank (*masna'*); Maqrizi, *Suluk*, vol. 2, pt. 1, 124, calls it well (*bi'r*). This confusion is not only due to the conflicting reports that Maqrizi seems to have copied without conflating them, but it is also a result of the similarity in function between a *masna'* and a *bi'r*. Both are structures used to store water, although in a *bi'r* water is drawn and stored in a shaft that is normally dug in the ground, while a *masna'* is a tank built above ground in which water brought on the backs of camels is stored.

³⁷⁴ Maqrizi, *Khitat*, 2: 432, says in the same sentence that the *zawiyat* was built by al-Nasir to lodge Taqi al-Din Rajab after 1320, when he had died in 1314.

where finished, al-Nasir was able launch his more grandiose projects at the Citadel which were in need of large quantities of water for their building and maintenance.

The Ablaq Palace

The Ablaq Palace, perhaps the most famous of al-Nasir Muhammad's structures at the Citadel, was constructed between 1313-14.³⁷⁵ The palace acquired its name from its exterior walls which were built of successive courses of black and ochreous stone, an arrangement called *ablaq* in Arabic.³⁷⁶ It was, we are told, modeled after the Ablaq Palace in Damascus, which was constructed by al-Zahir Baybars in 1264.³⁷⁷ Al-Nasir may have been impressed by the striking appearance and opulence of Baybars's Ablaq Palace, in which he used to reside every time he visited Damascus.³⁷⁸ Al-Nasir Muhammad had stayed at the Damascus palace, in 1312-13, when he went to Syria with his army after rumors of an imminent new Mongol invasion had reached him. The Mongols retreated after his arrival, but he stayed on in Damascus for a month, then went to the Hijaz to perform the Hajj, and then returned to Cairo via Damascus. He ordered the building of the Citadel's Ablaq Palace immediately after his return and summoned a mixed group of workers from Damascus and Cairo for that purpose.

³⁷⁵ Nuwayri, *Nihayat al-Irb fi-Funun al-Adab*, vol. 30, fol. 82; Ibn al-Dawadari, *al-Durr al-Fakhir fi-Sirat al-Malik al-Nasir*; 266; Author Zetterstéen, 161; Maqrizi, *Khitat*, 2: 209; Maqrizi, *Suluk*, vol. 2, pt. 1, 129; Ibn Taghri-Bardi, *Nujum*, 9: 36-7.

³⁷⁶ The arrangement of black and white stripes is generally called *ablaq*, regardless of the medium. A story of an administrator, 'Ali ibn 'Abd al-Zahir, who was a protégé of amir Salar illustrates the wide usages of the word. When al-Nasir Muhammad regained his throne for the third time, he reprimanded all those who supported Salar and Baybars al-Jashankir. When he cursed ibn 'Abd al-Zahir by calling him, "black faced," the administrator said "O sultan, *ablaq* is better than black." To this al-Nasir angrily replied, "damn you, even now you want to evoke his *rank*." Salar's *rank* was made of two fesses, one black and one white, thus it was *ablaq*, see, Maqrizi, *Suluk*, vol. 2, pt. 1, 73-4; Ibn Taghri-Bardi, *Nujum*, 9: 8-9.

³⁷⁷ Mufaddal ibn-Abi al-Fada'il, *al-Nahj al-Sadid*, 20: 236-7; Maqrizi, *Suluk*, vol. 2, pt. 1, 129; Qalqashandi, *Subh*, 4:94; Ibn Taghri-Bardi, *Nujum*, 9: 36-7.

³⁷⁸ Textual references to *al-Qasr al-Ablaq* in Damascus are gathered in, A.Q. al-Rihawi, "Qusur al-Hukkam fi-Dimashq," *Les annales archéologiques arabes syriennes*, vols. 22 & 23 (1972-73) 22: 42-48.

Mufaddal ibn-Abi al-Fada'il says that the workers brought from Damascus were Christian marble cutters, which indicates that they were the ones responsible for laying down the courses of *ablaq*. This suggests that this method of articulating the walls of structures, ubiquitous in later Mamluk and Ottoman monuments in Cairo, was introduced to Cairo from Damascus by al-Nasir Muhammad.³⁷⁹ Mufaddal goes on telling us that the Citadel palace was built like the one in Damascus (*nazir*) and following the same arrangement (*tartib*) with the addition of two elements in the Citadel Palace that did not exist in the Damascus model. The first is a *shadirwan* (a wall-fountain made of a slanted marble slab with either geometric pattern in relief or pebbles on its surface to cause the water to ripple on its way down to a channel cut in the ground that leads into another fountain in the center of the space) fixed on the wall of one of the iwans of the palace. The second is the unusual thickness of the wall, three cubits (approximately 1.5 meters), and the opening of two huge doors, each eight cubits high, in the walls of the iwan. This information, which is not presented in other contemporary descriptions of the Ablaq Palace, points to the composite origin of its architectural forms.

The Ablaq Palace was reserved for daily receptions and audiences, and may have replaced the Qa'a al-Ashrafiyya in this capacity, and possibly the Qa'a al-Salihiyya before it, according to the fifteenth-century historian Ibn Shahin al-Zahiri. Al-Nasir Muhammad sat in it for the audience (*khidma*) in the mornings and for the review of state affairs in the afternoon, except for Mondays and Thursdays when he sat in the Great Iwan for *dar al-'adl* sessions. He had a throne (*takht al-mulk*) set in the center of the principal iwan of the palace that overlooked the stables, but we are told that, when the audience was an informal one, he sometimes sat on a cushion next to that throne, while the amirs remained standing.

Only the *khassakiyya* amirs and a limited number of the office-holding great amirs were admitted to the morning audience. By midday, the sultan left the assembly, went to his inner palaces (*al-qusur al-juwwaniyya*), then

³⁷⁹ This and other Damascene influences on Bahri Cairene architecture are discussed in Terry Allen, "The Concept of Regional Style," in his *Five Essays in Islamic Architecture*, 91-110.

entered the houses of his harem (*dur al-harim*). In the afternoon, the sultan came back to his inner palaces, and the high-ranking administrators would attend him there for a working session to evaluate the daily affairs of the city and the sultanate. *Barrani* (of the outside) amirs were not present at either sessions. Two sets of banquets (*asmita*, singular *simat*) used to be served daily at the palace for those in attendance, three consecutive meals in the morning, of which the sultan partook of the last, and two at the end of the day.³⁸⁰ The *simat* was among the most visible and tangible prerogatives of the sultan; attendance and participation in banquets were signs of loyalty among the amirs.³⁸¹ All of these functions undertaken in the Ablaq Palace and the restrictions imposed on the number and rank of attendants emphasize its semipublic quality, as opposed to the Great Iwan which was the official, public, and ceremonial audience hall.

The Description of the Ablaq Palace

The description of the Ablaq Palace of al-Nasir Muhammad recorded by Ibn Fadl-Allah al-'Umari is the earliest and probably the most accurate of a number of later accounts. Maqrizi and Qalqashandi copied 'Umari's account, almost verbatim. It is worth quoting 'Umari's description in its entirety.

On the side of the Great Iwan there is a passageway to the door of the Ablaq Palace followed by a small court where

³⁸⁰ A general overview of Mamluk court ceremonials during the reign of al-Nasir Muhammad is Karl Stowasser, "Manners and Customs at the Mamluk Court," *Muqarnas*, vol. 2 (1984) 13-20; an Arabic equivalent, though less accurate, is A.M. Majed, *Nuzum Dawlat Salatin al-Mamalik wa-Rusumahum fi-Misr*, vol.2, *Court Ceremonials*, 149-165. A survey of Mamluk ceremonials at the Citadel is found in, Doris Behrens-Abouseif, "The Citadel of Cairo: Stage for Mamluk Ceremonial," *Annales Islamologiques*, vol. 24 (1988) 25-79. All these authors depended on the descriptions of Qalqashandi and Maqrizi, with very little textual criticism. The two Mamluk chroniclers had copied the text concerning the daily court sessions from 'Umari, *Masalik al-Absar*, 102, and failed to account for any changes that may have occurred in the period between 'Umari's recording (ca. 1325) and the end of the Bahri period (1382), although their texts show that they were aware of the radical variations introduced after the death of al-Nasir especially in the early Burji period. This may be taken to suggest that they considered Mamluk ceremonial to have reached its height in pomp and in organization in al-Nasir's time, and deemed the later alterations unworthy of reporting.

³⁸¹ The son of Baysari, who was among the khassakiyya of al-Nasir, was arrested because he used to skip eating in the *simat* for pietistic reasons that turned out to be fake, see, Maqrizi, *Suluk*, vol. 2, pt. 1, 232.

the close amirs sit before they enter to the Palace for the service.

From the door of the palace one passes through corridors to a monumental palace of splendid construction with two iwans, the larger being the northern [northwest], which overlooks the stables of the sultan, and from which one can see the horse market, Cairo and its suburbs as far as the Nile, and beyond to Giza and its villages. The second or qibli iwan [southeast] has a special door [Qalqashandi calls it the secret door] for the exit of the Sultan and his courtiers to the Great Iwan on the days of ceremonies. From this palace one can enter three inner palaces (*al-qusur al-juwwaniyya*), of which one is on the same level of the first palace, whereas the other two are reached by a staircase. All these palaces have windows with iron grilles, whence the view is the same as the principal palace. In all these palaces are channels for the water brought from the Nile by saqiahs turned by oxen from one point to another until it reaches the Citadel. From there it goes into the palaces of the sultan, and the houses of the great *khawwas* [a linguistically more accurate variation on *khassakiyya*] amirs which are close to the sultan's palaces. It is used in their houses and their baths.

The inner palaces communicate with the inner part (*haram*) of the harem, and the Abwab al-Sutur (Gates of the Veils)(*sutur*, which means veils, should be understood here as referring to the wives of the sultan, not to curtains or veils put on the door]. The facades of all these palaces are built of black and yellow stones, and within are dadoes of marble and gold and floriated mosaics, heightened with mother of pearl and colored paste and different colors. The ceilings are all gilded and painted with lapis lazuli. The light comes through windows filled with colored glass from Cyprus resembling necklaces of precious stones. All the floors are paved with marble transported from all the countries of the world, which has no equal.

Then we will report the rest of what relates to the sultan's palace: one can descend from the side of the iwan of the palace to the stables of the sultan, then to a maydan covered with grass, which is so spacious that the eye travels in it. This maydan lies between the stables and horse market to its west [northwest]. The sultan mounts his horse from a staircase next to his inner palace, and he descends to his private stable, then to the maydan with the great amirs in his

service to watch the horses in the days of parades or to accept new horses brought as gift or to buy them. In this maydan, the sultan performs the prayer of the two holidays with his retinue, and in these occasions the sultan descends to the maydan and returns from it through another door in the corridor of the palace [cited also in Ibn al-Furat]³⁸² not through the door mentioned earlier. The sultan has many secret gates to the Qarafa and to other areas, which we are not going to mention here.³⁸³

The Ablaq Palace was at the same time the name of the principal palace in a group of interconnected palaces built by al-Nasir Muhammad as well as the general name of all these palaces. The three other palaces were collectively called the inner palaces, but there is some later evidence to suggest that they had independent names.³⁸⁴

The main component of the Ablaq Palace, the throne hall, had a qa'a plan, with two unequal iwans and a *durqa'a* in the middle topped with a dome. The large northwestern iwan overlooked the sultan's stables, the maydan and Cairo beyond; the southeastern one led to the private door through which the sultan and his retinue entered the Great Iwan on official occasions (the existence of this door in the iwan may be one of the differences between the Ablaq Palaces of Damascus and the Citadel listed by Muffadal). All the other units, which had qa'a plans with two opposite iwans as well, had a similar disposition to benefit from the same view over the city. The whole palace was connected on one end with the Great Iwan, and on the

³⁸² Ibn al-Furat, *Tarikh*, vol. 9, pt. 1, 169.

³⁸³ 'Umari, *Masalik al-Absar*, 142-4; Maqrizi, *Khitat*, 2: 209-10, 229-30; Qalqashandi, *Subh*, 3:369-72; part of the translation in, Creswell, M.A.E. 2: 260. Two later chroniclers, Ibn Iyas and Ibn Shahin al-Zahiri, complicate matters concerning the morphology of the Ablaq Palace. Al-Zahiri says in passing that the Ablaq Palace comprised three palaces (*Zubdat*, 27). Ibn Iyas asserts that it is composed of three interconnected palaces, with five qa'as and three *marqad*, which could mean a sleeping space as an alcove or a suffa (*Bada'i' al-Zuhur fi-Waqai' al-Duhur*, vol. 1, pt. 1, 445). Both descriptions should be rejected: they are both late and seem to be anachronistic, or they may have neglected to take notice of later additions to the original Ablaq Palace.

³⁸⁴ Casanova reports the names of two qa'as, but he does not ascribe them to the Inner Palaces, the Qa'a of Silver and the Qa'a of Copper, Casanova, *Histoire*, (Arabic translation) 134; the name Qa'a of Silver (*Qa'at al-Fidda*) is corroborated from Mamluk sources, one even implies that it was in the Qasr, that is the Ablaq Palace, Ibn al-Furat, *Tarikh*, vol. 9, pt. 1, 105, 129.

other with the rest of the sultan's palaces (*al-addur al-sultaniyya*), where the wives and concubines were accommodated. Al-'Umari says that the stairs that descended to the private stables of the sultan (which should have been the closest to his palace of the royal stables) were located next to al-Nasir Muhammad's inner palace (*qasrahu al-juwwani*; in the singular) which may be taken to mean the last of the series of three inner palaces. An important detail is that the sultan used a different set of stairs to reach the maydan on the occasion of the two major holidays, the Fast-Breaking Day (*'Id al-Fitr*) and the Sacrifice Day (*'Id al-Adha*). The door to these stairs was in the passageway (*dihliz*) of the palace, which should be taken to mean the corridor connecting the Ablaq Palace to the Great Iwan.

The Discussion of the Palace's Site

Although we have several descriptions of al-Nasir Muhammad's Ablaq Palace, which range from the contemporary account of al-'Umari to the brief early-nineteenth-century note of Viscount Valentia, its location has not been conclusively established. Casanova proposed the site on the map of the *Description de l'Egypte* south of the House of Joseph (# 84, T-4) towards the Sab' Hadrat (Seven Hadrat, # 72, U-4), but did not attempt to fix it further.³⁸⁵ Creswell, with his meticulous method based on gathering all the available textual references, site survey, and accurate measurements, suggested another site for the palace.³⁸⁶ He thought that the space below the northwestern portico of Muhammad 'Ali's Mosque, whose floor is at the same level as the ground of the old stables, or the modern army workshops, and which extends between the walls under the portico and the monumental corbels in the foreground was where the Ablaq Palace stood. **(Fig 4. 4 View of the Corbels)**. Creswell, basing his conclusion on Maillet's reference to a hall protruding from the walls whose arcades rested on pillars, assumed that the qa'as of the palace were built on top of the roof supported by these corbels. Finally, the archaeologists of the Egyptian Organization of Antiquities advanced the

³⁸⁵ Casanova, *Histoire*, (Arabic translation) 131.

³⁸⁶ Creswell, M.A.E. 2: 262-3.

newly discovered qa'a, identified in this study as the Qa'a al-Ashrafiyya, to be the main structure of the Ablaq Palace.

A careful reading of the relevant descriptions of the Ablaq Palace and an investigation of each of the aforementioned locations demonstrate that these ascriptions overlooked certain details that would make them improbable. The already advanced argument identifying the discovered qa'a as the Qa'a al-Ashrafiyya may be supplemented by a few points that would strengthen it, and at the same time refute Creswell's suggested site.

The main reason for refuting the identification of the new qa'a as the Ablaq Palace is topographic. All the chroniclers who described the Ablaq Palace were unanimous in their assertion that the four halls, or the four *qusur* that formed the structure, were arranged next to each other. Thus, any proposed site has to be large enough to accommodate four aligned halls. This is not the case with the location of the excavated qa'a. It stands north of the Rafrat Tower too close to its outer edge to fit three more halls in the remaining space. **(Fig 4. 5 Detailed Plan of the Rafrat Tower's area).**

The southern wall of the Rafrat Tower forms the edge of the southern enclosure at that point. It then extends to the southeast with a few slight bends until it reaches the wall upon which the northwestern portico of Muhammad 'Ali's mosque was built. Then the wall breaks at an almost right angle to enclose a surface for a balcony whose level is considerably lower than that of the mosque. This balcony opens into the great vaulted hall labeled "ruined vaults" on the Green Map of 1896, whose outer wall runs straight to the south. The area below this whole portion of the wall belongs to the stables of the Citadel and should be considered outside the palatial complex proper.

Creswell's proposed site, framed within these walls, is thus totally outside the southern enclosure, whereas the Ablaq Palace was inside according to all accounts. Creswell says that the roof of the corbels is covered with debris, implying that some structure must have stood there, and may have been high enough to have been reached from the platform of the palatial complex above it, which would have included it within the southern enclosure. A thorough examination of this roof in the summer of 1988, in search of some trace of a structure built on it, failed to reveal anything more

than rubble and no remains of walls. The grand corbels, described in detail by Creswell, were definitely meant to support some sort of protruding structure, but this seems to have been an incomplete project, which is, moreover, difficult to date. The possible argument that Muhammad 'Ali may have demolished the structure that existed there before he built his mosque is disproved by an early-eighteenth-century print, published by Arthur Rhoné.³⁸⁷ In this print, which predates the French Expedition's *Description de l'Égypte* and Muhammad 'Ali's refurbishing, the corbels are visible in the foreground, with heaps of rubble on their roof, but without a trace of an earlier structure that would have reached the level of the palaces above. (Fig 4. 6 Print of Rhoné).

Creswell notes that these five corbels are separated by four pointed tunnel vaults, which run a little more than 10 meters deep, while the depth of the area between their facade and the wall of the enclosure behind them varies between 40 and 50 meters. He seems not to have been aware of the structure behind these tunnel vaults, which is a massive hall built of large blocks of stone. The hall is made up of five huge groin vaults, each measuring on average 9 meters on the side, of which the second and fourth are flanked by two large iwans. Each of the two interior iwans is a square of 8 meters on the side, while the two exterior ones are rectangles of approximately 8 by 6 meters. The whole forms an unusual double-crossed plan. (Fig 4. 7 Plan of the Hall behind the Corbels "the Harraqa").

This monumental hall fills the space between the end of the tunnel vaults and the wall of the southern enclosure behind it, and definitely belongs in the stables' area. It is obvious from the disposition of the windows and doors in the centers of the two side iwans in the hall facing the outside that it was built before, and separately from, the tunnel vaults which encroached on its outer walls, and blocked its façade to the outside. (Fig 4. 8 View of the Iwan in the Harraqa). In fact, the tunnel vaults were not built in accordance with the module of the hall behind them, because the first tunnel

³⁸⁷ Published with no further identification in Arthur Rhoné, *L'Égypte à petites journées* (Paris, 1910) 67, and reproduced in my, *The Citadel of Cairo*, The Aga Khan Trust for Culture (Geneva, 1989) 13.

vault south of the Rafraf Tower has the window of the iwan behind it almost centered, while the third tunnel vault has the one behind it on the side. The hall's side entrance, presently obstructed by another hall that was added most probably by Muhammad 'Ali in the early nineteenth century, is seen on Rhoné's print as a large arched opening facing south into the stables area. The ground level of the hall is the same as that of the sultan's stables. The size of the stone used in its walls and vaults is smaller than late Ayyubid and early Mamluk building blocks, but larger and less smoothed than Ottoman building stone in Cairo.

Many arguments arise for identifying this hall with one of the structures cited in the sources as belonging in the stables' area, but hard evidence to sustain any ascription is lacking. The most probable candidate is a qa'a that was built by the amir Yalbugha al-Nasiri some time in the last quarter of the fourteenth century.³⁸⁸ This qa'a may have been the same as the one occasionally mentioned in the sources as the Harraqa in the stables, which was officially the residence of the grand amir of the horse (*amir akhur kabir*), from at least the late Qalawunid period. The earliest citation of the Harraqa appears in connection with Barquq, when he was still the commander of the armies (*atabek al-'asakir*) under the last Qalawunid sultan before he became the first Circassian sultan (1382-89, 90-99).³⁸⁹ The sources, however, do not ascribe its construction to him. Furthermore, no source locates the Harraqa in a precise way or describes it architecturally.³⁹⁰ *Harraqa* is a term usually used for the largest type of Mamluk war ship. The usage of

³⁸⁸ Ibn al-Furat, *Tarikh*, vol. 9, pt. 1, 168.

³⁸⁹ Ibn Taghri-Bardi, *Nujum*, 10: 32; Maqrizi, *Suluk*, vol. 3, pt. 1, 365, 383.

³⁹⁰ Ibn Iyas, *Bada'i' al-Zuhur fi-Waqa'i' al-Duhur*, vol. 1, pt. 2, 266, reporting an event that took place in 1381; Ibn al-Furat, *Tarikh*, vol. 9, pt. 1, 190, locates al-Harraqa near the Stables Gate; Maqrizi, *Khitat*, 2: 243, in reporting the residing of al-Mu'ayyad Shaykh (1412-21) in al-Harraqa in 1412, states that the structure is situated near the Gate of the Chain, which may mean that the two names the Stables Gate and the Gate of the Chain were alternate names of the same edifice. Ibn Iyas, *Bada'i' al-Zuhur fi-Waqa'i' al-Duhur*, vol. 3, 4, speaks of a staircase (*sullum*) of the Harraqa; Muhib al-Din ibn al-Shihna *Al-Badr al-Zahir fi-Nasrat al-Malik al-Nasir Muhammad b. Qaytbay*, 66, 82, and 84 locates the Harraqa next to the *tablakhana* inside the Chain Gate. William Popper, *Egypt and Syria Under the Circassian Sultans*, 15: 23, sums up the features of the Harraqa as they appear in Ibn Taghri-Bardi's *Nujum* as being a loggia (*maq'ad*), sleeping quarters (*mabit*), and a flight of stairs.

this term to designate a structure at the Citadel must have been meant to connote grandeur and invincibility.³⁹¹

No evidence firmly establishes the dates or the chronology of building in that area. One can only say that, on the sole basis of observation, the double-crossed hall predates the tunnel vaults and the corbels on their façade. These corbels correspond to the two corbels flanking the Rafrat Tower, although the latter are around 12 meters higher, and, curiously enough, absent from Rhoné's print. The upper corbels cannot be considered contemporaneous with the Rafrat Tower, that is, that they belong to the fourteenth century, because the top of the tower was rebuilt several times, the last in Muhammad 'Ali's period.

The Remains of the Ablaq Palace

Casanova locates the Ablaq Palace on the map of the *Description de l'Égypte* between the point referred to as the House of Joseph and the set of stairs called the Sab' Hadarat which appears on the map to have led from the southern enclosure level to the maydan, passing through the stables. The existence of a set of stairs on the map corresponds to the Mamluk descriptions of the Ablaq Palace. Casanova did not go beyond this in his suggestion, but architectural remains in the area proposed as the palace's site confirm his deduction.

The proposed site of the Ablaq Palace is a platform adjacent to the outer courtyard (*sahn*) of the mosque of Muhammad 'Ali, which extends along the southern enclosure's walls to the southwest to the location of the men's quarter (*salamlık*) of the Bijou Palace, built in 1812. This platform, 34 meters long, meets the outer southwestern wall of the mosque at a 60° angle. Ten steps, built at the same time as the mosque as they run parallel to its wall, lead down to the platform from the present ground level of the southern enclosure. **(Fig 4. 9 Plan of the Platform Adjacent to the Mosque of Muhammad 'Ali).** There, the remains of some structures are still visible in the form of brick walls, one of which has the imprints of a staircase.

³⁹¹ For the range of possible origins for the use of this term see, Doris Behrens-Abouseif, "The Citadel of Cairo: Stage for Mamluk Ceremonial," 61.

A door in the wall of the mosque in the northern side of the platform opens onto a spiral stone staircase, characteristic of the Mamluk period. Twenty-one steps below is a little passage, parallel to the wall of the mosque. Seven more steps below, the passage opens onto a huge vaulted hall to the south, just underneath the platform, and to three long barrel-vaulted halls to the north. **(Fig 4. 10 Plan of the First Lower Level under the Ablaq Palace).**

The first two of these vaulted corridors are connected by a narrow passage. Creswell measured their width, which averages 5 meters, and noted that they run behind a seven-meter-deep wall under the mosque of Muhammad 'Ali. This thick wall constitutes the lower foundation of the external northwestern wall of the mosque's *sahn*. It is pierced by nine rectangular windows which light the long halls.³⁹² The third northern hall, which escaped Creswell's notice, is also parallel to the external wall of Muhammad 'Ali's mosque, and is joined to the first hall by another vaulted passage. The function of these halls is very difficult to discern, but they could have been used as depots. Their disposition, under and parallel to the wall of the mosque, makes it almost certain that they were built at the same time as the mosque.

The huge hall to the south, marked "ruined vaults" on the Green map, is different in construction and in date from the northern halls. Trapezoidal in shape, and badly damaged, this hall is 65 meters long, on its façade which constitutes the Citadel wall along its length, and 45 meters deep. It is composed of eight rows of square stone pillars on its long side – each pillar measuring around 1.75 meters to the side – and six rows on its short one. It is covered with forty vaults, most of which are squares of a little more than 5 meters to the side, except for the row next to the tilted side of the trapezoid whose vaults vary in size depending on where they are located. Thirty-six of these vaults remain standing. The rest are in various stages of ruins, whose condition offers a glimpse of their construction material (burned brick) and method. The front two rows are all groin vaults; the back ones are barrel vaults. **(Fig 4. 11 View of One of the Barrel Vaults).** The hall's external façade opens onto the maydan with eight arched windows (the first six among which are original, the last two rebuilt). The first two windows from the

³⁹² Creswell, M.A.E. 2: 262.

northern end are framed within two huge projecting arches of stone that run down along the Citadel wall to the ground level some 20 meters below. An arched opening at the northern end of the hall leads to the triangle-shaped balcony under the northwestern portico of Muhammad 'Ali's mosque. This balcony, though apparently truncated as a consequence of the mosque's construction, seems to be contemporary to the hall. **(Fig 4. 12 View of the Balcony).**

The floor under the first two vaults on the third lateral row slopes down to a lower level. The slope is covered with rubble and debris which prevents verifying whether its base is a ramp or steps leading to a ruined lower level. **(Fig 4. 13 View of the Slope).** At the end of the slope is a door to the south which opens onto a lower hall underneath the upper hall. **(Fig 4. 14 Door to the Lower Level).** Another door to the north probably opened onto another space, but this door is blocked with masonry. The existence of these two doors at the two sides of the slope indicates that the descent was planned from the beginning. The lower hall in the south, measuring approximately 50 by 30 meters, is made up of eleven vaults, each measuring 5 by 5 meters on average. **(Fig 4. 15 Plan of the Lower Level).** Nine of them are groin vaults, and two are barrel vaults. **(Fig 4. 16 Groin Vault of the Lower Level).** The lower hall is not as deep as the upper one, but its length is equal to that part of the upper hall between the slope and the end side. On its southern side, it opens onto a lateral tunnel-vaulted corridor which has two doors on its other side leading to a ruined area. Hastily restored in the 1980s to complete the façade, this ruined area, whose remains extend to the upper hall above, covers the surface of six vaults. **(Fig 4. 17 View of the Ruined Area at the End of the Lower Level).** Paralleling the upper hall's windows, the lower hall has six windows (four original and two restored) along its external wall which open onto the maydan below. They are aligned with the corresponding windows of the upper hall, but they are rectangular rather than arched in shape and smaller in size.

In the façade, there is another set of similar windows right below the windows of this lower hall, but they are blocked with masonry. **(Fig 4. 18 View of the Exterior Façade of the Halls).** These last windows may reveal a third level below the two vaulted halls, but this is impossible to verify at

present because there is neither access from the lower vaulted hall to another one below it, nor is there any opening from the base of the wall behind the present army workshops.

The recently rebuilt southern area at the end of the lower hall, whose pillars continue to the level of the upper hall's ceiling, corresponds to the site marked on the *Description de l'Égypte's* map as the Sab' Hadarat (Seven Slopes or Ramps). The Egyptian Antiquity Department followed in its rebuilding the alignment of the extant pillars and blocked off the section of the façade overlooking the maydan with a solid masonry wall pierced with windows that correspond to the extant ones. This reconstruction is not based on the state of the original wall, as it is known from representations belonging to the end of the eighteenth century. The French map shows the Sab' Hadarat to be a staircase in the shape of a reversed S inscribed in a square which then runs in a straight line down to the maydan. This means that its façade was open to the outside. In fact, a nineteenth-century print shows the façade at that point to have been composed of a high arched opening inscribed in a rectangular frame that projects from the rest of the wall. **(Fig 4. 19 Ebers's Print of the Citadel's Façade).**³⁹³

The Sab' Hadarat must have been the staircase built by al-Nasir Muhammad next to the inner palaces to lead to the stables and the maydan from the Ablaq Palace. The name, Seven Hadarat, does not appear in the Citadel's descriptions from the time of al-Nasir Muhammad, but is attested in the late Mamluk period.³⁹⁴ Like the Seven Qa'as and the Seven Domes, the number seven in the staircase's name does not seem to denote the number of ramps so much as it refers to the mysterious symbolism of the number itself.

There is no trace of the staircase today, and no source records its destruction, which must have taken place sometime between the beginning of the nineteenth century when the French map was drawn and the middle of that century, because all early photographs of the Citadel, the first known

³⁹³ G. Ebers, *Egypt, Descriptive, Historical and Picturesque* (London, 1871) 232. The print is undoubtedly older than 1871, because by that date the area had already been destroyed by Muhammad 'Ali.

³⁹⁴ See for example, al-Khatib al-Jawhari al-Sayrafi, *Inba' al-Hasr bi-Abna' al-'Asr*, 250.

dated to the 1850s, show this area in ruin.³⁹⁵ (Fig 4. 20 Lorent's Photo of the Ruins of the Sab' Hadarat). The explanation for the disappearance of the Sab' Hadarat is that Muhammad 'Ali must have razed them when he fortified this part of the Citadel, and tried to isolate it from the ground, or the stables' level, to which the staircase originally led. This also explains the striking contrast between the gleaming new buildings of Muhammad 'Ali, the mosque and the Bijou Palace, shown on all old photographs, and the ruins of the Sab' Hadarat.

These two halls were reused for purposes different from those for which they were constructed. It is clear from extant architectural details that parts of the upper hall were rebuilt, and possibly replanned, by Muhammad 'Ali. The whole northern section, which comprises the three large barrel-vaulted halls under the mosque should be viewed as contemporary to his mosque because it is aligned with the mosque's orientation. The steps that lead down from the bottom of the spiral stone staircase to the upper hall level are the work of Muhammad 'Ali's time. So are the corridor adjacent to them and the wall that forms the acute angle of the trapezoidal plan, as evidenced by the alignment of the whole vestibule with Muhammad 'Ali mosque and by the rococo profile of the moldings on the walls. Later on, many vaults were closed off in a crude way by building walls between their supports so they could function as separate rooms. These walls are made of rough limestone and cement mortar, both modern materials. This may have been the work of the British Occupation forces which were stationed at the Citadel in the early twentieth century. The halls themselves, however, belong to an earlier period. Their vaulting methods and the sizes of stone used are characteristically Mamluk. They are probably the two lower levels of the Ablaq Palace of al-Nasir Muhammad.

The foremost textual support for this assertion comes from the account of Maillet, who speaks of a hall with square pillars that supported another hall on its top which overlooked the city. He specifies, moreover, that the

³⁹⁵ See for example, J.A. Lorent, *Egypten, Alhambra, Tlemsen, Algier, Reisebilder aus den Anfängen der Photographie*, plate 2. The picture, taken before 1860, shows the debris caused by the demolition of the area.

lower hall was vaulted. Other European travelers who saw the palace, known to them as the Maison de Joseph, all comment on the commanding view from its windows and its majestic and monumental appearance. They all also report that the palace was used during the Ottoman period as the place where the *kiswa* (cloth cover) for the *Ka'ba* was embroidered. This remark offers another clue to support the proposed location of the Ablaq Palace. The map of the *Description de l'Égypte* shows a structure (# 75, U-4) next to the Sab' Hadarat, which is called the Bayt al-Tarazi (House of the Tailor), perhaps in reference to the usage of the palace nearby for the *kiswa* embroidering.

Mamluk textual references to other palaces in the Citadel allude to the practice of building qa'as above vaulted halls which had various functions. The house of al-Malik al-Sa'id, the son of Baybars, in the northern enclosure is a case in point. Its site was occupied by a big depression (*jura*) which was filled up by constructing sixteen vaults (*'uqud*), upon which the house was erected. The vaults constituted the basement of the house which was used as a cistern.³⁹⁶ Another example is the Qa'a al-Ashrafiyya which was raised above a basement (*qabu*), though our sources do not specify whether it was vaulted or not.³⁹⁷ This basement communicated with the royal stables through a secret gate. There is a short, vaulted passage on the northern side of the Harraqa which penetrates into the mass of the Rafrat Tower, and which is blocked by debris. This may have been the gate of the staircase that descended from the basement of the Qa'a al-Ashrafiyya to the stables. Its direction and location correspond to the site proposed for the qa'a.

Similarly, the qa'as, or *qusur* (as they are called in all Mamluk sources) of the Ablaq Palace may have been arranged on top of the upper vaulted hall in the way described by 'Umari and Maqrizi. The hall's surface area is large enough to have accommodated four qa'as aligned side by side in a row

³⁹⁶ Ibn Shaddad, *Tarikh al-Malik al-Zahir*, 341; Ibn Taghri-Bardi, *Nujum*, 7:190, does not specify what the basement was used for, although his report seems to have been copied from Ibn Shaddad.

³⁹⁷ Ibn al-Furat, *Tarikh*, vol. 9, pt. 1, 169, 190; Ibn Duqmaq, *al-Jawhar al-Thamin*, 477, show that the basement of al-Ashrafiyya opened onto the stables; Ibn Iyas, *Bada'i' al-Zuhur fi-Waqa'i' al-Duhur*, vol. 1, pt. 2, 424-25, reports the same story but does not use the word basement to designate the lower level under the qa'a.

parallel to the wall of the Citadel, especially if its plan is extended to form a rectangle whose end side is the extension of the side of the triangular balcony. The mosque of Muhammad 'Ali must have been built above a section of the original hall, because the whole section of the trapezoidal plan adjacent to the mosque appears to be of a later construction, and because the spiral stone stairwell, which is presently inserted in the outer wall of the mosque's *sahn*, stylistically belongs to the Mamluk period. The terrace, or balcony, is probably the truncated remnant of the *maq'ad* (which is translated as loggia, but in the Mamluk context it is a specific loggia with an arcaded opening), according to one historian, or the *kharja* according to another, built by sultan al-Ashraf Sha'ban (1363-77) the grandson of al-Nasir Muhammad.³⁹⁸ Casanova argues that *kharja* here signifies a projection or balcony rather than a vestibule, its usual meaning, which would reconcile the different reports.³⁹⁹ This interpretation of the structure's form fits the rest of Ibn Iyas's account, which says that the *kharja*, that overlooks the Rumayla square is the place where the *sahaba* was usually pitched for processions at night. *Sahaba*, which literally means cloud, is not mentioned in other sources, but it appears to have been a special tent reserved for the review of processions.

The orientation of the halls and consequently the orientation of the reconstructed *qusur* on top of them fit the chroniclers' description of the window view of each *qasr* in the palace as encompassing the whole city of Cairo lying at the foot of the Citadel. This is graphically represented in a sixteenth-century Ottoman map of the city of Cairo.⁴⁰⁰ The map, reproduced in amiral Pir-i Re'is's *Kitab-i bahriye* which he presented to sultan Suleiman the Magnificent in 1526, depicts the Citadel of Cairo as divided into two

³⁹⁸ Qalqashandi, *Subh*, 3: 370, calls the structure *maq'ad*; Ibn Iyas, *Bada'i' al-Zuhur fi-Waq'a'i' al-Duhur*, vol. 1, pt. 2, 183, calls it *kharja*.

³⁹⁹ Casanova, *Histoire*, (Arabic translation) 155-56.

⁴⁰⁰ The map was reproduced in many manuscripts of Pir-i Re'is's *Kitab-i bahriye* dating from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Two manuscripts have what seems to be the original depiction, the one which has the Citadel with its two enclosures. The first is the Istanbul University Library, T. 6605, fol. 202a, dated to the year 962/1554. The second is the Walter Art Gallery, W. 658, fol. 305 a, titled *Portulan-i Kebir-i Seyyid 'Ali Kapudan*. I am grateful to my colleague Iffet Orbay for drawing my attention to the relevance of the *Kitab-i bahriye* and for providing me with copies of the map.

enclosures: a higher one with towers, which is undoubtedly the northern enclosure, and a lower southern one. The wall of the southern enclosure overlooking the city has a single structure on its right corner labeled *Yusef Kushk*. (Fig 4. 21 Map of Pir-i Re'is). The structure is depicted right above the wall with its three windows corresponding to the three windows of the enclosure's wall below. This is certainly the representation of the *qusur* of the Ablaq Palace above the lower hall, especially that the Ablaq Palace became known as the *Kushuk Yusef* (Arabization of *Yusef Kushk*) in Ottoman Egyptian texts.⁴⁰¹ Further evidence to support this reconstruction of the Ablaq Palace may be assembled from a review of extant Bahri Mamluk palaces in the city of Cairo.

The Concept of *Qasr* in the Bahri Period

Four Bahri Mamluk princely palaces survive in Cairo in an incomplete form. They are the palaces of Alin Aq (1293), Bashtak (1334-39), Qawsun (1337), and Taz (1352).⁴⁰² The names refer to their initial builders, but each palace was occupied by a succession of amirs throughout the Mamluk and Ottoman periods. They were all renovated and added to at several reprises but their palatial cores remained relatively intact. These central parts all exhibit the same scheme in their arrangements: vaulted halls on the ground floors, and corresponding first floor halls above. The palace of Qawsun has a four-iwan qa'a, those of Alin Aq and Bashtak two-iwan qa'as, and that of Taz does not exist anymore but the plan of the ground floor hall suggests a two-

⁴⁰¹ *Yusef Kushk* is the origin of the name *maison de Joseph*, applied by the French expedition's cartographers to the Ablaq Palace. *Kushk* is the Persian equivalent of the Arabic *qasr* and was applied to the Ablaq Palace in the Ottoman period. For the interchangeability of the two words, see, Howard Crane, *Risale-i Mi'mariyye, an Early Seventeenth Century Ottoman Treatise on Architecture* (Leiden, 1987) 86. For the use of the name in Ottoman Egyptian chronicles, see Mustafa Ibrahim, *Waqqa'i' Misr al-Qahira Bayn 1100 wa 1150*, 122; Ahmad Chalabi al-Hanafi al-Masri, *Awdah al-Isharat fi-man Tawala Misr al-Qahira min-l-Wuzara' wa-l-Bashat*, 213.

⁴⁰² Laila A. Ibrahim, "Residential Architecture in Mamluk Cairo," 55 and reference 40. A fifth Bahri palace, that of Manjak al-Yusufi (d. 1375) was still standing until the beginning of the twentieth century as evidenced by a photograph published by Gaston Migeon, *Les arts musulmans* (Paris-Bruxelles, 1926) Pl. XIII. The entrance to the stables of the palace and a beautiful flat dome above it with the titles of Manjak inscribed around it still stand today.

iwan qa'a above.⁴⁰³ (Fig 4. 22 Plans and Section of Bashtak's Palace, and Section through Alin Aq's Palace).

On the plans of all four palaces published in *Palais et maisons du Caire* and in the articles by Garcin and Revault in the same volume, the vaulted halls on the ground level are labeled *istabl* and the upper level halls *qasr*. The word *istabl* means stables, and both scholars use it with caution to designate the lower halls.⁴⁰⁴ As for *qasr*, which is distinctly used in the *Khitat* to designate an important hall in three of the four remaining palaces,⁴⁰⁵ both scholars note that in other Mamluk palaces similar spaces are usually called qa'a. Jean-Claude Garcin proposes an explanation for the difference between a qa'a and a *qasr*. He defines the latter as the most important hall in the second level of the palace reserved for the amir and his retinue.⁴⁰⁶ He sees the usage of this particular term as a direct reference to the royal paradigm in the Citadel, namely the Ablaq Palace. He does not comment, however, on the apparent elimination of the word from the terminology of princely palaces constructed in the Burji period.⁴⁰⁷

Of the four palaces, that of Alin Aq is described in three *waqf* documents. These descriptions offer the possibility of deducing the actual

⁴⁰³ The four palaces are thoroughly studied, with plans, sections, and photos in Jacques Revault, "L'architecture domestique du Caire à l'époque Mamelouke," 49-74, and in Jean-Claude Garcin, "Habitat médiéval et histoire urbaine à Fustat et au Caire," 180-87, both in Jacques Revault et al., *Palais et maisons du Caire, I' époque mamelouke*.

⁴⁰⁴ All plans are labeled *istabl* with a question mark. Furthermore, Jean-Claude Garcin, "Habitat médiéval et histoire urbaine à Fustat et au Caire," 185 equally advances the reading of the lower hall in the palace of Bashtak as either stables or hall for guards. He also notes, 182, that the notion that *istabl* sometimes designates both the stables in an amir's palace and the total structure, as is the case with the palace of Qawsun, is incorrect. It is specific to that palace because the stables existed prior to the building of the palace and thus their name stuck to the complex.

⁴⁰⁵ Maqrizi, *Khitat*, 2: 70 (the *qasr* of Bashtak), 72 (the *Istabl* of Qawsun), 73 (the *dar* of Taz).

⁴⁰⁶ Jean-Claude Garcin, "Habitat médiéval et histoire urbaine à Fustat et au Caire," 183, basing himself on Maqrizi, *Khitat*, 2: 72, the term *qasr* is used to describe the amir's private hall in *Istabl* Qawsun, which was apparently the highest part of the complex. Mona Zakarya, *Deux palais du Caire médiéval*, 143, gives a similar definition of *qasr* based on two *waqfs* of the fifteenth century.

⁴⁰⁷ Jean-Claude Garcin, "Habitat médiéval et histoire urbaine à Fustat et au Caire," 205, only records the usage of the expression "the place known in the past as *qasr*" in the *waqf* of Barsbay.

Mamluk names for the spaces of a Bahri palace, and of tracing the changes in terminology over time. The three *waqfs* were drafted after the date of the palace's building when the latter was incorporated on three different occasions in an endowed architectural complex. The first waqf is that of sultan Barsbay and dates to the year 1438. In it, the whole structure is called *qasr*, the ground level hall *marafiq* and *buyutat*, and the first floor hall either a *qasr* or a *manzara*, which is connected to a set of dependencies that include *takhayen* and *ma'azil*.⁴⁰⁸ The second waqf, that of amir Khayer Bak, is dated to the year 1521. It describes the state of the palace after it had been connected to the new madrasa and mausoleum built by Khayer Bak. In it, the whole structure is called the *qasr*, the lower level space a vaulted *qa'a* (*qa'a musaqqafa 'aqdan*) and the upper level space simply the *qasr*. The waqf further identifies the *qasr* as being of old construction, and describes it as having a *durqa'a* and two iwans: a large one with two sleeping spaces (*mabibat*) and a small one with one sleeping space (*mabit*), and the dependencies.⁴⁰⁹ By the date of the last waqf, that of the amir Ibrahim Aga Mustahfizan (1652), the palace had been ascribed to Khayer Bak, and the lower level hall is called a sitting *qa'a* (*qa'at julus*). The structure is still called *qasr*, and the upper level hall is also called the *qasr*, with no further elaboration.⁴¹⁰

Despite the differences in date between the waqfs and the palace, several pertinent conclusions may still be drawn from them. First, the word *istabl* is never used to identify the lower-level hall. In the first two waqfs, those of Barsbay and Khayer Bak, the *istabl* of the palace was a separate unit

⁴⁰⁸ *Awqaf* 880, Waqf of Sultan Barsbay, dated 24 Rajab, 841/1438, pages 106-108. *Buyutat* is a generic term for household dependencies' spaces which include the *tishtakhana* (the washbasins room), the *hawa'ijkhana*, (the pantry) and the *firashkhana*, (the tent-room), Qalqashandi, *Subh*, 4:10-11. *Marafiq* has the same general meaning. *Manzara* is an upper floor *qa'a* with a view to the outside. Hazem Sayed does not define the word *ma'azil* in his study. He proposes a conjectural definition of *takhayen* as sleeping rooms. Mona Zakarya, *Deux palais du Caire médiéval*, 128, says that *ma'azil* is an unidentified part of the common area of the residence, while *takhayen* is unidentified. Both words remain unknown.

⁴⁰⁹ *Awqaf* 292/44, Waqf of Amir Khayer Bak, dated 8 Muharram, 927/1521, pages 8-10. The reference is taken from M. Hussam al-Din 'Abd al-Fattah, *Mantiqat al-Darb al-Ahmar* (the district of al-Darb al-Ahmar), 390.

⁴¹⁰ *Awqaf* 952, Waqf of Amir Ibrahim Aga Mustahfizan, dated 10 Safar, 1062/1652, pages 117-118. The reference is taken from M. Hussam al-Din 'Abd al-Fattah, *Mantiqat al-Darb al-Ahmar* (the district of al-Darb al-Ahmar), 395.

from the *qasr*, whereas the space under the *qasr* contained a set of dependencies. Second, the word *qasr* is repeatedly used in the three documents to designate both the upper level hall and the whole palace. *Qasr* was not the word generally used to indicate a residence in the Mamluk period; the more common term was *dar*. Laila Ibrahim notes that among fifty-seven important residences in Cairo mentioned by Maqrizi (who was writing in the early fifteenth century, or the Burji period, but whose list comprises mostly Bahri residences)⁴¹¹ only four are called *qasr*, whereas fifty-one are called *dar*.⁴¹² She does not give an explanation for the restriction of the designation to only four structures, but after a review of the word's etymology in Islamic Egypt up to the Mamluk period, she suggests an interpretation for it as a descriptive term signifying "a high rectangular construction."

The word *qasr* is still not conclusively defined in relation to its Mamluk usage. In fact, the whole question of Mamluk terminology for palatial and residential architecture is still to be comprehensively studied.⁴¹³ But a few suggestions related to the two terms *qasr* and *istabl* as they appear in primary sources and in waqfs would help elucidate the concept of a Bahri palace, including the royal Ablaq Palace.

⁴¹¹ Maqrizi, *Khitat*, 2: 51-79. Of the fifty-seven residences listed, six are Fatimid in date, one is Ayyubid, forty-three are Bahri Mamluk, and only seven are attributed to people who were known in the Burji period. This means that Maqrizi's data is mainly relevant for the study of princely Bahri palaces, and does not reflect the status of residences in the period of his writing (early Burji). Of the six Burji residences, only four are explicitly said to have been built after 1382, which marks the starting of the Burji period. Another remark of interest for the classification of these residences is that seven out of forty-three residences attributed to the Bahri period were owned by high administrators in the state, while thirty-six were owned by amirs and members of the royal Qalawunid family. For the small sample of Burji period's residences, six were owned by high administrators and only one was owned by an amir.

⁴¹² Laila A. Ibrahim, "Mamluk Monuments of Cairo," *Quaderni dell'Instituto Italiano di Cultura per la R.A.E.* (Cairo, 1976) 9-29. The number of *qasur* mentioned by Maqrizi is five not four. They all belong to the period of al-Nasir Muhammad. They are the palaces of Baktimur, Bashtak, Yalbugha, Altunbugha, and Tatar al-Hijaziyya, a daughter of al-Nasir, Maqrizi, *Khitat*, 2: 68-72.

⁴¹³ A forthcoming study of Mamluk architectural terminology in waqf documents by Laila Ibrahim and M.M. Amin entitled *al-Mustalahat al-Mi'mariyya fi-l-Watha'iq al-Mamlukiyya*, promises to meet some of these needs.

A number of applications of the word *qasr* can be gleaned from a cursory examination of the rest of the waqf of Barsbay.⁴¹⁴ This waqf, which belongs to the middle of the Burji period, contains a list of princely palaces in Cairo that Barsbay had managed to appropriate and to include in his endowment. The frequent appearance of the word *qasr* in the document allows for a comparison between the various descriptions attached to it. A *qasr* is a large *riwaaq* (in this context the word generically indicates a living unit in the upper level of a residence)⁴¹⁵ in the palace of Salar composed of two opposing iwans and a *durqa'a* in the middle with its dependencies (including *tibaaq* and *khaza'in*).⁴¹⁶ It is also a *riwaaq* in the Palace of Baysari, but no description of its plan is given other than that it has *ma'azil* and *manafi'* (requirements).⁴¹⁷ In the residence of Mughulatay, the *qasr* is also a *riwaaq* with *takhayen* and *ma'azil* and a *tibaaq* in addition to a kitchen and dependencies.⁴¹⁸ In the palace of the amir Sudun Ba'jad, who is unknown otherwise, the *qasr* is a raised *qa'a* (*qa'a mu'allaqa*) that has four iwans arranged in a cross plan with four columns to support the *durqa'a*'s roof, with a list of unspecified dependencies.⁴¹⁹

It is evident from the different uses of the term in the waqf of Barsbay that *qasr* did not denote a specific architectural structure. There are, however, a few common characteristics in all the descriptions of *qasr* which make it

⁴¹⁴ The choice of the waqf of Barsbay is governed by the frequency of the appearance of the word *qasr* in it, which gives a sampling of the range of meaning applied to it. Five halls in five different residential structures are called *qasr* in this waqf, in addition to the *qasr* of Alin Aq.

⁴¹⁵ *Riwaq*, like *qasr*, acquired a specific meaning in the Mamluk period. For a definition of the word, see, Mona Zakarya, *Deux palais du Caire médiéval*, 146; Laila Ibrahim, "Middle-Class Living Units in Mamluk Cairo: Architecture and Terminology," 24; Abd al-Latif Ibrahim 'Ali, "Wathiqat al-Amir Qaraqaja al-Hasani," 231, note 41.

⁴¹⁶ *Awqaf* 880, Waqf of Sultan Barsbay, 62: 9-10. *Tibaaq* here appears to mean a separate room of small dimension, and *khaza'in* is the equivalent of *mabibat*, or sleeping spaces, see, Mona Zakarya, *Deux palais du Caire médiéval*, 125.

⁴¹⁷ *Awqaf* 880, Waqf of Sultan Barsbay, 77: 8-9.

⁴¹⁸ *Awqaf* 880, Waqf of Sultan Barsbay, 113: 7-8. *Takhayen* is not identified by either Sayed or Zakarya.

⁴¹⁹ *Awqaf* 880, Waqf of Sultan Barsbay, 122: 7-8. A raised *qa'a* (*qa'a mu'allaqa*) is a *qa'a* in the second floor, raised above a first floor. A raised *qa'a* and a *riwaaq* denote basically the same space in term of its location: both are first floor's hall that are built above some ground floor space.

possible to advance a more inclusive definition of the term than those of Garcin and Ibrahim. First, all the descriptions use the term to designate a component in a structure, not the entire structure; whereas those of Alin Aq and Salar use it for both. Second, *qasr* appears to have become an obsolete term in the Burji Mamluk period: many descriptions in Barsbay's waqf are preceded by the expression "the place known in the past as *qasr*" (*yu'raf qadiman bi-l-qasr*). Furthermore, in all these descriptions, *qasr* is equated with either a *riwaq* or a raised qa'a, apparently to impart the spatial meaning of these two terms known by the readers of the period to that of the *qasr* which may have been dropped out of use. From the ascribed locations of all the *qusur*, and the constant usage of the two terms *riwaq* and raised qa'a in conjunction with *qasr*, it is evident that the latter is always an upper level space.

Third, and most important, all the halls named *qasr* exclusively belong to palaces of Bahri amirs. Alin Aq was a *khassaki* of al-Ashraf Khalil.⁴²⁰ Baysari was a great amir under al-Zahir Baybars. Salar was the vicegerent during the second reign of al-Nasir Muhammad. Mughulatay was the vizir of al-Nasir Muhammad for a short while at the beginning of his third reign. Sudun Ba'jad is the only unknown amir mentioned in the waqf. Other palaces listed in the same waqf which belong to high-ranking administrators from the Bahri period (such as the *dar* of al-'Imadi ibn al-Mushrif) or the Burji period (such as the huge residence near Suwayqat Mun'im) did not contain a *qasr*.

Therefore, a *qasr* is an upper-level unit in a Bahri amir's palace. It may be added, from the limited evidence of the architectural vestiges, that the *qasr* rests on a lower level hall whose plan it reciprocates and which was vaulted in most cases. This is a specific and period-bound usage of the term. The word *qasr* had a categorical denotation before the Bahri period that was

⁴²⁰ Garcin did not identify Alin Aq, yet Maqrizi, *Khitat*, 2: 112-13, lists him among the *khassakiyya* of Khalil. The name is written A'naq al-Husami, which is obviously a corruption of the name Alin Aq. This amir was involved in the assassination of Khalil and is listed among those executed in 1293, see, Nuwayri, *Nihayat al-Irb fi-Funun al-Adab*, vol. 29, fol. 77; Maqrizi, *Suluk*, vol. 1, pt. 3, 795.

applied universally: it meant a fortified palace of a king or a governor.⁴²¹ This general meaning remained in use during the whole Mamluk period in various cases such as the Ablaq Palace, Maqrizi's four palaces, and the waqf of Barsbay's designation of the palaces of Salar and Alin Aq. The new meaning was derived from the generic one and applied to a particular circumstance.

The development of the restricted and spatial meaning for the word *qasr* in Bahri Mamluk Egypt along with the old common one created the confusion we perceive in the documents of the period. The usage of the term *qasr* in its general meaning to designate a whole structure seems to have been arbitrary, as evidenced in Maqrizi's *Khitat* where he alternates between the terms *dar* and *qasr* when he speaks about several structures,⁴²² and in other chronicles where some of the palaces that Maqrizi calls *qasr* are called either *bayt* (house) or *dar*.⁴²³ The only exceptions to this imprecise usage are in the references to the Ablaq Palace, which is always called *qasr*, and whose units are constantly called *qusur* as well. In the Burji period, it appears from the limited number of available documents that the narrow Bahri usage of the term was dropped while the word retained its general palatial denotation. The upper-level hall in a Burji amir's palace lost the semantic distinction that a princely Bahri equivalent had. It was called either a raised qa'a or a *riwaq*, like non-princely residences throughout the Mamluk period and after.⁴²⁴ The

⁴²¹ Laila A. Ibrahim, "Mamluk Monuments of Cairo," 18-19; 'Abd al-Rahim Ghaleb, *Mawsu'at al-'Imara al-Islamiyya*, 315-16.

⁴²² Namely the *istabl* of Qawsun, the *dar* of Taz, and the *dar* of Sarghatmish, see Maqrizi, *Khitat*, 2: 72, 73, 74. A fourth example, the *dar* of Baysari, is called a *qasr* only in the context of its popular name, 69. Maqrizi's usage of the word *qasr* in these last examples is always coupled with the usage of *istabl*, as if he implies that a *dar* of an amir has two separate units: a *qasr* and an *istabl*. This denotation of *qasr* is related to the second usage noticed in the description of Alin Aq's palace in the waqfs of Barsbay and Khayer Bak.

⁴²³ Shams al-Din al-Shuja'i, *Tarikh al-Malik al-Nasir Muhammad*, 25 calls the residence of Yalbugha *bayt* and *istabl*; in page 68, he calls the residence of Bashtak, *dar*; Ibn Taghri-Bardi, *Nujum*, vol. 9, 188, calls the *dar* of Tashtimur *qasr*.

⁴²⁴ See for example, the waqf of sultan Qaytbay, where the upper level halls are named *riwaq* in two residences attributed to him, one is in fact said to have been built by him and called the Grand Dar (*al-Dar al-Kubra*), *Awqaf* 886, Waqf of Sultan Qaytbay, dated 15 Zi-l-Hujja, 895/1490, pages 47-48 for the first house and 260-61 for the second. Other examples, all belonging to Burji princely palaces, are collected in Abd al-Latif Ibrahim 'Ali, "Wathiqat al-Amir Qaraquja al-Hasani," 231-32, note 41. This perception of Burji halls is perhaps best illustrated in an anecdote attributed to sultan Selim the Ottoman who commented on the

word *qasr* was used in its Bahri meaning only to denote princely Bahri halls that were still functional in the Burji period.⁴²⁵

A *qasr* as an architectural unit within a palace may have any number of iwans around its *durqa'a* (the examples include *qusur* with two iwans or four), or may have had a number of *takhayen* and *ma'azil* which, though undefined, probably refer to sleeping spaces in the form of recesses on the side of a hall. The lower level space under the *qasr* is mostly referred to as a *qa'a* (Alin Aq, Baysari, Mughulatay), sometimes a vaulted *qa'a* (Alin Aq in Khayer Bak's *waqf*), and sometimes undefined (Salar, Sudun Ba'jad).

But the most important aspect of a *qasr* is that it is exclusively a princely hall from the Bahri period that rises above a lower level. This definition perfectly fits the Ablaq Palace. The four halls of the Ablaq Palace are *qusur* par excellence: they are more than princely structures, they are royal ones, and they not only rise above one lower level but two (and perhaps three if the blocked lower windows on the façade revealed another hall behind them).

These lower halls were not part of the royal stables, for it is clearly stated in the sources that the Ablaq Palace's *qusur* overlook (*tattilu 'ala*) the royal stables, which means that the latter were separate and away from them.⁴²⁶ The lower halls, then, were most probably for the mamluks in

Mamluk structures he saw by saying that the mosque of Sultan Hasan is a magnificent fortress (*hisar*), while he pronounced the madrasa of Qansuh al-Ghuri (1509) to be a *qa'a* of a merchant (*qa'at tajir*), lacking the expected royal monumentality, in Muhammad 'Abd al-Mu'ti al-Ishaqi al-Munufi, *Akhbar al-Uwal fi-man Tasarrafi fi-Misr min Arbab al-Duwal* (Cairo, 1890) 140.

⁴²⁵ Although this is difficult to prove for the palace of amir Janim al-Sharifi described in a *waqf* of sultan Qaytbay dated 1481. In it, a space in the upper level is called *qasr*. It has a *durqa'a* of the type called Iraqi, two *mabitat*, one large and one small. Mona Zakarya, *Deux palais du Caire médiéval*, 49-81. She notes, however, that the palace appears to have been renovated and enlarged many times, 80-81, and that it was ascribed to a certain Baybars al-Tawil, who resided in it in the past (*qadiman*). She does not identify Baybars, and I could not identify him from the sources available to me. The initial palace could have been built in the Bahri period since the area in which it is located, Suwayqat al-'Izzi, was first zoned by 'Izz al-Din Aybak al-'Izzi who was one of the amirs of al-Ashraf Khalil, Maqrizi, *Khitat*, 2: 107.

⁴²⁶ 'Umari, *Masalik al-Absar fi-Mamalik al-Amsar*, 142; Maqrizi, *Khitat*, 2: 210; Qalqashandi, *Subh*, 3: 371.

service and for some of the royal storehouses (*al-buyut al-sultaniyya*) just like the lower halls in princely palaces as described in waqfs. This may be indirectly corroborated from several references in the sources which indicate that some of the storehouses, namely the buttery (*sharabkhana*) and the saddlery (*rikabkhana*), were near the stables and overlooking the gate that led from the maydan to the palaces.⁴²⁷

This understanding of the word *qasr* clarifies the terminology of the southern enclosure's palaces used by Mamluk chroniclers and shows that they expressed a precise distinction between the various components of the royal complex by their choice of terms. The main palace unit and the inner palaces of the Ablaq Palace are invariably named *qusur* in the sources, while the halls of the harem which were connected to them are called *adurr* (a rarely used plural of *dar*), and their units *qa'a*, probably because they were not built above lower halls. This also explains why other halls built in the Citadel during the Ayyubid and Bahri Mamluk periods before the drop of the word *qasr* were constantly called *qa'as*. The *Qa'a* of the Columns (probably Ayyubid), the *Qa'a al-Salihiyya* (of al-Salih Najm al-Din Ayyub, 1245), the *Qa'a al-Duhaysha* (ascribed to al-Salih Isma'il the son of al-Nasir, 1345), and the *Qa'a al-Baysariyya* (built by sultan Hasan the son of al-Nasir in 1370) were all royal halls with a *qa'a* plan, like the *qusur* of the Ablaq Palace. They do not appear to have been raised on lower halls, and thus they were never identified as *qusur*. The only exception is the *Qa'a al-Ashrafiyya*, which Maqrizi calls a *qasr*, probably because it had a lower hall underneath, called a basement (*qabu*) in the sources, which opened onto the stables level.

The point that remains to be tackled is the reason behind the application of the word *qasr*, which was loaded with meanings, rather than a more neutral term, to designate what seems to have been only a variation on a prevalent architectural type: the *riwaq* (whose plan is that of a *qa'a*) and its

⁴²⁷ Ibn al-Furat, *Tarikh*, vol. 9, pt. 1, 169, reports an event that shows that the buttery overlooked the gate of the maydan (which means that it was located near or in the lower halls of the Ablaq Palace) and that the *Qa'a al-Ashrafiyya* and the Ablaq Palace both opened into the stables under neath; Maqrizi, *Suluk*, vol. 3, pt. 2, 682, produces a short version of the same report. Ibn Shahin al-Zahiri, *Zubdat*, 124, says that the saddlery is attached to the royal stables.

dependencies over one or more lower halls. The readily available explanation, and the one adopted by Garcin and Revault, is that the Ablaq Palace provided the royal model for contemporary and later Bahri palaces, which copied the form and assumed the appellation *qasr*. Revault and Garcin did not differentiate in their discussion of Bahri palaces between the wide and specific denotations of the word *qasr*, and thus they did not notice the contradiction inherent in explaining the adoption of a word from a general royal usage to an architecturally particular one. Furthermore, their explanation is based on the thesis of a downward influence of the royal example, which presumes that the Ablaq Palace's forms were new to Mamluk Cairo: that they were invented, or imported, and then transmitted to the princely palaces, and possibly diffused from then on into the local architectural repertoire. The history of residential architecture in Cairo, in which upper level halls with a qa'a plan had been common before the Mamluk period, refutes this assumption. The same thesis overlooks the fact that Bahri palaces older than the Ablaq Palace included *qusur* units such as the palaces of Alin Aq, Baysari, Salar, and Bektash Amir Silah, in addition to the royal Qa'a/Qasr al-Ashrafiyya at the Citadel, and that these *qusur* may have furnished the model for the Ablaq Palace itself rather than the opposite.

The word *qasr* was used precisely for the meaning it would convey about the unit to which it would be applied, namely monumentality, both in its memorial and formal connotations.⁴²⁸ Since *qasr* was normally used to designate the palace of a sultan or an amir, applying it to the place of honor in the palace such as the qa'a where the sultan or the amir sat, is an appropriate concentration of the meaning in the part that lends the entire structure its memorial value. This interpretation would clarify why a *riwaq* in a princely Bahri palace may be called *qasr*, whereas another *riwaq* in the palace of an administrator or a merchant would be just a *riwaq*. However, this distinction cannot fully account for the disappearance of the term from the vocabulary of

⁴²⁸ The concept of monumentality as embodying a memorial function and an aesthetic of immensity is discussed in Françoise Choay, "Alberti, the Invention of Monumentality and Memory," *Harvard Architectural Review*, 4 (Spring, 1984) 99-105.

Burji palatial architecture, although princely palaces were still being built with an upper *riwaaq* and a lower hall.

The second connotation of monumentality, grandeur in the formal sense, is what distinguished princely Bahri halls from Burji ones and made them deserving of the appellation *qasr*. Extant princely Bahri halls are in fact larger and higher than later Burji (of which an even smaller number exist) or Ottoman ones.⁴²⁹ Moreover, Bahri *qusur* were not only loftier (the word Humphreys prefers using when describing the physical monumentality of Mamluk architecture in general),⁴³⁰ than Burji ones, but they appear to have intentionally been positioned to be seen as such. The *qusur* of Alin Aq and Beshtak directly overlooked the street so that their mass and their height would impress the passerby.⁴³¹ The palaces of Qawsun and Taz may have had the same disposition, but this is very difficult to verify today as their plans have been modified and the street configurations around them have been altered several times.⁴³²

⁴²⁹ Laila A. Ibrahim, "Residential Architecture in Mamluk Cairo," 55; Alexandre Lézine, "Les salles nobles des palais mameloukes," *Annales Islamologiques* (1972) vol. 10, 128-30, gives the plan dimensions of the extant Bahri qa'as. Many of his remarks have been disproved but his measurements show that there is a decrease in the average size of a princely qa'a from the Bahri to the Burji period.

⁴³⁰ R. Stephen Humphreys, "The Expressive Intent of the Mamluk Architecture in Cairo: a Preliminary Essay," 98.

⁴³¹ Shams al-Din al-Shuja'i, *Tarikh al-Malik al-Nasir Muhammad*, 68; Maqrizi, *Khitat*, 2: 70, and *Suluk*, vol. 2, pt. 2, 501, notes that the view from the palace of Beshtak encompasses the whole city of Cairo. He uses almost the same language to describe the view from the Ablaq Palace. A more explicit remark concerning the position of the *qasr* vis-à-vis the street is, Maqrizi, *Suluk*, vol. 2, pt. 3, 687, where he reports the building of a *qasr* for amir Arghun al-Kamili in 1346. Sultan al-Kamil Sha'ban the son of al-Nasir Muhammad had bestowed the *dar* of the superintendent of the royal butchery that bordered on the Pond of the Elephant (Birket al-Fil) on his favorite amir Arghun. He ordered that a *qasr* be constructed next to it, and specified that it should overlook the street, although the more expected choice would have been the pond side in order to exploit the view, but it seems that the street side was more important to achieve the monumentality message to the outside.

⁴³² Jean-Claude Garcin, "Habitat médiéval et histoire urbaine à Fustat et au Caire," 187, notes the fundamental difference between the three palaces and that of Taz in terms of their organization in relation to the open court. This courtyard appears to have been the central space onto which the other components of the palace opened, just like the later Burji palaces. It should be noted that the palace of Taz, which is later than the three other palaces, might have been a transitional model between the period of al-Nasir Muhammad and the Burji period.

The arrangement of the princely palace's architectural elements appear to have changed in the Burji period. Closed upper level halls lost their prominence as the place of honor. They were replaced by the *maq'ad*, which is the open loggia with several arches that overlooks the courtyard, and which was not always included in Bahri palaces. The elevation to prominence of the *maq'ad* in the Burji period necessitated the restitution of the courtyard to a central position, as shown in the plans of the few remaining palaces from the time of Qaytbay.⁴³³ The palace became an introverted composition where halls and rooms were arranged around, and opened onto, its courtyard. They could barely have been seen from the street, and thus they could not have been intended to overwhelm.

The Ablaq Palace was conceived with exactly the opposite intention in mind. It was planned to have an imposing effect on viewers inside and outside the Citadel. Its site dominated the royal stables and the maydan where several events that drew large numbers of people took place, such as polo playing and the performance of the congregational prayer on holidays. It was seen (even its lower halls are seen today) from the major approaches to the Citadel in the city: Khatt al-Saliba al-Kubra (Saliba Street today), Khatt Hadarat al-Baqar (which the palace of Qawsun opened onto) and the *khatt* between the two palaces of Yalbugha and on the one side and the hammam of al-Malik al-Sa'id on the other, which corresponds to the street between the two mosques of Sultan Hasan and al-Rifa'i today.⁴³⁴

The visual prominence provided by the site was enhanced by the construction of the Ablaq Palace *qusur* above two or three superimposed lower halls, so they would loom high above the structures of the stables on the ground, and, more important, higher than the previous palaces that lined the western façade of the southern enclosure, especially the Qa'a al-Ashrafiyya. Verticality was further emphasized by the great height of the *qusur* themselves, as may be gathered from 'Umari's description of the major *qasr* as a "splendid construction, high in the air." Furthermore, if the remains

⁴³³ Jean-Claude Garcin, "Habitat médiéval et histoire urbaine à Fustat et au Caire," 211-16.

⁴³⁴ Maqrizi, *Suluk*, vol. 2, pt. 2, 438-39, gives the approximate locations of these palaces that disappeared when Sultan Hasan built his mosque.

of princely Bahri *qusur* are any indication of the intended physical monumentality, the missing royal ones must have been really towering.

It appears as if, at every stage of decision-making in the construction of the Ablaq Palace, the major concern was the achievement of utmost monumentality (in the formal sense), certainly to reflect and symbolize the memorial function of the structure as the palace of the sultan. This effect was not realized by inventing or importing a new type (that the Cairo Ablaq Palace was imitating that of Damascus in achieving monumentality), but by employing a local architectural type, the *qasr*, that already carried the quality of loftiness and the commemorative dimension, and by adapting it to the requirements of the site and the exigencies of the sultan's image. Thus the *qusur* of the Ablaq Palace were not a new type that set up an example followed in other princely Bahri palaces, but were the paragon of a pre-existing type fitted to the status of the sultan.

The Rebuilding of the Mosque and the Planning of its Surroundings

In 1318, al-Nasir Muhammad ordered the demolition of the old mosque at the Citadel along with several structures around it, including some *buyutat* and houses of *khassaki* amirs that stood against its qibla (southeastern) wall, and incorporated their sites in the building of a new mosque. The earlier, and presumably considerably smaller, mosque that stood in the same site, opposite the Qulla Gate that separates the two enclosures, is neither dated nor named. A congregational mosque at the Citadel is mentioned from at least the first year of Mamluk rule (1250), when the Ayyubid al-Nasir Yusef, the sultan of Damascus, attacked Egypt and was about to defeat the Bahri Mamluks of his cousin al-Salih Najm al-Din Ayyub who had abolished Ayyubid rule there. This mosque was most probably an early Ayyubid legacy because a citadel has to have a congregational mosque, and because it is difficult to imagine that the initial plan of Salah al-Din did not provide for one. The mosque could have been one of the preexisting Fatimid mosques on the site enlarged and refurbished to serve the entire population of the Citadel, or it could have been a new construction. Although there are no supporting specific references, Casanova attributes it to

al-Kamil because he was the Ayyubid sultan who finished the palaces at the Citadel.⁴³⁵

The rebuilding of the mosque involved more than just enlarging its surface.⁴³⁶ Minarets were added to it (the number is not specified but it could be deduced from the reported number of *mu'azzins* chosen to call for the prayers that more than one minaret were erected). Its *qibli riwaqs* (which means the aisles of the prayer hall) were extended, and the qibla wall was given a marble layer, probably in accordance with the Mamluk style of covering qibla walls with colored marble dadoes as a mark of distinction. (Fig 4. 23 **Marble Dado of the Mosque's Qibla Wall**). Nothing more is said about the architecture of the mosque. Al-Nasir Muhammad demolished it and rebuilt it again in 1335. The extant mosque, which is the only Bahri structure in the Citadel still standing in its entirety, is the 1335 rebuilding.

The building of the Nasiri Mosque resulted in the modification of the Qulla Gate's configuration. Our sources do not connect the two works as they record that, in 1320, al-Nasir Muhammad built a new door outside the Qulla Gate and enlarged its vestibule (*durkah*).⁴³⁷ The existence of a link between the two projects is inferred from a reference in Ibn al-Furat, who, in reporting an event in 1291, says that the entrance to the royal wardrobe (*firashkhana*) which used to be inside the second door of the Qulla Gate on the side of the treasury (*khizana*) has become a door to the mosque of al-Nasir Muhammad in his time (mid-fifteenth-century).⁴³⁸ Qalqashandi, when speaking of the access from the northern to the southern enclosure in his description of the Citadel, says that the Qulla Gate leads to wide passages, or vestibules (*dahaliz*) which open via a door on the left side into the mosque.⁴³⁹ These references indicate that al-Nasir Muhammad cleared the area between the Qulla Gate

435 Casanova, *Histoire*, (Arabic translation) 116-17.

436 'Umari, *Masalik al-Absar fi-Mamalik al-Amsar*, 141; Nuwayri, *Nihayat al-Irb fi-Funun al-Adab*, vol. 30, fol. 118; Author Zetterstéen, 167; Ibn al-Dawadari, *al-Durr al-Fakhir fi-Sirat al-Malik al-Nasir*, 293; Maqrizi, *Khitat*, 2: 211.

437 Author Zetterstéen, 170.

438 Ibn al-Furat, *Tarikh*, vol. 8, 109. The same report, without the remark on the change in configuration, is given by Maqrizi, *Suluk*, 1, pt. 3, 762.

439 Qalqashandi, *Subh*, 3: 371.

and the eastern gate of his mosque (which had lost its dating inscription, but most probably belongs to the first rebuilding of the mosque) after the reconstruction of 1318. The initial Qulla Gate led into a maze of structures and vestibules between it and the original mosque of the Citadel in the southern enclosure that needed to be removed to make room for the new larger mosque and to create the adjacent open space for the requirements of circulation of people to and from the palace complex. The Qulla Gate was the only entry point to the palace for both the public and *barrani* amirs. The new open space inside the gate that can be seen on the *Description de l'Égypte's* map, and that still exists today, though the gate itself was rebuilt by Muhammad 'Ali, accommodated the dense traffic that resulted from the restructuring of the ceremonial of daily attendance at the palace, and from the relocation of *dar al-'adl's* sessions to the Great Iwan inside the southern enclosure. Al-Nasir Muhammad was the author of both decisions.⁴⁴⁰ *Barrani* amirs were to gather every morning in the Qulla Gate vestibule to proceed in a group under the vicegerent to the daily service at the palace. Common people would crowd both vestibules inside and outside the Qulla Gate on the days of *dar al-'adl* (Mondays and Thursdays under al-Nasir Muhammad) after the sultan had moved this service into the palatial complex from either the northern enclosure where the Dar al-'Adl of al-Kamil existed, or outside the Citadel where the Dar al-'Adl of al-Zahir Baybars stood.

The Buildings of al-Nasir Muhammad in the First Period

Aside from turning Dar al-'Adl of al-Zahir Baybars into a *tablakhana*, where the royal military band would perform at least twice a day, al-Nasir Muhammad did not order any major work at the Citadel between 1320 and 1333. An analysis of the sequence of projects done in the period between 1310 and 1320 reveals that there must have been an organizational plan at work, if not openly at least in the mind of al-Nasir Muhammad.

⁴⁴⁰ Ibn Taghri-Bardi, *Nujum*, 9: 180, explicitly describes the ceremonials developed by al-Nasir for the sessions in his Iwan as very complicated and taxing for those in attendance.

First, each project needed the completion of the preceding one before it could be undertaken, and they all followed each other in a logical succession. Thus, the provision of water for the site of the maydan and the palaces was the first project undertaken by al-Nasir Muhammad after the necessary repairs to the Iwan of al-Ashraf done a year earlier, immediately after his return to the throne. The walling up of the maydan defined and expanded the boundaries of the royal domain and established the edge for the later construction of princely palaces opposite the royal palaces in the southern enclosure. The Ablaq Palace took advantage of the view above the green meadow of the maydan and was preceded by the planning of the circulation of the sultan from the high level of the palace to the low level of the stables through the two sets of stairs flanking the palace's structures. It also completed the series of royal palaces that were started by the New Palace or the House of Gold built by al-Zahir Baybars at the northern tip of the southern enclosure and followed by the Qa'a al-Ashrafiyya. Thus, the western front of the southern enclosure which overlooked the city and formed the façade of the Citadel towards it presented the viewer coming from the city with a succession of sumptuous royal structures crowned by the four *qusur* of the Ablaq Palace. The enlargement of the mosque followed the rebuilding of the Iwan on the northeastern end of the main square of the southern enclosure and completed the encircling of this square with major public monuments. The rebuilding of the door of the Qulla Gate and the widening of its vestibule could not have been undertaken before the completion of the mosque rebuilding and were functional responses to the increase in traffic in that area due to its opening to the public. The conversion of the Dar al-'Adl of Baybars into a *tablakhana* was understandable in light of the previous provision of a newer, loftier Dar al-'Adl inside the southern enclosure.

Second, many projects were related to changes in the structure of the Mamluk hierarchy and the role of the sultan at its apex that were concurrently being introduced by al-Nasir Muhammad. These projects tallied with the implementation of these changes as if to engender them and give them their physical manifestations. The sultan was interested in emphasizing his public image which he achieved on two different levels: the

first by rebuilding the Iwan and by holding *dar al-'adl*'s sessions in it, and the second by projecting his grandeur through the imposing structures of the Ablaq Palace. Both projects, however, seem to have followed on the introduction of the new rituals of royal audiences: the public ones held in the Iwan and the private ones in the main *qasr* of the Ablaq Palace. It may be argued that the rebuilding of the mosque and the addition of the minarets were partly prompted by the same general interest in applying in the religious setting the same type of ceremonial centered around the sultan that had already been put into effect in both public and private settings. The establishment of a special locus for the military band, the *tablakhana* was probably another aspect of the ceremonial reorganization, which would reach even higher degrees of elaboration and pomp in the second period of construction at the Citadel.

Third and most important from a planning viewpoint, the entire work of al-Nasir Muhammad in this first period was located in the administrative section of the northern enclosure in the vicinity of the Qulla Gate and in the public and semi-public parts of the southern enclosure and the maydan. No project was initiated in the private quarters of the sultan in the southern part of the southern enclosure; a situation that would be almost completely reversed in the second period. The motivations behind the concentration of works in the public and semipublic sections stem mostly from al-Nasir's endeavor to concentrate the executive apparatus of the sultanate around him. The reasons for the reversal of orientation in the second period would become clear with the analysis of al-Nasir's change of focus in the last decade of his rule, a change that became possible mainly because of his success in implementing and maintaining the new political and administrative structures of the sultanate. The ramifications of these new structures were far-reaching on different levels, and were still felt long after the vanishing of the Qalawunid dynasty in 1382.

Chapter Five

Al-Nasir Muhammad's second period 1333-41

When al-Nasir Muhammad had finished converting the Dar al-'Adl of Baybars into a *tablakhana* in 1322, he seemed to have been satisfied with the his palatial complex at the Citadel for he started no new projects there for more than a decade (1322-33). But he did not lose interest in construction; he simply turned his attention to other places in and around his capital.

The Projects of al-Nasir Muhammad in Siryaqus

One of the most important of these projects of the period was a cluster of pleasure palaces he built for himself and his amirs in 1323. He also constructed a number of stables for his horses and camels, a polo ground, and some dependencies in a village north of Cairo known as Siryaqus. (**Fig 5. 1 Map of Cairo and Siryaqus**). He organized plantations and orchards around the palaces and brought Syrian gardeners, famed for their skill with the cultivation of fruit trees, to tend to them.⁴⁴¹ In 1325, he constructed a congregational mosque nearby and a khanqah that could house a hundred sufis. In 1326, he ordered a new canal to be dug from the Nile, the Khalij al-Nasiri, to join the older Khalij al-Misri north of Cairo and bring water to Siryaqus. The new waterway was not just an irrigation project: it was large enough for ships to sail all the way to Siryaqus to provision the town. Residences soon evolved around the khanqah and along the canal; markets were established, and hammams and mosques were erected to serve the growing population. Siryaqus soon developed into a Cairene satellite town north of Cairo consisting of the palatial complex and the town itself, which became known as Khanqah Siryaqus after its new civic center (the small village there today is still called al-Khankah).

The sources do not explain al-Nasir's choice of site, but he most probably wanted his palaces near the Birket al-Jubb (Pond of the Pit), a favorite spot of the Fatimids for royal outings and a hunting ground especially famous for the abundance of cranes (*karaki*) on its shores since the time of Salah al-

⁴⁴¹ The works of al-Nasir Muhammad in Siryaqus and the waqf for his khanqah there are discussed in, John Alden Williams, "The Khanqah of Siryaqus: A Mamluk Royal Religious Foundation," *Towards an Islamic Humanism: Studies in Memory of Mohammad el-Nowaihi* (Cairo, 1984) 109-19.

Din.⁴⁴² Al-Nasir Muhammad was an avid hunter and polo player, and the site at Birket al-Jubb was ideal for both. Every year for the remainder of his reign, he brought his court and all his *khassaki* amirs to the palaces at Siryaqus for a few days of *sarha* (extended royal promenade).⁴⁴³ There, the sultan would hunt and play polo with his amirs, to whom he would display his royal bounty by bestowing robes of honor (*khila'*), and presiding over elaborate banquets and other festivities.

This yearly retreat to a royal pleasure was a significant development at the Mamluk court. It showed that the sultan felt secure after fifteen years of consolidating his rule. Al-Nasir Muhammad was the first Mamluk sultan who dared leave the safety of the Citadel for reasons other than to wage war or quell rebellion.⁴⁴⁴ However, the cautious al-Nasir Muhammad, sharpened by his past experiences and the idiosyncracies of the Mamluk system, according to which all amirs were legally eligible for the sultanate, did not leave anything to chance. The choice of Siryaqus only a few miles north of Cairo, guaranteed a speedy return to the Citadel in the event of trouble. Digging a navigable canal to Siryaqus made it more accessible to him. Finally, he made certain that the entire court and all the important amirs and administrators had to accompany him to the *sarha* every year. No powerful potential leader was left behind to foment trouble. This *sarha* to Siryaqus became an instituted royal practice, and was intermittently practiced under the remainder of the Qalawunids, until, like many Nasiri royal traditions and

⁴⁴² Maqrizi, *Khitat*, 1: 359, 465, 489.

⁴⁴³ John Alden Williams, "The Khanqah of Siryaqus: A Mamluk Royal Religious Foundation," 118, note 4, says that the word may be used to denote both a place and an act in the description of the sultan's activities at Siryaqus. The context of its usage in Maqrizi, *Khitat*, 2: 149 and 199, does not seem to imply a place, only the activity associated with the pleasure palaces at Siryaqus.

⁴⁴⁴ The same sense of security is reflected in the three pilgrimages of al-Nasir Muhammad. Unlike his predecessors who did not perform this most prestigious of Islam's requirements (except for Baybars who went there once almost incognito), al-Nasir Muhammad visited Mecca three times, in 1313, 1320, and 1332, the last two of which were performed with utmost royal pomp and decorum.

ceremonials, it was dropped by Barquq at the beginning of the Burji period, clearly as an indication of dynastic change.⁴⁴⁵

Whether al-Nasir Muhammad had intended Siryaqus to be a new city or only a permanent royal resort with a supporting population nearby is not known, but it is unlikely that he had considered it a new center for the sultanate, akin to the royal quarters strong rulers had constructed close to the capital in earlier times in Islamic Egypt. Al-Nasir Muhammad did not see himself as the founder of a new dynasty, but as the legitimate heir and consolidator of an already established one. Many of his public acts, even after he had secured his rule following his second comeback, attest to this.⁴⁴⁶ He showed no signs of moving the court permanently to Siryaqus. He never stayed there more than a few days, never conducted state business there, and most of his Egyptian army remained at the Citadel during these annual outings. Even if he had contemplated a transfer of court to Siryaqus, he would soon have rejected the notion because the site presented a few drawbacks. Siryaqus lay in low land and in a relatively isolated spot and was therefore less easily defended than the Citadel. The time and effort al-Nasir Muhammad and his predecessors had invested in planning the lodging of the Mamluk army at the Citadel, the organization of the royal palaces in its southern enclosure, and the distribution of great amirs' residences around it, with clear demarcations to reflect the Mamluk hierarchical structure, would have been wasted in a move. Duplicating the scheme of organization at

⁴⁴⁵ Barquq altered many customs, and abolished a number of them, when he took over the sultanate in 1382 as part of his reform and as an attempt to mark the beginning of a new dynastic change, see, Maqrizi, *Khitat*, 2: 241.

⁴⁴⁶ Many examples could be cited. First, early on in his third reign, al-Nasir Muhammad instituted the convention of sending the mamluks, who were to be elevated to amir's rank, to swear allegiance in front of Qalawun's tomb inside his *qubba* in Bayn al-Qasryn, evidently as a proof of loyalty to the Qalawunid house and its actual head al-Nasir Muhammad. Second, the size and positioning of his madrasa next to his father's *qubba* in Bayn al-Qasryn reflect a message of continuity and reverence. Third, this continuity is emphasized more explicitly in his titulatures where his name is always followed by the expression the son of Qalawun, whose name is accorded the full regalia of a living sultan in addition to the two titles, *al-sa'id* (the one of good omen) and *al-shahid* (the martyred) used as honorary attributes for sultans who had died while serving the cause of Islam. Qalawun had died in his encampment outside Cairo when he was preparing to go for a raid against Acre, the last Crusader stronghold. Thus he was entitled to be called a martyr according to Islamic doctrine.

Siryacus would have taken a very long time and would have been prohibitively expensive even for a great builder such as al-Nasir Muhammad. He appears, however, to at least have planned the town to stand on its own as a regional center. Aside from bringing the Khalij to it and thereby linking it with the rest of Egypt, he apparently decreed that no taxes (*mukus*) should be collected from its market, allegedly in deference to the sanctity of the khanqah. This encouraged a weekly market on Fridays that attracted people from far away, and added to the town's prominence.⁴⁴⁷

Al-Nasir Muhammad intended the khanqah to be a royal endowment in rank and size among the most prestigious khanqahs in Cairo. The provisions for the khanqah's occupants in his original waqf, drafted in 1325, revealed the intention of creating a center that would attract sufis by offering them more rations and higher salaries than elsewhere. A second waqf, dated 1326, appended to the first added endowed, income-yielding properties to provide for the support of still more sufis. The sultan's patronage and the large income elevated the institution to a class by itself. Al-Nasir Muhammad confirmed this status by bestowing the title Sheikh of Sheikhs (Shaykh al-Shuyukh) on the head of his new khanqah, a title hitherto reserved for the sheikh of the khanqah of Sa'id al-Su'ada' in al-Qahira. He also decreed in his waqf that he himself should be buried in the khanqah of Siryacus, rather than in his madrasa in Bayn al-Qasrayn street in al-Qahira, where most of the royal religious endowments of his predecessors –which contained their tombs as well– were located. When he died, however, his wishes were not observed. He was hastily buried in his father's tomb in the Qubba al-Mansuriyya to avoid the unrest that a proper ceremonial procession bearing his body to Siryacus might have generated.⁴⁴⁸

Despite al-Nasir Muhammad's efforts, the town of Siryacus never became an important city, but it remained a flourishing religious center until the Burji period as evidenced by the building of the madrasa of the Amir Sudun min 'Abd al-Rahman there in 1422, and the establishment of a new

⁴⁴⁷ Maqrizi, *Khitat*, 2: 422-23.

⁴⁴⁸ Maqrizi, *Khitat*, 2: 305; Maqrizi, *Suluk*, vol. 2, pt. 2, 546; Ibn Taghri-Bardi, *Nujum*, vol. 9, 165.

royal religious complex in 1433 by Sultan Barsbay that comprised a congregational mosque, a sabil-kuttab, a cistern, a *maq'ad*, a small palace and an orchard. These endowments, however, did not suffice to sustain the town's importance after Barquq deserted the royal palaces nearby in the early fifteenth century. Siryaqus had gone into a steady decline, even before the Burji religious endowments were built there, and it lapsed into oblivion after the Mamluk period. The palaces and maydan of al-Nasir Muhammad disappeared without a trace.

The Projects of al-Nasir Muhammad in Cairo

Cairo itself expanded speedily in the same period; during the first third of the fourteenth century, the city at least doubled in size.⁴⁴⁹ (Fig 5. 2 Map of Cairo's Surroundings). Most of the new construction was south of Fatimid al-Qahira in the area bound by the new Nasiri Khalij on the west and the Citadel on the southeast. The main thoroughfare in the district of the Darb al-Ahmar, extending south from the Zuwayla Gate of the old city in a wide curve to the foot of the hill upon which the Citadel stood, was lined with mosques, palaces, and commercial structures. From 1326 on, the area west of the old Khalij was laid out with mosques, houses and palaces.⁴⁵⁰

That the city expanded in these directions was determined by circumstance. Al-Darb al-Ahmar linked the old Fatimid capital al-Qahira, which has become the center of economic life, to the Citadel, and formed the last stretch of the processional route taken by the sultan in major ceremonies, such as coronation day and victory parades. The sultan would ride through al-Qahira from the north through the Bab al-Nasr (Victory Gate) and come out from the Zuwayla Gate riding along the Darb al-Ahmar to the horse market below the Citadel, and then he would enter the Citadel from the Chain Gate and proceed up to the Great Iwan, the scene of the ceremony's

⁴⁴⁹ Maqrizi, *Khitat*, 2: 114-17; Ibn Taghri-Bardi, *Nujum*, vol. 9, 193-8; 'Ali Suleiman al-Miliji, *'Ama'ir al-Nasir Muhammad (the Buildings of al-Nasir Muhammad)*, 71.

⁴⁵⁰ John Alden Williams, "Urbanization and Monument Construction in Mamluk Cairo," *Muqarnas*, vol. 2 (1984) 36-40.

culmination, the royal banquet (*simat*).⁴⁵¹ The section of the processional route inside al-Qahira (the old Bayn al-Qasryn of the Fatimids between the Victory Gate and the Zuwayla Gate) seems to have been reserved for royal religious structures; only amirs' palaces were permitted to border on it. In the beginning of the fourteenth century, the madrasas of al-Kamil Muhammad (known as the Dar al-Hadith al-Kamiliyya), of al-Salih Najm al-Din Ayyub, of al-Zahir Baybars, of al-Mansur Qalawun (in the complex comprising his *bimaristan* and *qubba*), and of al-Nasir Muhammad himself (which was started by the usurper Kitbugha but then bought and completed by al-Nasir after his return to his third reign)⁴⁵² were all aligning the central section of Bayn al-Qasryn. Amirs built their religious monuments on the side streets that led off from Bayn al-Qasryn or along the second part of the processional route, the Darb al-Ahmar. The latter location had high status and the amirs' structures there helped embellish this new and important street. Three of its major buildings, all mosques built by amirs of al-Nasir Muhammad, are still standing there. They are from north to south, the mosque of Ahmad al-Mihmandar (1324-25), the mosque of Altunbugha al-Maridani (1339-40), and the mosque of Aqsunqur (1346-47).

The westerly direction of the city's expansion followed the receding Nile, which had started shifting eastward in the tenth century. The river's retreat had peaked by the early fourteenth century and slowed considerably immediately afterward, leaving large vacant lots close to the water that could be developed once the river had more or less stabilized in its new course.⁴⁵³

⁴⁵¹ On the route of royal processions, see, *Suluk*, vol. 1, pt. 2, 443-44, for the *mawkib* of Baybars's coronation in 1260; *ibid*, 492, for the *mawkib* after his victorious return from Palestine in 1262; *ibid*, 643, al-Malik al-Sa'id, upon his coronation, did not ride through al-Qahira, which was an anomaly; *ibid*, pt. 3, 664, Qalawun rode through al-Qahira upon his coronation; al-Ashraf Khalil did not follow the route of the *mawkib*, for fear of an assassination plot; *ibid*, 823, Lajin rode through al-Qahira for his coronation. The most elaborate description of a *mawkib*'s route is that of the victory parade of al-Nasir Muhammad in 1302, see, *Suluk*, vol. 1, pt. 3, 939-40. After al-Nasir Muhammad, most of his sons who succeeded each other followed a shorter processional route that took them from the harem at the Citadel to the Great Iwan, the riding through Cairo was performed only by a few of them.

⁴⁵² Maqrizi, *Khitat*, 2: 382.

⁴⁵³ C.J.R. Haswell, "Cairo, Origin and Development; Some Notes on the Influence of the River Nile and its Changes," *Bulletin de la société royale de la géographie d'Égypte*, vol. 11 (1922) 171-76.

Then embankments (*zaribas*) were constructed along the riverbank from Misr al-Fustat in the south to Bulaq in the north, and the land behind them was opened for development. These areas formed a prime target for expansion. People rushed to build in them because of their proximity to the main source of water for the city, the Nile. In addition, the empty tracts that lined the artificial waterways – the old and new khalijs and the several ponds – were built up as well, especially around the ponds west of the Citadel beside the main east-west thoroughfare, the Shari' al-A'zam (Grand Street) such as the Birket al-Fil (Pond of the Elephant) and the Pond of Qaroun. (Fig 5. 3 Map of the Western Extension of the City).

The sultan's involvement in the city's development was manifested on two levels: directly, in land reclamation projects, and indirectly, in supporting building projects by his amirs.⁴⁵⁴ On the first level, al-Nasir Muhammad set about early in his third reign protecting the new eastern banks of the river from erosion and draining the wetland. He erected embankments and dug ponds to drain the flood water, then funded community-oriented projects on the land thus reclaimed. In 1311, he had a congregational mosque, the New Nasiri Mosque, constructed on the bank of the Nile north of Misr al-Fustat, and opened up the area around it to residential construction. In 1320, he erected the Zaribat al-Sultan to protect the borders of a new maydan, the Maydan al-Mahari, he had made for his horses; it was west of the famous Qanatir al-Siba' (Lions Bridge) on the Khalij where the major east-west thoroughfare, the Shari' al-A'zam, passed. The embankment was filled with clay excavated from an adjoining site; the pit that resulted was turned into a new pond, the Birket al-Nasiriyya, and was used to drain the land around it. Al-Nasir then created a new urban center in the area by building two residential blocks (*rab' s*) and a large warehouse (*wakala*).⁴⁵⁵

But most of al-Nasir's contributions to the development of the new districts in and around the city were less direct. He gave his amirs parcels of reclaimed land to develop, or sent them material and corvée laborers to help

⁴⁵⁴ Maqrizi, *Suluk*, vol. 2, pt. 2, 542; Ibn Taghri-Bardi, *Nujum*, vol. 9, 185.

⁴⁵⁵ Maqrizi, *Khitat*, 2: 131-32.

construct the urban complexes they embarked on, or both. He gave his favorite amir Baktimur al-Saqi one of the two *rab'* s he had built around the Birket al-Nasiriyya, whereupon Baktimur continued the area's development by adding two hammams, one for the men and one for the women, before dividing up the rest of the land for sale. Al-Nasir Muhammad also sent workers (sometimes called *asra*, which means prisoners of war)⁴⁵⁶ and material to Qawsun and to Altunbugha al-Maridani when they each built their mosques. Qawsun's rose on the north-south Shari' al-A'zam south of the Zuwayla Gate (1330), and Altunbugha's in the Darb al-Ahmar (1339-40).⁴⁵⁷ (Fig 5. 4 Plan of the Darb al-Ahmar).

In most cases, the new parts of the city were owned by the state treasury (*bayt al-mal*). They were then either given away by the sultan to his favorite amirs or sold to them for a low price.⁴⁵⁸ The amirs would then exploit the land as their private property (a practice called *tahkir* which means to claim ownership of the land and to zone it for development).⁴⁵⁹ They usually augmented the value of the land by constructing congregational mosques or khanqahs, and divided the remaining empty land into smaller lots, which they sold off to others who would build their houses there. The sources mention about sixty *hukrs* (land that was zoned or *hukkirat* from *tahkir*) that had been developed in the third reign of al-Nasir Muhammad. Included is

⁴⁵⁶ Al-Yusufi, *Nuzhat al-Nazir fi-Sirat al-Malik al-Nasir*, 324 and 348, speaks of the use of *asra* in a royal construction site; Maqrizi, *Khitat*, 2: 307, and *Suluk*, vol. 2, pt. 2, 320, says that *asra* were sent with the superintendent of the royal constructions to build Qawsun's mosque. These *asra* were mostly Armenian prisoners of war who were captured in several campaigns against Little Armenia during al-Nasir's reign. They were lodged with their families in Khizanat al-Bunud in al-Qahira, which used to be a prison for mamluks, or at the Citadel in an unspecified place. Maqrizi explicitly says that al-Nasir gathered them and used them in the construction of his structures, Maqrizi, *Suluk*, vol. 2, pt. 3, 640. Other groups who were used in forced labor included captive bedouins from the several raids on bedouin tribes in Upper Egypt or Barqa, or corvée peasants and urban riffraff, which are also called "the chained ones" (*muqayyadin*) in the sources.

⁴⁵⁷ For the mosque of Qawsun, see, Maqrizi, *Khitat*, 2:307; for that of Altunbugha, see, Maqrizi, *Khitat*, 2: 308, and *Suluk*, vol. 2, pt. 2, 385.

⁴⁵⁸ See for example al-Yusufi, *Nuzhat al-Nazir fi-Sirat al-Malik al-Nasir*, 340 where he reports how Qawsun bought a *hikr* from the state treasury after he got al-Nasir's permission.

⁴⁵⁹ Maqrizi, *Khitat*, 2: 114, quoting Ibn Sayduh, one of the major medieval lexicographers of Arabic.

the *hukr* of the Sultan around the Birket al-Nasiriyya, the *hukr* of Qawsun, the *hukr* of Tukuzdamur, the *hukr* of Akbugha, and the two *hukrs* of Sitt Miska the sultan's stewardess (*qahramana*). All of them were between the Khalij al-Nasiri and the Nile.⁴⁶⁰

Al-Nasir Muhammad's Entrepreneurial Activities

By granting control over vacant land to his amirs and by financing their projects, al-Nasir Muhammad was in fact privatizing the public treasury. This was a form of *iqta'*, applied to the city and restricted to members of the sultan's household, including amirs related to the sultan through marriage. It was meant to provide an additional and exclusive source of revenue for the chosen few. Of the nine amirs who were married to daughters of al-Nasir Muhammad, at least five, Bashtak, Qawsun, Altunbugha, Aq-Sunqur, and Milkumtur, are known to have been involved in land speculation and in building new facilities. Another amir, Akbugha 'Abd al-Wahid, the superintendent of royal buildings (*shadd al-'Ama'ir*), made a fortune in land speculation and reclaimed land. He was the brother of the sultan's favorite wife, Tughay, and was said to have reached his high position through this connection.⁴⁶¹

Reclaimed land was not the only means al-Nasir Muhammad used in his pursuit of wealth to finance his extravagant purchases of mamluks, horses, and slave-girls and to sustain his large construction projects and his elaborate court ceremonials.⁴⁶² In 1310, he created the new position of overseer of crown property (*nazir al-khass*) whose antecedent was the agent of

⁴⁶⁰ Maqrizi, *Khitat*, 1: 365, says that sixty *hukrs* were planned in the days of al-Nasir Muhammad; *Khitat*, 2: 114-17 speaks of some of the more important *hukrs* of al-Nasir's amirs.

⁴⁶¹ On the women's relations in the family of al-Nasir Muhammad, see, Ahmad 'Abd al-Raziq, *La femme au temps des Mamlouks en Égypte* (Cairo, 1973) 31, for Tughay the sister of Akbugha, 269, 280-81, 297, and 300 for the daughters of al-Nasir Muhammad.

⁴⁶² A summary of al-Nasir Muhammad's large expenses on exquisite acquisitions is found in Maqrizi, *Suluk*, vol. 2, pt. 2, 525-32; Ibn Taghri-Bardi, *Nujum*, vol. 9, 166-71. His extensive spending on buildings and royal bounties was opposed by some of his subjects. Maqrizi, *Suluk*, vol. 2, pt. 1, 135, reports that in 1314 a sheikh criticized al-Nasir Muhammad in person for his dependence on Coptic scribes, who staffed most of his administrative departments, and for his extravagance in construction and gifts.

the privy purse (*wakil al-khass*), who under earlier sultans had been a second-rank administrator responsible for the royal estates. But al-Nasir elevated this office to *nazir al-khass* and entrusted it in addition with the management of the royal enterprises.⁴⁶³ During his long reign, a succession of carefully chosen and crafty *nazirs* implemented the sultan's schemes to promote royal ventures at the expense of the wealthy great amirs and private merchants, partly as a means of diminishing their independence and partly as a way of generating money.

In 1314-15, al-Nasir Muhammad undertook a new survey (*rawk*) of *iqta'* land in Egypt, only sixteen years after the Rawk al-Husami made by Sultan Husam al-Din Lajin and completed in 1298.⁴⁶⁴ He had realized that many of the Burji amirs who had been promoted by his deposed enemies Baybars al-Jashankir and Salar still retained large *iqta'*s. Al-Nasir Muhammad ordered the *rawk* partly to redistribute the land and reduce the amirs' holdings without taking back their *iqta'* outright, which would have stirred up hostility.⁴⁶⁵ His main reason, however, was more self-oriented. He assigned a considerably larger portion of *iqta'* to the *khass* (privy purse) than Lajin had done. Almost a half [ten-twenty-fourths] of Egypt's land became the sultan's as opposed to a sixth [four-twenty-fourths] in the past.

Al-Nasir Muhammad also supplemented his income from other commercial and industrial ventures,⁴⁶⁶ in contrast to his predecessors who depended solely on taxes and on the *khass* estates for income. He was involved in textile manufacture, in sugar production, and in rearing livestock and selling grain. His first *nazir al-khass*, Karim al-Din al-Kabir (1310-23), supervised all of these enterprises, in addition to the sultan's urban projects. He also swiftly transferred the *matjar* (the state office that controlled

⁴⁶³ Al-'Umari, *Masalik al-Absar* 114-15; Maqrizi, *Khitat*, 2: 227; Ibn Iyas, *Bada'i' al-Zuhur fi-Waqa'i' al-Duhur*, vol. 1, pt. 1, 484.

⁴⁶⁴ On *iqta'* see, Hassanein Rabie, "Size and Value of the *Iqta'* in Egypt 564-741 A.H., 1169-1341 A.D." in, M.A. Cook, *Studies in the Economic History of the Middle East* (London, 1970) 129-38.

⁴⁶⁵ Maqrizi, *Suluk*, vol. 2, pt. 1, 146-7; Maqrizi, *Khitat*, 1: 87-88.

⁴⁶⁶ On al-Nasir Muhammad's commercial and industrial activities, see, Hassanein Rabie, *The Financial System of Egypt A.H. 564-741 [A.D. 1169-1341]* (London, 1972) 141-44; Robert Irwin, *The Middle East in the Middle Ages*, 112-17.

large-scale trading in a number of commodities) to the *khas*s and established a network of royal agents in every town and every port.⁴⁶⁷

Al-Nasir Muhammad's ventures into controlling the sultanate economy was combined with his steady advance towards concentrating all political power in his hands.⁴⁶⁸ He suspended the position of vizir between 1314-23 and 1331-41, and transferred many of its functions to the administrators who were directly attached to the sultan.⁴⁶⁹ His boldest move, however, came in 1326, when he abolished the position of vicegerent (*na'ib al-saltana*). The responsibilities of that office had included the administration of *iqta'*, a major source of funds. This al-Nasir assumed himself, aided by the *nazir al-khas*s, who was thus given great authority, and who became one of the most influential officials.⁴⁷⁰

With this move, al-Nasir Muhammad effectively became the sole power in the sultanate, a power he held onto until his death. It is also at this time that he became even more obsessed with money, an obsession that led him to try every conceivable means for augmenting his income.⁴⁷¹ His last *nazir al-khas*s, al-Nashu (1332-40), was chosen, promoted, and long kept in office despite the animosity of the great amirs because of his genius for inventing new ways of taxing their enterprises and those of other prominent individuals.⁴⁷² Al-Nashu instituted practices that forced merchants to buy royal goods at arbitrarily set prices, a practice called *tarh* in the sources.⁴⁷³ He

⁴⁶⁷ Maqrizi, *Suluk*, vol. 2, pt. 1, 172; Ibn Taghri-Bardi, *Nujum*, vol. 9, 76-77. In 1317, Karim al-Din appointed his nephew as superintendent of spices and *Karem* (the group of traders specializing in importing spices and other expensive materials from India via Yemen, see, Qalqashandi, *Subh al-A'sha*, 4: 32) and of the house of molasses (*dar al-qinid*) which was the trading center in sugar-cane molasses from which sugar was extracted. This was a direct transfer of these positions from the state administration to the *khas*s.

⁴⁶⁸ Al-'Umari, *Masalik al-Absar* 114-15; Maqrizi, *Suluk*, vol. 2, pt. 2, 534; Ibn Taghri-Bardi, *Nujum*, vol. 9, 174.

⁴⁶⁹ Maqrizi, *Suluk*, vol. 2, pt. 1, 125. Also, Ahmad 'Abd al-Raziq, "Le vizirat et les vizirs d'Égypte au temps des Mamluks," *Annales Islamologiques*, 16 (1980) 198-99.

⁴⁷⁰ Al-'Umari, *Masalik al-Absar*, 116-17; Qalqashandi, *Subh al-A'sha*, 4: 17.

⁴⁷¹ Al-Nasir Muhammad's greed became excessive in the last decade of his rule, see, al-Shuja'i, *Tarikh al-Malik al-Nasir Muhammad*, 113; Maqrizi, *Khitat*, 2: 306.

⁴⁷² Maqrizi, *Suluk*, vol. 2, pt. 2, 413.

⁴⁷³ Maqrizi, *Suluk*, vol. 2, pt. 2, 360-61, 420, 435, 444, 460.

was able, thereby, to install the sultan as chief entrepreneur in the sultanate and to collect additional funds for the *khass* coffers.

The wealth accumulated by al-Nasir Muhammad and the power he managed to command in his third reign were evident in the opulence and monumentality of his later architectural projects, especially those he built at the Citadel. The prime reason behind his rebuilding of the two major structures in the southern enclosure, the Great Iwan and the Nasiri mosque, in fact appears to have been to show off his wealth and power: the new structures were simply larger, costlier, and more lavishly ornamented reproductions of the old ones. In the chroniclers' reports superlatives such as "opulent," "splendid," "unparalleled," "monumental," and "great" are used to describe them.

The Great Iwan and the Nasiri Mosque were reconstructed almost at the same time, the Iwan in 1333-34 and the mosque in 1335-36. The operation was too large and too disruptive to daily life at the Citadel to permit the completion of the two projects simultaneously, so they were done in succession. The eyewitness account of Ibn al-Dawadari suggests that the projects may have constituted stages in a larger plan to remodel the main court in the southern enclosure, where the two buildings stood – the mosque on the southeast and the Iwan on the northwest.⁴⁷⁴ Descriptions indicate that the buildings had many features in common by the time their reconstruction was complete. Both had green-tiled domes supported on reused, gigantic granite columns and arched crenellations, which may have been intended to unify the appearance of the main court's architecture.

The Iwan al-Kabir (Great Iwan)

In 1333, al-Nasir Muhammad decided to demolish the Iwan he had built in 1318 and to rebuild it anew. The reports are not very clear about how much he actually had razed; some say the structure was leveled; others that

⁴⁷⁴ Ibn al-Dawadari, *al-Durr al-Fakhir fi-Sirat al-Malik al-Nasir*, 372.

only the dome (*qubba*) in the middle of the structure was demolished.⁴⁷⁵ However, the Iwan remained the official throne hall at the Citadel where coronations, *iqta'* distributions, receptions of foreign envoys, and the biweekly *dar al-'adl*'s sessions were held throughout the rest of the Qalawunid period. It was sporadically used at the beginning of Barquq's reign for the *dar al-'adl*'s setting as well, until it was replaced by an unspecified place in the royal stables (most probably the Harraqa) for most of the Burji period.⁴⁷⁶ The Iwan was still used to receive foreign embassies, undoubtedly because of its size and spatial arrangement that make it the most impressive structure at the Citadel and most expressive of the sultan's might. Otherwise, it was neglected throughout most of the Burji period, although a few sultans attempted to revive the biweekly service (*khidma*) in it, and at least two, Barsbay and Qaytbay, had it restored.⁴⁷⁷

The Great Iwan was reportedly stripped of its *sumaqi* rare red or green marble columns by Selim I after the Ottoman conquest of Egypt which were said to have been shipped to Istanbul and used for Selim's projects there.⁴⁷⁸ But even abandoned, dilapidated, and stripped bare, the Great Iwan still provoked wonder and awe by its sheer size. Evliya Çelebi, who lived at the Citadel around 1670, says that the Iwan was so splendid that one doubted that it was built by men. He calls it the "divan of Sultan al-Ghuri," although this last Mamluk sultan is not recorded to have done any work on it,⁴⁷⁹ and

⁴⁷⁵ Ibn al-Dawadari only says that the Iwan of al-Ashraf was demolished on the third of Sha'ban 733, along with other structures; Author Zetterstéén, 186, gives the same date of completion but a different one for the beginning of construction, and specifies that the dome was the only part destroyed; al-Shuja'i, *Tarikh al-Malik al-Nasir Muhammad*, 113, only says that al-Nasir demolished the Iwan of al-Ashraf twice, presumably in the same dates given by Ibn al-Dawadari, but unfortunately the part of al-Shuja'i's chronicle covering the years between 1310-38 is missing. The same vague report is repeated by Maqrizi, *Suluk*, vol. 2, pt. 2, 538, and Ibn Taghri-Bardi, *Nujum*, vol. 9, 180.

⁴⁷⁶ Maqrizi, *Khitat*, 2: 207; Ibn Qadi Shahbet, *Tarikh Ibn Qadi Shahbet* (Damascus, 1977) 789; Ibn Iyas, *Bada'i' al-Zuhur fi-Waqa'i' al-Duhur*, vol. 1, pt. 2, 388.

⁴⁷⁷ The sequence of neglect and repair as it appears in Mamluk sources, and the descriptions of foreign visitors who attended audiences in it during the Burji period are collected in Doris Behrens-Abouseif, "The Citadel of Cairo: Stage for Mamluk Ceremonial," 40-45.

⁴⁷⁸ Ibn Iyas, *Bada'i' al-Zuhur fi-Waqa'i' al-Duhur*, vol. 5, 179.

⁴⁷⁹ Ibn Iyas, *Bada'i' al-Zuhur fi-Waqa'i' al-Duhur*, vol. 5, 94, reports that al-Ghuri renovated several qa'as in the palatial complex and the Ablaq Palace, in addition to the maydan and

introduces a groundless story of its construction that may have been invented in the Ottoman period to justify the reported ban on its use by Sultan Selim.⁴⁸⁰

A more plausible reason for this ban would have to do with the awesome effect the Iwan must have had on Selim and his contemporaries. Casanova quotes Maillet, the French consul in Egypt in the late seventeenth century, as explaining that Selim forbade the governors of Egypt from holding their audiences at the Great Iwan for fear that its grandeur in comparison to the audience halls in Istanbul would instill in them a feeling of eminence and induce them to declare their independence from the Sublime Porte.⁴⁸¹ Totally abandoned, the building slowly decayed. Its huge dome collapsed in 1521 and was never rebuilt.⁴⁸² When the Citadel was divided up into three semi-independent and competing parts, the area of the Great Iwan and the

many service structures, but does not mention the Iwan. Doris Behrens-Abouseif, "The Citadel of Cairo: Stage for Mamluk Ceremonial," 59-60, uses this reference, and Evliya Çelebi's description of the Divan's location, to suggest that the Divan al-Ghuri is another hall in the *hosh* area. Evliya Çelebi's information concerning the topography of the Citadel is very jumbled, but his reporting on the size and number of columns in the Divan of al-Ghuri leaves no doubt that he is speaking of the Great Iwan. Other Ottoman chroniclers speak of the Divan of Sultan al-Ghuri as well (see for example, Mustafa Ibrahim, *Waqā'i' Misr al-Qahira Bayn 1100 wa 1150*, 19, writing in the mid eighteenth century) until a certain point in time when its name became Divan Yusuf, the name that the French cartographers heard from the local residents and put on their map.

⁴⁸⁰ Evliya Çelebi, *Seyahatnamesi*, 9-10: 389, says that the Divan of al-Ghuri was built in three days and three nights after al-Ghuri had gathered for that purpose all the skilled workers of Egypt in order to impress an important ambassador of the Safavid Shah of Iran whom he was expecting. The Ottomans had accused the Mamluks, and especially sultan al-Ghuri, of planning an alliance with the Shi'ite Safavids of Iran who were their avowed enemies to justify their attack and subsequent elimination of the Mamluk sultanate. Modern historians tend to believe that this was a baseless allegation. See references and discussion in Akram H. al-'Ulabi, *Dimashq bayn 'Asr al-Mamalik wa-l-'Uthmaniyyin* (Damascus, 1982) 371-408. The association of the Great Iwan with the enemies of the Ottomans would have lent a moral dimension to Selim's ban on its use.

⁴⁸¹ Casanova, *Histoire*, (Arabic translation) 180-81.

⁴⁸² Casanova, *Histoire*, (Arabic translation) 124, although the translator A. Darraj says that he could not find the reference in the printed edition of Ibn Iyas, yet it is there, see Ibn Iyas, *Bada'i' al-Zuhur fi-Waqā'i' al-Duhur*, vol. 5, 441.

Ablaq Palace appears to have become a no-man's land,⁴⁸³ and even a passageway leading to the part of the southern enclosure where the pasha lived.⁴⁸⁴

Though ruined state and lacking its dome, the Iwan was still standing at the beginning of the nineteenth century, when it was documented for the *Description de l'Égypte*. (Fig 5. 5 The Great Iwan by Robert Hay). It was razed by Muhammad 'Ali in 1812 along with the rest of the palaces and halls that both the Mamluks and the Ottomans had built to clear the ground for his new structures.⁴⁸⁵

In 1988, part of the modern paving in the garden in front of the Police Museum collapsed and uncovered parts of a foundation wall made of large, dark blocks of stone that are believed to have belonged to the Great Iwan. It was evident from the small section uncovered that the wall was aligned with the Nasiri Mosque, an observation corroborated by the plan of the *Description de l'Égypte* which shows the two juxtaposed structures across a court (*rahba*) called the outer suq (*suq al-barrani*).⁴⁸⁶ Unfortunately the wall was buried again in 1989, and the garden replanted on top of it.

The Description of the Great Iwan

The French plan of the Great Iwan is probably the most accurate of a series of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century plans.⁴⁸⁷ (Fig 5. 6 Plan of the Iwan from the *Description de l'Égypte*). It shows the Iwan to have been

⁴⁸³ The Citadel was divided into the northern enclosure which contained the barracks of the Janissaries, the stables and the areas surrounding them, including the maydan and parts of the southern enclosure, which became the residence of the locally recruited troops, called al-'Azab, while the governor and his troops occupied the *hosh* and the area around it in the southern enclosure, see, Casanova, *Histoire*, (Arabic translation)182-83.

⁴⁸⁴ Evliya Çelebi, *Seyahatnamesi*, 9-10: 384.

⁴⁸⁵ 'Abd al-Rahman al-Jabarti, *'Aja'ib al-Athar fi-l-Tarajim wa-l-Akhbar* (Beirut, n.d.) 3: 372-3.

⁴⁸⁶ A similar name, Square of the Suq of the Citadel (*rahbat suq al-qa'la*), appears in a contemporary Egyptian source, see, 'Abd al-Rahman al-Jabarti, *'Aja'ib al-Athar fi-l-Tarajim wa-l-Akhbar*, 3: 320.

⁴⁸⁷ Other plans include that of Richard Pococke, *A Description of the East and some Other Countries*, vol. I, *Observations on Egypt*, 33, pl. 14, drawn in the 1740s; and that of L. Cassas, drawn in 1799 and published in *Voyage pittoresque de la Syrie et Basse Égypte* (reproduced in Doris Behrens-Abouseif, "The Citadel of Cairo: Stage for Mamluk Ceremonial," 62).

almost square (measuring 36 by 31 meters without the corridor behind it). It was open on three sides: the northeast, which constituted its main façade, the southeast and the northwest. The fourth side, which faced back toward the rest of the sultan's palaces across from the passageway (called *dihliz al-'ubur* in Mamluk sources), was built up with a thick wall. This wall was pierced with doors in five places, the middle door, according to Pococke, the eighteenth-century traveler, "was adorned with that grotesque sort of work, which is common in the Eastern buildings."⁴⁸⁸ He, of course, did not know the *muqarnas*, which is what is above the central door. The interior façade depicted in the *Description de l'Égypte*, shows this door as looking like a typical Mamluk outer gate, complete with a recessed arched opening, topped with a *muqarnas* semi-dome, and even flanked by the two customary stone benches called *mastabas* or *maksalas* (from *kasal*, laziness, because *portiers* used to sit on them all day long) in colloquial Egyptian. This form was confused by M. Jomard, the author of the entry on the Citadel in the *Description de l'Égypte*, with that of a *mihrab*, which led him to conclude that the Iwan must have been used as a mosque.⁴⁸⁹ The form of the door was probably meant to symbolize the entry to the private domain of the sultan behind it through the *dihliz* seen in the plan, which led to the Ablaq Palace and beyond it to the private quarters (*al-dur al-sultaniyya*).⁴⁹⁰

The main façade of the Iwan, which commanded a large court called *Rahbat al-Iwan*, was formed of five slightly pointed arches: a large one in the middle and two flanking arches. (**Fig 5. 7 Main Façade of Iwan**). A row of twin-arched windows surmounted the arched openings, except for the central one which had a triple-arched window. An inscription band more than two meters wide ran across the façade above the windows. The characters of the inscription, which were 1.5 meter long each, were in the Kufic style. The accuracy of the French draftsman makes it possible to decipher the inscription. It is an incomplete Qur'anic verse (14:32), which reads, "God is

⁴⁸⁸ Richard Pococke, *A Description of the East and some Other Countries*, vol. I, *Observations on Egypt*, 33.

⁴⁸⁹ M. Jomard, "Description de la ville et de la citadelle du Kaire," 354-55; Ayman. F. Sayyed, *Wasf Madinat al-Qahira wa-Qal'at al-Jabal*, 234.

⁴⁹⁰ Al-'Umari, *Masalik al-Absar*, 141-2; Maqrizi, *Khitat*, 2:210.

He Who created the heavens and the earth, and caused water to descend from the sky, thereby producing fruits as food for you ...". The rest of this verse, and the next one of the same *sura*, were unexpectedly completed on the inner side of the dome wall; it can be deciphered from another drawing of the *Description de l'Égypte*. The façade is topped with the arched crenellations, typical of many monuments of the same period that are repeated on the walls of the Nasiri Mosque across the court.

The plan of the Iwan consisted of five parallel aisles formed by six rows of reused red granite columns, thirty-two in all and six rectangular pillars.⁴⁹¹ The columns came from pre-Islamic Egyptian temples, but their provenance is not established. Several Mamluk chroniclers repeat the story of Ibn al-Dawadari that ancient columns from Ashmunin in Upper Egypt were brought to rebuild the Citadel's Nasiri Mosque in 1335, but none mentions the Iwan's columns. Maqrizi says that al-Nasir Muhammad took the granite columns left on the site of the deserted citadel of Roda Island in 1311 to build his New Nasiri Mosque north of Misr al-Fustat and his Great Iwan at the Citadel.⁴⁹² Jomard discusses the Iwan's columns in his entry in the *Description de l'Égypte*, and suggests that they came from Alexandria or Babilyun (the name of the old settlement on the site of Misr al-Fustat) because he saw similar columns lying on the ground in both cities.⁴⁹³ The site he describes in Babilyun, near the intake tower of the Citadel's aqueduct, corresponds to the location of the New Nasiri Mosque which had disappeared by his time. Thus the columns to which Jomard refers may have belonged to that mosque. His observation corroborates Maqrizi's assertion that the New Nasiri Mosque's columns and those of the Iwan were salvaged from the Roda

⁴⁹¹ Evliya Çelebi, *Seyahatnamesi*, 9-10: 389, says that the Divan of sultan al-Ghuri had 35 columns. Casanova, *Histoire*, (Arabic translation) 124, reports that Maillet counted 34 columns, probably counting two of the square pillars as columns. Pococke's plan has 44 columns, but it is doubtlessly wrong as he extends the middle two rows all the way to the end wall, thus adding six columns, whereas he himself speaks in his text about the middle rows having been designed to support a dome.

⁴⁹² Maqrizi, *Khitat*, 2: 184, the columns for the Citadel on the Roda Island were brought by al-Salih Najm al-Din Ayyub from the *barabi*, which is the word used to designate old Egyptian temples.

⁴⁹³ M. Jomard, "Description de la ville et de la citadelle du Kaire," 354; Ayman. F. Sayyed, *Wasf Madinat al-Qahira wa-Qal'at al-Jabal*, 234.

Citadel. This means that the columns that Jomard saw in the Citadel in 1799 were the ones that al-Nasir brought for the first rebuilding, and kept in the second rebuilding of 1333. Therefore, the second rebuilding was perhaps limited to the dome, as reported by Zetterstéen's unknown eyewitness. Pococke says that the name and titles of the sultan were engraved on the columns' shafts, but unfortunately he does not specify the name of the sultan in question.⁴⁹⁴ Inscribing the name of the sultan on the columns apparently symbolizes their appropriation.

The central aisle of the Iwan was almost twice as wide as the four lateral aisles. The three middle aisles were intersected at one third of their length by a dome. The dome, which had already collapsed when the drawing was made, formed the main feature of the Iwan in the eyes of its contemporaries.⁴⁹⁵ It was constructed of wood, like most other Bahri Mamluk domes, and covered from the outside with greenish faience. It was supported by twelve columns which formed, with the back wall, a square plan of almost 20 meters to the side. The transition from square to circle was achieved by four wooden *muqarnas* pendentives, whose units, to judge from the perspective of the *Description de l'Égypte*, were of huge proportions. (Fig 5. 8 Perspective of the Iwan).

Very little information can be obtained about the surface articulation of the interior walls from the perspective drawing of the *Description de l'Égypte*. A broad inscription band, which was very carefully depicted in the drawing with all its falling characters and stripped surfaces, was situated under the dome on the inner side of the supporting arcades. It ran around the full perimeter of the inner square, and even followed the curve of the central aisle's arch. Its characters, which were made of carved and gilded

⁴⁹⁴ Pococke, *A Description of the East and some Other Countries*, vol. I, *Observations on Egypt* 33. The name of the sultan would have helped in determining the extent of the work done in the Iwan by al-Nasir Muhammad. Had the name inscribed been any other than al-Nasir's, it would have meant that al-Nasir had kept the columns of an earlier rebuilding of the Iwan. Inscribing the name of the sultan on reused columns was probably a widespread practice as evidenced by the inscriptions on the four columns next to the Qa'a al-Ashrafiyya (discussed earlier). These columns, it should be stressed again, do not seem to have belonged to the Iwan.

⁴⁹⁵ Maqrizi, *Khitat*, 2: 206; Ibn Shahin al-Zahiri, *Zubdat*, 26; Ibn Iyas, *Bada'i' al-Zuhur fi-Waqa'i' al-Duhur*, vol. 5, 441.

wood, were in the Mamluk Naskhi style. It appears that its text consisted of the full titulature of the sultan al-Nasir Muhammad and probably the date of construction.⁴⁹⁶ It was inscribed within cartouches that were intercepted with medallions that may have contained the sultan's emblem, as found in contemporary Mamluk buildings, such as the dome of Sultan Qalawun (1284-85) and the Nasiri Mosque at the Citadel. **(Fig 5. 9 Inscription inside the Dome of the Nasiri Mosque).** But this cannot be verified because their surfaces had been eroded by the date of the French drawing. The space between the inscription band and the springing of the dome had in its center a decorative roundel with sun-like pointed rays inscribed in the middle with sinuous lines, and was probably made of stucco in the method of the period (similar roundels can still be seen on the drum of the dome of Sanqar al-Sa'di, known as the dome of Hasan Sadaqa and built in 1315, and in the iwan of the khanqah of Umm-Anuk, or Tughay the favorite wife of al-Nasir Muhammad, built before 1349 in the Northern Qarafa). Above the roundel, a triple arched-window opened onto the outer porticos of the Iwan. The outer walls of the porticos on the two lateral sides were pierced by two rows of windows above the arched openings. Inscription bands ran across the full length of the walls between the arcades and the first row of windows. Their content is unintelligible. Some of the blank spaces between the windows seem to have had stucco ornaments in the familiar Mamluk elliptical shape called *bukhariyya*. Each of these elements is flanked by a pair of columns on each side that were engraved in the stucco surface. The perspective drawing does not show the upper part of these columns, but they may have carried an arch that framed the composition (in a similar way to that of the row of stucco arches that run around the walls of the Qa'a al-Ashrafiyya, but much larger).

This incomplete image does not permit any pronouncement on the decorative program of the Great Iwan. The only noticeable characteristic is the large size of every element of the surface articulation in comparison to similar contemporary monuments. This proves that Mamluk builders had a

⁴⁹⁶ Casanova, *Histoire*, (Arabic Translation) 127, was the first to correctly read the remainder of the inscription, which confirms that the drawing represented al-Nasir's Iwan. A similar inscription band runs around the drum of the Nasiri Mosque's dome. Both inscriptions were possibly done at the same time.

sense of proportion in matching the size of decoration to that of the structure rather than a desire for enormous ornamental elements applied for their sheer size. The whole structure was designed to be monumental and the decoration followed to achieve the same effect. The Iwan was obviously the most public and most ceremonial of the sultan's palaces, and its monumentality must have been deliberate in order to impress both foreign officials and subjects.

The Origin of the Great Iwan's Plan

The Great Iwan of al-Nasir Muhammad, as a structure, had a unique plan. It stood out from the general hall type of Islamic Egypt, generically called *qa'a*. Alexandre Lézine proposes as prototype of the Iwan and other royal Mamluk structures the *Qa'a* of al-Salih Najm al-Din Ayyub at the Roda Citadel.⁴⁹⁷ (Fig 5. 10 Plan of the *Qa'a* of al-Salih Najm al-Din Ayyub). The plan of this hall, which was still standing until the early nineteenth century, is composed of two iwans facing one another across a huge *durqa'a*. Four sets of columns, each made up of three columns arranged in a right angle, formed a smaller rectangle inside the *durqa'a* (two similar sets existed in the Great Iwan). They framed the side iwans and the two alcoves (*suffas*) on the longitudinal sides, and may have carried a dome, or perhaps a wooden lantern in the center of a flat roof (similar applications to the latter one can be found in later Cairene houses where a lantern, named *shukhshikha*, usually crowns the roof of a rectangular *durqa'a*). This hall may have been the structure that Ibn Sai'd al-Maghribi, who visited the Roda Citadel shortly after its completion in the 1240s, calls the Iwan and says was reserved for the audiences of al-Salih Najm al-Din Ayyub.⁴⁹⁸ Lézine considered its plan to have formed a transitional stage between the halls of the Fustat houses,

⁴⁹⁷ Alexandre Lézine, "Les salles nobles des palais mamelouks," 65 and 71, the plan of this *qa'a* is known to us from its reproduction in the *Description de l'Égypte, état moderne, planches*, tome premier, planche # 23; redrawn by Creswell, M.A.E. 2:86.

⁴⁹⁸ Maqrizi, *Khitat*, 2: 183-84, quoting Ibn Sa'id al-Maghribi, *Al-Mugharrrib fi-Hilly al-Maghrib, al-Nujum al-Zahira fi-Hilly Hadrat al-Qahira*.

which we now know that they have been called *majlises*,⁴⁹⁹ and the later Mamluk *qa'as*.

Doris Behrens-Abouseif suggests that the plan of the principal hall in several Fatimid shrines (*mashhads*) in Cairo provides a precedent to the plan of the Great Iwan. She cites two examples: the *mashhads* of al-Juyushi (1085) and that of Sayyida Ruqayya (1133).⁵⁰⁰ (Fig 5. 11 Plan of Mashhad al-Juyushi). The halls in these *mashhads*, whose forms and arrangements she compares to those of the Great Iwan, are in fact only variations on the earlier type of hall, the *majlis*. A *majlis* is a hall with a T-shape plan that comprises a large space in the center and two smaller, and sometimes shallower, ones flanking it. It has a frontal gallery (*riwaaq*) which has a set of doors that separate it from the central space, be it an open court or a roofed *durqa'a*. The halls of both *mashhads* have *majlis*'s plans with a dome surmounting the central back space, probably as a visual sign of distinction to the cenotaphs of the important persons placed under them, or as a marker of the *qibla*, which is a treatment encountered in several larger Fatimid mosques such as the Azhar and al-Hakim mosques (built respectively in 970-72 and 990-1013, but their domes were rebuilt at later dates).

The Great Iwan's plan was radically different from that of the *majlis*, or the later *qa'a* types. In fact, its whole spatial conception, being open on the three sides from which it could be approached, does not follow either types of halls which were enclosed spaces by definition. The openness of the Great Iwan's plan was its main characteristic, and this had been intentional. The Iwan functioned both as a stage and as a review stand for the sultan. He had to be seen from all sides when he sat in there to redress the grievances of his subjects on *dar al-'adl* days or on embassies receptions,⁵⁰¹ and he had to be able

⁴⁹⁹ Hazem Sayed proved that the *majlis* was a specific type and traced its development, see, Hazem Sayed, "The Development of the Cairene *Qa'a*: Some Considerations," *Annales Islamologiques*, 23 (1987) 32-39.

⁵⁰⁰ Doris Behrens-Abouseif, "The Citadel of Cairo: Stage for Mamluk Ceremonial," 77-78.

⁵⁰¹ A Florentine traveler, Brancacci, reports on the audience he attended there during the reign of Barsbay, and says that the sultan was seated on a raised platform inside the Iwan and was perfectly visible from everywhere, see, Doris Behrens-Abouseif, "The Citadel of Cairo: Stage for Mamluk Ceremonial," 42-43.

to see the parades taking place in the court in front of the Iwan while sitting inside on *khidma* days.⁵⁰²

Thus, the Great Iwan was not a development out of a hall type, but rather a fundamentally different one conceived to respond to a specific set of functions. In this regard, it may have followed its four direct predecessors at the Citadel in Cairo: the Iwan of al-Kamil, the two *qubbas* of Baybars and Qalawun, and the Iwan of al-Ashraf Khalil. But this is impossible to judge as the architecture of these four preceding audience halls is totally unknown to us. A careful analysis of the Iwan's architecture, however, reveals that it was a composite structure made up of a variety of elements taken from extant types.

First, the Iwan of al-Nasir Muhammad was a distinguished structure whose royal character had to be visually and spatially articulated. This was conveyed through its massiveness and height and the lavishness of its surface articulation. On a more directly referential level, the specific quality was communicated by two features: the triumphal arch form of its outer façade and the green dome. Both elements existed in the architectural vocabulary of Islamic palaces prior to al-Nasir Muhammad, and both must have been understood by people of his time as signs of royalty.

Triumphal arches seem to have been transposed from their late-antique form into Islamic Egypt from at least as early as the building of Ahmad Ibn Tulun's palatial complex in 876-79. The author of the biography(*sirat*) of Ibn Tulun, al-Balawi, speaks of a gate to Ibn Tulun's maydan which consisted of three grand doors, the central one of which was exclusively reserved for Ibn Tulun himself.⁵⁰³ The sentence suggests that the central door was architecturally differentiated from the two side ones, thus a triumphal arch form is implied. In the Fatimid period, tripartite, triumphal-arch shaped, and projecting gates seem to have been incorporated into the vocabulary of major congregational mosques, possibly for ceremonial

⁵⁰² Maqrizi, *Khitat*, 2: 206.

⁵⁰³ 'Abd Allah al-Balawi, *Sirat Ahmad Ibn Tulun* (Cairo, n.d.) 55, copied verbatim by Maqrizi, *Khitat*, 2: 315.

purposes.⁵⁰⁴ This was the case in the Fatimid mosque of Mahdiyya in Tunisia, and probably in the first building of the mosque of al-Hakim in Cairo. A sentence in the description of a lost mosque, the mosque of the Qarafa, which was built in 976, may be construed to refer to a projecting gate inspired by the triumphal arch model.⁵⁰⁵ If this mosque's gate was indeed of a triumphal arch shape, it would provide the link between the Tunisian model in Mahdiyya, and the door of the later al-Hakim's imperial mosque in Cairo, which was built after the mosque of the Qarafa.

The green dome of the Great Iwan is reminiscent of the Umayyad and Abbasid the Qubba al-Khadra (the Green Dome), as the caliphal palaces in Damascus and Baghdad were named after their central green domes. It may have been a symbol of power and dominion.⁵⁰⁶ The symbol does not seem to have been used by the Fatimids in their Great Iwan in the Eastern Palace of al-

⁵⁰⁴ Alexandre Lézine, *Mahdiyya: Recherches d'archéologie islamique* (Paris, 1965) 108, reconstructs the mosque of Mahdiyya in Tunisia as having a tripartite projecting gate, and gives ceremonial-related interpretation of the door's form. Jonathan Bloom refutes Lézine's explanation, but concedes to his architectural reconstruction, see, Jonathan Bloom, "The Mosque of al-Hakim in Cairo," *Muqarnas*, 1 (1983) 24-25.

⁵⁰⁵ Maqrizi, *Khitat*, 2: 318. The sentence reads, "The door of the mosque from which one enters is the grand middle one with large mastabas under the high minaret." This sentence implies that there were other smaller doors on the side of the middle one. My reading differs from that of Jonathan Bloom, who understands the word middle to refer to the mosque, and who reconstructs the mosque as having one door and a clerestory in the middle of its hall, because he interprets the word *manar* as clerestory. See, Jonathan Bloom, "The Mosque of the Qarafa in Cairo," *Muqarnas* 4 (1987) 7-8.

⁵⁰⁶ I tentatively suggest here that a green dome may have been the symbol of *sultan*, which means power or dominion, and which was an attribute of the Umayyad and early Abbasid caliphs. The word's usage evolved from the level of a prerogative of rule to a proper title of a ruler in the early eleventh century. It was used in combination with *al-dawla* (the state), as a title by one of the Buyids, Abu Shuja' ibn Baha' al-Dawla. The Buyids had stripped the Abbasid caliph of his political authority and installed themselves as the guardians of the caliphate in Baghdad in 945. The title also appears to have been adopted by Mahmud the Ghaznavid at the same period, and some reports say that he had obtained it from the caliph. See for the Ghaznavids, C.E. Bosworth, "The Titulature of the Early Ghaznavids," *Oriens*, 15 (1962) 210-33. The title and the real power passed on to the Turkish Seljuks after they removed the Buyids and became the new custodians of the caliphate. From there on the title may have been transferred through the Zengid Atabeks, who had never used it themselves, to the Ayyubids, and later on to the Mamluks. See, J.H. Kramers's article "Sultan" in *Encyclopedia of Islam, first edition*, vol. 7, 543-45. The revival of a weakened and subservient Abbasid caliphate in Cairo after 1261, and the desire to project an image of legitimacy on the part of the Mamluks may have led to the resurrection of *sultan*'s visual signs, including the green dome. Clearly, more needs to be said on the subject, but this is not the place for it.

Qahira, which had a dome under which the caliph sat on audience days, but not a green one.⁵⁰⁷ The Mamluks, though coming almost directly after the Fatimids, wanted to disassociate their insignia from those of the Fatimids, and to connect them to the Abbasid ones, under whose aegis they were theoretically ruling. The revival of the green dome as a royal sign may have been precisely meant to allude to the Abbasid link. A green dome, being the most visible element of the Great Iwan, would reduce the directness of the association with the Fatimid precedent, and enhance the reference to the Abbasid model.

Second, the Iwan of al-Nasir Muhammad had the same spatial quality as that of the Mamluk *rafrac* as described in the sources. The word *rafrac* seems to have been used to denote two kinds of structures. The first is the pergola or the marquee affixed above some sitting space to protect it from the sun.⁵⁰⁸ The second is the entire structure covered with the *rafrac* (pergola) which could be a review stand or a sitting place with a view.⁵⁰⁹ The Great Iwan could be seen as a monumental *rafrac* executed in stone. This is probably the reason why there is some confusion among the sources concerning the structure built by al-Ashraf Khalil at the Citadel. Maqrizi calls it *rafrac*, whereas other chroniclers call it Iwan.⁵¹⁰ Reduced to its basic form, al-Nasir Muhammad's Iwan consisted of a roof supported on pointed arches carried by columns with open façades on three of its four sides. (**Fig 5. 12 Plan of the Iwan by Cassas**). Its only solid wall was the back one which belonged to the structure behind it, *dihliz al-'ubur*, and which figuratively functioned as

⁵⁰⁷ Maqrizi, *Khitat*, 1: 388.

⁵⁰⁸ This meaning of *rafrac* is illustrated in a story attributed to al-Mansur Qalawun, who wanted a mastaba, which should be understood as a stand here, with a *rafrac* on top to protect him from the sun. A fixed canopy, sort of a miniature iwan, was deemed very expensive and Qalawun opted for a cloth canopy on sticks above the mastaba. Maqrizi, *Suluk*, vol. 2, pt. 2, 537; Ibn Taghri-Bardi, *Nujum*, vol. 9, 177.

⁵⁰⁹ Ibn Shaddad, *Tarikh al-Malik al-Zahir*, 343 describes a square mastaba built by Baybars in the middle of the Citadel's square facing the Gate [probably the Mudarraaj Gate] which was covered with an awning (*sitara*). It was used as a review stand.

⁵¹⁰ Maqrizi, *Khitat*, 2: 212; Maqrizi, *Suluk*, vol. 2, pt. 1, 118, reports in the events of 1312 the demolition of the *Rafrac*, while every other chronicler who reports the event calls the structure the Iwan. See Ibn al-Dawadari, *Kanz al-Durar wa-Jami' al-Ghurar*, vol. 8, *al-Durra al-Zakiyya fi-Akhbar al-Dawla al-Turkiyya*, 345.

the vertical support and the connector of the Iwan's roof to the royal palaces. In fact, the Great Iwan was conceptually considered a structure standing alone "outside" (*zahir*) the royal palaces.⁵¹¹ This conception was architecturally enhanced by the form and function of the central door on the Iwan's back side. With its muqarnas semidome and its two side mastabas this door was effectively an outer gate of the royal palaces which opened onto the Iwan.

Third, the Great Iwan's plan followed a basilical model that was uncommon in Cairo. Only one Islamic structure had a basilical plan prior to the Iwan, namely, the madrasa of Qalawun in his complex in Bayn al-Qasryn (1284).⁵¹² In this madrasa, the aisles that form the basilical plan seem to have been added as an afterthought to the *qibli* iwan, in what was, otherwise, a madrasa with a ubiquitous two-iwan plan. (**Fig 5. 13 Plan of the Madrasa of Qalawun in Bayn al-Qasryn**). In the Great Iwan at the Citadel, however, the entire structure is a basilica whose plan was modified by the removal of the apse and the addition of the dome to impart the royal, secular association to the building and by opening the sides to provide an unobstructed view to the outside and to imply the accessibility of the sultan sitting inside. The basilical model seems to have been deliberately chosen in order to serve the function of arranging the audience on the biweekly service (*khidma*) around the central figure, the sultan. This inference may be justified by visualizing the hierarchy of the seating arrangement in the Iwan under al-Nasir Muhammad, as explained by the sources.

The Description of the *Dar al-'Adl*'s Session

Ibn Fadl-Allah al-'Umari provides an elaborate account of the *dar al-'adl* sessions during the reign of al-Nasir Muhammad that may serve as the basis for the reconstruction of the seating arrangement. His report was copied by both Maqrizi and Qalqashandi who add very little new information on the

⁵¹¹ Ibn Shahin al-Zahiri, *Zubdat*, 26, says exactly that about the Iwan. He, however, was writing in the mid fifteenth century, when the Iwan was only used for major ceremonies.

⁵¹² Doris Behrens-Abouseif, "The Citadel of Cairo: Stage for Mamluk Ceremonial," 76, notes this precedent.

changes introduced to the ceremony in their time.⁵¹³ Contrary to his father Qalawun and brother al-Ashraf Khalil, Al-Nasir Muhammad had regularly presided in person over the administration of justice to his subjects on Mondays and Thursdays in the Iwan, except for the month of Ramadan. He had established a complicated ritual and a very elaborate order of seating in the Iwan on that occasion, and had all of the amirs, *khassakiyya* and *barranis* alike, present during the session.

On *dar al-'adl* days, al-Nasir Muhammad would come out of his inner palaces through the vestibule behind the Iwan and enter through the door with the muqarnas. (Fig 5. 14 The Sultan Enters the Iwan). He would sit on a wooden chair covered with a silk cloth (*dast*) next to his marble throne, in the center of the Iwan's back wall. The marble throne, which looked like a minbar of a mosque, was only used on official ceremonies when foreign envoys were received. The sultan's place was the apex of a concentric formation surrounding him which was arranged according to a strict hierarchical order.

Immediately around him a circle would be formed of those officials directly involved in the review of complaints. To the right of the sultan would sit the four supreme judges (*qudat al-qudat*) of the four Sunni schools of jurisprudence in order of their importance: the Shafe'ite judge being the closest to the sultan, followed by the Hanafite then the Malikite, while the Hanbalite would be the farthest. Next to the Hanbalite judge would come the treasury controller (*wakil bayt al-mal*), then the market-inspector (*muhtasib*) of Cairo. To the left of the sultan his secretary (*katib al-sirr*) (who in the 1320s was Ibn Fadl-Allah al-'Umari himself) would sit followed by the army supervisor (*nazir al-jaysh*). The circle around the sultan would be completed by a group of clerks who are known as the clerks of the chair (*kuttab al-dast*), after the *dast* of the sultan. Their job would be to record the minutes of the sessions. (Fig 5. 15 The Circle around the Sultan). It is very plausible that this circle of seated people was placed under the dome, with the sultan close to the

⁵¹³ Al-'Umari, *Masalik al-Absar*, 100-02; Maqrizi, *Khitat*, 2: 208-9; Qalqashandi, *Subh al-A'sha*, 4: 44-5, 4: 62. An English translation of Maqrizi's report is, P.M. Holt, *The Age of the Crusades*, 144-45; also, Karl Stowasser, "Manners and Customs at the Mamluk Court," 17.

center away from the back wall, as court protocol and the sultan's safety required some space behind him for the standing of two rows of his guards to his right and left: the *silahdariyya* and *jamadariyya*, along with the *khassakiyya* mamluks.

The great Amirs of Hundred, holders of the highest rank in the Mamluk system, would be seated in two rows, opposite each other, on the two sides of the sultan at some fifteen cubits (approximately 5 meters) distance from him. They were called amirs of the council (*umara' al-mashura*) and they functioned as the sultan's official advisory group. Since there were twenty-four of them in al-Nasir Muhammad's army, it is probable that twelve would sit on each side. **(Fig 5. 16 Amirs Seating around the Sultan).**

Lesser Amirs of Forty and other important, non-military, state functionaries would come after these high-ranking amirs and they would complete the lines toward the entry of the Iwan. But these amirs and administrators would remain standing. Behind this first row several other rows of Amirs of Ten and mamluks would stand, while attendants and clerks of the chancery would form an outer circle around the three open sides of the Iwan. **(Fig 5. 17 The Full Arrangement on Dar al-'Adl's Days).**

We may imagine the lines of the important amirs extended against the first row of columns which supported the dome on both sides. The lesser amirs and mamluks would be standing in the space between the inner and outer rows of columns. The relatively wider space in the frontal part of the Iwan is where attendants would stand and where petitioners would be brought to face the assembly. **(Fig 5. 18 The Plan of the Iwan and the Order of Seating).**

As shown by the sequence of figures, the order of seating in the *dar al-'adl* 's session fits almost perfectly with the organization of the plan of the Great Iwan. This may indicate that the *dar al-'adl* 's ceremonial was designed to follow the logic of the Iwan's space arrangement. Conversely, it may also mean that al-Nasir Muhammad rebuilt the Iwan to accommodate the ceremonial that he had introduced. This second deduction is more plausible since, as established by Jomard's observation on the origin of the Iwan's columns, al-Nasir Muhammad does not seem to have removed them when

he modified the Iwan's volume and space in 1333. He only replaced the dome in order to reflect the aggrandizement his image had undergone since the first rebuilding. He, however, must have preserved the basilical arrangement of the columns, undoubtedly because it fulfilled the requirements of the seating order better than any other model.⁵¹⁴

The Nasiri Mosque

Al-Nasir Muhammad demolished the congregational mosque at the Citadel and started rebuilding it anew in 1335, shortly after he had completed the rebuilding of the Great Iwan. It is not clear from the sources whether the rebuilding resulted in any increase of the mosque's surface area. One of the two eyewitnesses, Ibn al-Dawadari, says that the demolition was limited to the interior of the mosque. According to him, it comprised the arcades, the mihrab, and the *maqsurā*, which is an enclosure in the prayer hall reserved for the sultan and his close entourage and usually made out of ornamented iron grille.⁵¹⁵ The other eyewitness, al-Yusufi, records that the sultan changed the site of the mosque and included in it the old house of the washbasin (*tishtakhana*) and parts of a residential quarter (Harat Mukhtass, which was probably where some *Khassakiyya* amirs' residences were located).⁵¹⁶ The inclusion of these structures augmented the area of the mosque itself, which is what Maqrizi, who was a later chronicler, and who copied al-Yusufi's text, adds.⁵¹⁷

⁵¹⁴ It is tempting to see in this plan a continuation of the Roman basilical model, in a similar way as other Hellenistic-Roman palatial elements are manifest on different levels in palatial Islamic architecture around the Mediterranean. The Roman basilica may have provided not only the original architectural paradigm from which, or from some vanished Islamic adaptation of it, stemmed the Great Iwan's plan, but also the function and the symbolism attached to it and developed initially for it. The architectural clues point to this direction, but the complete image is still too sketchy, and the sources too inadequate, to allow for any firm conclusion. On the Roman basilica see, William L. MacDonald, *The Architecture of the Roman Empire, An Introductory Study* (New Haven, 1982) 53 and note 21. On the Roman palatial tradition's continuity in Islamic ones see, Oleg Grabar, *The Alhambra*, 103-8, 207-8.

⁵¹⁵ Ibn al-Dawadari, *al-Durr al-Fakhir fi-Sirat al-Malik al-Nasir*, 382.

⁵¹⁶ Al-Yusufi, *Nuzhat al-Nazir fi-Sirat al-Malik al-Nasir*, 240.

⁵¹⁷ Maqrizi, *Suluk*, vol. 2, pt. 2, 380-81.

The mosque's external façades, however, present the definitive evidence that the rebuilding did not change the surface area. First, the masonry bears traces of the walled-up earlier windows, which were at a lower level on the four façades. Second, the two minarets rest on bases that are lower than the actual roof level of the mosque. Besides, the base of the eastern minaret still has a number of the arched crenellations on the original lower roof level showing that the additional height is about 2 meters. **(Fig 5. 19 The Base of the Mosque's Eastern Minaret)**. This elevation of the mosque's roof without extending its surface resulted in a 1: 4 ratio of height to length in the mosque's façades that is unusual in other congregational mosques in Cairo.⁵¹⁸

The Architectural Description of the Mosque

The Mosque of al-Nasir Muhammad occupied the eastern side of the Rahbat al-Iwan while the Great Iwan stood in the northwest. The present-day court extending from the Bab al-Jadid (New Gate) to the walls of Muhammad 'Ali's mosque has almost the circumference of the original one as it appears on the map of the *Description de l'Égypte*. The mosque has three doors. The one used as the main entrance today, set in a deep recess and surmounted with a muqarnas semidome, faces the northwest and opens into the Citadel's court. It has above it an inscription in the name of al-Nasir Muhammad and the date of the first rebuilding (1318). The second entrance, the northeastern one, is opposite the Qulla Gate which separates the Citadel's two enclosures. It consists of a slightly-pointed arched door inscribed within a trilobed shallow recess that has an inscription plate whose date is missing. The entire composition is placed in the middle of a projecting rectangle that reaches two-thirds the height of the mosque's façade. It is topped with a row of sawtooth crenellations similar to the ones aligning the walls of the mosque's inner court (*sahn*). **(Fig 5. 20 Views of the Mosque's Façades)**. The southwestern entrance is very peculiar. Its door is set off-center in another projecting rectangle. The door itself is presently blocked with masonry, and is topped

⁵¹⁸ Noted by Martin S. Briggs, *Muhammadan Architecture in Egypt and Palestine* (Oxford, 1924, reprint 1974) 101.

with an arch filled with a sun-rise motif made out of alternating green and red masonry. (Fig 5. 21 **The Southwestern Door of the Mosque**). As noted by Doris Behrens-Abouseif, none of the three doors has mastabas or *maksalas* on its side, which is unusual for Mamluk mosques.⁵¹⁹ But this could be explained as a result of the royal character of the mosque and its location inside the Citadel where it did not need any *portiers*.

The façades of the mosque are uncharacteristically plain and fortress-like for the period, with arched crenellations on top. They give the whole structure an austere and dignified aspect that is not alleviated by the colorful finials of the two minarets. The façades may have made a different impression in the past when the now-buried lower floor of the mosque was still above ground. Sources do not mention that the Citadel's mosque was a raised (*mu'allaq*) mosque, although a number of blocked arched-windows, whose upper parts show above the present ground level, in addition to a print of the late eighteenth century attest to this assertion.⁵²⁰ (Fig 5. 22 **Mayer's Print of the Mosque's Façade**).

The two minarets, one on the eastern corner and one above the main door, are situated so as to face the two audiences to whom the call to prayer (*azan*) was directed: the mamluks in the northern enclosure across from the Qulla Gate, and the amirs and administrators in the Great Iwan area. The minarets are architecturally different from each other, and both are quite unusual in shape and surface articulation. The eastern minaret is closer to the Mamluk minaret's type than the western one. It has a rectangular base, followed by a cylindrical story surmounted with a hexagonal pavilion. The western minaret is very remarkable. (Fig 5. 23 **View of the Western Minaret**). It has two cylindrical, carved stories: the lower covered with a continuous vertical chevron motif, the second with a horizontal one. Both minarets have peculiar finials that Behrens-Abouseif calls garlic-shaped bulb, which are set atop tapering, ribbed cylinders. These parts of both minarets are covered with greenish enamelled tiles, with bands of white Qur'anic

⁵¹⁹ Doris Behrens-Abouseif, *Islamic Architecture of Cairo, An Introduction* (Leiden, 1989) 109.

⁵²⁰ The print is published in Ludwig Mayer, *Views in Egypt from the original drawings in the possession of Sir Robert Ainslie taken during his embassy to Constantinople*, 48.

inscription on a blue background surrounding the bases of the finials. There is nothing else quite like them in Cairo. They are believed to be the work of a Tabrizi master builder who had been active in Cairo for some time after 1322.⁵²¹ This inference is based on the known fact that amir Aytamish, al-Nasir Muhammad's envoy to the Ilkhan Abu Sa'id, brought back with him to Cairo the craftsman who was said to have constructed the minarets of the mosque of 'Ali Shah.⁵²² No chronicler attributes the Citadel's mosque minarets to the Tabrizi master, although many speak about him as having built the two minarets of the mosque of Qawsun on the north-south Shari' al-A'zam in 1330 (which according to Evliya Çelebi were covered with faience), after he had erected a minaret for a mosque that Aytamish sponsored in his *iqta'* village.⁵²³ It is plausible that al-Nasir Muhammad liked the novelty of the minarets of Qawsun's mosque and requested the Tabrizi master to apply his skills to his mosque's minarets. Unfortunately, both mosques of Qawsun and Aytamish, as well as their Iranian model, the mosque of 'Ali Shah in Tabriz, have disappeared, therefore, their minarets' resemblance to those of the Citadel's mosque cannot be gauged. Michael Meinecke, however, resorted to a thirteenth century painting of Tabriz depicting the same minaret tops, presumably representing the mosque of 'Ali Shah, to positively identify the Tabrizi influence on the Citadel's minarets.⁵²⁴

The plan of the mosque is almost square in shape (63 by 57 meters). (**Fig 5. 24 Plan of the Mosque**). The mosque is of the hypostyle type, with a prayer hall made of four arcades, and three porticos each with two arcades. A square, central part of the roof in the prayer hall, supported on ten monolithic granite columns, is elevated above the rest of the mosque. This square is surmounted by a green-tiled dome (the one extant now was rebuilt in the

⁵²¹ Doris Behrens-Abouseif, *The Minarets of Cairo* (Cairo, 1985) 78; Michael Meinecke, "Die Mamlukischen Faience Dekorationen: Eine Werkstatt aus Tabriz in Kairo (1330-1355)" *Kunst des Orients*, 11, 1/2 (1976-77) 85.

⁵²² Donald P. Little, "Notes on Aitamis, a Mongol Mamluk," *Beiruter Texte und Studien*, 22 (1979) 397-98.

⁵²³ Maqrizi, *Suluk*, vol. 2, pt. 2, 320; also al-'Aini, *Iqd al-Juman*, quoted in Donald P. Little, "Notes on Aitamis, a Mongol Mamluk," 398.

⁵²⁴ Michael Meinecke, "Die Mamlukischen Faience Dekorationen: Eine Werkstatt aus Tabriz in Kairo (1330-1355)" 85-144.

twentieth century). (Fig 5. 25 Back Wall of the Mosque). The transition from square to circle is achieved by four muqarnas pendentives similar to the ones depicted in the French perspective of the Great Iwan. The columns are all Pharaonic and Ptolemaic that were reportedly brought from Ashmunin in Upper Egypt, with an array of capitols that represent every known style in pre-Islamic Egypt. The arcades carry a second tier of arched windows, two above each arch, that are of the same size as the exterior windows. All the voussoirs of the mosque's arcades and the frames of the windows above them are made of alternate red and black stone, a treatment that combines the *ablaq* (alternate black and white) and the *mushahhar* (alternate red and white) arrangements.⁵²⁵ This gives the arcades a unified appearance that diminishes the visual jumble caused by the variety of columns, bases, and capitols used. The ceiling, made of octagonal wooden coffers covered with vegetal motifs, was painted with bright colors with gilding, of which some traces still exist. On both northeastern and southwestern walls are remains of intricate marble mosaic work that must have formed a continuous high dado around the full perimeter of the mosque.⁵²⁶

One direct conclusion of this description of the Nasiri mosque is that its outer appearance seems to have echoed that of the Great Iwan across the Rahbat al-Iwan, although their functions and their interior spaces were fundamentally different. This resemblance must have been intended by al-Nasir Muhammad when he rebuilt both monuments. The chroniclers' reports on the mosque's rebuilding indicate that it involved what seems to have been unifying measures with the Great Iwan. This included the raising of the arcades of the mosque to reciprocate the height of the Iwan's arcades; the rebuilding of its dome and its covering with green faience in a similar manner to that of the Iwan; and the usage of arched crenellations of the outside walls despite the presence of another type of crenellation, the

⁵²⁵ *Awqaf* 292/44, Waqf of Amir Khayer Bak, 4: 11, gives the definition of *mushahhar* as alternate red and white stone.

⁵²⁶ In fact, al-Yusufi, *Nuzhat al-Nasir fi-Sirat al-Malik al-Nasir*, 24, specifically states that the second rebuilding of the mosque included the covering of the entire length of its walls with marble.

sawtooth triangles, on the interior walls around the courtyard and atop the rectangular projection of the northeastern entrance.

The Nasiri Mosque between the Public and Private Spheres

Another deduction that stems from the mosque's architectural description is that its formal structure reflects its conceptual position in the general scheme of private versus public spheres at the Citadel. Because it was the congregational mosque of the entire Citadel, the mosque belonged to the public sphere. It had to be open to those worshippers who lived in either the northern or southern enclosure and to those who happened to be present in the Citadel at prayer times, such as the petitioners at *dar al-'adl*.

The mosque of the Citadel was also the royal mosque of the sultanate where the sultan, as the symbol of the state, performed the Friday prayer, which all amirs were required to attend. This prayer fulfilled a political role as the illustration of the sultan's leadership of the Mamluk top ranks and the recognition of his leadership through the invocation of his name in the sermon. The mosque was thus a public space with a royal function.

However, since the mosque was inside the southern enclosure, it lay on the edge between the private and public spheres of the sultan's circulation, just like the Great Iwan did. But, unlike the Great Iwan which was separate from the sultan's private quarters by the series of semipublic *qusur* that constituted the Ablaq Palace, the mosque was adjacent to the sultan's private section of the Citadel. This proximity necessitated a careful handling of the connection between the two spheres in a manner that would preserve the accessibility of the mosque to worshippers, but would not endanger the privacy nor the safety of the sultan. This was achieved through the provision of the three doors for the various constituencies that would use the mosque, and through the form of the passage that led from the sultan's quarters to the mosque. The difference in the role of the doors was furthermore expressed in their shape, size, and location.

The northwestern entrance was the main one. It opened into the central court of the southern enclosure and provided access for the amirs, judges, and mamluks on the days of *khidma* when they would be coming from the Iwan. It was also the ceremonial door whenever a royal *mawkib*

required a congregation at the mosque, such as when the caliph was brought to give the Friday sermon on politically critical occasions,⁵²⁷ or whenever a ceremony involved distributing robes of honor to the *muta'amimin*, or religious men.⁵²⁸ The door's form manifested this status. It is higher than the two other doors, and has the customary muqarnas semidome above it to mark it as a main gate. It is positioned at the center of the northwestern façade in a rectangular projection that encompasses the full height of the mosque. And, finally, the western minaret sits above the right side of its portal projection, which is another sign of its prominence (similarly, the main gate of the Azhar mosque has a minaret above it on the right side, and the mosque of al-Maridani, built in 1339-40, has one on the left side of the projecting portal).

The northeastern gate was also a public entrance, but not a ceremonial one. It faced the northern enclosure across from the Qulla Gate which opened onto it through the *dihliz* that al-Nasir Muhammad had established in 1320 after he had rebuilt the mosque for the first time. This door provided access for worshippers from the barracks of the mamluks and officials who worked in the several administrative qa'as in the southern section of the northern enclosure. It did not have any ceremonial function, and thus it was less monumental and less ornate than the northwestern door.

At prayer time, the sultan would enter the mosque through the third, southeastern door, accompanied by his *khassakiyya* amirs. He would go directly to his *maqsurah* which faced the door and was set to the right of the mihrab. The *maqsurah* formed the screen that separated the sultan and his entourage from the rest of the hall while it maintained the visual connection. After the prayer, the sultan would regain his private quarters (*al-dur al-sultaniyya*) through the same door, whereas the rest of the worshippers would leave the mosque through the other two. Thus, the southeastern door

⁵²⁷ Maqrizi, *Suluk*, vol. 1, pt. 3, 774; Ibn al-Furat, *Tarikh*, vol. 8, 128 and 135; both report that the caliph was released from his house-arrest by al-Ashraf Khalil in 1290 to deliver the sermon at the Citadel's mosque and to formally recognize the sultanate of al-Ashraf.

⁵²⁸ Maqrizi, *Suluk*, vol. 3, pt. 3, 963, *qadis* were gathered at the mosque in 1399 for the distribution of robes of honor.

formed the private entrance of the sultan and his close amirs.⁵²⁹ Its size and location clearly demonstrate this quality. Its opening was a small one, and only allowed the entry of one person at a time. It faced a court, which is now truncated and filled with debris, but which originally led towards the direction of the sultan's palaces through a passage that is currently underground.

The Passage from the Public to the Private Spheres

The passage opposite the mosque's door is a part of a group of buried and ruined structures that occupy the triangular section extending from the mosque's southwestern façade to the court in front of Muhammad 'Ali's Hall of Justice. **(Fig 5. 26 Area South and West of the Nasiri Mosque)**. These structures present a composite group of Mamluk and nineteenth century remains which are very difficult to disentangle. They include the Bir al-Sab' Sawaqi where the Nasiri aqueduct bringing the Nile water to the Citadel emptied, and several connected spaces whose functions are difficult to determine. **(Fig 5. 27 Plan of the Buried Area West of the Mosque)**. They may have belonged to the royal kitchen rebuilt by al-Nasir Muhammad, because Mamluk sources locate it next to the mosque,⁵³⁰ and because the proximity of the water source supports this inference. Muhammad 'Ali also rebuilt the kitchen in the same location. Some ruined vaulted spaces and the trapezoidal court clearly belong to this rebuilding (marked as such on the plan). Recently, the southern part of the old kitchen was removed to create a series of service spaces along the border of the straight road between the two mosques of al-Nasir Muhammad and Muhammad 'Ali, and in front of the Hall of Justice of Muhammad 'Ali to the south.

Thus, it is impossible to reconstruct the connection between the passage and the rest of the buried structures to the south of it, although they appear linked today. One thing, though, is clear from the plan: all these structures, Mamluk and nineteenth century ones alike (which must have

⁵²⁹ Maqrizi, *Khitat*, 2: 212.

⁵³⁰ Al-Yusufi, *Nuzhat al-Nazir fi-Sirat al-Malik al-Nasir*, 240; Maqrizi, *Suluk*, vol. 2, pt. 2, 381; Ibn Taghri-Bardi, *Nujum*, vol. 9, 181.

been superimposed on older Mamluk structures), are aligned with the terminus-well of the aqueduct. This proves that the original structures must have been built to follow its orientation, and thus they postdate it. Al-Nasir Muhammad is the one who activated the *saqiahs* on top of the intake tower by the Nile and built the series of wells that collected the water at several intervals along the way of the aqueduct, including the terminus-well, in 1312.⁵³¹ This date represents the *terminus a quo* for any of these structures, and 1335 (the date of the mosque's rebuilding) is their *terminus ad quem*.

The passage occupies the northern end of this group of structures, and definitely did not belong to the royal kitchen. It is composed of a corridor and a small hall on its western end. The entrance of the corridor directly faces the mosque's door across the court. It is so narrow that it barely allows the passage of one person. Its other end opens into a larger portion of the corridor which is tilted to the north by 60 degrees clockwise. This proves that the first and short section of the corridor was constructed at a later date than either the second section or the mosque's door. It was rotated on purpose to face the mosque's door. The second, and larger portion of the corridor runs for 5.35 meters, with an alcove at the end of its southern side, measuring 2.3 by 1.4 meters. The plausible explanation for the alcove is that it may have served as the guard's post commanding the access from the mosque's side. The corridor's end opens onto a rectangular hall whose sides had been crudely reinforced sometime after it had been built. **(Fig 5. 28 The Corridor and the Vaulted Hall)**. The hall had originally two shallow alcoves (*suffas*) on its longitudinal sides and a door at the other end.

The area beyond this door was rebuilt in the nineteenth century and all traces of its original plan have been obliterated. However, the wall in which the door is cut is an original one, and it extended to the south beyond the limit of the hall. Its clean surface and the facing of its stone blocks suggest that it was an outside wall, which means that the door in it initially led into an open space. Therefore, one can conclude that the hall and the corridor constituted an architectural unit whose sole function had been to connect two

⁵³¹ Nuwayri, *Nihayat al-Irb fi-Funun al-Adab*, vol. 30, fol. 80; Shams al-Din al-Shuja'i, *Tarikh al-Malik al-Nasir Muhammad*, 95.

open courts on its two sides: the one in front of the mosque, and the mosque itself, and the open space on the other side with whatever existed beyond it.

The sources speak of an entry to the harem, the Bab al-Sitara (Gate of the Curtain), which was accessed from the mosque, and which appears to have become known simply as Bab al-Harem in the Burji period.⁵³² One story, which is repeated in several chronicles, indicates that the Bab al-Sitara was preceded by a court, the Rahbat Bab al-Sitara.⁵³³ The open space that bordered the wall at the end of the passage may have been the Rahbat Bab al-Sitara. Thus, the buried passage with its narrowing corridor led initially into Rahbat Bab al-Sitara. This passage, then, formed the transition between the two spheres: the public and the private beyond the Bab al-Sitara.

This transition was very carefully designed. First, the two spheres were announced by forecourts, the one in front of the mosque and the Rahbat Bab al-Sitara, which must have functioned as preludes or as buffers before one entered into either the realm of public life or the private domain of the sultan. Second, the corridor was gradually made narrower so that its end permitted the exit of one person only, namely the sultan. Third, the passage was provided with a checkpoint so that no one who was unwanted could go through. Fourth, it seems that in addition to aligning the exit from the passage with the mosque's door, there was also some consideration for visual privacy in the tilting of the corridor so that no one standing in the court in front of the mosque could see the other end of the passage.

⁵³² Maqrizi, *Khitat*, 2: 212, and Qalqashandi, *Subh al-A'sha*, 3: 375, say that the mosque's door led to the Bab al-Sitara. Al-Khatib al-Jawhari al-Sayrafi, *Inba' al-Hasr bi-Abna' al-'Asr*, 62, 123, 331, 373, and 499, speak of Bab al-Sitara and Bab al-Harem as interchangeable entities. He was writing in the period of Qaytbay (late fifteenth century).

⁵³³ The story of the sultan al-Mansur 'Ali who was brought out from the harem to the Rahbat Bab al-Sitara and enthroned there in 1377 is reported by Maqrizi, *Suluk*, vol. 3, pt. 1, 276; Ibn Taghri-Bardi, *Nujum*, vol. 11, 72; Ibn Duqmaq, *al-Jawhar al-Thamin*, 432. Casanova, *Histoire*, (Arabic translation) 120, cites the version of Ibn Taghri Bardi, but suggests that the door of the mosque is the one meant as Bab al-Sitara.

The Establishment of the Animal Enclosure (*al-Hosh*)

The *hosh*, which literally means enclosure, was built in 1338 in a record time of 36 days, at a high human cost. It was the last project completed at the Citadel before al-Nasir Muhammad's death. The sources say that the *hosh* was originally a huge crater (*ghur*) at the Citadel outside the Qarafa Gate, under the quarters of the sultan and the harem.⁵³⁴ It is unclear from the wording of the reports whether this site was inside the walls or simply near the Citadel. The hollow had been created as a consequence of cutting stone from its site to construct the qa'as of the harem a few years earlier.⁵³⁵ This means that the ground of the *hosh* must have been initially outside the boundaries of the Citadel proper before al-Nasir Muhammad had incorporated it, for it is difficult to imagine that the sultan would allow the digging of a huge crater in between his palaces.

The *hosh* was used as an enclosure for sheep and cow breeding, which had become one of the major interests of al-Nasir Muhammad at the end of his life. He is reported to have left more than 30,000 animals after his death in the several *hoshs* he had built around Cairo, of which the one adjacent to the Citadel was the last addition.⁵³⁶ A mixture of political and economic motives prompted al-Nasir Muhammad's involvement in rearing livestock. The political purpose was closely tied to the duties of the sultan toward his mamluks, his amirs, and their mamluks. First, the sultan was responsible for five daily banquets (*simats*) held for the amirs and office-holders, for which large numbers of animals were slaughtered, and, on celebratory occasions, the banquets would be more splendid and the quantities of meat consumed enormous.⁵³⁷ Second, al-Nasir Muhammad followed and expanded upon the custom instituted by al-Zahir Baybars whereby the sultan would provide the royal mamluks with riding horses, with camels for their baggage transport, and with daily meat rations, in addition to extra meat bonuses on holidays.

⁵³⁴ Shams al-Din al-Shuja'i, *Tarikh al-Malik al-Nasir Muhammad*, 23; Maqrizi, *Suluk*, vol. 2, pt. 2, 433-34; Ibn Taghri-Bardi, *Nujum*, vol. 9, 119.

⁵³⁵ Maqrizi, *Khitat*, 2:229.

⁵³⁶ Maqrizi, *Suluk*, vol. 2, pt. 2, 531-32; Ibn Taghri-Bardi, *Nujum*, vol. 9, 170-71.

⁵³⁷ Maqrizi, *Khitat*, 2: 210-11, and Qalqashandi, *Subh al-A'sha*, 4: 13, 56.

Al-Nasir Muhammad was also supplementing the great amirs in supporting their own troops of mamluk horsemen by supplying them with riding horses and with slaughter animals, thus creating in these mamluks a direct bond of dependency that bypassed the amirs who were their nominal masters and providers.⁵³⁸

These practices seem to have been dropped after al-Nasir Muhammad. None of his sons and successors showed any interest in animal farming. Even the sheep left in his *hosh* were taken by his son al-Nasir Ahmad, who, in 1343, depleted the royal stores and enclosures and transported everything to Kerak in Jordan after his short stint as sultan.⁵³⁹ The *hosh* thus lost its initial purpose, and presented the subsequent sultans with an empty, functionless enclosure adjacent to their palaces. The first sultan to take advantage of the space was al-Salih Isma'il who in 1345 constructed a new royal palace, the Qa'a al-Duhaysha, and turned part of the *hosh*'s ground into an orchard with a fountain and a *shadirwan*.⁵⁴⁰ Little by little, more qa'as and residences were constructed around the *hosh*, so that by the end of the Bahri period, the original enclosure became engulfed by a series of royal structures. The origin of the *hosh* as a hole in the ground seems to have survived in the name of its outer part, which was called the crater (*al-ghur*), and which eventually became occupied by the residences of the sultans' family members.⁵⁴¹

The *hosh*'s functions, and most probably its configuration and boundaries, started to slowly change at the beginning of the Burji period. Maqrizi records that, during the reigns of Barquq (1382-89, 1390-99) and his son Faraj (1399-1412 with one interruption), a great tent used to be set up in it for the celebration of the Mawlid al-Nabawi (Birth of the Prophet), a costum

⁵³⁸ Al-'Umari, *Masalik al-Absar*, 95; copied by Qalqashandi, *Subh al-A'sha*, 4: 51; Maqrizi, *Khitat*, 2: 216.

⁵³⁹ Maqrizi, *Suluk*, vol. 2, pt. 3, 618.

⁵⁴⁰ Al-Shuja'i, *Tarikh al-Malik al-Nasir Muhammad*, 273; Maqrizi, *Suluk*, vol. 2, pt. 3, 633.

⁵⁴¹ Maqrizi, *Suluk*, vol. 3, pt.1, 212, says that the amir kabir Aljay al-Yusufi lived in the *ghur* (probably because he was married to the sultan al-Ashraf Sha'ban's mother); Sakhawi, *Kitab al-Tibr al-Masbuk fi-Zayl al-Suluk*, 82, reports the building of a residence for Muhammad the son of Sultan Jaqmaq in 1469 in the *ghur*.

that persisted right through the Mamluk period and was not abolished until the governorship of Khayer Bak early in the Ottoman period (1517-22).⁵⁴² By the middle of the fifteenth century, the *hosh* became the focus of the palatial complex's life, with the sultan holding his regular audiences in a qa'a there, Qa'a al-Bahra (Qa'a of the Fountain) whose original builder is unknown, and playing polo with his mamluks in an enclosure that was the leftover of the original one.⁵⁴³ The transformation of the area was so thorough that Ibn Taghri-Bardi (1411-69) was confused about the location of al-Nasir Muhammad's *hosh*, and thought it might have been the polo ground.⁵⁴⁴

The *hosh* as planned by al-Nasir Muhammad must have stood in the southern part of the southern enclosure in the area that had become the residence of the pasha and his entourage during the Ottoman period. Its exact boundaries are difficult to fix. The map of the *Description de l'Égypte* shows a structure marked as the mosque of al-Duhaysha (# 40, U-3 & 4) which may have been the metamorphosis of the original Qa'a al-Duhaysha of al-Salih Isma'il. **(Fig 5. 29 Map of the *hosh*'s Surroundings)**. As Mamluk sources say, the Qa'a al-Duhaysha's site constituted the northwestern corner of the original *hosh*. Its northeastern corner may have been at the other end of the west-east line of structures, near the (# 43, U-3) on the map identified as the mint (*dar al-darb*). This suggestion is supported by an Ottoman report on the transfer of the mint in 1711 by a royal decree (*firman*) to the Divan's *hosh*.⁵⁴⁵ The *hosh*'s open space may have survived in the form of the two courts on the map marked the Ouas'at al-Basha (Court of the Pasha) and the Ouas'at al-Istabl (Court of the Stables). Together, they indicate the subdivision of the initial enclosure after al-Nasir Muhammad's time. Whether the southern wall of the southern enclosure behind the Ouas'at al-Istabl constituted the boundary of the *hosh* is very difficult to determine. **(Fig 5. 30 View of the**

⁵⁴² Maqrizi, *Khitat*, 2:229; Ibn Iyas, *Bada'i' al-Zuhur fi-Waqa'i' al-Duhur*, vol. 5, 26, 245, lament the abolishing of the festivities and the spoiling of the last great tent ordered by Qaytbay.

⁵⁴³ This appears to have started at the time of Barsbay, see, Doris Behrens-Abouseif, "The Citadel of Cairo: Stage for Mamluk Ceremonial," 51-4, and references.

⁵⁴⁴ Ibn Taghri-Bardi, *Nujum*, 9: 121.

⁵⁴⁵ Mustafa Ibrahim, *Waqa'i' Misr al-Qahira Bayn 1100 wa 1150*, 163.

Southern Wall of the Southern Enclosure). The wall must have been renovated and refaced by Muhammad 'Ali when he built his own palaces in the southern enclosure, for the surface of its stone and the moldings running midway through its height along its top are definitely the work of Muhammad 'Ali. Its plan and outline, however, seem to follow the pre-nineteenth-century ones for they correspond to the south wall on the French map. The question was rendered more complicated by the discovery of a stone wall cropping up behind the houses in the area of 'Arab Yasar (the picture shows a better view for it was taken by Creswell in the 1920s). The wall's method of construction, alternating long and short blocks of rough cut stone, makes it a Mamluk one. It may have constituted the southern wall of the *hosh* of al-Nasir Muhammad before its gradual transformation from an animal enclosure to an integral part of the royal palaces.

In the Last year before his death, 1341, al-Nasir Muhammad's interest in augmenting the water supply to his Citadel resurfaced in the form of two projects.⁵⁴⁶ The first one was a simple increasing of the aqueduct's capacity by adding another intake tower next to the old one. The second was a complex undertaking which would have involved the digging of a new canal from the Nile to a rocky hill south of Misr al-Fustat, the Rasad (the Observatory, named after an observatory erected there in the eleventh century by the Fatimid vizir al-Afdal)⁵⁴⁷ and the construction of a new aqueduct from there which would have joined the old one east of Misr al-Fustat. The project was started, despite the opposition of landowners along its way, but was stopped and neglected after the sultan's death.⁵⁴⁸ Al-Nasir Muhammad's main objective from these projects was to irrigate the orchards and provide more water for the animal enclosures around the Citadel. Had he lived longer, he may have had expanded the *hosh* with the availability of more water, and turned it into a more permanent component of the Citadel's landscape than it ended up being.

⁵⁴⁶ Shams al-Din al-Shuja'i, *Tarikh al-Malik al-Nasir Muhammad*, 95; Maqrizi, *Khitat*, 2: 230; Maqrizi, *Suluk*, vol. 2, pt.2, 514.

⁵⁴⁷ Maqrizi, *Khitat*, 1: 125.

⁵⁴⁸ The first phase of the project, the digging of the new canal to the Rasad was completed, see, Mufaddal ibn-Abi al-Fada'il, *al-Nahj al-Sadid*, 20: 162-63; Maqrizi, *Khitat*, 2: 230.

Al-Nasir Muhammad's Last Projects Around the Citadel

In 1338, al-Nasir Muhammad constructed two palaces for two of his favorite *khassakiyya* amirs, Yalbugha al-Yahyawī and Altinbugha al-Maridani, opposite the Citadel across from the Rumayla. He also ordered amir Qawsun, who was also a *khassaki* amir but older and more independent than the former two, to build a palace next to the stables that he seems to have already had there, and to expand his whole complex by incorporating other structures that belonged to other amirs. The entire enterprise seems to have been sponsored by al-Nasir Muhammad, and supervised by his superintendent of constructions (*shadd al-'ama'ir*) Akbugha 'Abd al-Wahid.⁵⁴⁹

The two palaces of Yalbugha and Altinbugha are reported to have stood where the mosque of sultan Hasan stands today. **(Fig 5. 31 Location of the Three Princely Palaces)**. Each had a *qasr* and stables that opened, by order of al-Nasir Muhammad, into the street across from the hammam of al-Malik al-Sa'id Baraka Khan (the present location of the Rifa'i mosque). The palace of Qawsun's remains, including his *qasr*, are bound by the al-Mudaffar street behind the mosque of sultan Hasan and the Qurra Qul al-Manshiyya street further west. Both streets converge in the Rumayla maydan today at the foot of the Citadel. The palace may have originally extended further to the southeast, closer to the Citadel, for Maqrizi says that one of the doors of the new palace, after its 1338 expansion, opened onto the Rumayla opposite the Chain Gate that led to the royal stables under the Ablaq palace, whereas the second door opened into the Hadarat al-Baqar (al-Mudaffar street today).⁵⁵⁰

Maqrizi explains the choice of these locations for the palaces by reporting that al-Nasir Muhammad wanted to have these favorite amirs close

⁵⁴⁹ Shams al-Din al-Shuja'i, *Tarikh al-Malik al-Nasir Muhammad*, 25; Author Zetterstéen, 216, mentions only the palace of Yalbugha. Maqrizi, *Suluk*, vol. 2, pt. 2, 438-9, 453, says that al-Nasir planned the palaces of Qawsun, Yalbugha and Altinbugha in front of the Citadel; Ibn Taghri-Bardi, *Nujum*, vol. 9, 121, produces the same report, but adds that the palace of Qawsun has become the residence of the *atabek al-'asakir* in his time.

⁵⁵⁰ Maqrizi, *Khitat*, 2: 71-2.

to him so that he could see their residences from his palace. This should be interpreted in the context of the sultan's desire to control the movements of these amirs who were at that period rising to the highest positions in the court. This wariness on the part of the sultan may have been a result of his mounting suspicion of his close amirs at the end of his life, a wariness that was undoubtedly heightened by his concern to secure the succession for his son.⁵⁵¹ Maqrizi's remark on the location of the three palaces' doors clearly underlines the closeness of Qawsun to the sultan for, otherwise, he would not have permitted him to have direct access from his palace to the Rumayla, which functioned with the maydan south of it as the buffer zone in front of the royal stables.⁵⁵² This closeness was to be translated shortly in the sultan's designation of Qawsun as one of the two regents, along with Bashtak, of his son and successor Abu Bakr.

The three palaces of Qawsun, Yalbugha, and Altunbugha should be considered royal projects not only because al-Nasir Muhammad planned, sponsored, and supervised their construction, but also because as structures they had a role in the network of princely palaces to the north and west of the Citadel that he had created as a symbolic ring around the royal residence.

Their role was more important than other structures planned by the sultan and executed for his amirs because of their central location. They commanded the approach from the city of al-Qahira through the north-south Shari' al-A'zam south of the Zuwayla Gate. Strategically, these palaces controlled the access to the horse market area (Rumayla square), and defended the royal domain behind it. Aesthetically, they announced to the

⁵⁵¹ This suspicion led him to eliminate his greatest amir Tankiz, the governor of Damascus, who had become too independent to accept the transition of power in Egypt. Tankiz was arrested in 1340, and executed shortly afterward, only a few months before the death of al-Nasir Muhammad; Robert Irwin, *The Middle East in the Middle Ages*, 121. See the period's interpretation of Tankiz's fall in Maqrizi, *Suluk*, vol. 2, pt. 2, 495-512.

⁵⁵² This closeness, and the ensuing importance of Qawsun's palace, was manifested in its usage on royal occasions. Maqrizi, *Suluk*, vol. 2, pt. 2, 379, says that Abu Bakr, the son and first successor of al-Nasir Muhammad, who was granted the amir rank in 1335, rode from Qawsun's stables to the royal palaces to get his promotion, and then got back to preside over a banquet that Qawsun gave in his honor.

viewer the royal splendor that would fully unfold upon the entry to the open square of the Rumayla.

The Extension of the Citadel Under al-Nasir Muhammad

The Citadel is evidently larger today than it was when al-'Imad al-Isfahani reported its circumference in the time of Salah al-Din. The expansion was limited to the southern enclosure, for, as Creswell proved, the extant northern enclosure is the same as Salah al-Din had built it, except for a short stretch of its north wall behind the Haram palace of Muhammad 'Ali (present-day Military Museum).⁵⁵³ The enlargement of the southern enclosure must have taken place before Muhammad 'Ali refurbished it at the beginning of the nineteenth century, for a comparison of its outline on the map of the *Description de l'Égypte* (1801) with the outline of the same area on the Egyptian cadastral map of 1951 shows no change. **(Fig 5. 32 Comparison between the Southern Enclosure's Old and New Outlines)**. In the Ottoman period no major works at the southern enclosure are reported, and it is very difficult to imagine that any of the multitude of pashas that succeeded one another for short periods in the governorship of the country had enough time or motivation to embark on a project of expansion. The extension of the southern enclosure should therefore be dated to the Mamluk period, yet, no Mamluk chronicler mentions it.

As it was shown earlier, the northern part of the southern enclosure, bounded by the Tower of the Corner from the north and the Rafrat Tower from the west, which may have been originally joined with a wall extending south from the Muqattam Tower, most probably belonged to the original plan of the Citadel (see reconstruction of the initial plan of the Citadel in Chapter One). The royal structures built by al-Nasir Muhammad's immediate Mamluk predecessors, Baybars, Qalawun, and al-Ashraf Khalil were all situated within the proposed initial enceinte, which may mean that none of them considered expanding the southern enclosure. It is only the additions of al-Nasir Muhammad which seem to have been located to the south of the

⁵⁵³ Creswell, M.A.E. 2: 31-3.

Rafraf Tower in the southern half of the present southern enclosure, and thus outside the original enclosure. This southern area may have been included in the Citadel by increments that followed the expansion of royal buildings towards the south. This process was started, and perhaps even completed, by al-Nasir Muhammad during his third reign. Several textual and architectural indices indicate that the structures of al-Nasir Muhammad formed the boundaries of the enceinte when they were built. By fixing the location of these structures on the present map, it would be possible to prove that al-Nasir Muhammad was the one completely responsible for the southern enclosure's southerly expansion.

The earliest clue comes from the account of al-'Umari on the Citadel's walls, written shortly after al-Nasir Muhammad had built his Ablaq Palace.

Al-'Umari, who was copied almost verbatim by later chroniclers, states that the exterior walls of the Ablaq Palace and those of the quarters of the sultan (*dur al-mulk*) formed the exterior walls of the Citadel, and that the walls between them "are not like the ways of towers of citadels."⁵⁵⁴ Both Ablaq Palace and harem were built by al-Nasir on the edge of the Citadel proper to take advantage of the views to the west and south. Mamluk chroniclers all say that the qa'as of the Ablaq Palace dominated the maydan and the city beyond it, while the qa'as of the harem overlooked the Southern Qarafa. Therefore, the former must have been on the southern enclosure's western fringe, and the latter on its southern fringe.

European observers give us better descriptions. They say that the Palais de Joseph, or the Ablaq Palace, was built on the edge of the escarpment on the western side of the southern enclosure. The French consul in Cairo in the late seventeenth century, Maillet, speaks of a high wall contiguous to the hill side, which is broken midway by a protruding hall supported on square pillars, perhaps the same as the hall found today under the terrace to the south of Muhammad 'Ali's mosque, which has been identified as the lower level of the Ablaq palace's *qusur*. The Dutchman Niebuhr, who visited the Citadel in the 1750s, says that the series of halls that constituted the Palais de Joseph are propped up by a huge wall built against the rock upon which the

⁵⁵⁴ Shihab al-Din al-'Umari, *Masalik al-Absar fi-Mamalik al-Amsar*, 140-1.

Citadel is situated.⁵⁵⁵ Jomard, in his commentaries on the map of the *Description de l'Égypte*, says only that there are subterranean halls to the north of the Palais de Joseph (i.e. the Great Iwan) which are made of huge vaults, and which were dilapidated beyond description.⁵⁵⁶ Thus, the foundations of the Ablaq Palace constituted the boundary of the southern enclosure from the west. They started on ground level, that is the level of the stables and the maydan. The qa'as of the palace were raised upon the two superimposed halls (or perhaps three) to reach the level of the Citadel proper above the hill.

Creswell remarks that the spur upon which the Citadel was constructed does not underlie its whole area, and that some parts of the platform were artificially raised.⁵⁵⁷ The sentence of al-'Umari, and the travelers' remarks point to this fact by indicating that the palaces of the sultans in the southern enclosure were built on subterranean halls, whose outer walls formed the Citadel's edge. It is demonstrable that the southern edge of the southern enclosure, especially where the private quarters (*haramlik*) of the Bijou Palace stand today, is also made out of subterranean vaulted halls, which most probably belonged to the Mamluk harem. Unfortunately, these halls, unlike the two vaulted halls on the western side, are inaccessible.

That Mamluk palaces formed the boundaries of the Citadel where they were located can be observed in the variations in the form of the exterior walls of the southern enclosure. Although most of the exterior walls in the southern enclosure were definitely rebuilt since the fourteenth century, the last time under Muhammad 'Ali in the 1820s, the ones corresponding to the locations of the Ablaq Palace and the Mamluk harem are still different in treatment and size of stone from the walls of the rest of the enceinte.

That al-Nasir Muhammad's semipublic and private palaces constituted the western and southwestern edges of the southern enclosure in the time of al-'Umari, as their remains do in the present, signifies that they were the last

⁵⁵⁵ Both accounts are cited in Creswell, M.A.E. 2: 260.

⁵⁵⁶ E. Jomard, "Description de la ville et de la citadelle du Kaire" 360; Ayman F. Sayyed, *Wasf Madinat al-Qahira wa-Qal'at al-Jabal*, 239.

⁵⁵⁷ Creswell, "Archaeological Researches in the Citadel of Cairo," 98.

extensions of the Citadel made at those two edges. This explanation fits nicely with the information conveyed by the sources, for it permits us to account for the addition of the *hosh* and to locate it at the southern end of the enclosure, just to the southeast of the harem, where all textual references situate it. The *hosh*'s area, which became the center of the palatial complex in the Burji period, and later the residential section of the Ottoman pashas, was the last parcel included in the enceinte by al-Nasir Muhammad. The Mamluk sultans after him who built new halls in the *hosh* limited their work to the interior and edges of his enceinte, and may have even cut out one part of the *hosh* and left it outside the southern enclosure (if the wall standing in 'Arab Yasar is in fact the wall of the initial *hosh*). Thus, the southern enclosure reached its final boundaries with the work of al-Nasir Muhammad during his long third reign.

Conclusion

The general plan of organization devised by al-Nasir Muhammad persisted throughout the period in which his descendants ruled (1341-82), with one important modification: some of the royal functions were transferred to the previously private area of the *hosh*. Perhaps this was an indication of the rising influence of the eunuchs and concubines and their noticeable intervention in the affairs of state, especially during the reigns of al-Salih Isma'il (1342-45) and al-Kamil Sha'ban (1345-46).⁵⁵⁸ After Barquq assumed power in 1382, he imposed a definite change of focus in the southern enclosure. He altered the ceremonies celebrated in the palaces and relocated the major public audiences to the Harraqa in the stables.⁵⁵⁹ As a consequence, al-Nasir Muhammad's plan began to fall apart, although his structures were still used for minor public roles. From the time of Barquq, the rapid turnover of sultans and constant internal strife did not encourage large building programs, or even maintenance of the extant monuments.⁵⁶⁰ Seclusion and security were the only concerns of the sultans, whose office had become the prize that every strong amir sought who could muster sufficient forces. The magnificent structures of al-Nasir Muhammad were neglected, and no new palaces took their place. In two distinguished, long and relatively calm reigns, that of Qaytabay (1468-96) and that of al-Ghuri (1501-16), attempts were made to revive the plan of al-Nasir Muhammad and to refurbish his

⁵⁵⁸ On the power of the eunuchs and harem in that period see the different incidents cited by, Maqrizi, *Suluk*, vol. 2, pt. 3, 678, 692, 708, 713; Robert Irwin, *The Middle East in the Middle Ages*, 130-31. The shift to the *hosh* may be also because many of al-Nasir Muhammad's successors were confined to the harem before and after their terms of rule.

⁵⁵⁹ The choice of the Harraqa in the stables is probably due to Barquq's first official position as an amir when he was the stable master (*amir akhur*), and to the general mistrust that dominated this struggle ridden, transitional period between Kipchak and Circassians, when controlling the stables meant blocking the movement in and out of the southern enclosure.

⁵⁶⁰ Brief discussions of the general state of the Citadel during the Burji period can be found in Casanova, *Histoire*, (Arabic translation) 175-79; Doris Behrens-Abouseif, "The Citadel of Cairo: Stage for Mamluk Ceremonial," 41, 51-59.

palaces. These two sultans also built new constructions to fulfill new functional developments and to mark aesthetic changes, but the Citadel never recovered the splendor of al-Nasir Muhammad's time.⁵⁶¹

The period covered by this dissertation started with the building of the Citadel under Salah al-Din and ended with the final expansion of the southern enclosure at the end of al-Nasir Muhammad's reign. The analysis of the building activities during that period demonstrated that the Citadel of Cairo shared some characteristics with other citadels and was distinct in others.

As it was often the case in medieval times, the Citadel of Cairo was built to be a stronghold in the fortified walls of the two cities of Misr al-Fustat and Cairo. The entire process of building was articulated within the larger consideration of a centralized, hierarchical state. The buildings represented the prosperity and vigor of the state in general, whereas the scope and extent of each sultan's architectural achievements reflected his own power, tastes, and inclinations, and the specific circumstances of his reign.

The Citadel of Cairo was among the last in a series of citadels constructed in Anatolia, Syria, and the Jezira in the eleventh and twelfth centuries. The building of these citadels in cities where none had existed before, such as Mosul, Damascus, and Cairo, heralded the coming of new regimes whose roots and preferences were foreign and military. The founders of these citadels were all Muslim Sunni amirs of non-Arabic origin who came to the region with or after the Seljukid expansion. They led armies made of non-Arab, mostly Turkish and Kurdish, free and manumitted horsemen, and expanded their principalities through war and conquest. Their Citadels were built to be a refuge in the case of an attack, and a barrier, both real and symbolic, between them and the ruled. In Cairo, the sultan and his top officials resided in the Citadel or around it, with the army stationed nearby within the same enceinte, and the local population restricted to the city at the foot of the hill beyond the maydan.

⁵⁶¹ For a list of Qaytbay's works at the Citadel, see, Ibn-Iyas, *Bada'i' al-Zuhur fi-Waqa'i' al-Duhur*, vol. 3, 330, for the work of al-Ghuri, vol. 5, 94.

But the Mamluks introduced a new and peculiar political system that greatly affected the architectural organization of the Citadel. As a result, the Citadel's development diverged from that of other medieval citadels including the ones in the capitals of Mamluk provinces such as the citadels of Damascus and Aleppo. The unique properties of the Cairo Citadel included the division of its interior space into two enclosures separated by a wall and towers; the subdivision of each of these two enclosures into several, elaborately delimited domains that reflected the complex hierarchy of the Mamluk cavalry army; and the opening up of parts of the sultan's domain to the public on regular basis for *dar al-'adl*, so as to temporarily remove the barriers that existed between him and his people, and to enhance his image as a just and caring ruler.

Al-Zahir Baybars conceived the separation of the Citadel into a palatial complex in the southern enclosure and a military and an administrative areas in the northern enclosure, mostly for security but perhaps also for ceremonial purposes. He also built residences for his close amirs on the edge between the administrative section and the royal domain. Baybars's motive was twofold: the amirs were his *khushdashs* and were indispensable to him, and, at the same time, they represented a constant threat to his rule. They were ambitious Umara' Mi'a wa-Muqaddamin Alf (Amirs of Hundred and Commanders of Thousand) who strong enough to have their own aspirations to the throne.⁵⁶²

Baybars's plan to lodge his amirs near his own palaces became the impetus of a system of hierarchy in the proximity to the sultan's dwelling which reached its culmination under al-Nasir Muhammad, and which involved a complicated structure of physical barriers and access patterns. During thirty years of continuous construction, al-Nasir Muhammad redefined the basic division of the Citadel into five concentric spheres of actions intersected by a few channels of circulation. The first division was the

⁵⁶² In fact amir Sunqur al-Ashqar later on declared himself independent sultan in Damascus when he heard of Qalawun's accession to the throne in Egypt in 1280. This may have been prompted by his loyalty to Baybars's house, as Qalawun had displaced Baybars's son Salamish. But Sunqur did not lead the cause of Salamish, he rather claimed the throne for himself.

army barracks confined to the northern part of the northern enclosure. The second was the public domain in the administrative part of the northern enclosure which was entered through the main gate of the Citadel, the Mudarraaj Gate, and to which people were admitted on daily basis. The third was the semipublic domain, which was located in the northern end of the southern enclosure and which comprised the Great Iwan and the Nasiri mosque. Access to this domain was restricted in time but it was open to all: to worshippers at prayer time,⁵⁶³ to petitioners on *dar al-'adl*'s days, and to amirs every day. The fourth domain was semiprivate, and comprised the Ablaq Palace and the other royal palaces, such as the Qa'a al-Ashrafiyya. Access to it was restricted both in time and to specific ranks of mamluks and officials. The fifth domain, the harem, was totally private, and was reserved for the family, concubines, and eunuchs of the sultan. Al-Nasir Muhammad articulated the degrees of separation between the five different spheres of circulation in the Citadel by establishing a series of connecting passages (*dahaliz*, plural of *dihliz*) and gates between the various architectural components. (Fig C. 1 Patterns of Accessibility at the Citadel as Arranged by al-Nasir Muhammad).

Al-Nasir Muhammad's plan may be said to have transferred to the topography of the Citadel and its urban setting the order by which the Mamluks were organized. It is during his reign that the two terms *juwwani* and *barrani* amirs made their appearance in the chronicles. *Juwwani* amirs, also called *khassakiyya*, were those who lived inside the southern enclosure and were destined to be elevated in rank and importance; *barrani* amirs, also called *khurjiyya*, lived in the northern enclosure and included those who had been punished and removed from the *khassakiyya*, and those who have grown too old to perform their duties (*tirkhan*). The division of the Mamluk

⁵⁶³ The mosque was also the place where judicial councils that involved important dogmatic and canonical questions used to be held, See, Maqrizi, *Suluk*, vol. 2, pt. 1, 18, for a council (*majlis*) in 1305; pt. 2, 552, for another in 1341; pt. 3, 901, a third council was held in 1353. These were public gatherings, presided over by the representatives of the foremost legal authorities, the four supreme judges (*qudat al-qudat*), who had the full judging power in matters of belief, but needed the royal executive power to carry out their ruling in major cases. The mosque represented the perfect middle ground between religious and royal authority. This was the reason why it was chosen for these councils.

army was reflected in the arrangement of their residence at the Citadel from the base in the north to the apex in the south: the soldiers (*jund*), then *barrani* amirs, *juwwani* amirs, and finally the sultan. Inside the southern enclosure, the sultan housed the young mamluks selected to become royal mamluks. They were divided into two groups, the *kutabiyya* and the *mamalik al-tibaq*. The *kutabiyya* studied in the *maktab* with the sultan's sons and were prepared to become *khassakiyya*. The *mamalik al-tibaq* were lodged in the southern enclosure's *tibaqs*, and were trained to become the *silahdariyya* and *jamadariyya*, or the bodyguards of the sultan, a lower position than that of the *khassakiyya*. (Fig C. 2 Order of Arrangement in the Mamluk Hierarchy as Translated in the Citadel).

Al-Nasir Muhammad also redefined the relationship of the Citadel to the city. His urban expansion projects seem to represent a desire to surround the Citadel with built-up areas as a way of defending it, as well as underlining the centrality of the sultan's presence in his capital. The group of palaces for his favorite *khassakiyya* to the west of the Citadel were meant to be a buffer zone between the city and the Citadel. The development of the two areas around the Citadel, the Qarafa al-Kubra (Great Cemetery) and the Qarafa al-Sughra (Small Cemetery), that were heretofore empty, stemmed from the same desire to make the Citadel central in the City. The first was located to the north and east of the Citadel, the second to the south; both were built up under al-Nasir Muhammad with mausolea that had madrasas and sabils attached. They were sponsored by his *khassakiyya* amirs, probably with his encouragement.⁵⁶⁴ These projects, which needed people to run them, attracted settlers who built houses around them, and residential quarters formed as a consequence. (Fig C. 3 The Centrality of the Citadel in the City).

⁵⁶⁴ Maqrizi, *Khitat*, 2: 443-5; Ibn Taghri-Bardi, *Nujum*, 9:185-9. The first mausoleum in the Small Cemetery was the one al-Nasir built for his amir Baybugha al-Turkmani in 1307. The first to erect a mausoleum in the Great Cemetery is amir Qarasunqur, who died in Maragha in Ilkhanid Persia in 1328. The word *qarafa* is used until today in Cairo to mean cemetery, although linguistically it has no such denotation. *Qarafa* is either the name of a clan from Yemen that came with the Arab conquerors in the seventh century and settled in two areas, *khatta*, in the original Fustat, or the name of a certain woman. See the discussion in Wladyslaw Kubiak, *Al-Fustat, Its Foundation and Early Urban Development*. (Cairo, 1987) 108-9.

The reconstruction of the various palaces built by the Mamluk sultans prompted a number of remarks on their architecture and surface articulation. First, the architecture of the Mamluk structures whose forms are known to us shows the influence of the militarization of the ruling class on palatial architecture. Both the Iwan and the mosque of al-Nasir Muhammad in the southern enclosure display austere, fortress-like façades topped with crenellations. Second, aside from the Great Iwan whose plan was so functional that it seems to have formed a type on its own, the royal palaces seem to have been only grandiose examples of princely and ordinary palaces in Cairo. The textual descriptions of a number of them reveal that they shared the same architectural components and spatial organization with their urban counterparts. They were distinguished only by their location in the Citadel, their monumentality, and the profusion of and variety of decorative elements that virtually covered their surface as evidenced by the walls of the uncovered the Qa a al-Ashrafiyya. The subject of the surface articulation of the Mamluk palaces before al-Nasir Muhammad, representations of the sultans and their amirs during *furusiiyya* exercise and images of conquered castles and towns, also relates to the image these fighting rulers were trying to project. The disappearance of these subjects from the palatial decoration during and after the reign of al-Nasir Muhammad may be explained by the changes of taste that resulted from the softening of the military image of the state and the adoption of the local upper-class urban culture by the once segregated ruling class of Turkish-speaking Mamluks.

Textual analysis of the terminology used by the sources resulted in new interpretations for the meaning of three terms, *qubba*, iwan and *qasr*, normally thought to have been fairly clear and straightforward. It proved that the meaning of these terms have changed during the Mamluk period, and in the case of *qubba*, the word moved from the secular domain to the commemorative one. The changes in the meaning of these terms certainly reflected changes in forms and functions. This demonstrates that the modern characterizations of Mamluk architecture as having been static, self referential, organized according to a very limited number of formulas, and closed to outside influence have ignored the evidence of secular architecture and need to be revised.

Glossary

'Aja'ib: wonders.

'Aziziyya: the mamluks of al-'Aziz the Ayyubid ruler of Aleppo.

'Id al-Adha: the Sacrifice Day.

'Id al-Fitr: the Fast-Breaking Day.

'Uqud: vaults.

A'zam: the greatest.

Ablaq: alternate black and white.

Abraj al-hamam: dove-cotes.

Abraj (sg. burj): the towers.

Abwab al-Sutur: the Gates of the Veils.

Addur al-sultaniyya: the sultan's palaces.

Adurr: a rarely used plural of dar which means a house or the halls of the harem.

Akra: the polo game, also kura.

Al-Qahira: the Victorious, the original name of the Fatimid fortified city north of Fustat which was corrupted in European languages to Cairo.

Amir Akhur Kabir: the Grand Amir of the Horse.

Amir kabir: the great amir.

Arkan: buttresses, or supports.

As: Abkhazi, a people from the southern Crimean area.

Asmita (sg. simat): banquets.

Asra: prisoners of war.

Atabegs: the guardian of a Seljuk prince and the regent of his appanage. After the disintegration of the Seljukid empire, the title was held by the rulers of the successor-states to the Seljukids in Syria, Jezira, and Anatolia.

Atabek al-'asakir: the commander of the armies.

Azan: the call to prayer.

Bab 'Arab Yasar: the Gate of 'Arab Yasar.

Bab al-Istabl: the Gate of the Stables.

Bab al-Jabal: the Mountain Gate.

Bab al-Jadid: the New Gate.

Bab al-Nasr: the Victory Gate.

Bab al-Nasr: the Victory Gate.
Bab al-Qantar: the Gate of the Bridge.
Bab al-Sa'at: the Gate of the Hours.
Bab al-Sab' Hadarat: the Gate of the Seven Hadarat.
Bab al-Silsila: Gate of the Chain.
Bab al-Sirr: the Secret Gate.
Bab al-Sitara: the Gate of the Curtain.
Bab al-Wastani: the Middle Gate.
Babilyun: the name of the old settlement on the site of Misr al-Fustat.
Bahra: fountain.
Bahri: facing the Bahr, the Nile, which is the northwest orientation in Cairo.
Barrani: of the outside.
Bashura: barbican.
Bayt: house.
Bayt al-Mal: the Treasury.
Bayt al-Tarazi: the House of the Tailor.
Bi'r al-Istabl: the Stables Well.
Bi'r al-Sab' Sawaqi: the Well of the Seven Saqiahs.
Bimaristan: a hospital.
Bir al-Naqqala: the Carrying Well.
Birket al-Fil: the Pond of the Elephant.
Birket al-Jubb: the Pond of the Pit.
Bukhariyya: the familiar Mamluk stucco ornaments elliptical in shape.
Burj al-'Afiya: the Convalescence Tower.
Burj al-Ahmar: the Red Tower.
Burj al-Khalifa: the Tower of the Caliph.
Burj al-Mansuri: the Tower of al-Mansur [Qalawun].
Burj al-Rafraf: the Rafraf Tower.
Burj al-Shakhs: the Tower of the Person.
Burj al-Tabbalin: the Tower of the Drummers.
Burj al-Tablakhana: the Tower of the Drummery.
Burj al-Tarima: Tower of the Baldachin.
Burj al-Zafar: Victory Tower.
Burj al-Zawiyya: the Tower of the Corner.

Bustan: garden.
Buyut al-sultaniyya: the royal storehouses.
Dahaliz: passages.
Dahaliz, sg. dihliz: the connecting passages.
Dar: house.
Dar al-'Adl: the palace of justice.
Dar al-'Awamid: the House of Columns.
Dar al-Baqar: the House of Oxen.
Dar al-darb: the mint.
Dar al-Dhahab: the House of Gold.
Dar al-Dhiafa: the Hospitality Palace.
Dar al-Jadida: the New House.
Dar al-Mahfuzat: Archives.
Dar al-Niyaba: The Vicegerency Palace.
Dar al-qinid: the house of molasses.
Dar al-Shukhus: the House of Figures.
Dar al-Wizara: the official residence of the Fatimid vizir.
Daraj: stairs.
Dast: a wooden chair covered with a silk cloth.
Dhahabiyya: the Golden, usually used to refer to the royal boat.
Dihliz: a passageway or a vestibule.
Diwan: a special bureau.
Diwan al-'Ama'ir: the construction department.
Diwan al-Jaysh: the Army Department.
Dur al-harim: the houses of the harem.
Dur al-mulk: the quarters of the sultan.
Dur al-sultaniyya: the private quarters of the sultan.
Durkah: vestibule.
Durqa'a: the central part of the qa'a, which literally means the entry to the qa'a.
Firashkhana: the royal wardrobe and tent-room.
Firman: a royal decree.
Fuqani: upper.
Furusiyya: the equestrian exercises.
Ghasha: enveloped or covered.

Ghisha': cover or coat.
Ghur: the crater.
Harafish oral-'amma: the populace.
Haram: the inner part of the harem.
Haramlik: the private quarters.
Hawa'ijkhana: the pantry.
Hosh: enclosure.
Hukr: the zoned land.
Huquq: dependencies.
Hurmiyya: either a part of a qa'a or a certain type of qa'a, discussed in Chapter Two.
Husn: castle.
Iqta': fief.
Iwan al-Kabir: the Great Iwan.
Iwan al-Qal'a: the Iwan of the Citadel.
Iwan Kisra: the palace of Sassanian kings in ancient Ctesiphon.
Jamadariyya: wardrobe masters.
Jashankiriyya: of jashankir, the taster.
Jumaqdariyya: of jumaqdar, ax-bearer.
Jundi: a Mamluk soldier.
Jura: a big depression.
Juwwa: inside.
JuwwanI: those of the inside, antonym of barrani.
Karem: the group of traders specializing in importing spices and other expensive materials from India via Yemen.
Kashf: open.
Katib al-sirr: the sultan's secretary.
Khafiqi: an Egyptian waterproof mortar.
Kharej: outer.
Khas: privy purse.
Khasaki (sing. of khasakiyya): name of the sultan's close group of amirs, discussed in Chapter Three.
Khatib: preacher.
Khawwas: a linguistically more accurate variation of khasakiyya amirs.
Khaza'in, sg.khizana: the nooks.

Khidma: the audience, or the service.
Khila': robes of honor.
Khizanat al-kutub: royal library.
Khurjiyya: from kharij, the outside.
Khushdashiyya: comrades.
Khutba: the sermon.
Kiman: rubble mounds.
Kiswa: embroidered cloth cover of the Ka'ba .
Kushuk Yusef: palace of Yusef (Salah al-Din).
Kuttab al-dast: the clerks of the chair.
Kuttabiyya: the khassakiyya who were trained in the sultan's court.
Lajuq: small tower-like enclosure.
Ma'azil and manafi': requirements of a residential unit.
Mabitat: sleeping spaces.
Majlis: a type of a hall with a middle deep space and two flanking smaller spaces, usually separated from the central court of the house by three sets of doors.
Majrah: channel.
Maktab: the classroom for the sultan's sons and the few select mamluks.
Malik: king.
Mamalik al-Burjiyya: Mamluks of the Towers.
Mamalik al-Mu'izziyya: the mamluks of al-Mu'izz.
Mamalik al-sultaniyya: the royal mamluks.
Manazir, (sg.manzara): belvederes.
Maq'ad: usually translated as loggia, but in the Mamluk context it is a specific loggia with an arcaded opening.
Martaba: dais.
Mashhad: shrine.
Mastaba: a square stand, or a bench.
Matjar: the state office that controlled large-scale trading in a number of commodities.
Mawakib al-sultaniyya: royal processions.
Mawlid al-Nabawi: the celebration of the Birth of the Prophet.
Maydan: hippodrome.
Maydan al-Akhdar: the Green Maydan.

Maydan al-Qal'a: the Citadel Maydan.
Mu'allaq: raised.
Mu'izziyya: attributed to al-Mu'izz Aybak.
Muhtasib: the market-inspector.
Mukus: taxes.
Muqayyadin: the chained ones.
Mushahhar: alternate red and white.
Mushtarafat, sg. mushtaraf: probably a room which overlooks something.
Muta'amimin: those who wear 'umama, or turban, distinguishing them as religious men.
Na'ib al-saltana: the sultan's vicegerent.
Nashz: outcrop.
Nazir al-buyut: the supervisor of the palaces.
Nazir al-jaysh: the army supervisor.
Nazir al-khass: the overseer of crown property.
Niyaba: viceroyship.
Qa'at al-'Awamid: the Qa'a of the Columns.
Qa'a al-Bahra: Qa'a of the Fountain.
Qa'a al-Salhiyya: al-Salih's hall at the Citadel of the Mountain.
Qa'a al-Zahiriyya: the Qa'a of al-Zahir.
Qa'a mu'allaqa: a raised qa'a.
Qa'a musaqqafa 'aqdan: a vaulted qa'a.
Qa'at al-Insha': the Chancery Hall.
Qa'at al-Sab'a: the Seven Qa'as.
Qa'at al-Sahib: hall of the Vizir.
Qa'at julus: a sitting qa'a.
Qabu: basement.
Qadi al-'askar: judge of the army.
Qahramana: stewardess.
Qal'at al-Bahr: the Citadel of the Nile.
Qal'at al Jabal: the Citadel of the Mountain.
Qal'at al-Jundi: Citadel of the Soldier.
Qanatir al-Siba: the Bridge of the Lions.
Qarafa: the Cemetery.

Qarafa al-Kubra: the Great Cemetery.
Qarafa al-Sughra: the Southern or Little Cemetery.
Qaramaydan: the Black Maydan.
Qasr al-Ablaq: the Striped Palace or Ablaq Palace.
Qastal: a watercourse.
Qibli riwaqs: the aisles of the prayer hall.
Qubba: dome.
Qubba al-Khadra: the Green Dome, after the Umayyad and Abbasid palaces.
Qubba al-Zarqa': the Blue Dome.
Qubbat al-Hawa: Dome of the Winds.
Qudat al-qudat: the four supreme judges of the four Sunni schools of jurisprudence.
Qulla: keep.
Qusur al-Juwvaniyya: inner palaces.
Rab': residential block.
Rafraf: the word seems to mean a light roofed structure, something like a pergola.
Rahbat al-Hamra: the Red Court.
Rahbat al-Iwan: the Court of the Iwan.
Rahbat al-Kharej: the Outer Court.
Rahbat al-Qal'a: the Court of the Citadel.
Rank: emblem.
Rawashin, sg.rawshan: corbels.
Rawk: survey.
Rijal al-Qalam: Men of the Pen.
Rijal al-Sayf: Men of the Sword.
Rikabkhana: the saddlery.
Riwaq: the word should be understood as generically indicating a living unit in the upper level of a residence. It may mean also a gallery or a portico.
Sa'id: the one of good omen.
Sab' Hadarat: the Seven Slopes or Ramps.
Sahat al-'Alam: Place of the Flag.
Sahn: an outer courtyard.
Salamlik: reception quarter.
Saqiah: waterwheel.

Sarha: extended royal promenade.
Shadd: construction supervisor.
Shadd al-'ama'ir superintendent of constructions.
Shadirwan: a wall-fountain made of a slanted marble slab with either geometric pattern in relief or pebbles on its surface to cause the water to ripple on its way down to a channel cut in the ground that leads into another fountain in the center of the space.
Shahid: the martyred.
Sharabkhana: the buttery.
Shubbak: window.
Shukhshikha: a lantern.
Sifl: below.
Silahdariyya: of the silahdar, the arms-bearer.
Simat: banquet.
Sina'a: dockyards.
Sirat: a biography.
Sitara: an awning.
Suffah: a awning, but a suffah in a qa'a is a shallow and small alcove.
Suq al-barrani: the outer suq.
Suq al-Khayl: the Horse Market.
Suqat sg. saqi: cupbearer.
Suwwa: the hill.
Tabaqa: an apartment.
Tablakhana: drummery.
Tahtani: lower.
Takht al-mulk: a throne.
Tarima: baldachin.
Tayyara: literally the one flying over, usually used to designate a high room.
Tiraz: inscription band.
Tishtakhana: house of the washbasin.
Turba: mausoleum.
Umara' mi'a wa-muqaddamin alf: amirs of hundred commanders of thousand.
Umara' al-mashura: amirs of the council functioning as the sultan's official advisory group.

Ushaqiyya: of ushaqi or jift, the stable-attendant.

Ustadar: the master of the household.

Wafidiyya: the Mongol immigrants.

Wakala: a warehouse.

Wakil al-khass: the agent of the privy purse.

Wakil bayt al-mal: the treasury controller.

Wali: governor.

Waqf: endowment deed.

Zariba: embankment.

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Figures

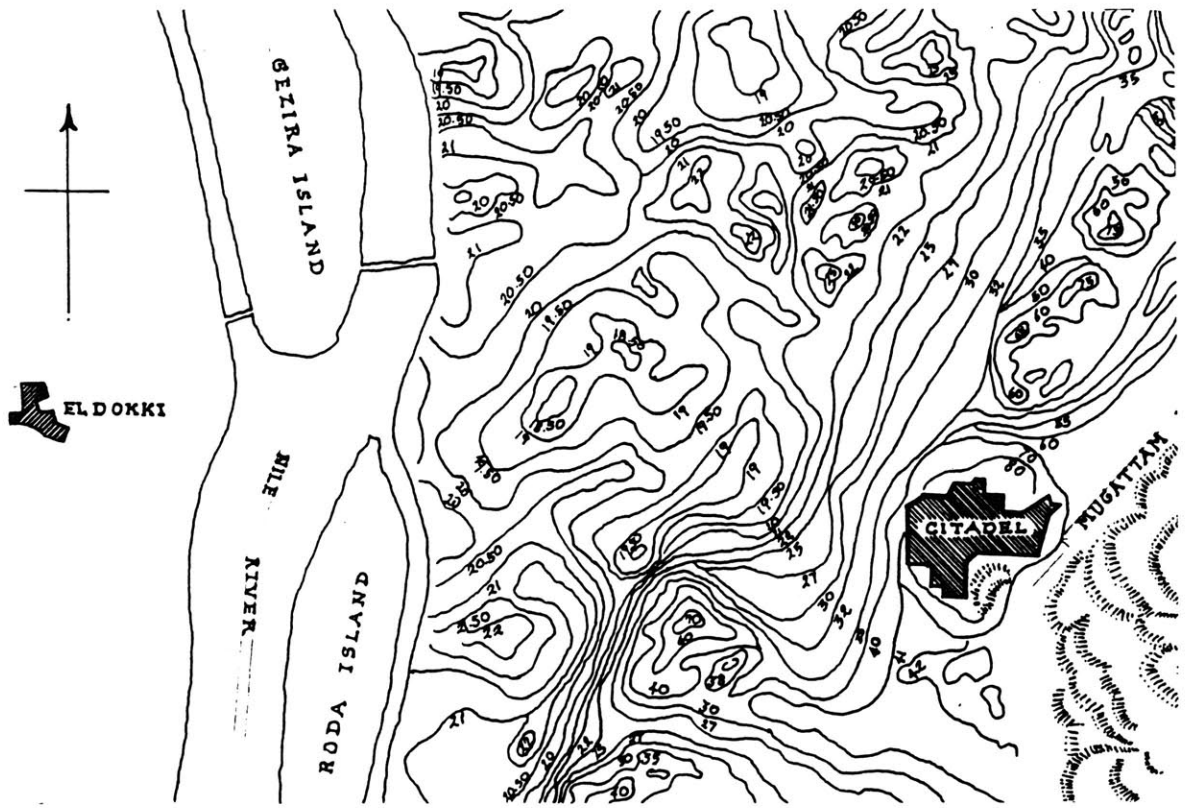


Fig A. 1 Contour Plan of Cairo.

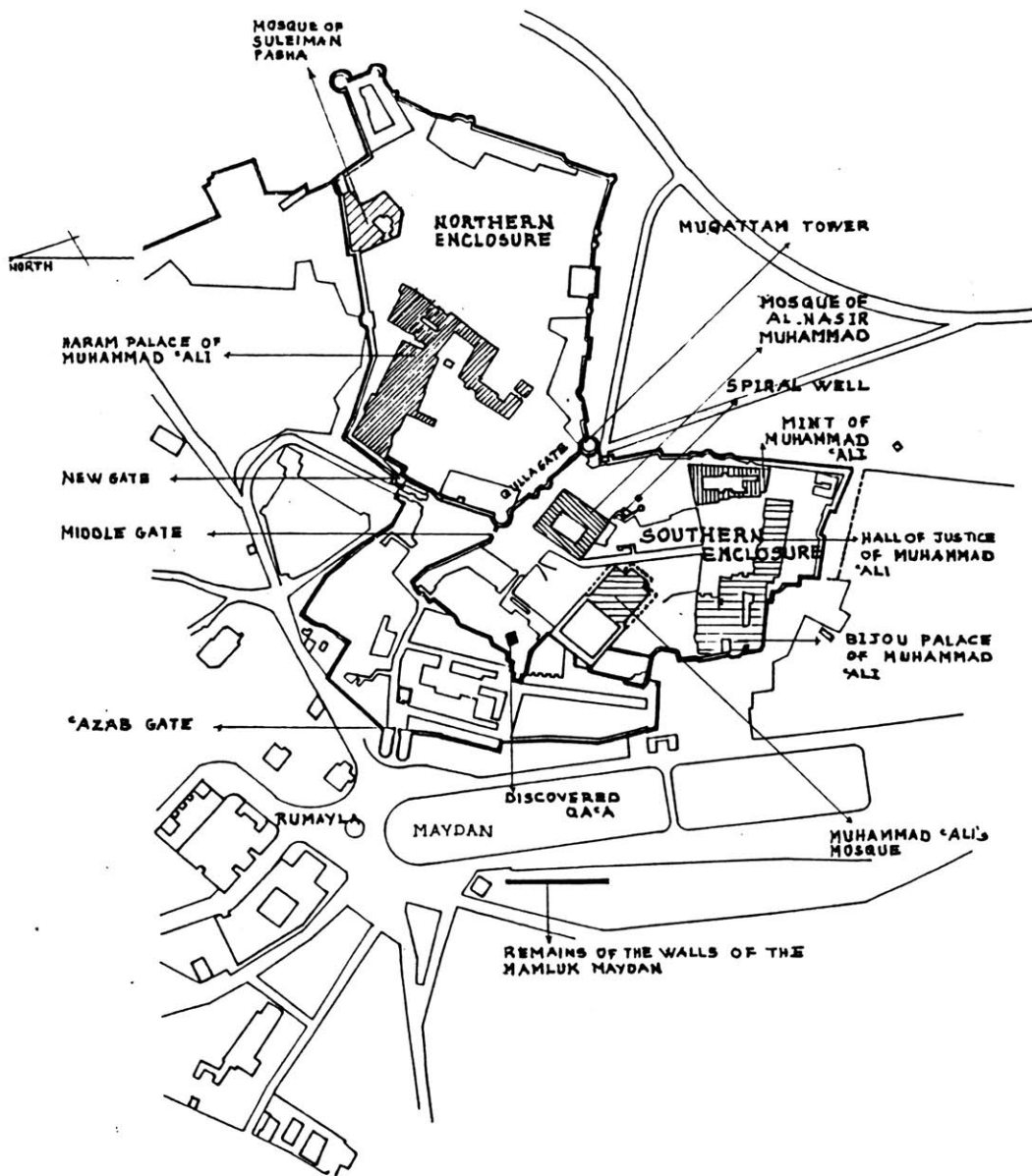


Fig A. 2 Plan of the Citadel Today.

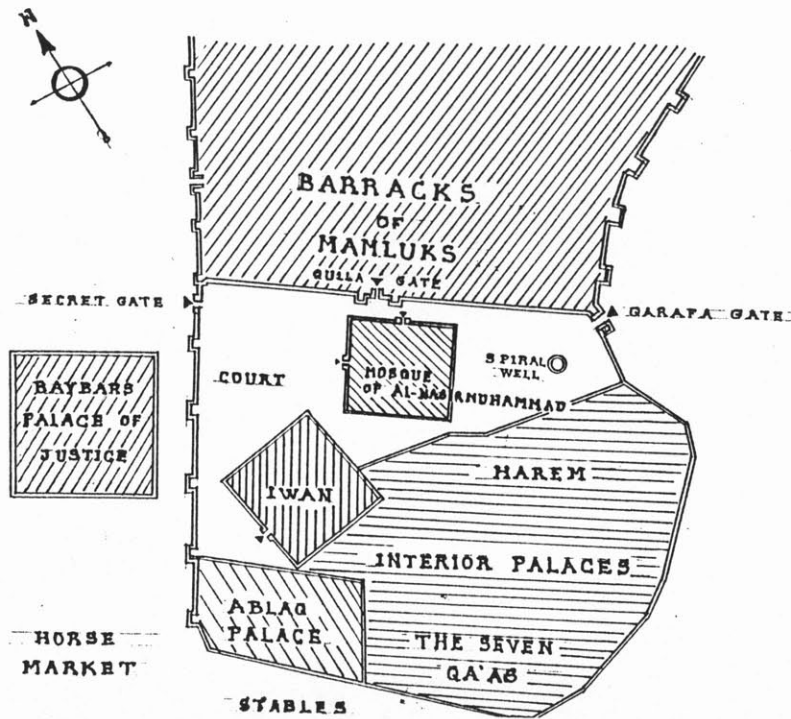


Fig A. 3 Casanova's Schematic Plan of the Southern Enclosure.

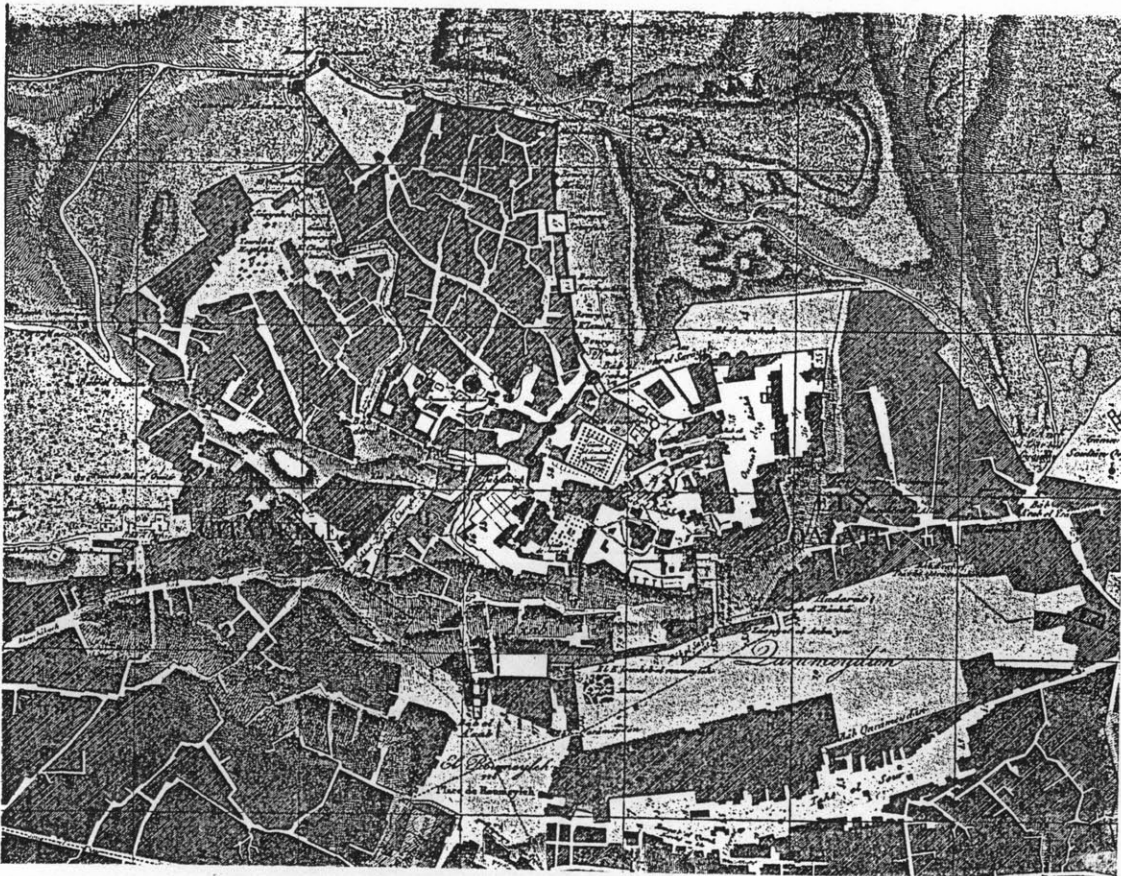


Fig A. 4 Plan of the Citadel from the Description de l'Égypte.

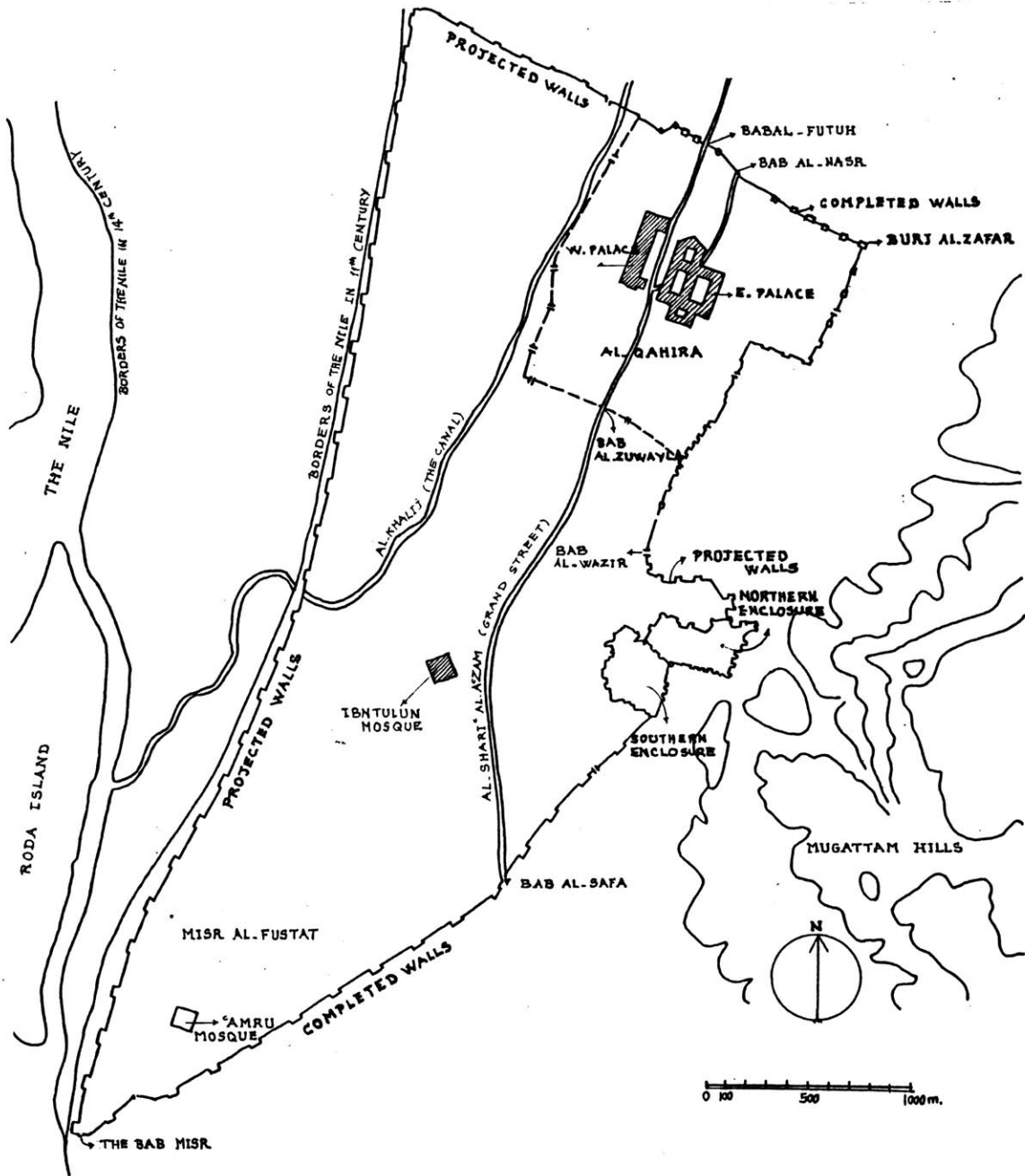


Fig 1. 1 Reconstructed Plan of Fatimid al-Qahira

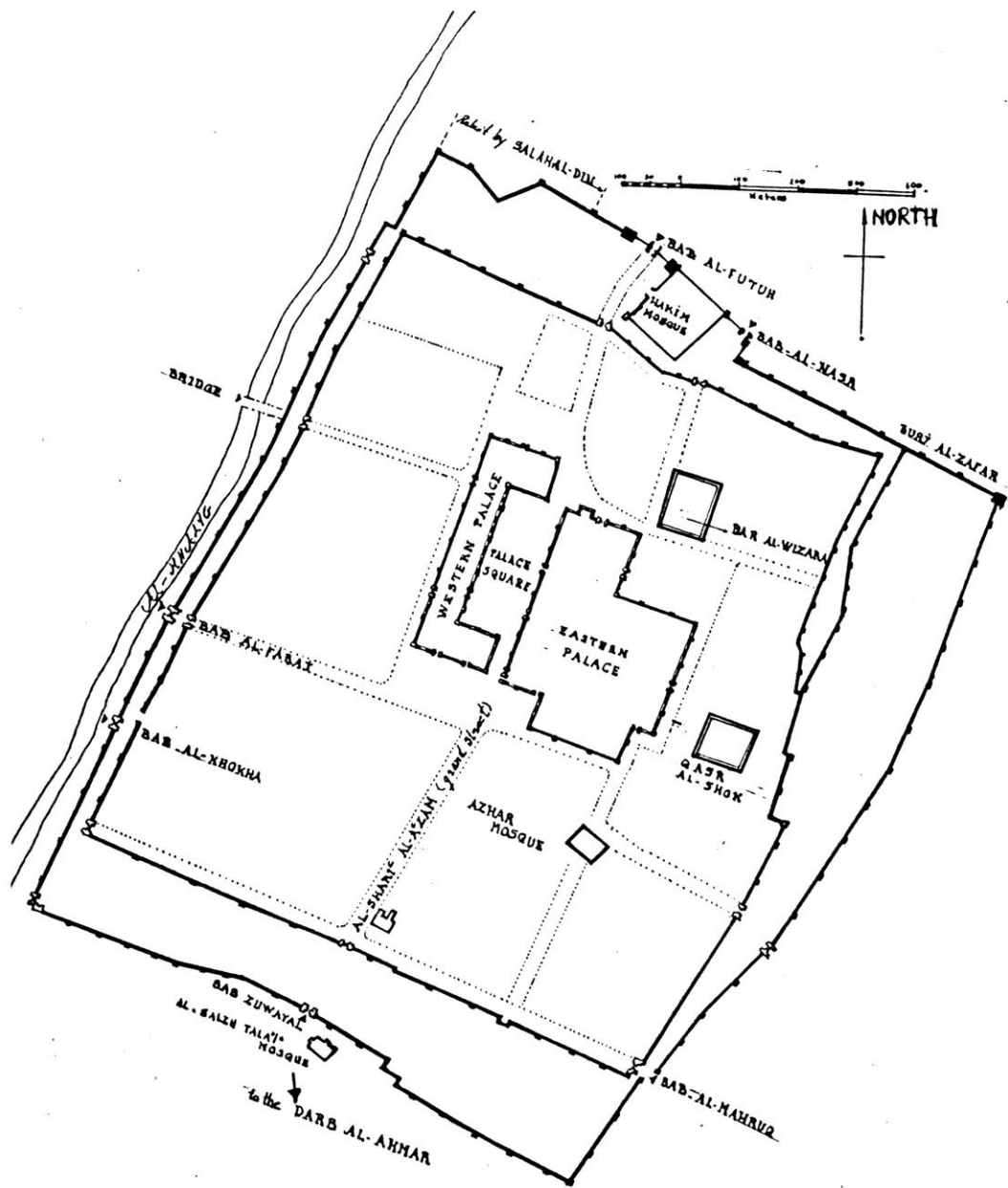


Fig 1. 2 Reconstruction of the Original Fortifications' Plan

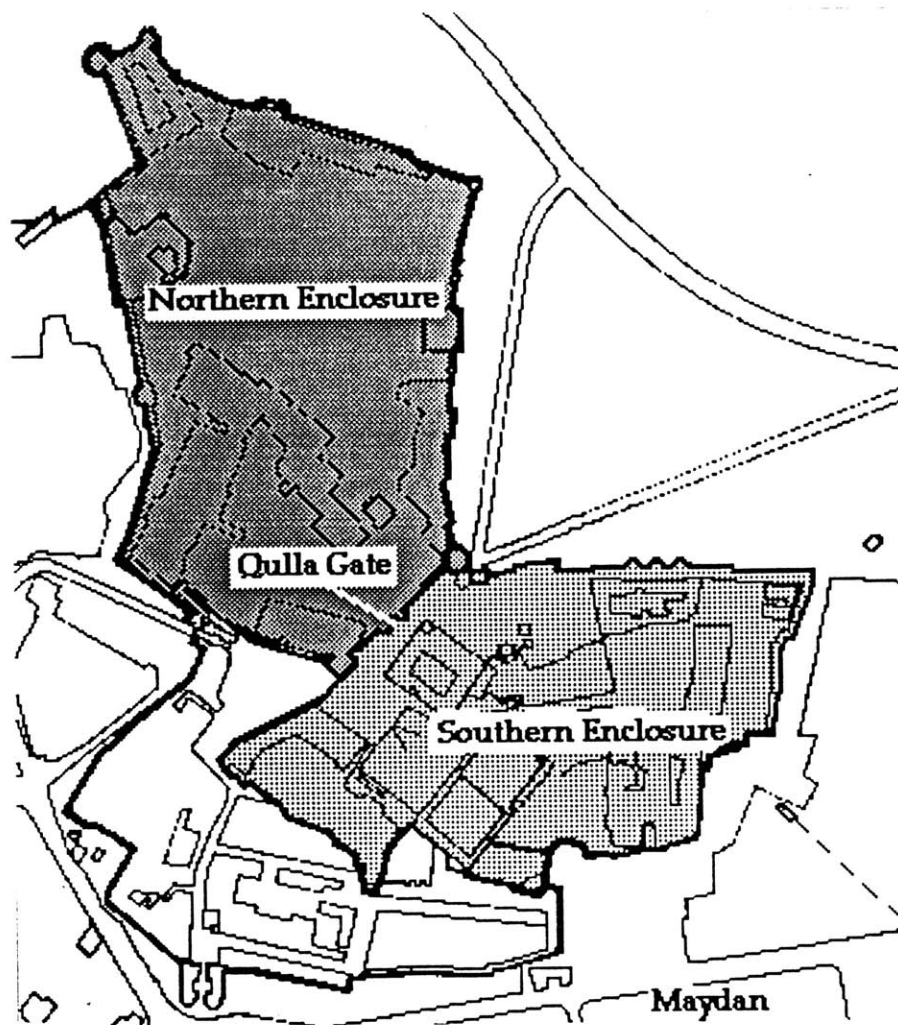


Fig 1. 3 Plan of the Basic Division of the Citadel

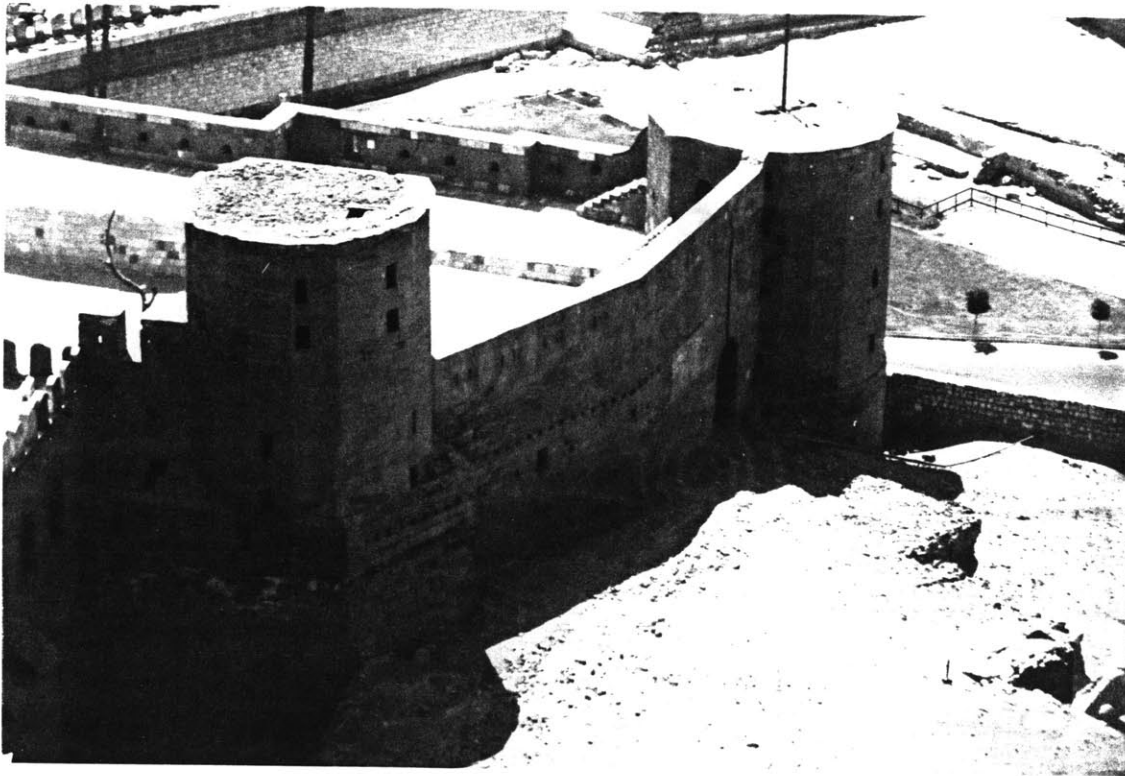


Fig 1. 5 View of the Two Towers and the Wall between them

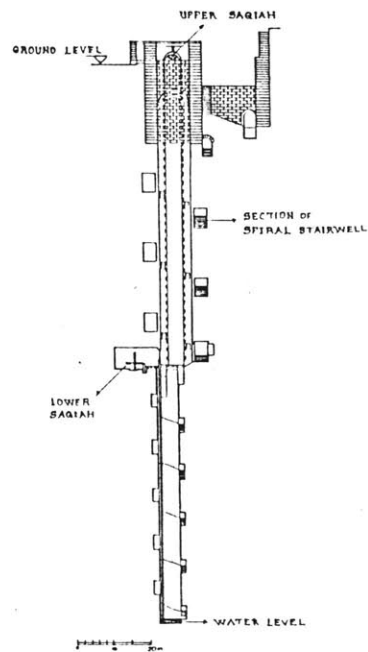


Fig 1. 4 Section Through the Well

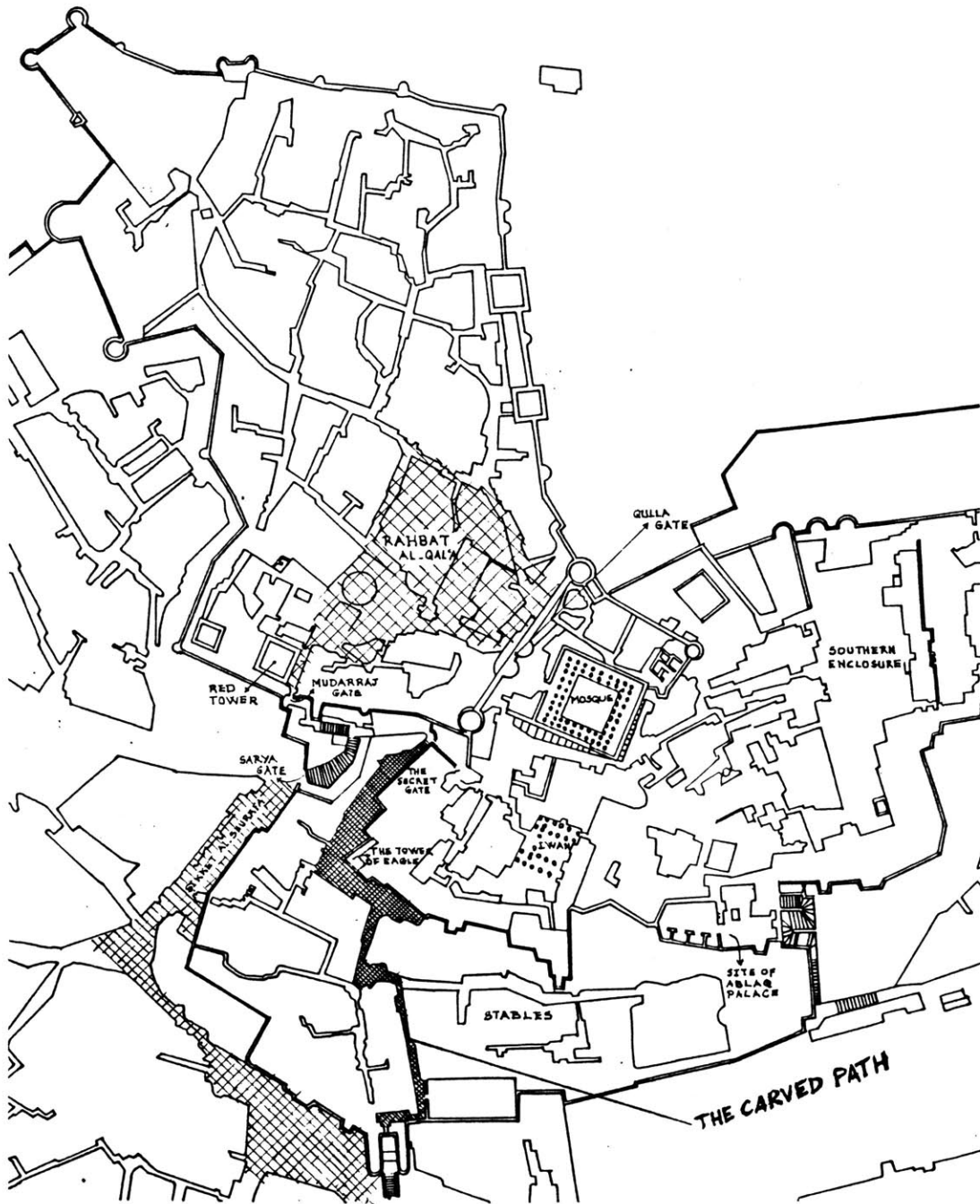


Fig 1. 6 Description de l'Égypte 's Plan Showing the Path

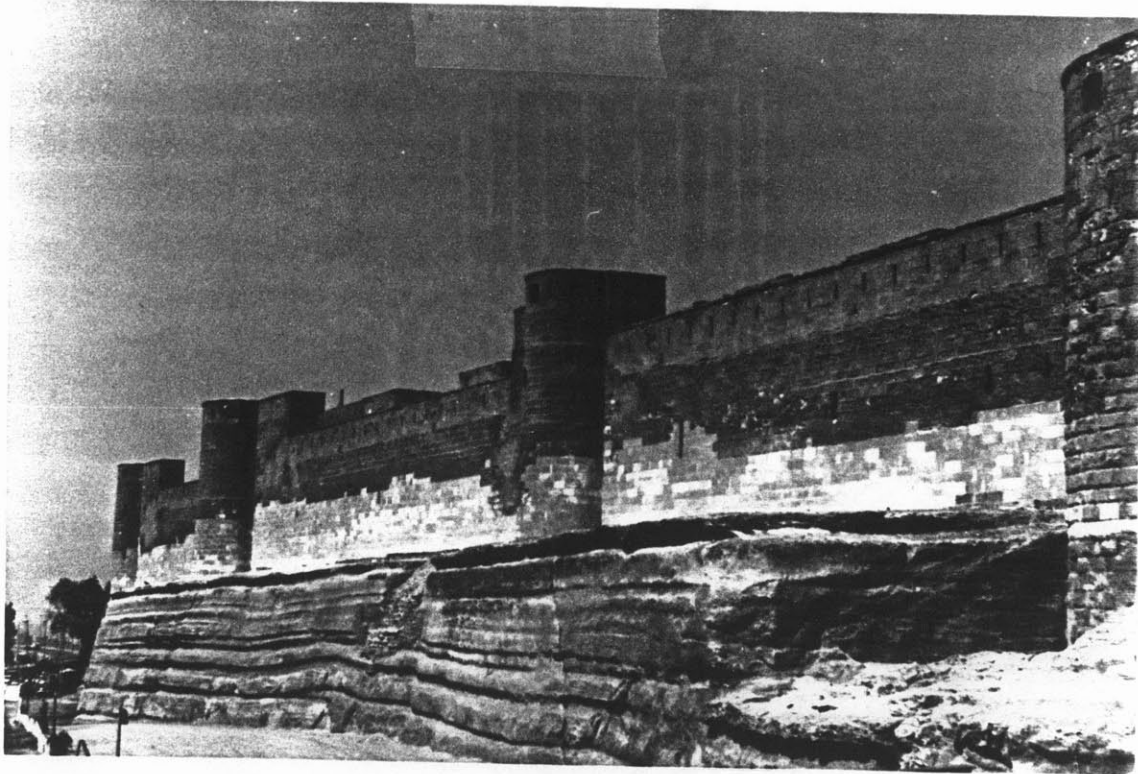


Fig 1. 7 View of the Northern Enclosure's Walls

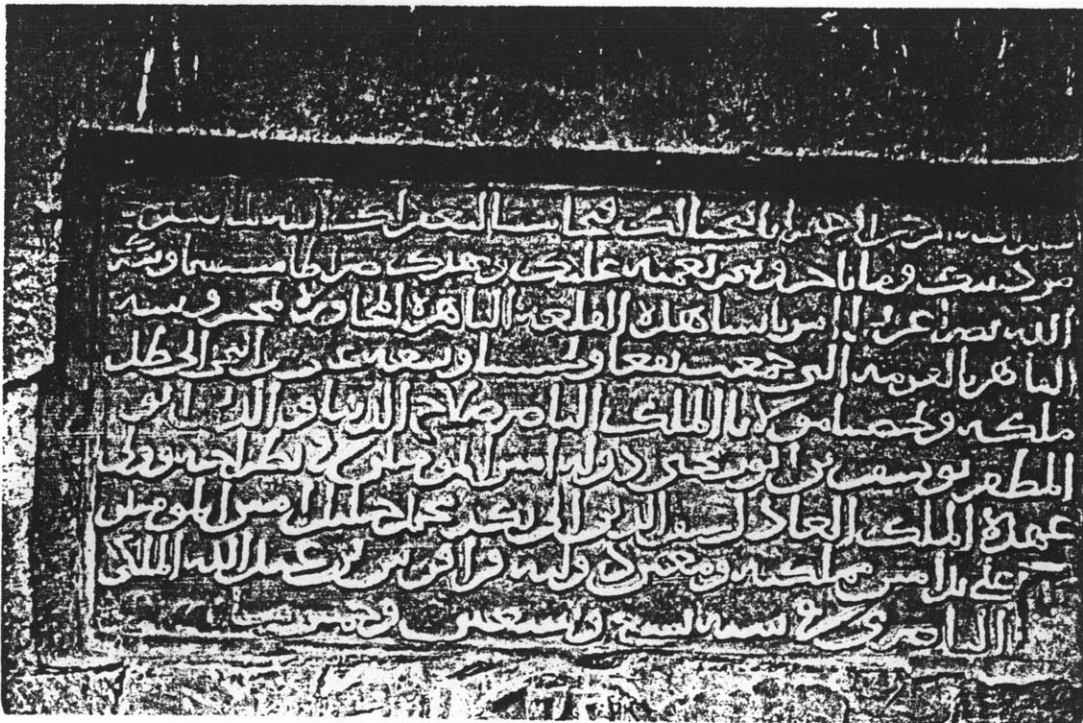


Fig 1. 8 View of the Foundation Inscription

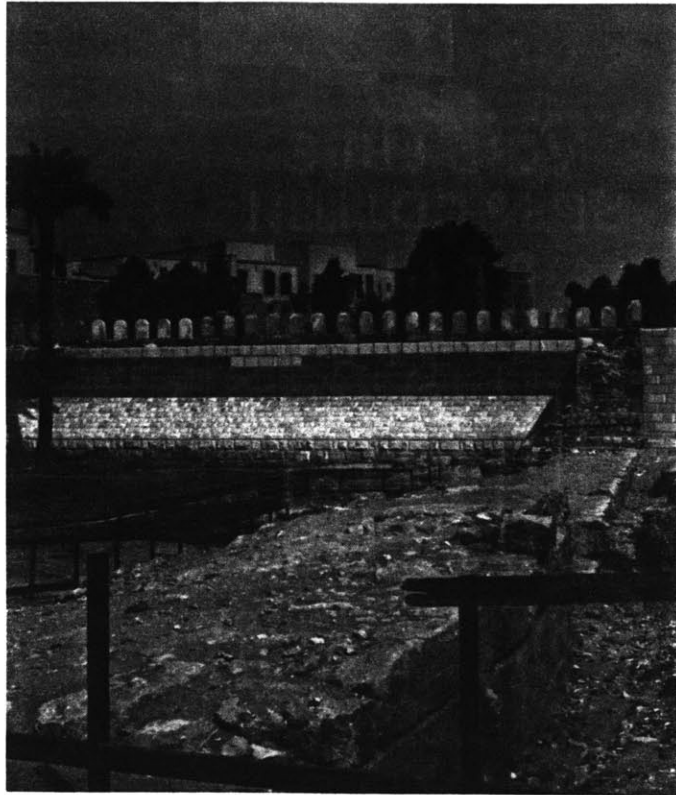


Fig 1. 9 Excavated Wall between the Well and the Muqattam Tower

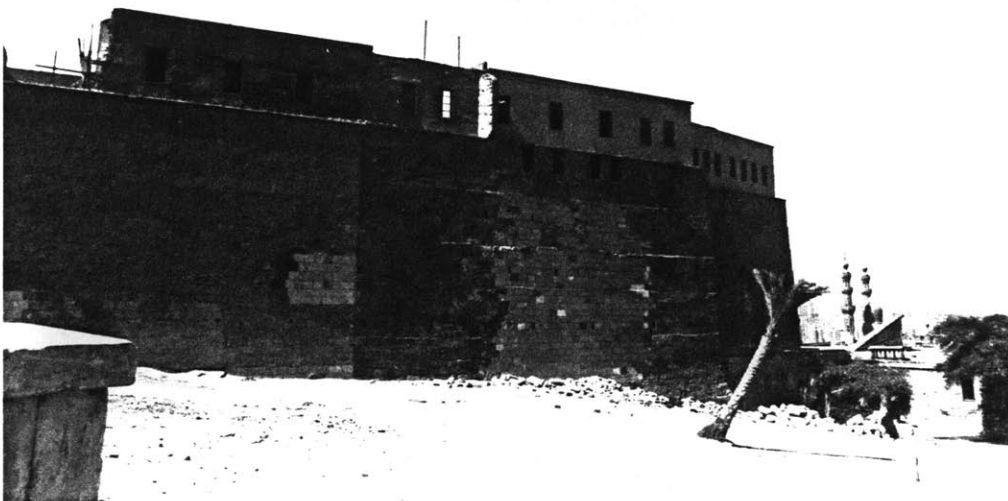


Fig 1. 10 Wall between the New Gate and the Double-Headed Eagle Tower

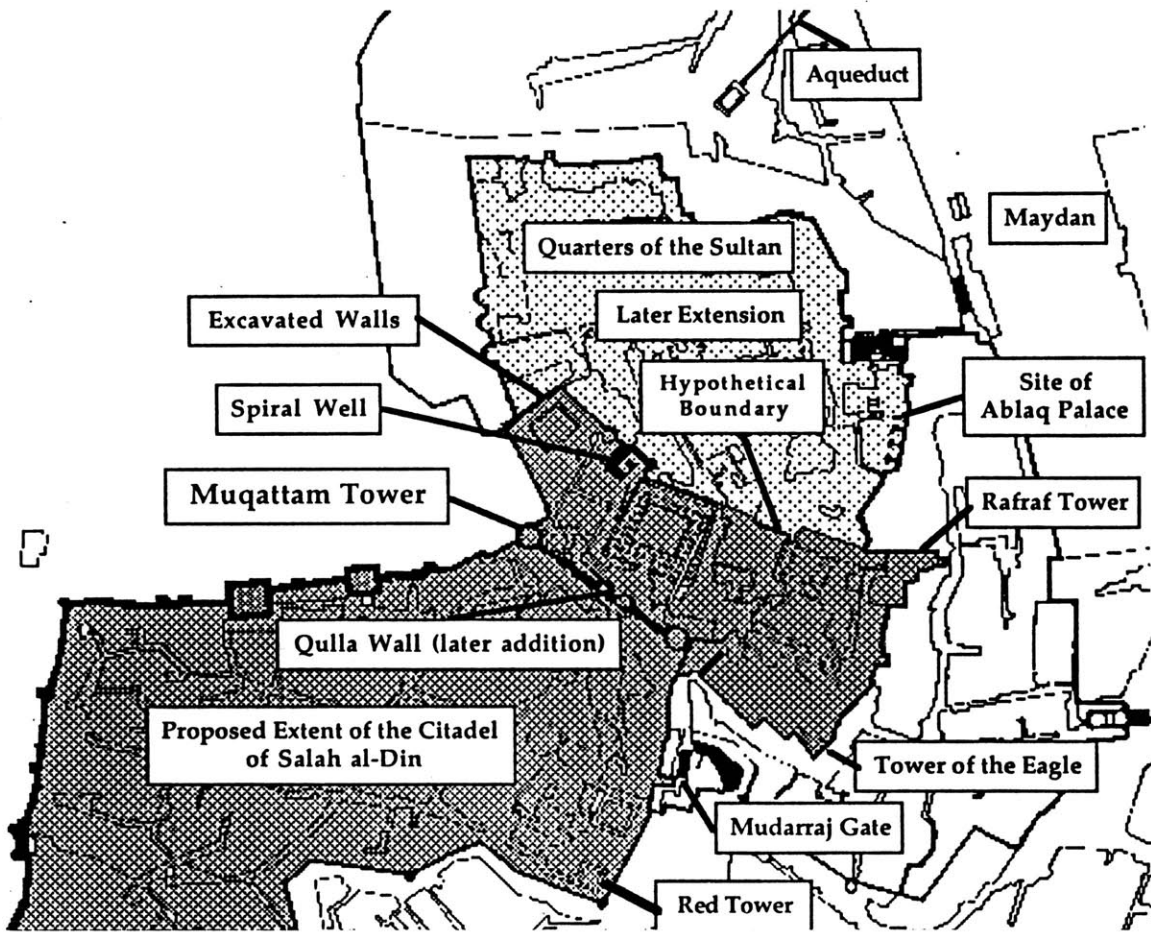


Fig 1. 11 Proposed Circumference of the Initial Enclosure of Salah al-Din Marked on the Map of the Description de l'Égypte

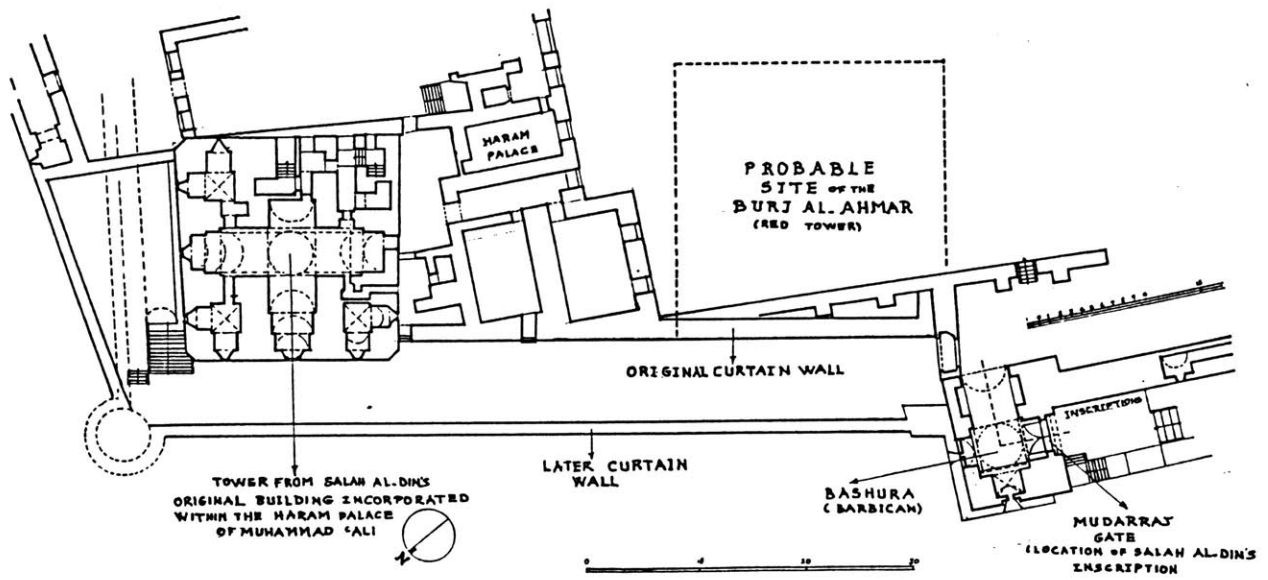


Fig 2. 1 Location of the Red Tower.

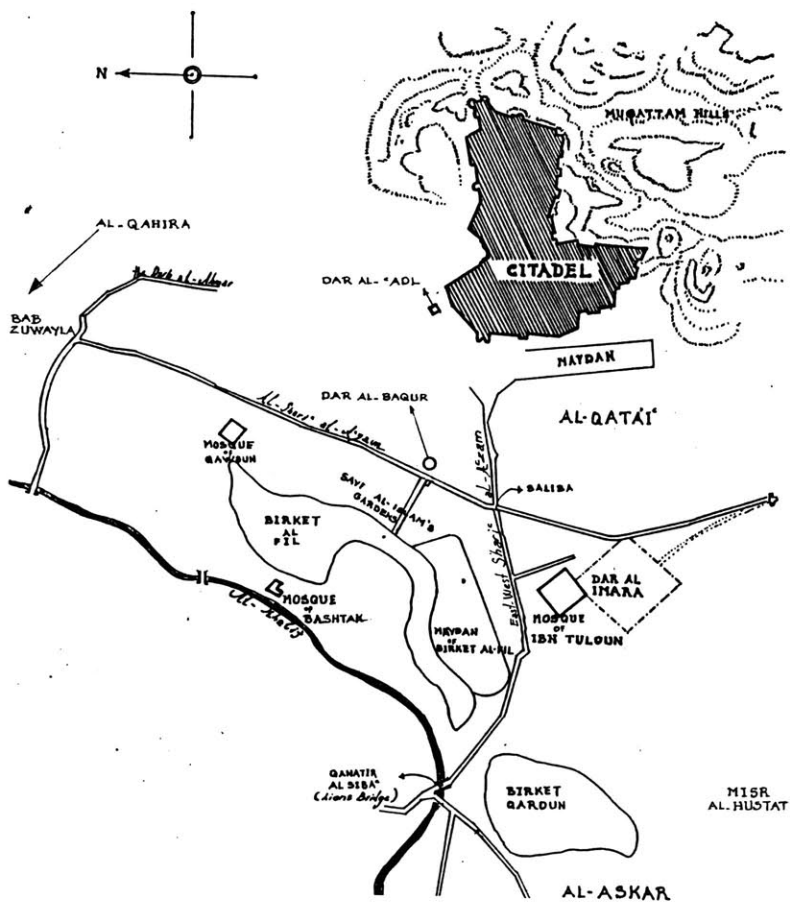


Fig 2. 2 Reconstruction of the Citadel's Surroundings in Baybars's Period.

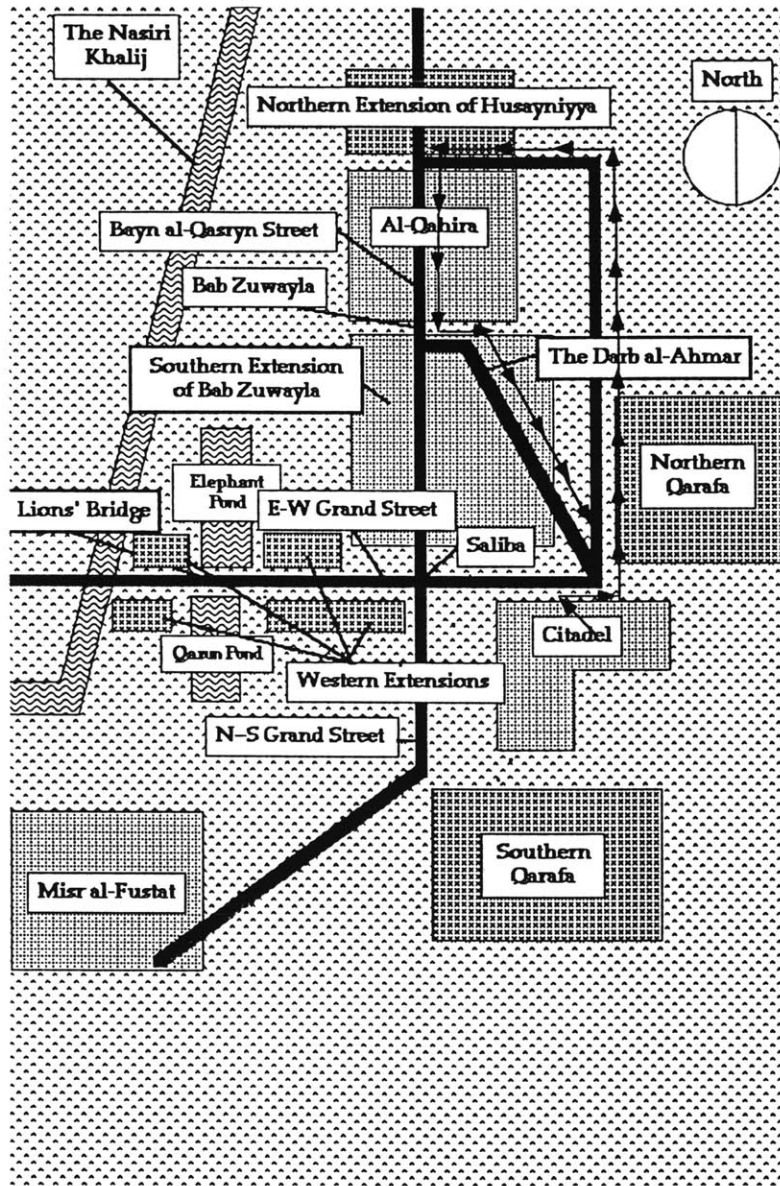


Fig 2. 3 Route of the Royal Procession across Cairo.

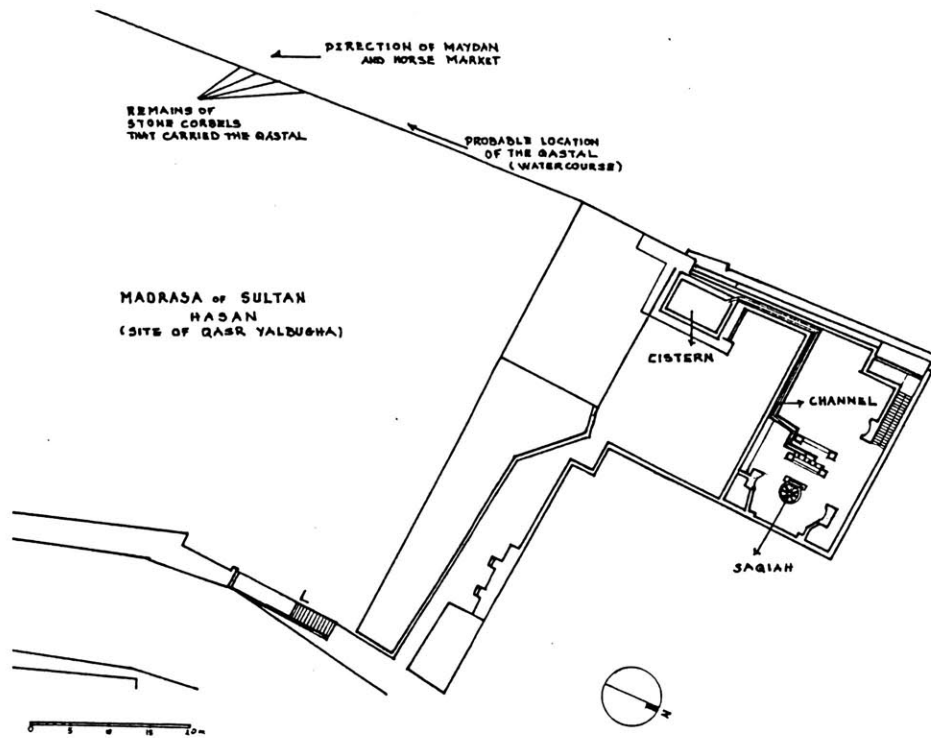


Fig 2. 4 Plan of the Bir al-Naqqala.

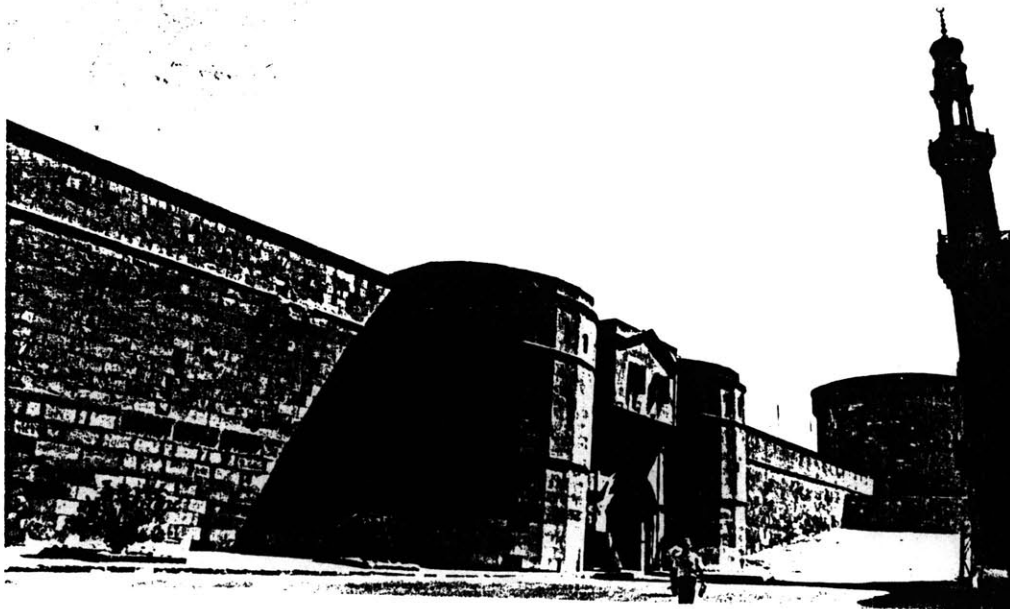


Fig 2. 5 View of the Qulla Gate Today.

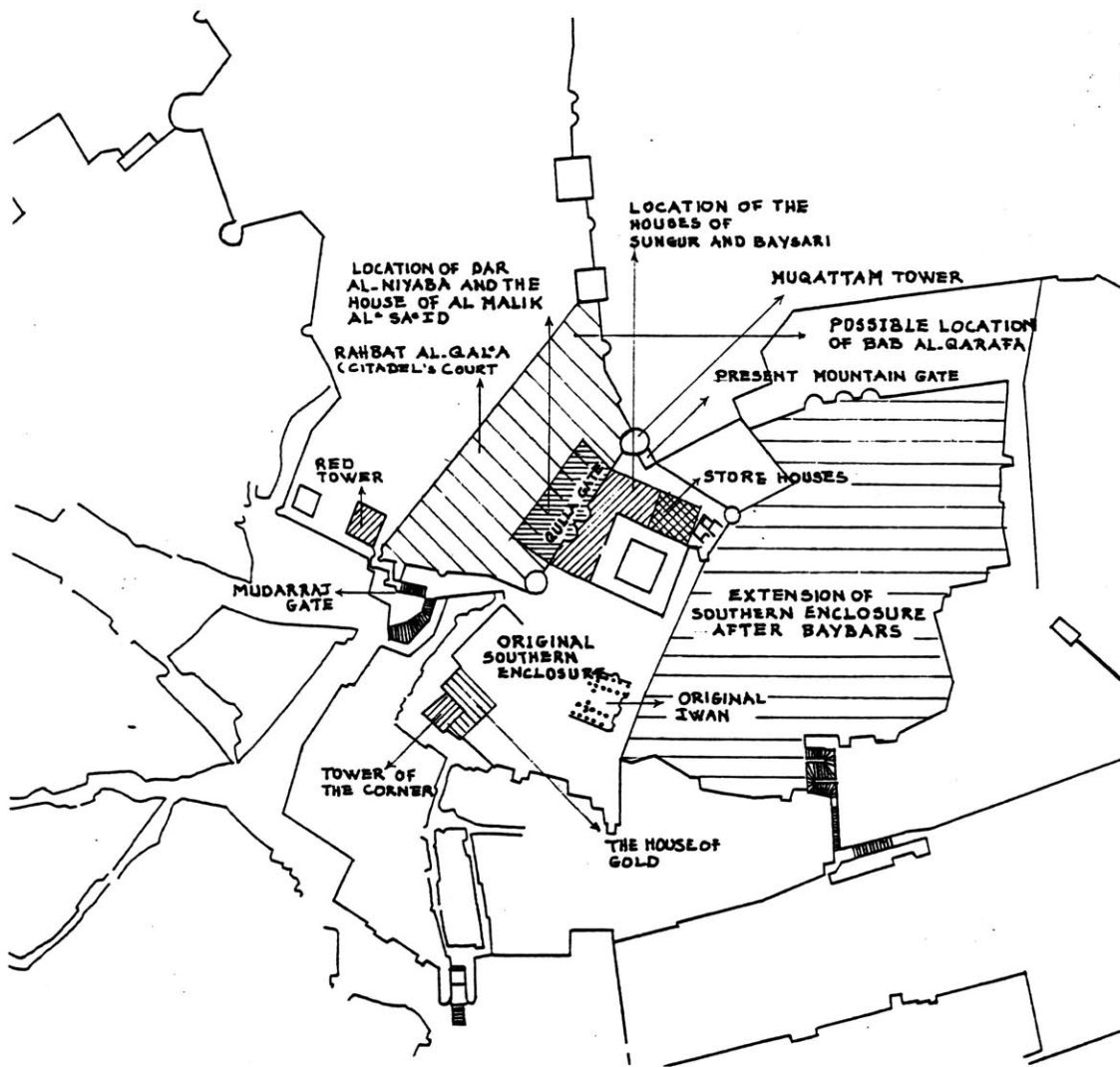
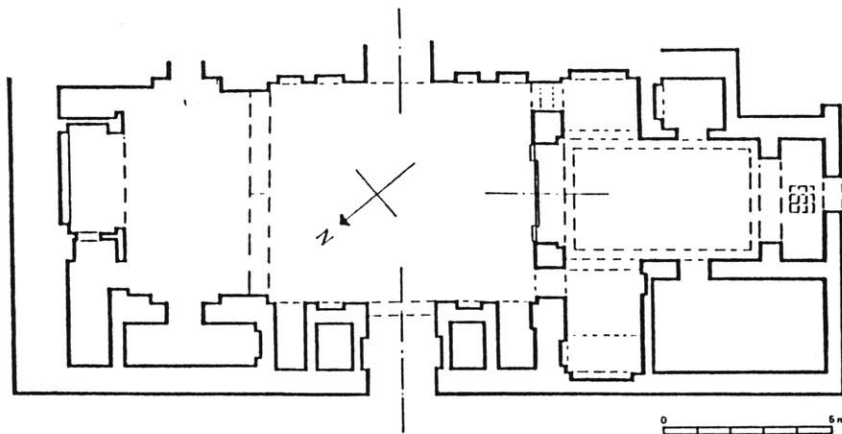


Fig 2. 6 Reconstruction of the Citadel's Division Under Baybars.



Fig 2. 7 View of the Present-Day Mountain Gate.



Dayr al-Banât. Plan. [Source : Plan by B. Maury in A. Lezine, « Les salles nobles des palais mamelouks », *Annales Islamologiques* 10 (Cairo : I.F.A.O., 1972) Fig. 7 on p. 74].

Fig 2. 8 Typical Plan of a Majlis.



Fig 2. 9 View of the Main Hall in the Palace of Bashtak with Arcades on the Sides.

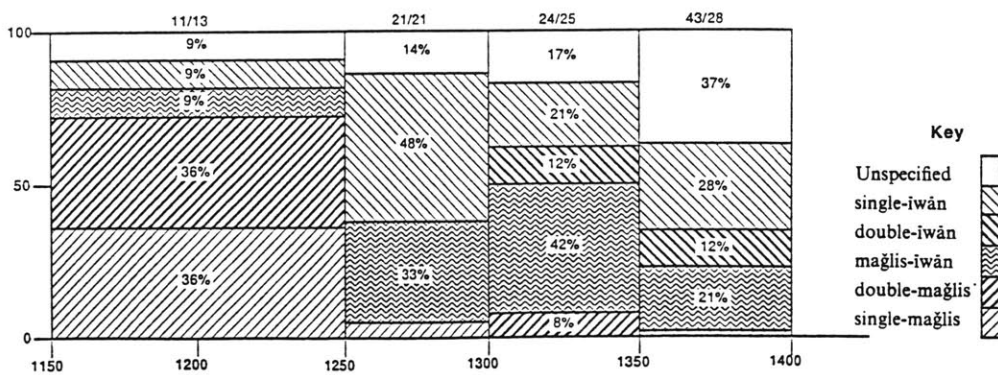


Fig 2. 10 Types of Residential Units Built in Cairo from 1150 to 1400 According to Sayed.

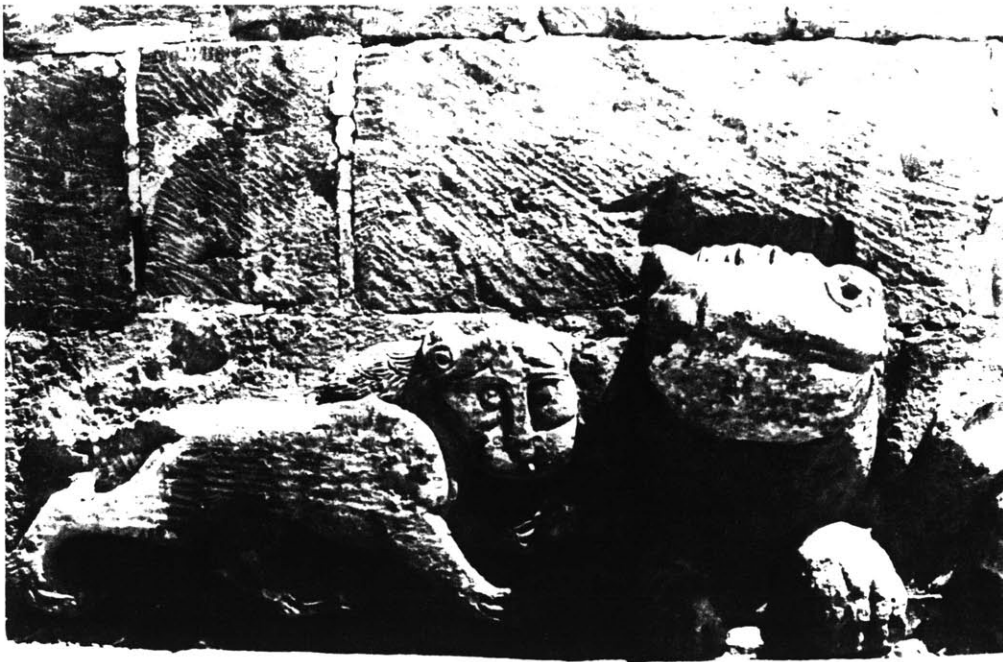


Fig 2. 11 View of the Carved Lions' Frieze.

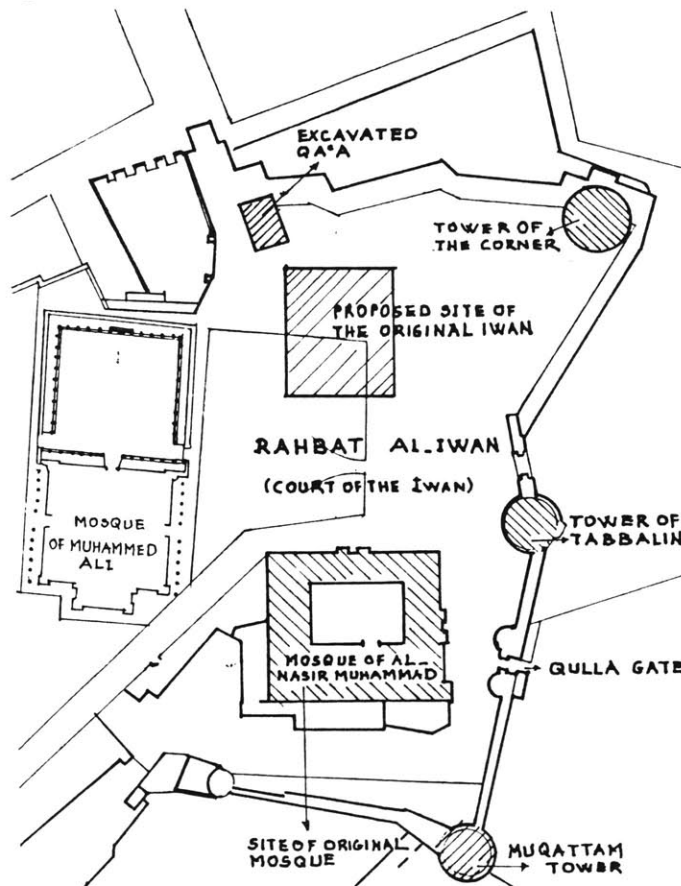


Fig 2. 12 Plan of the Court and Location of the Iwan.



Fig 2. 13 A Hunting Scene from the Baptistère de Saint Louis.

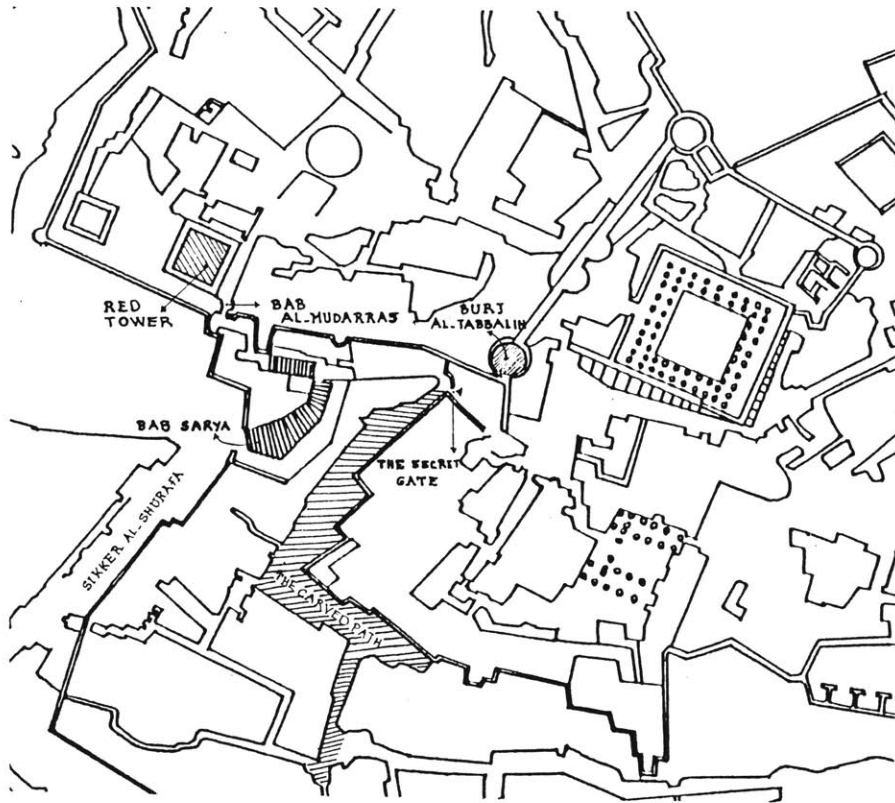


Fig 3. 1 Plan of the Northern Tip of the Southern Enclosure.

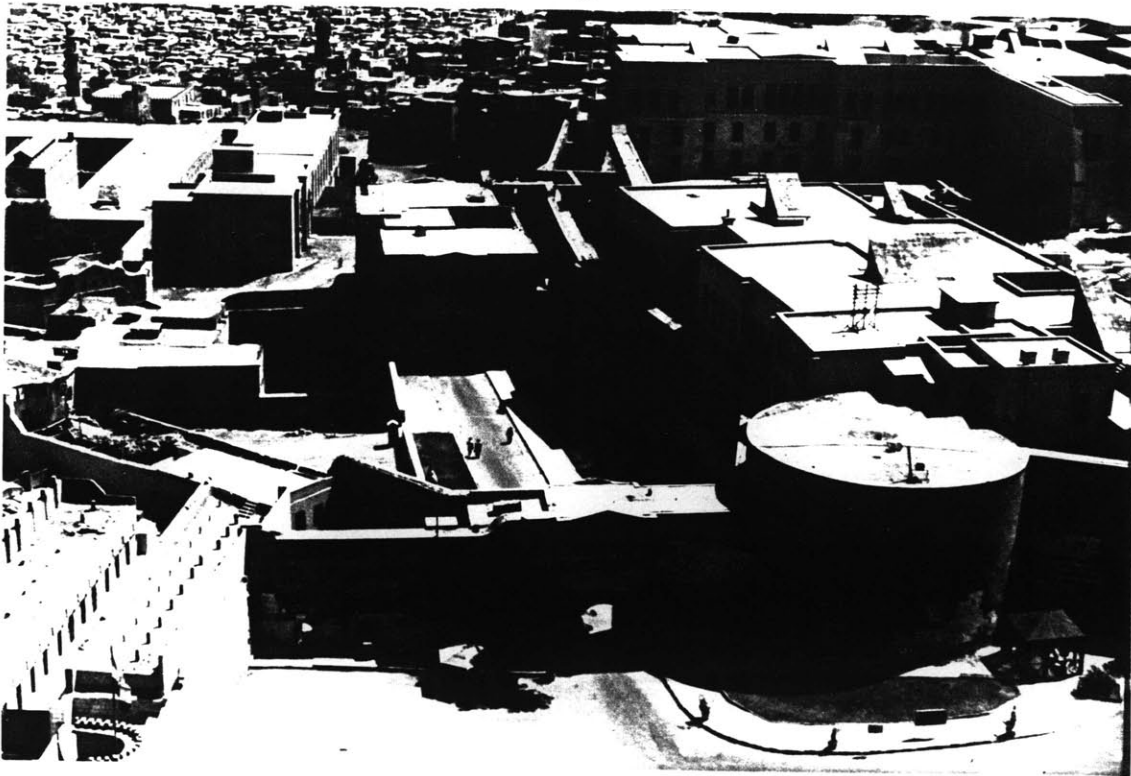


Fig 3. 2 View of the Bab al-Wastani and the Tower.



Fig 3. 3 View of the Interior of the Qubba al-Mansuriyya in Bayn al-Qasryn from Ebers.

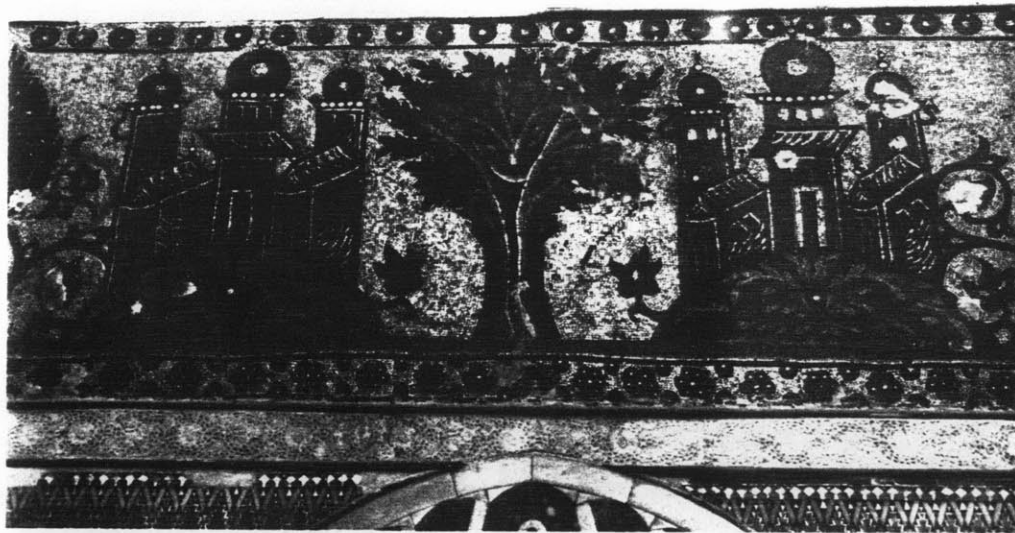
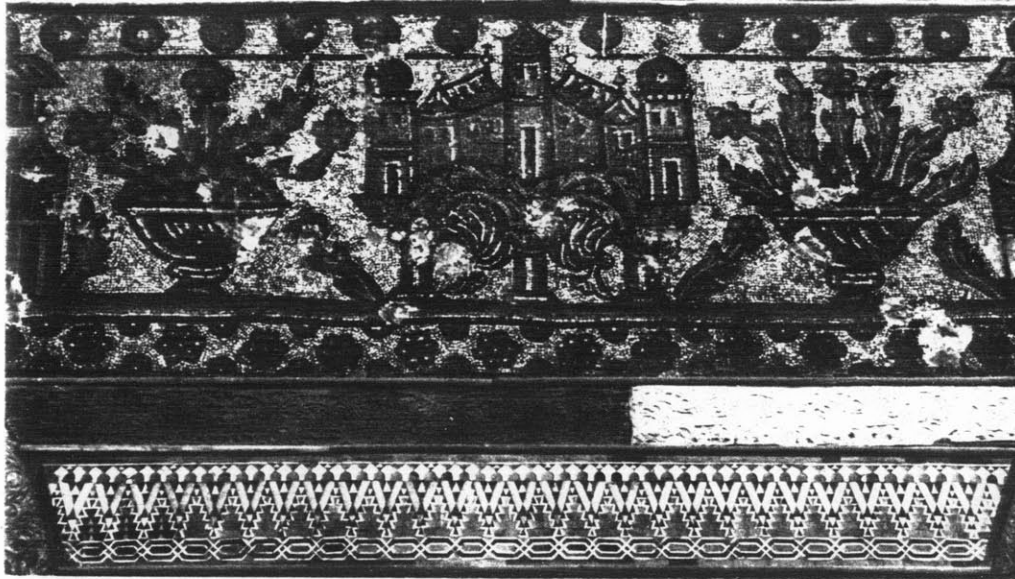


Fig 3. 4 Views of the Mosaic of the Qubba al-Zahiriyya in Damascus.

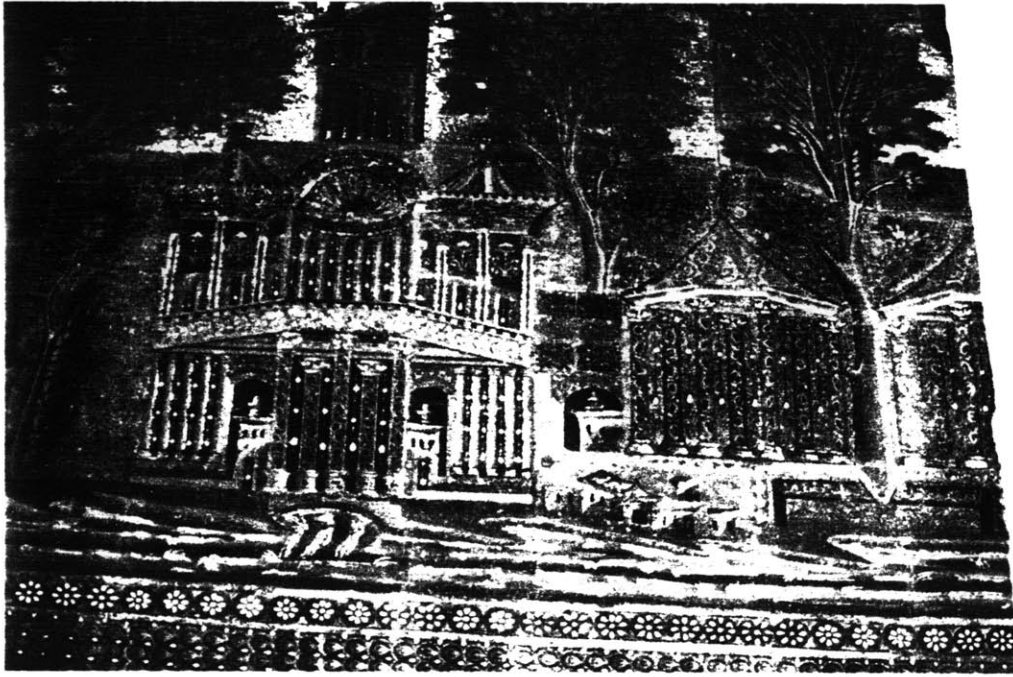


Fig 3. 5 A Mosaic Panel at the Umayyad Mosque.

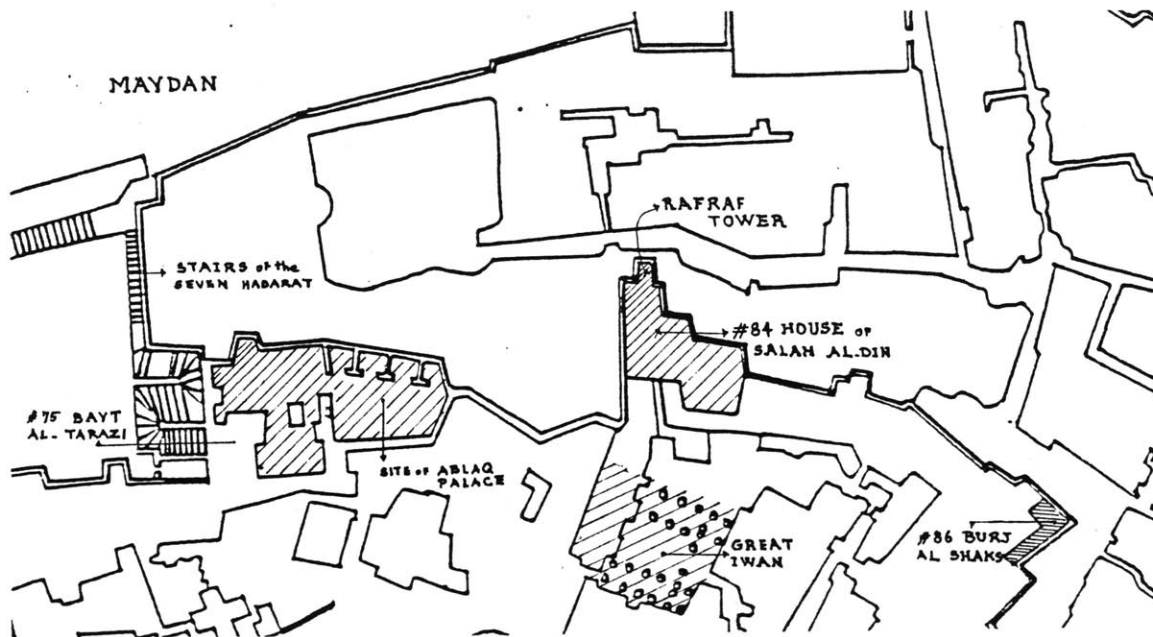


Fig 3. 6 Western Part of the Description de l'Égypte's Map.

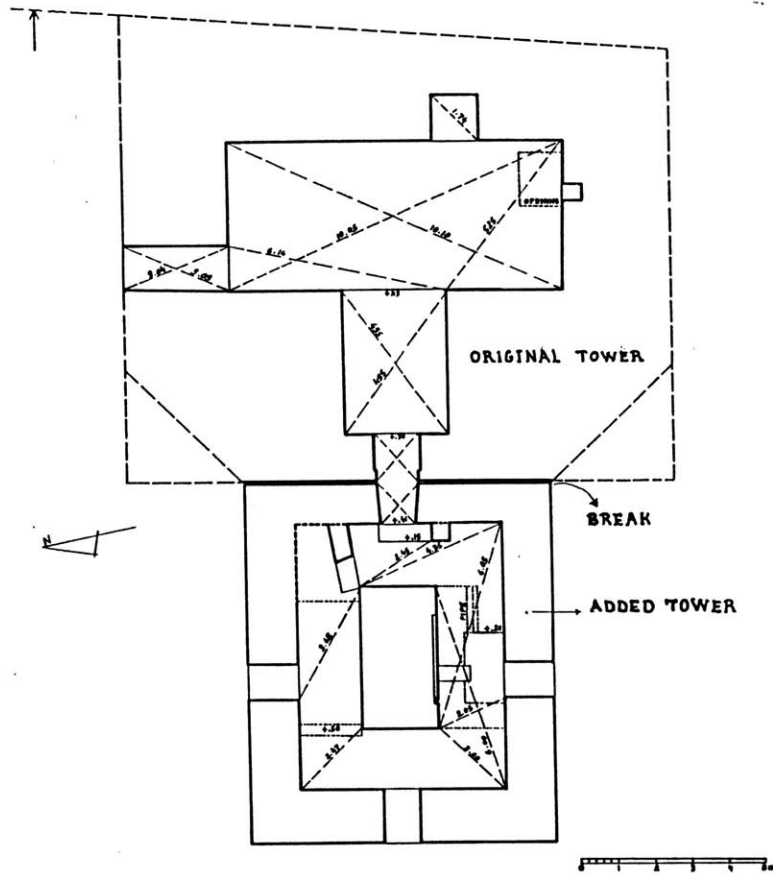


Fig 3. 7 Plan of the Upper Level of the Rafrat Tower.

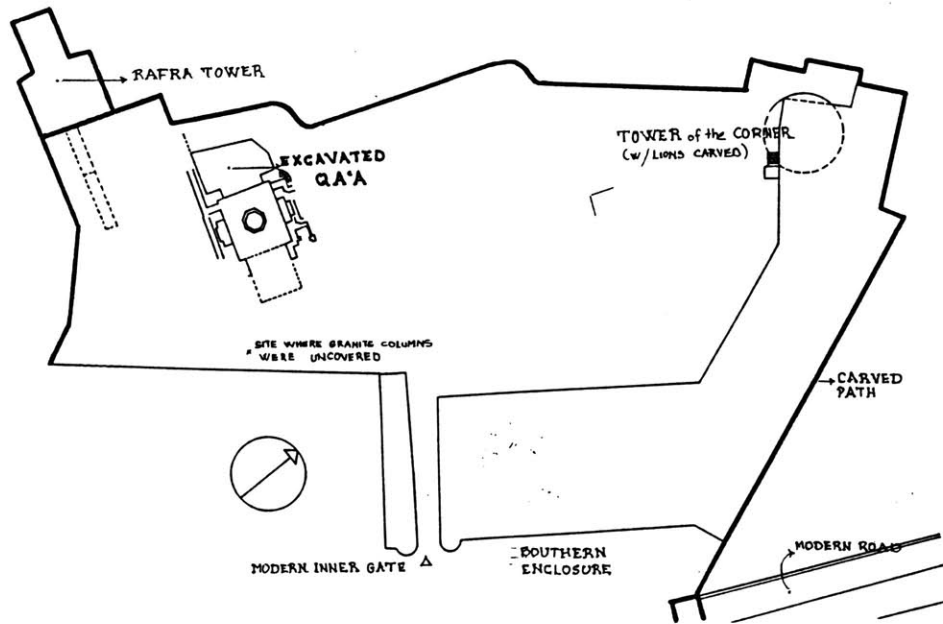


Fig 3. 8 Site Plan of the Excavated Qa'a.

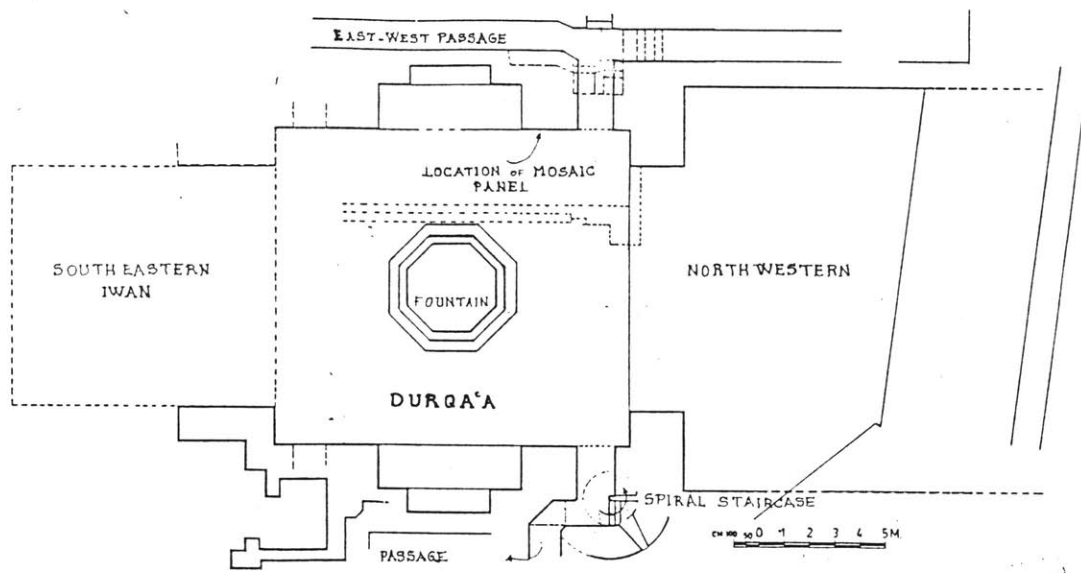


Fig 3. 9 Plan of the Qa'a al-Ashrafiyya.

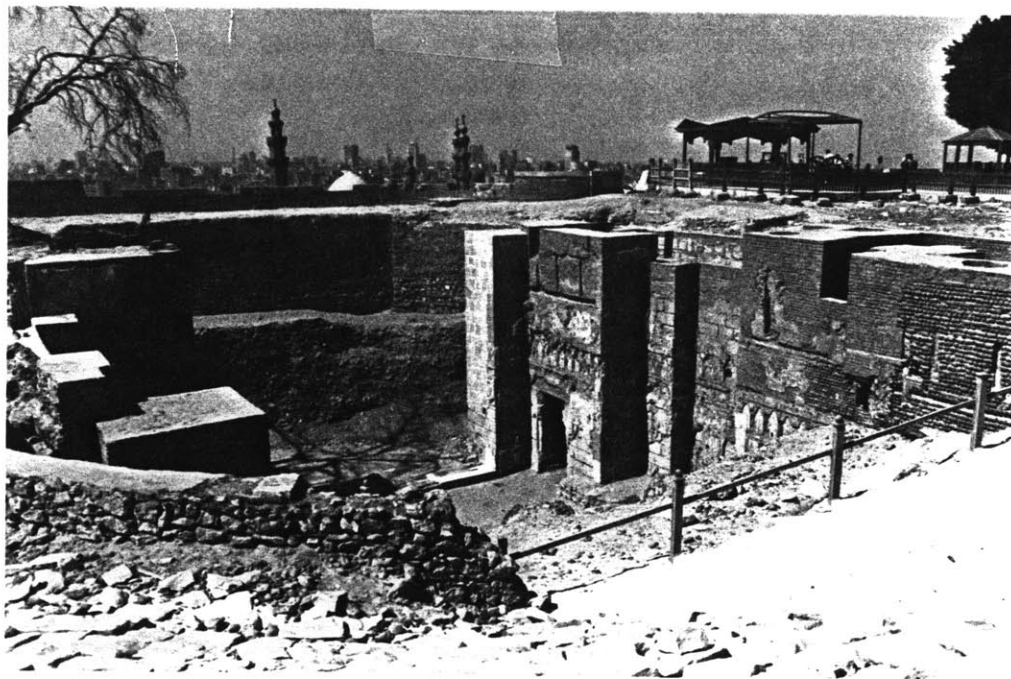


Fig 3. 10 The Northwest Iwan of the Qa'a al-Ashrafiyya.

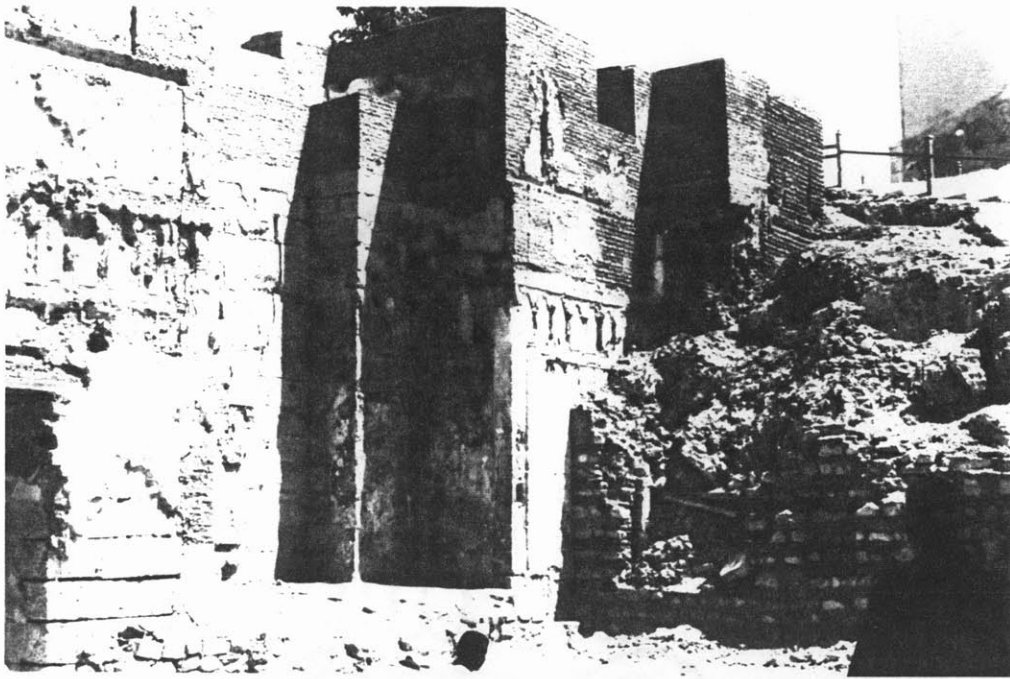


Fig 3. 11 The Southeastern Iwan of the Qa'a al-Ashrafiyya.



Fig 3. 12 Fragment of a Marble Slab with a Vegetal Motif.

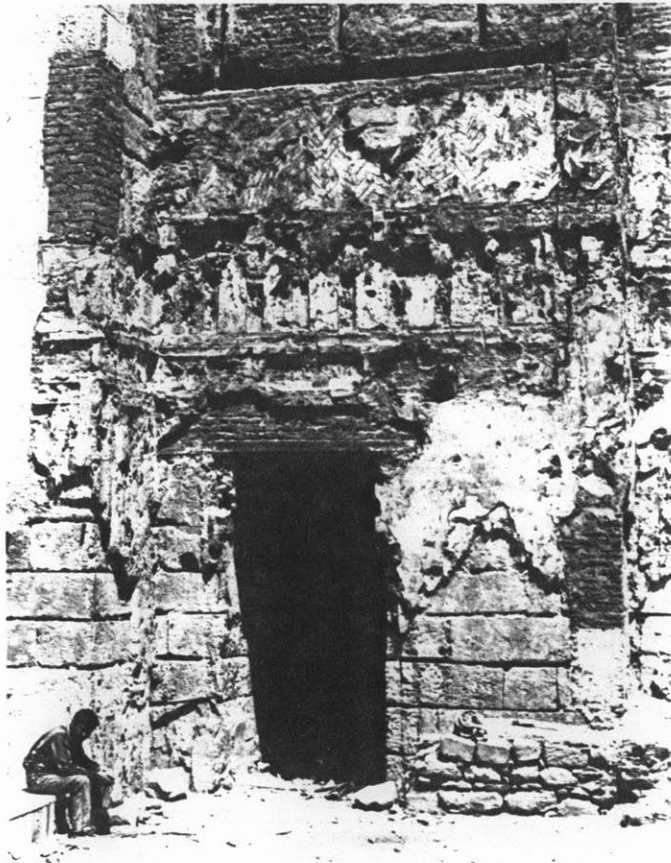
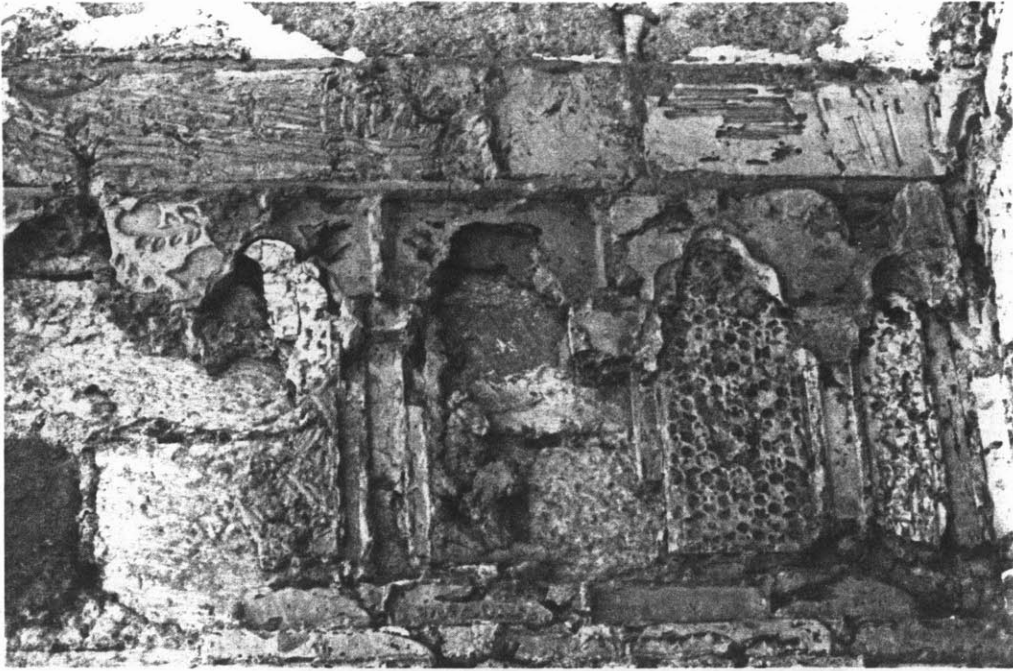


Fig 3. 13 Views of the Arched Niches.

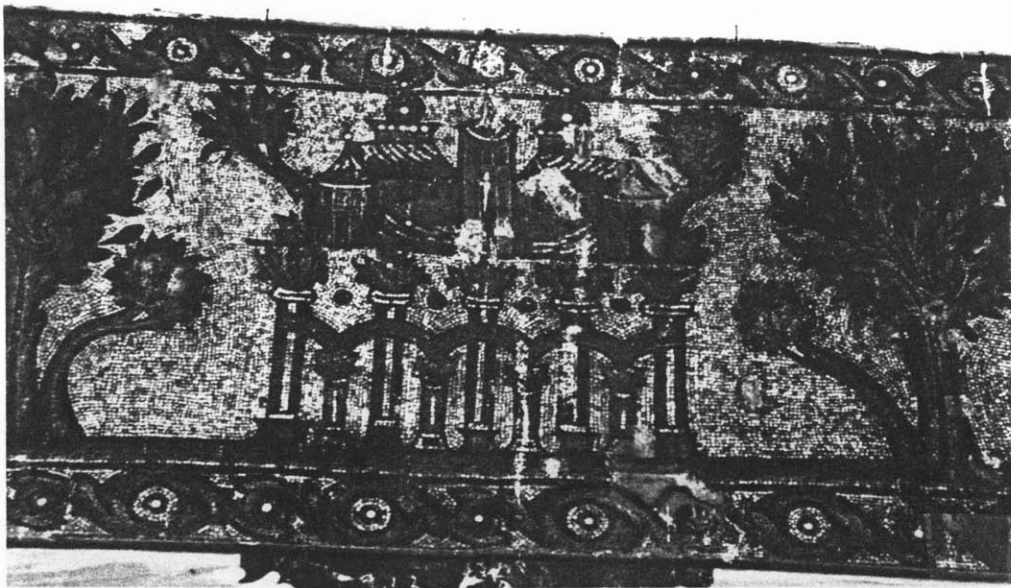
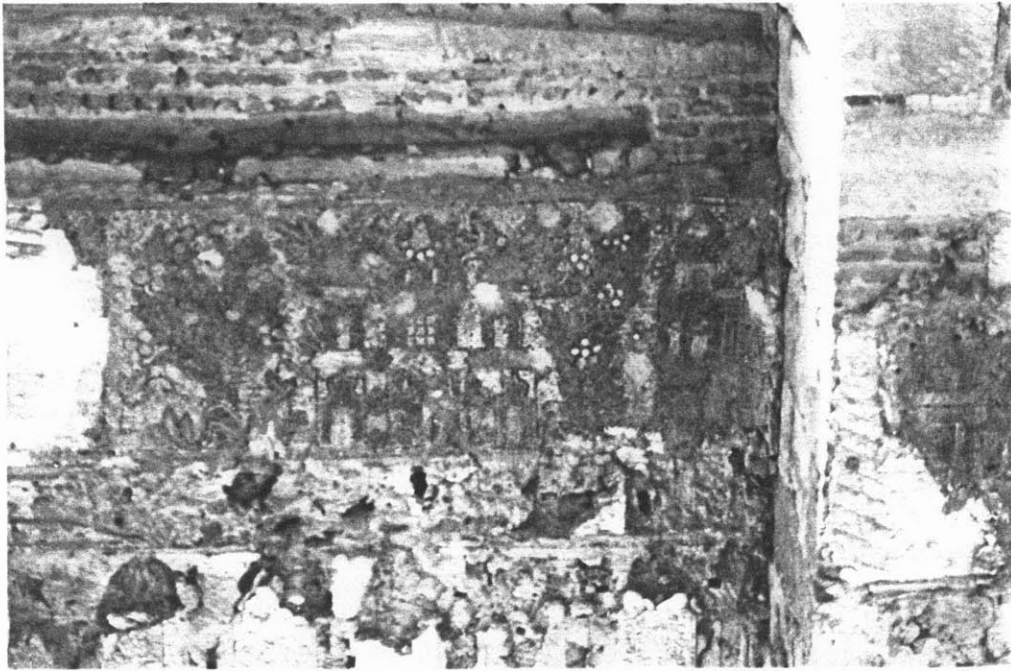


Fig 3. 14 the Mosaic Panel in the Qa'a Compared with One from the Qubba al-Zahiriyya.



Fig 3. 15 Inscription on the Second Shaft.

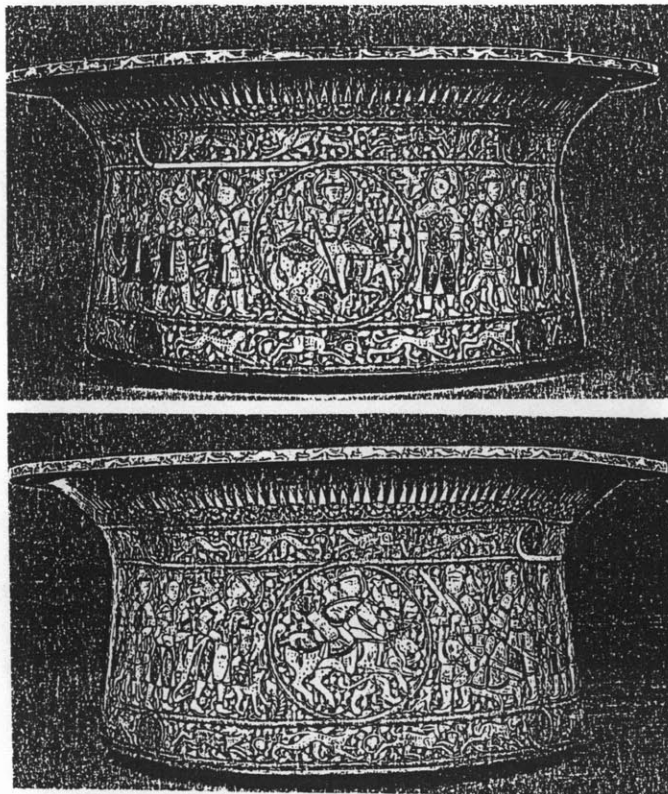


Fig 3. 16 Representations on the Exterior of the Baptistère de Saint Louis.

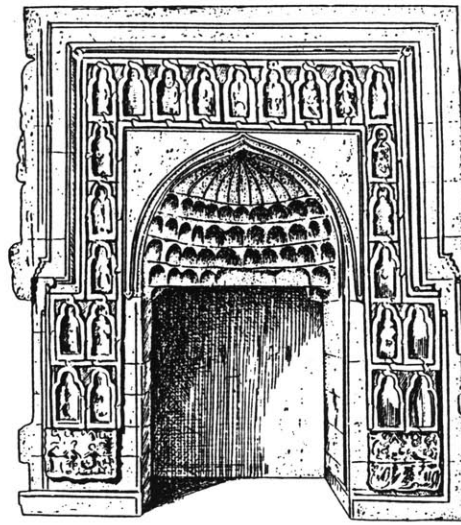


Fig 3. 17 The stone niche from the Gu' Kummet at Sinjar.

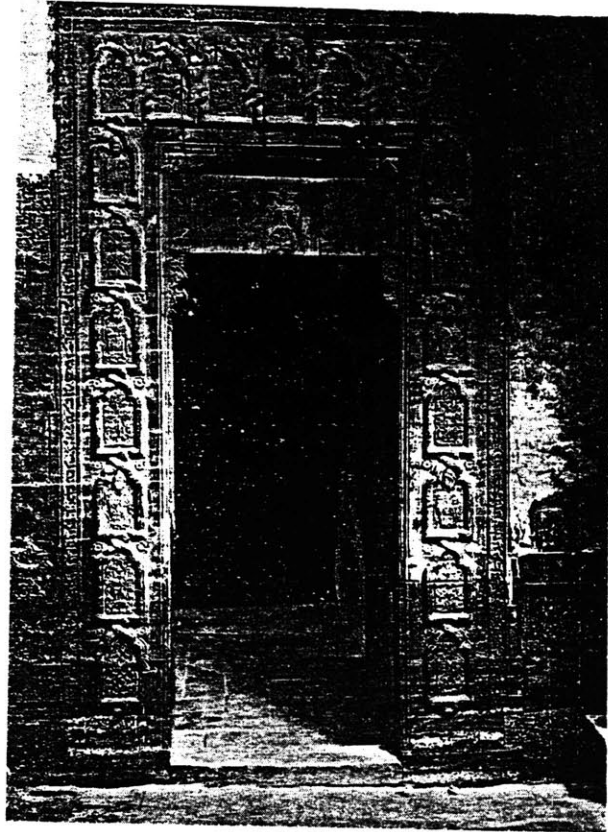


Fig 3. 18 The Door of the monastery of Mar Bahnam.

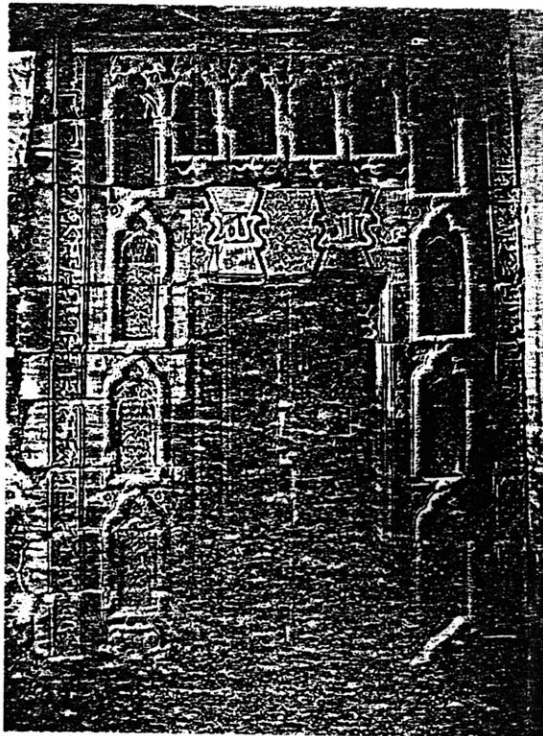


Fig 3. 19 The Door to the Mausoleum of Imam al-Bahir.



Fig 3. 20 Manuscript Cover Representing Badr al-Din Lu'lu' and Attendants.

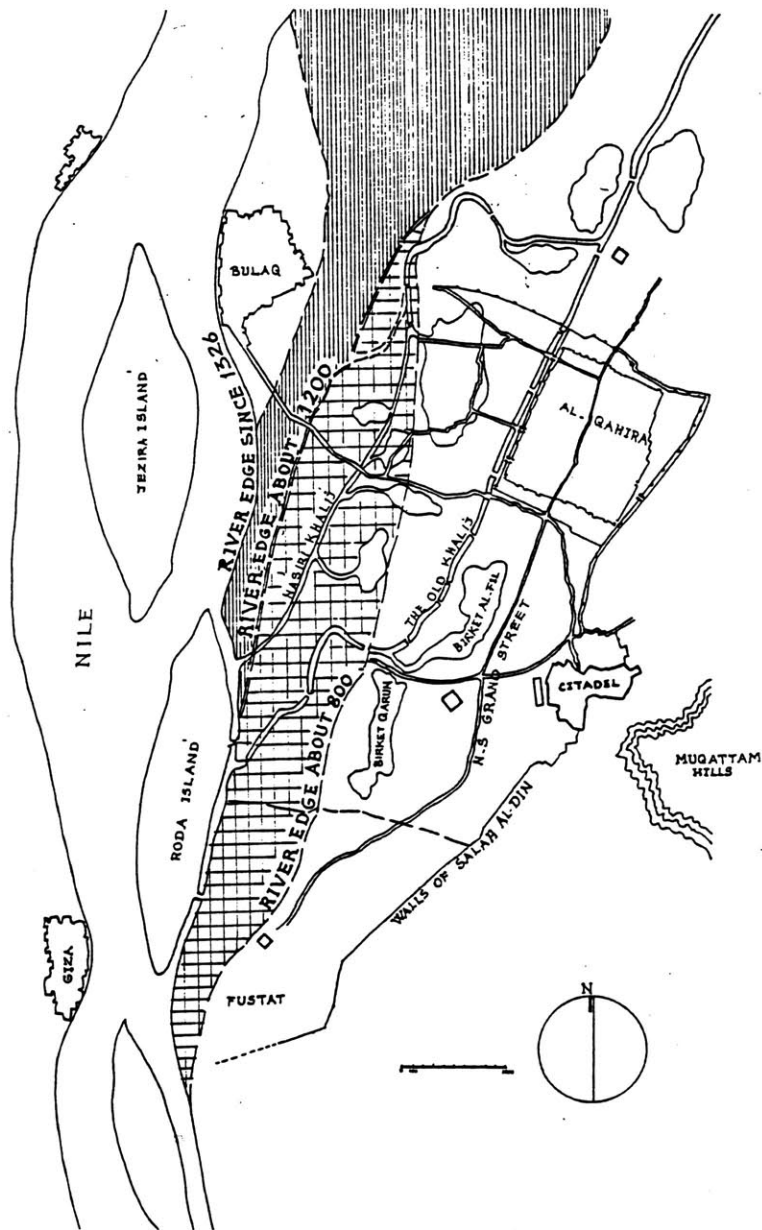


Fig 4. 1 Recession of the Nile and Expansion of Cairo under al-Nasir Muhammad.

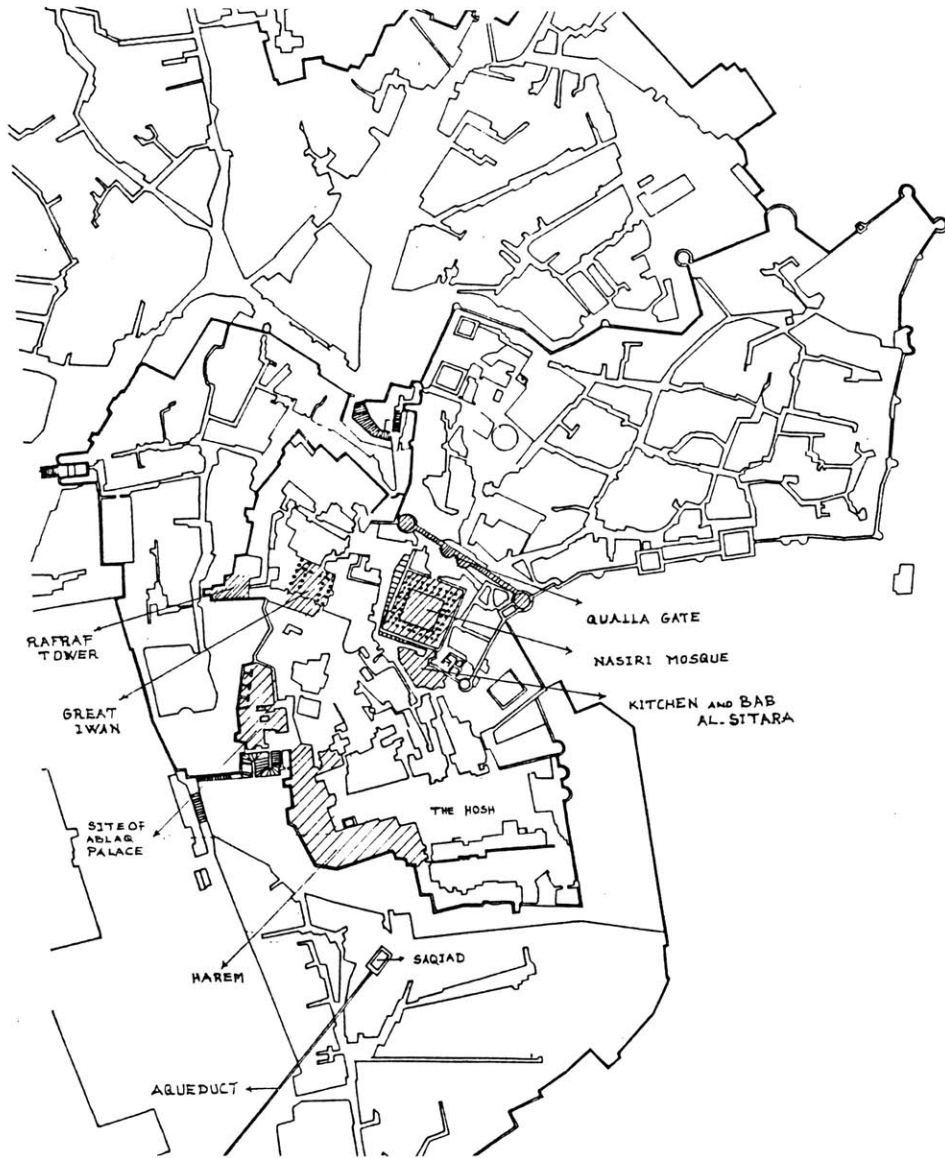


Fig 4. 2 Location of the Structures of al-Nasir Muhammad at the Citadel.

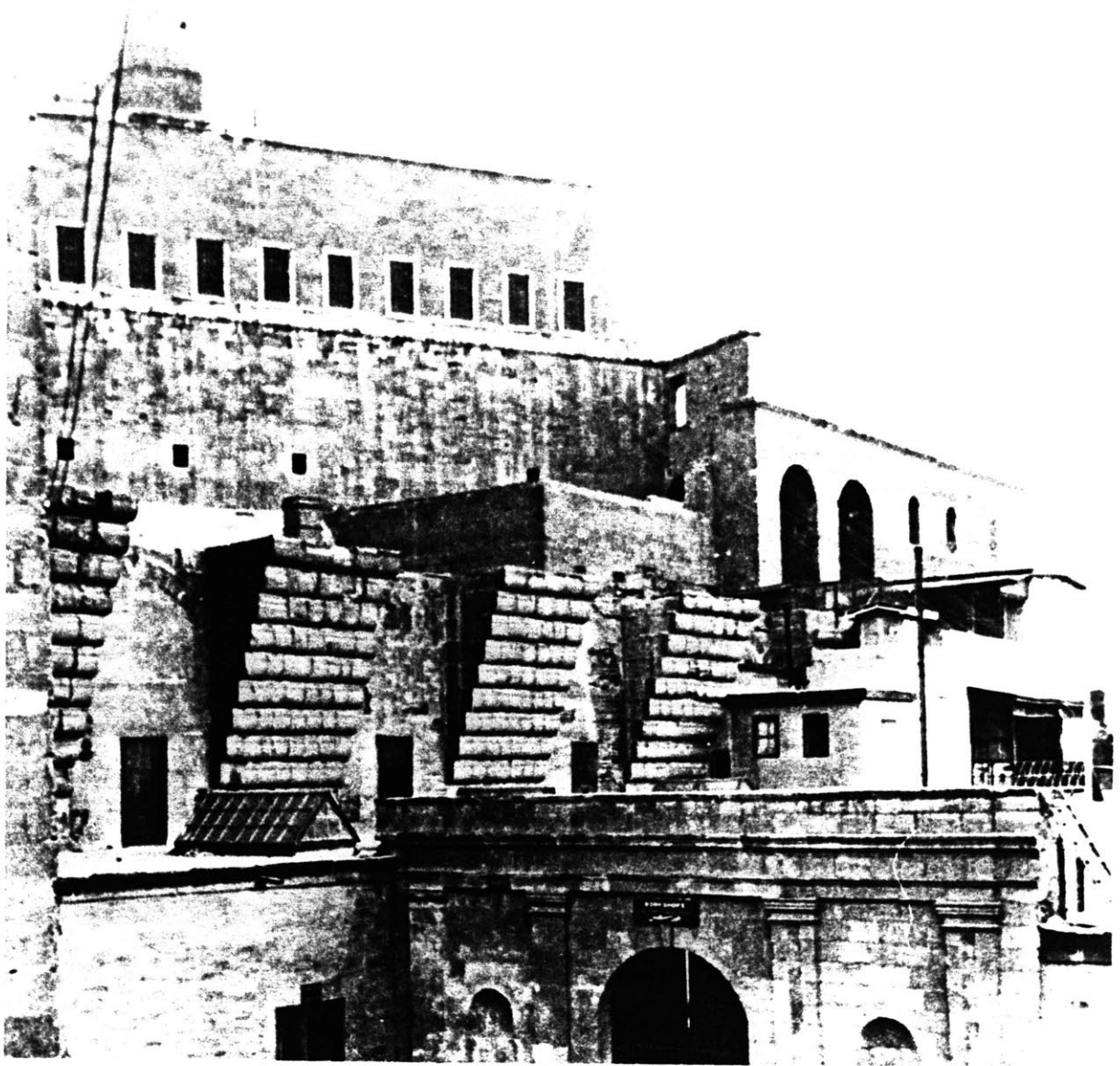


Fig 4. 4 View of the Corbels.

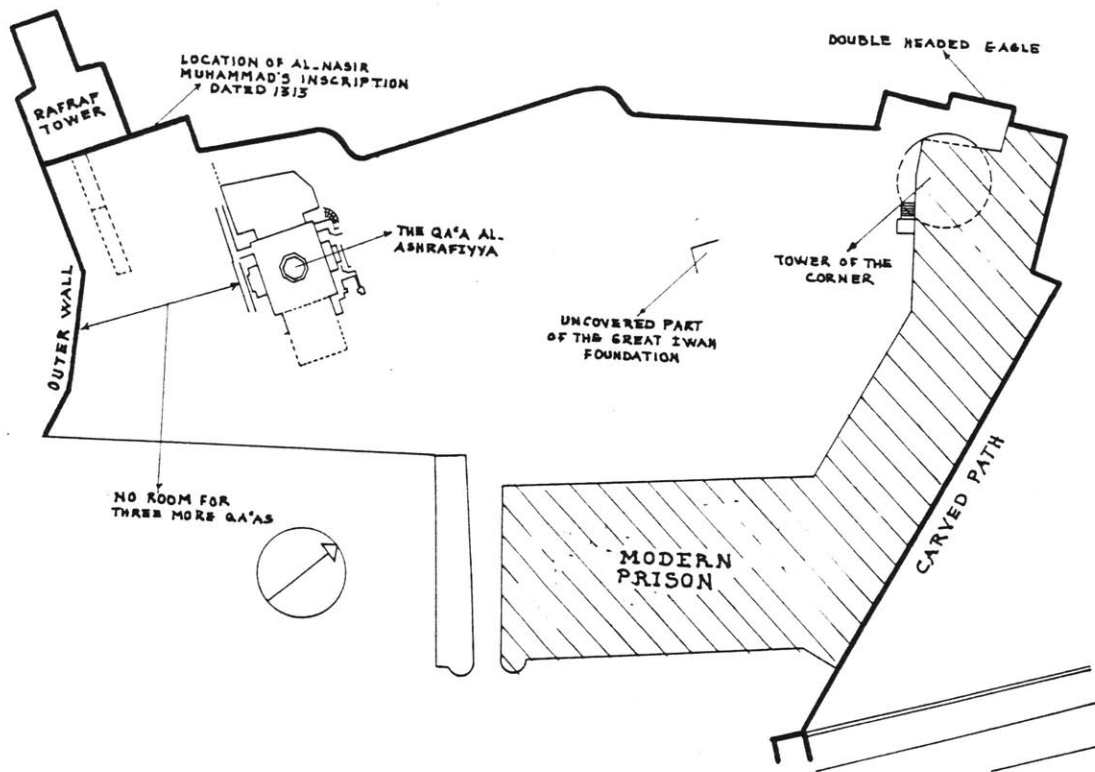


Fig 4. 5 Detailed Plan of the Rafrat Tower's area.

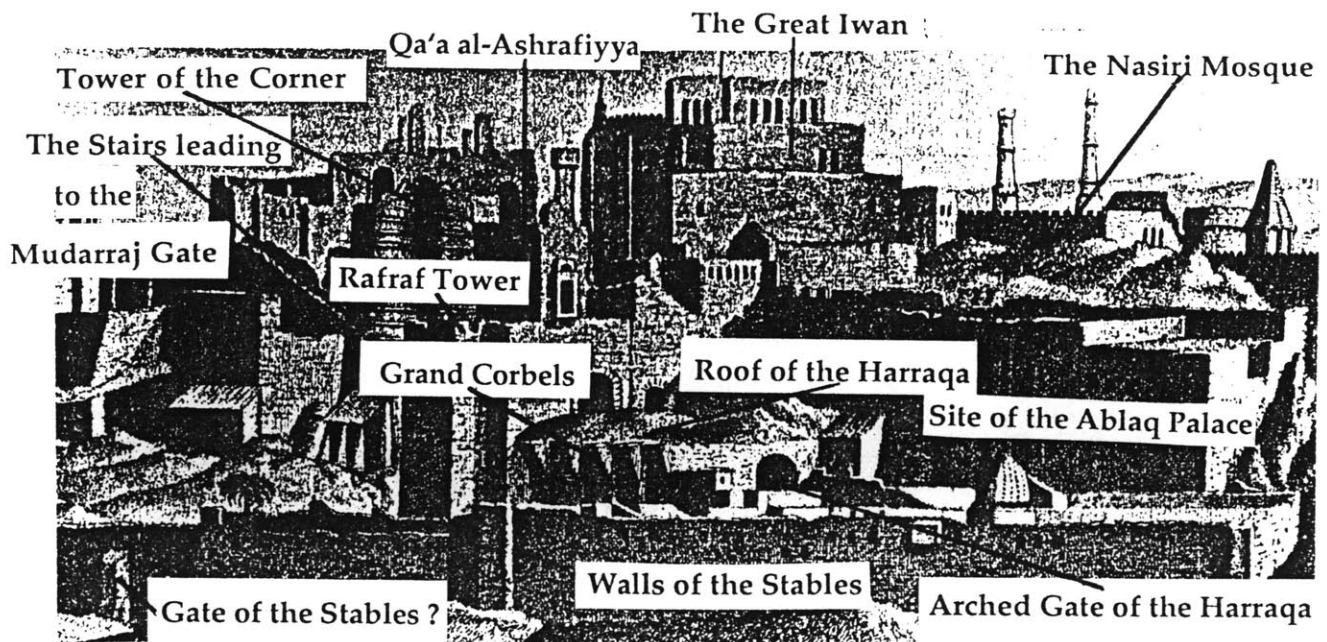


Fig 4. 6 Print of Rhoné.

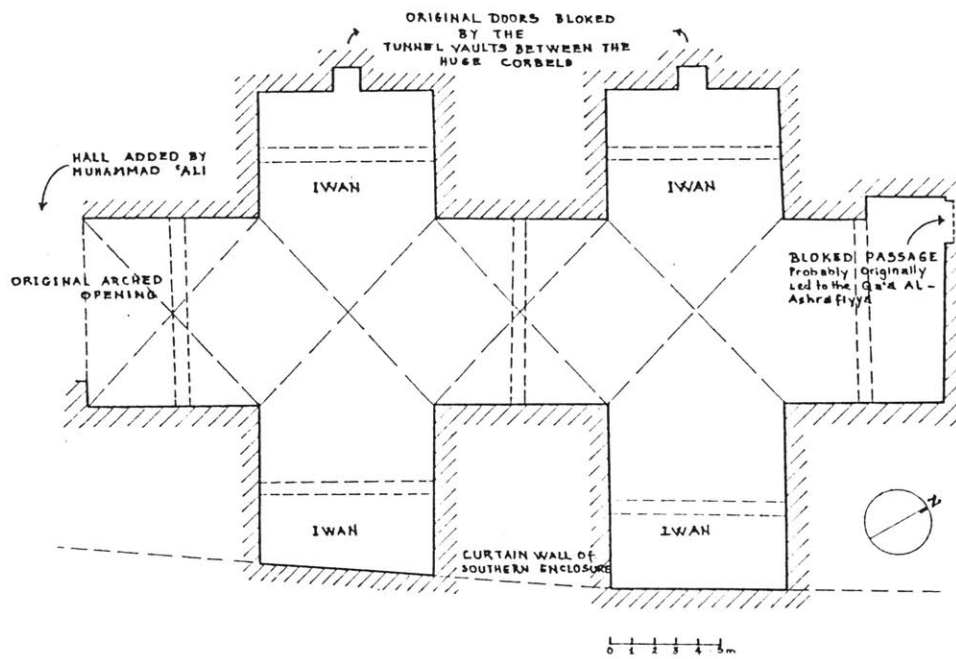


Fig 4. 7 Plan of the Hall behind the Corbels "the Harraqa."

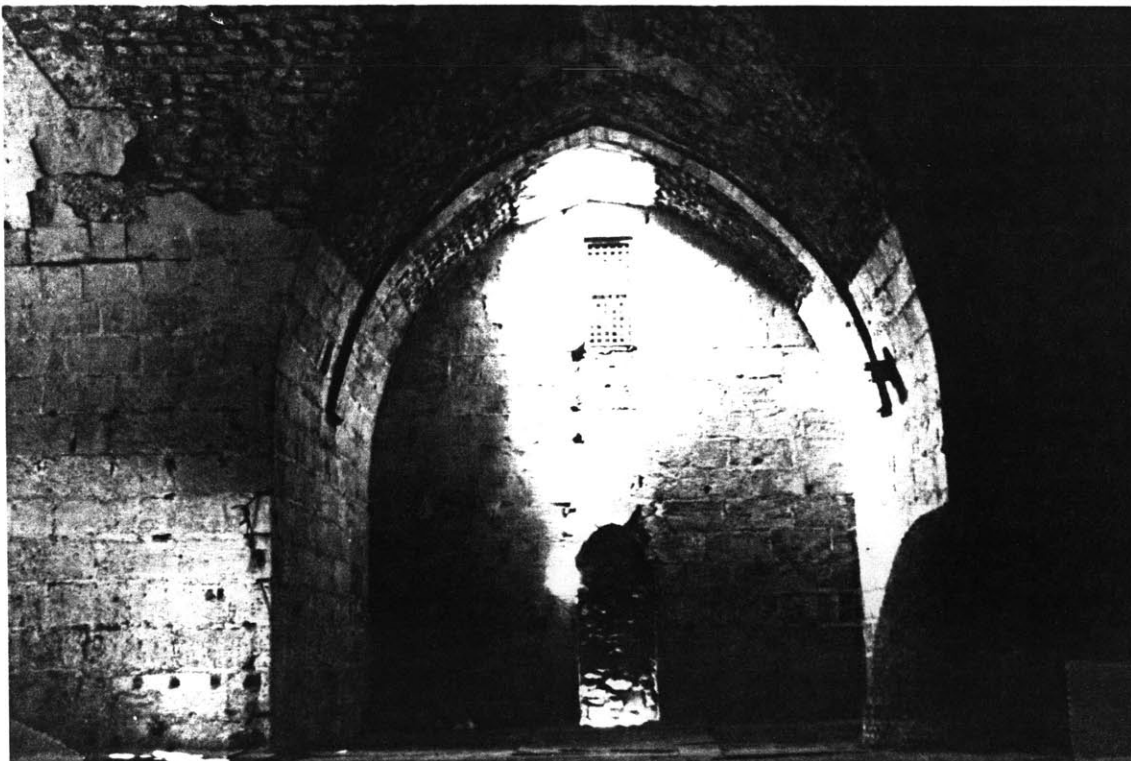


Fig 4. 8 View of the Iwan in the Harraqa.

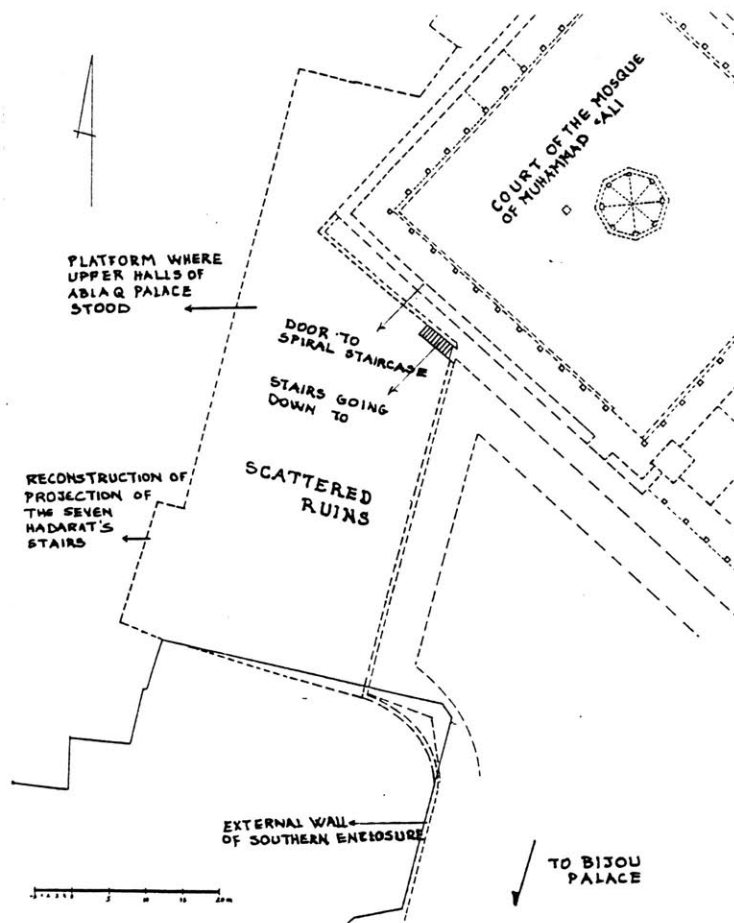


Fig 4. 9 Plan of the Platform Adjacent to the Mosque of Muhammad 'Ali.

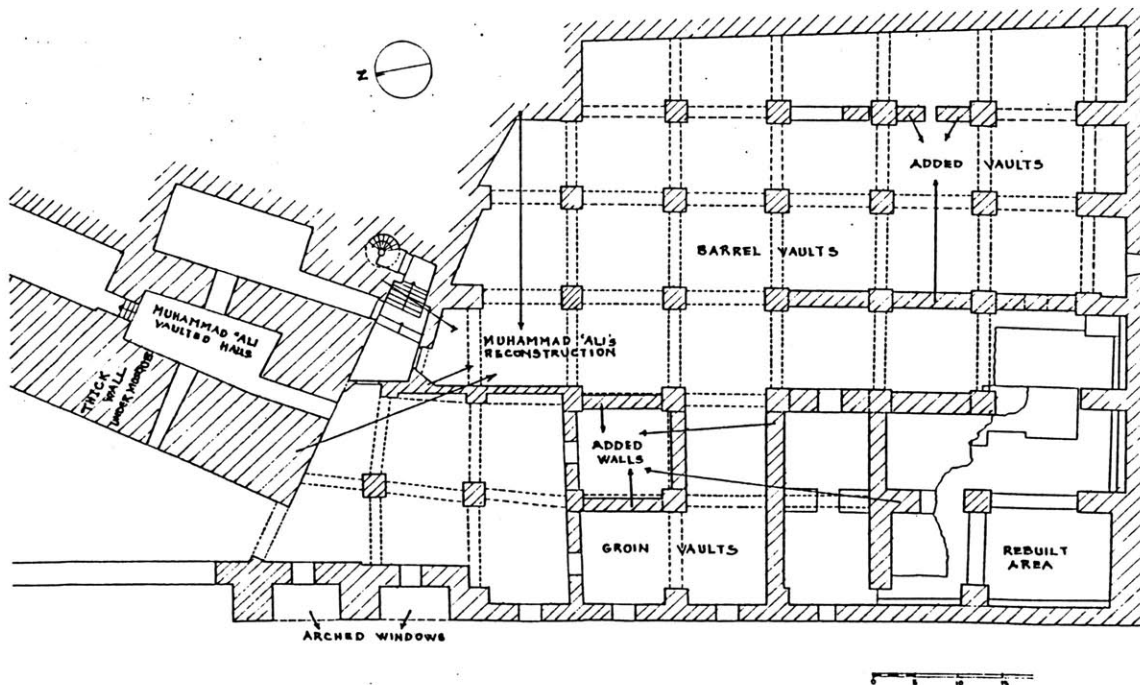


Fig 4. 10 Plan of the First Lower Level under the Ablaq Palace.



Fig 4. 11 View of One of the Barrel Vaults.

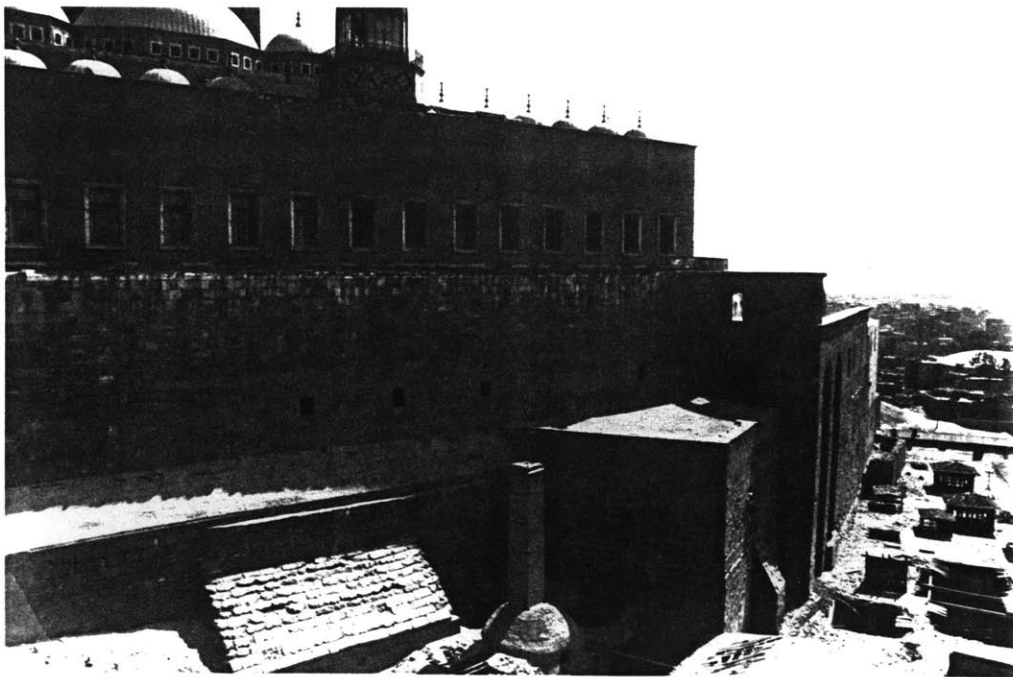


Fig 4. 12 View of the Balcony.



Fig 4. 13 View of the Slope.

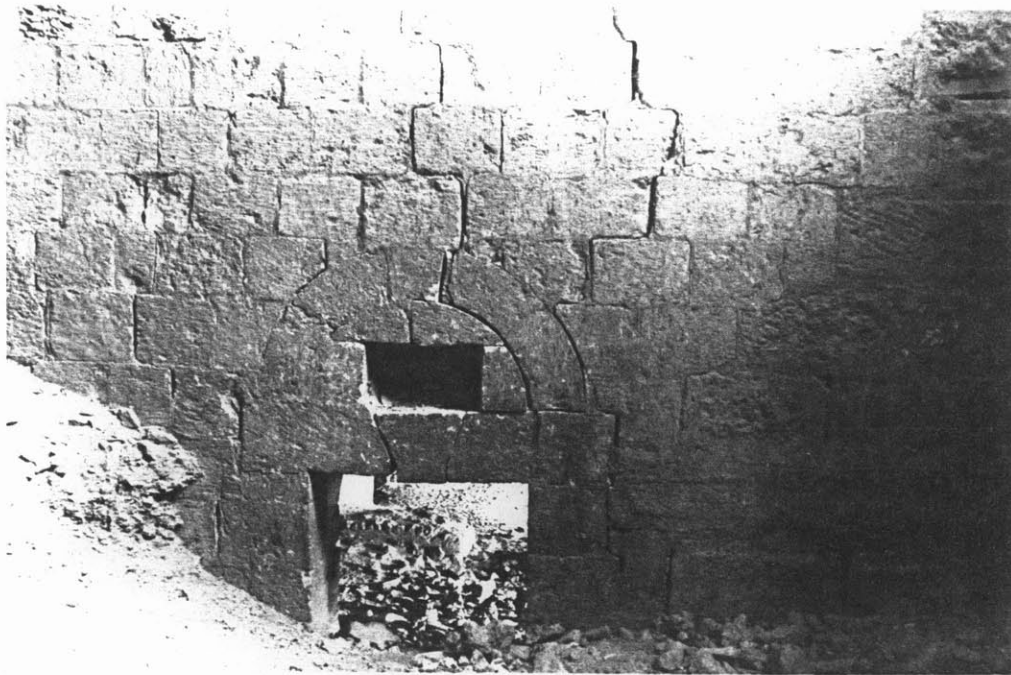


Fig 4. 14 Door to the Lower Level.

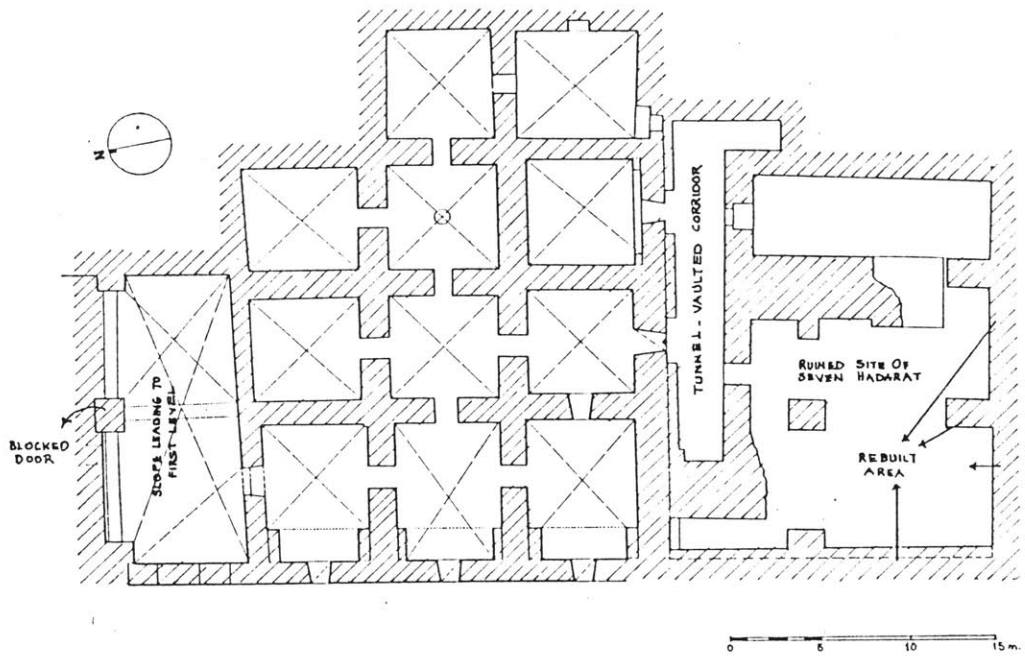


Fig 4. 15 Plan of the Lower Level.

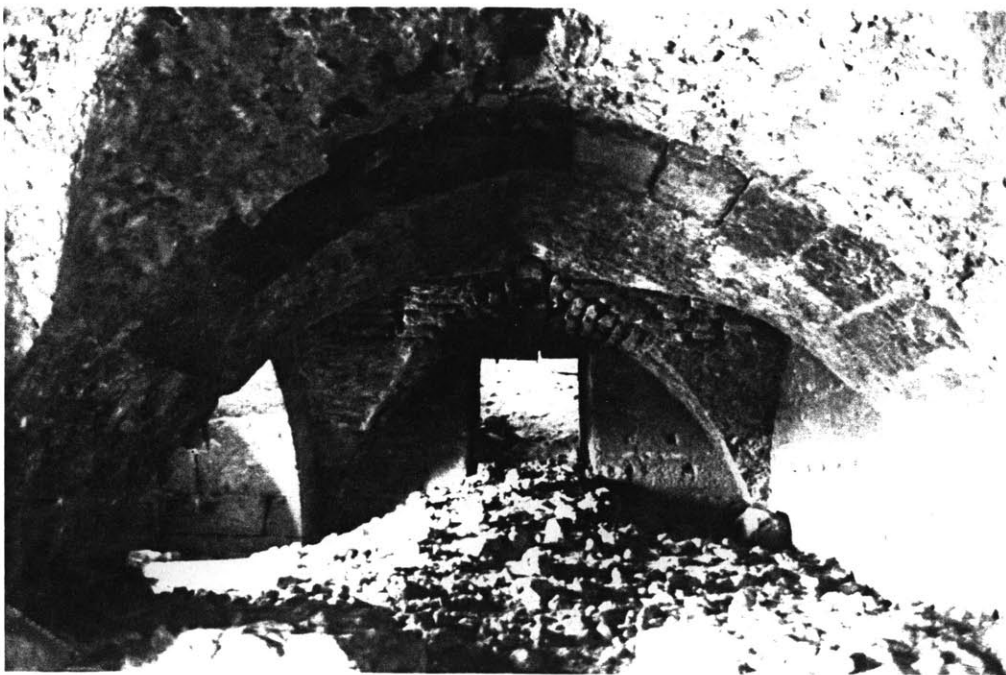


Fig 4. 16 Groin Vault of the Lower Level.

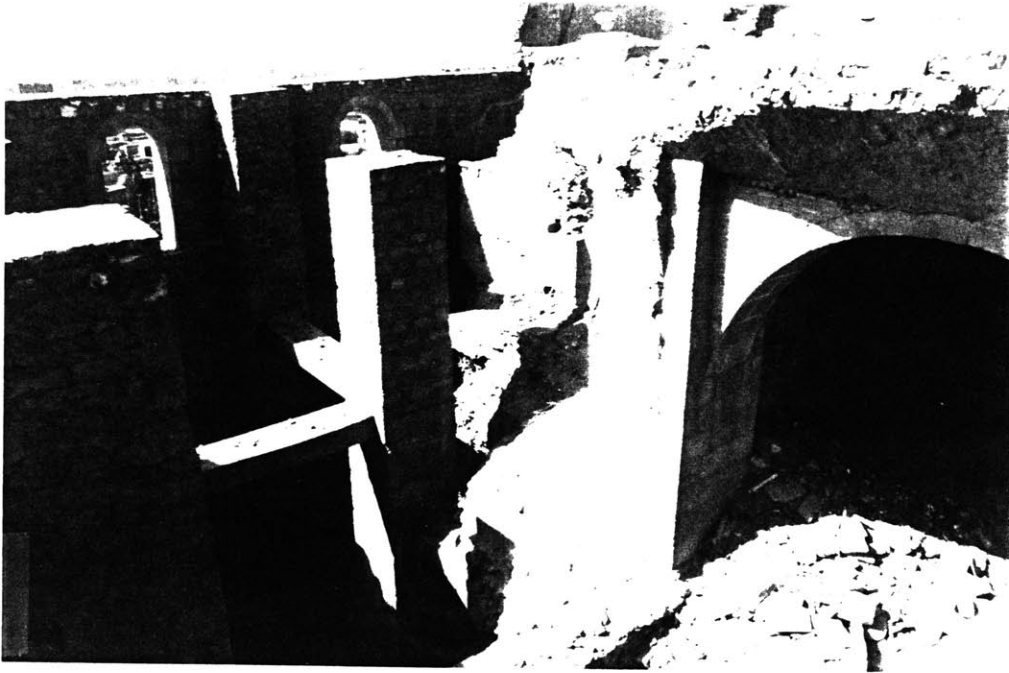


Fig 4. 17 View of the Ruined Area at the End of the Lower Level.

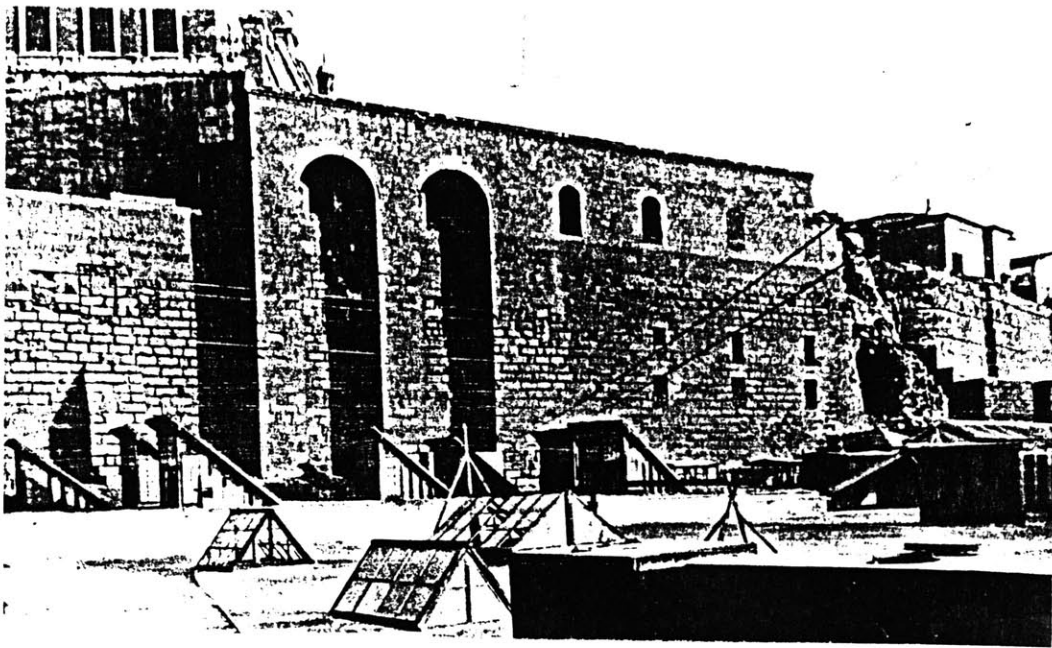


Fig 4. 18 View of the Exterior Façade of the Halls.

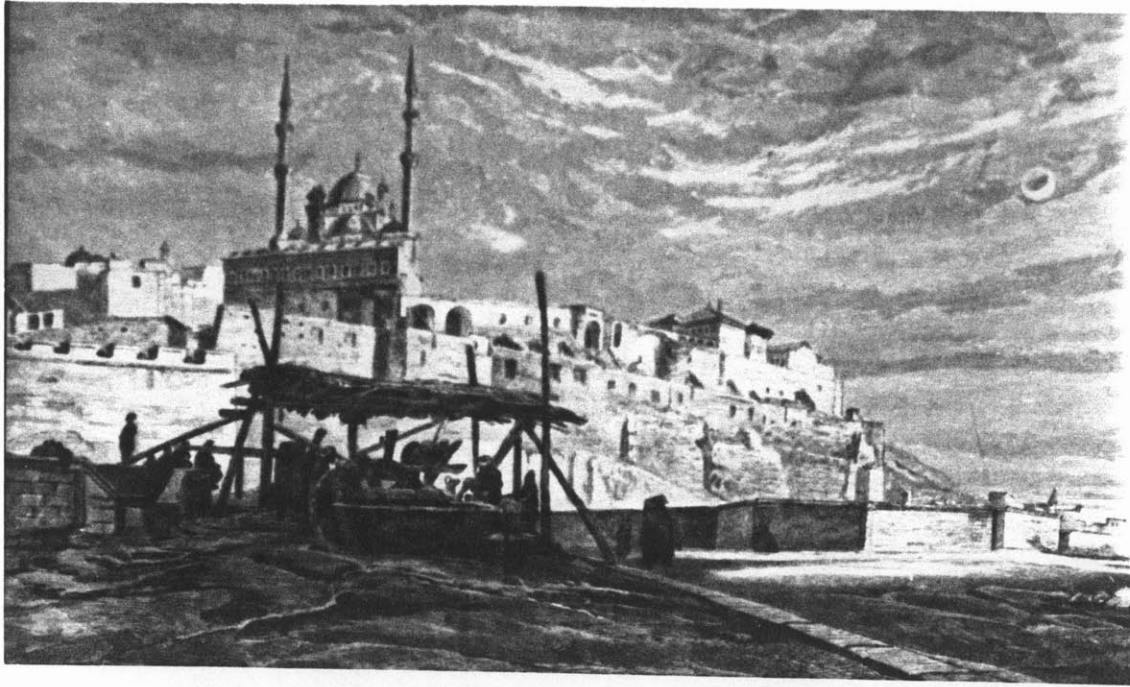


Fig 4. 19 Ebers's Print of the Citadel's Façade.



Fig 4. 20 Lorent's Photo of the Ruins of the Sab' Hadarat.

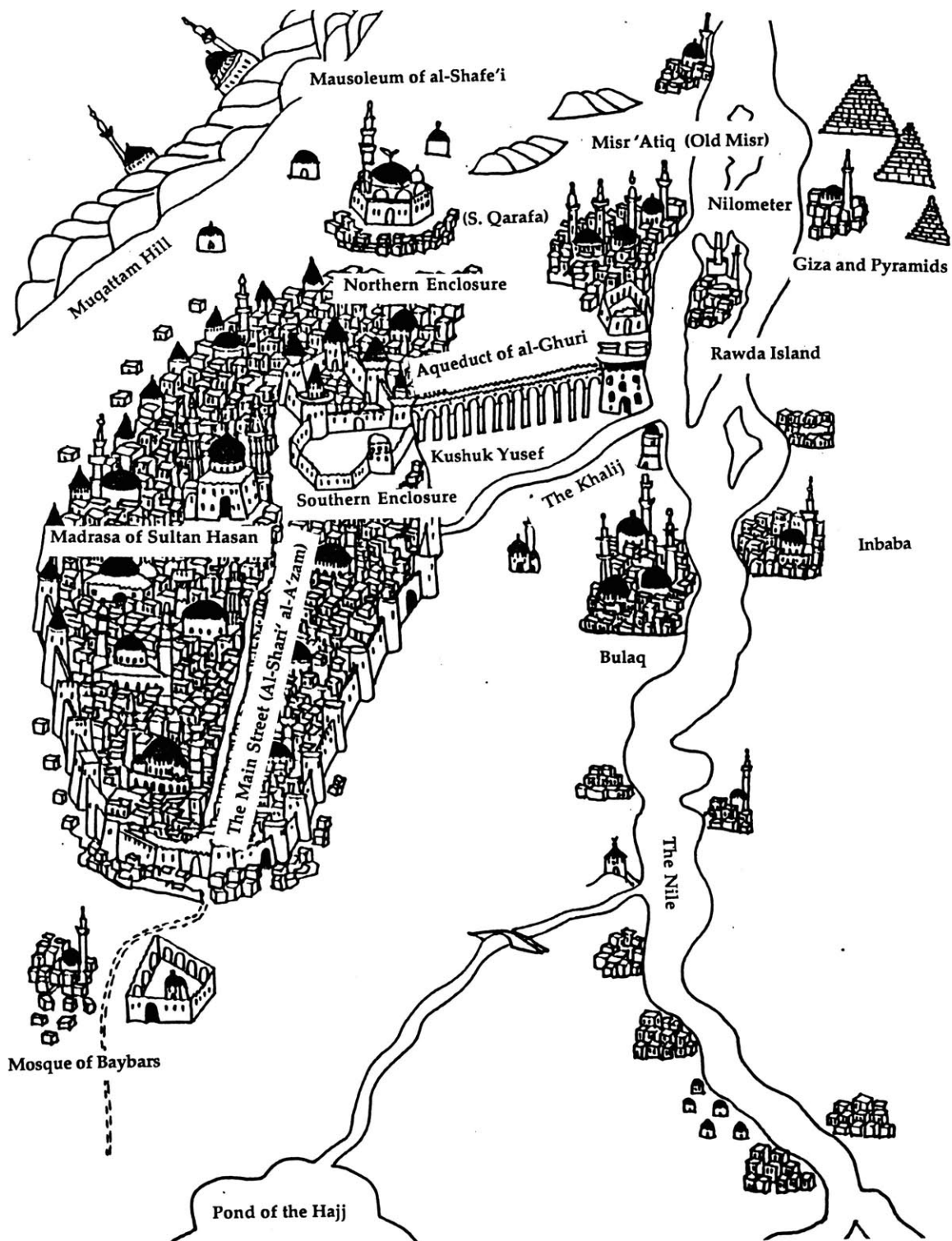
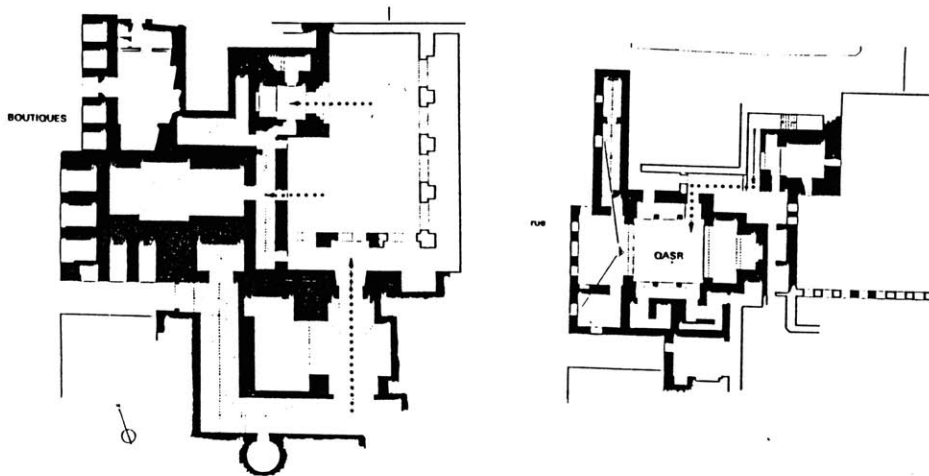
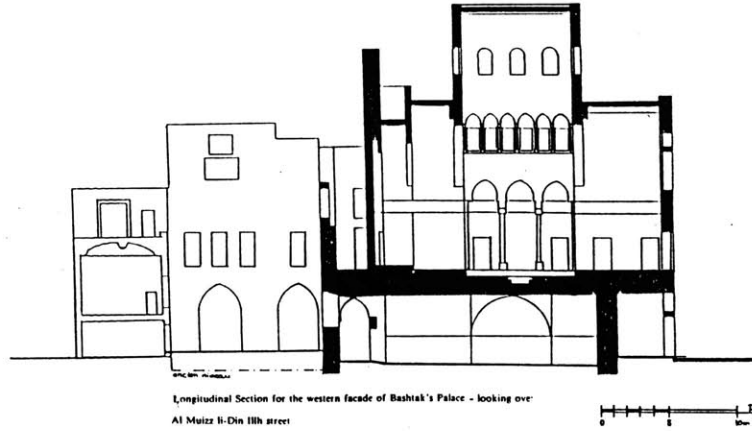


Fig 4. 21 Map of Pir-i Re'is.



Plans and Section of Bashtak's Palace

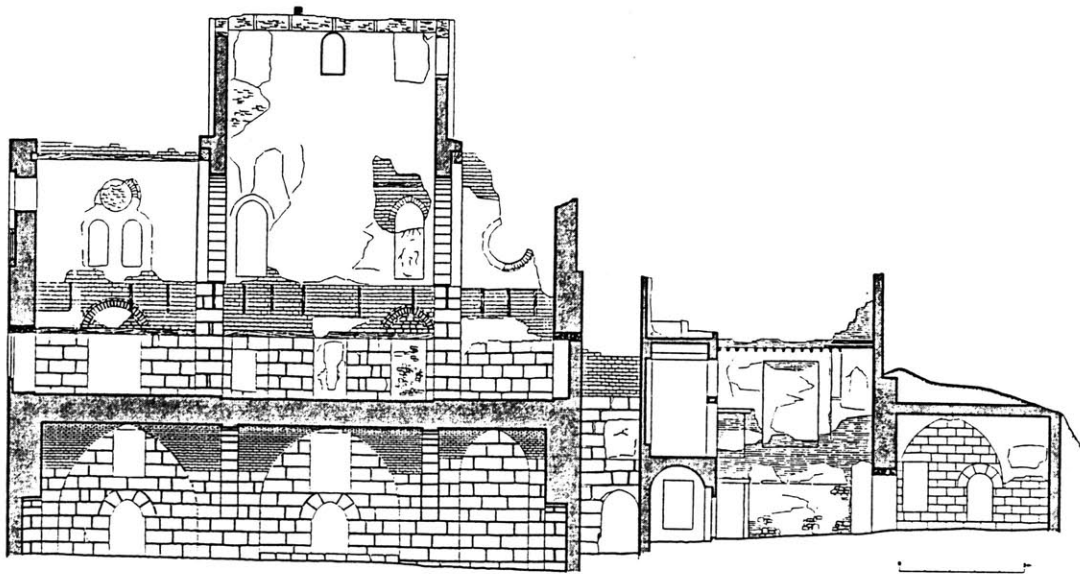


Fig 4. 22 Plans and Section of Bashtak's Palace, and Section through Alin Aq's Palace.



Fig 4. 23 Marble Dado of the Mosque's Qibla Wall.

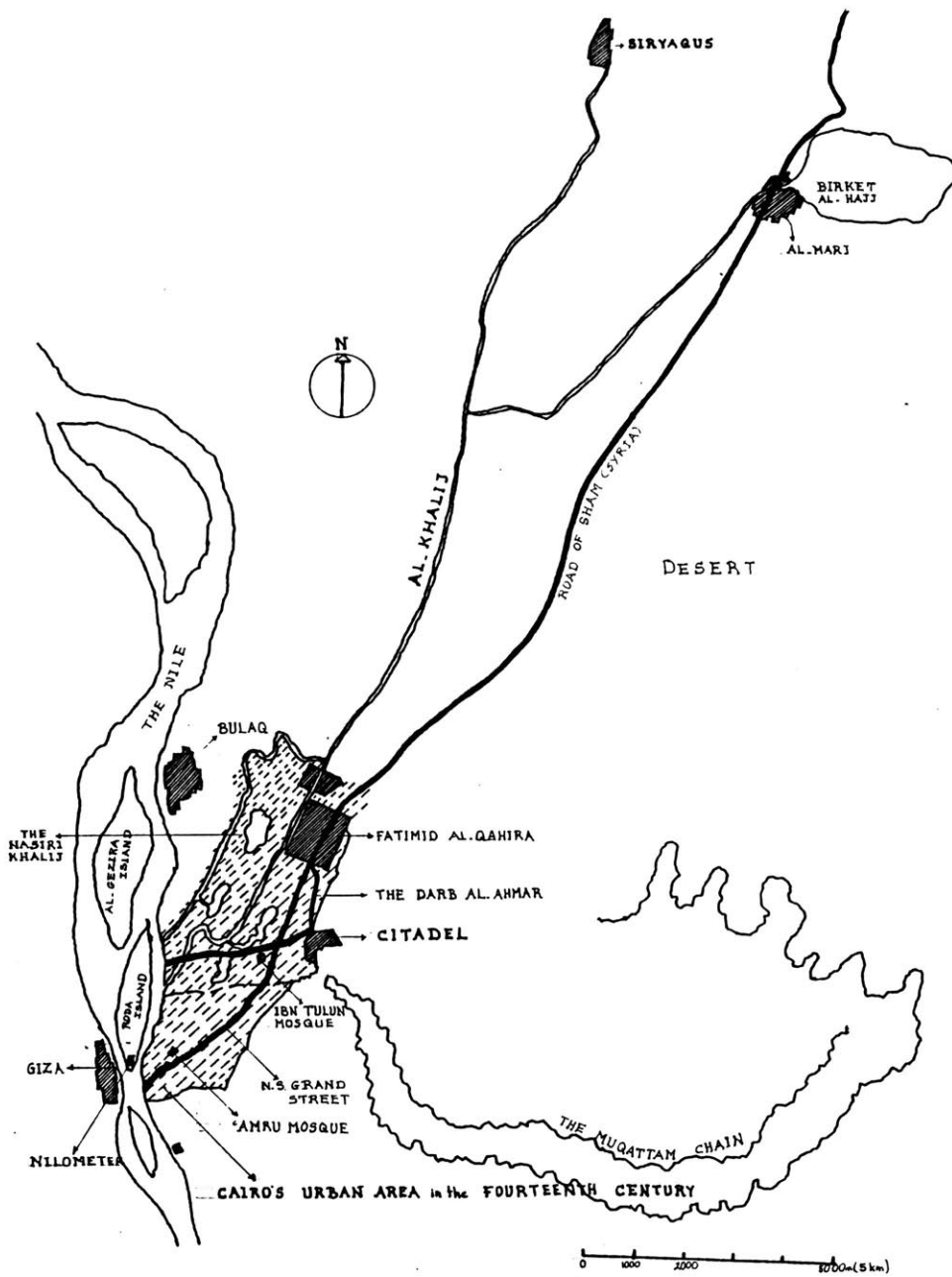


Fig 5. 1 Map of Cairo and Siryaqus.

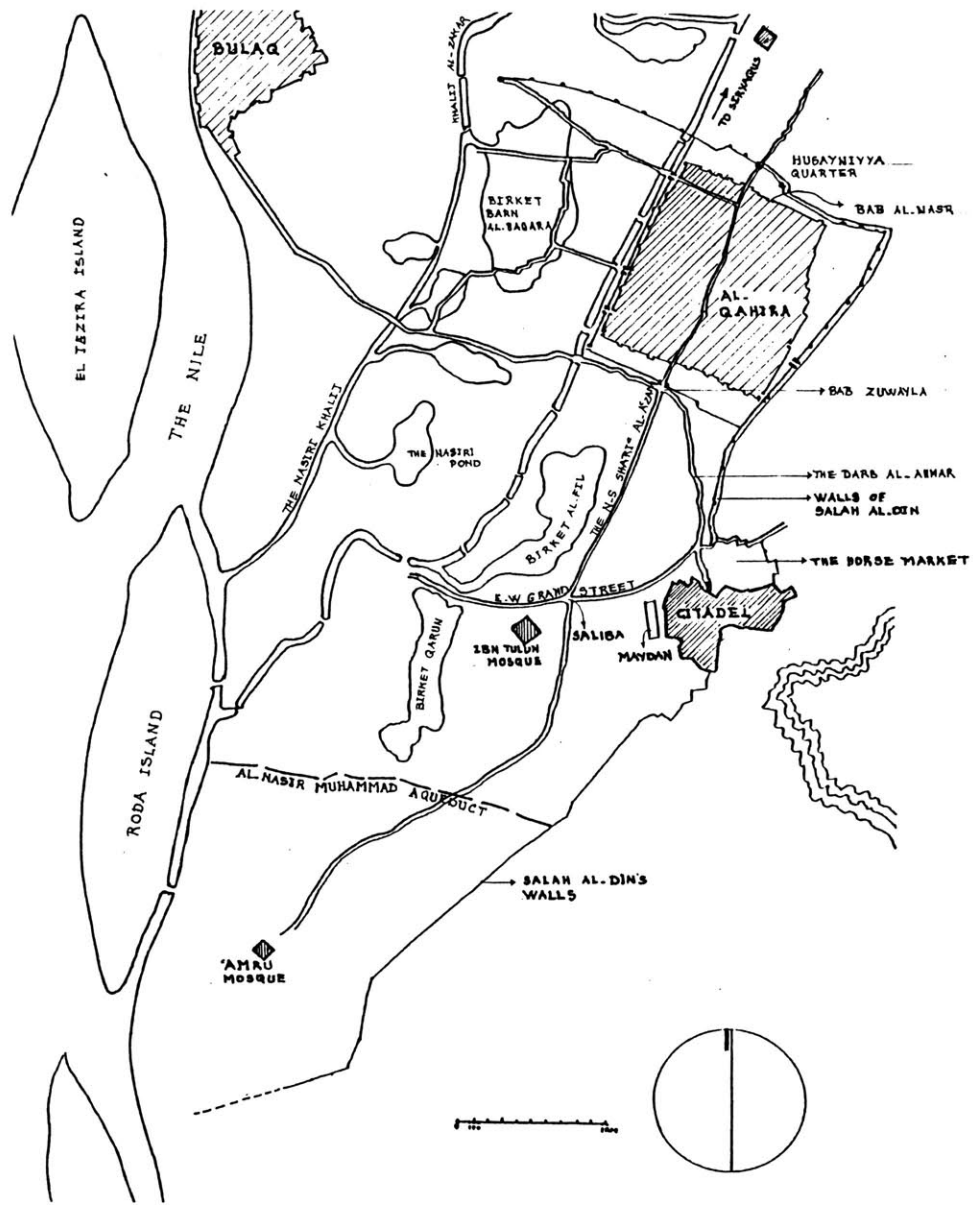


Fig 5. 2 Map of Cairo's Surroundings.

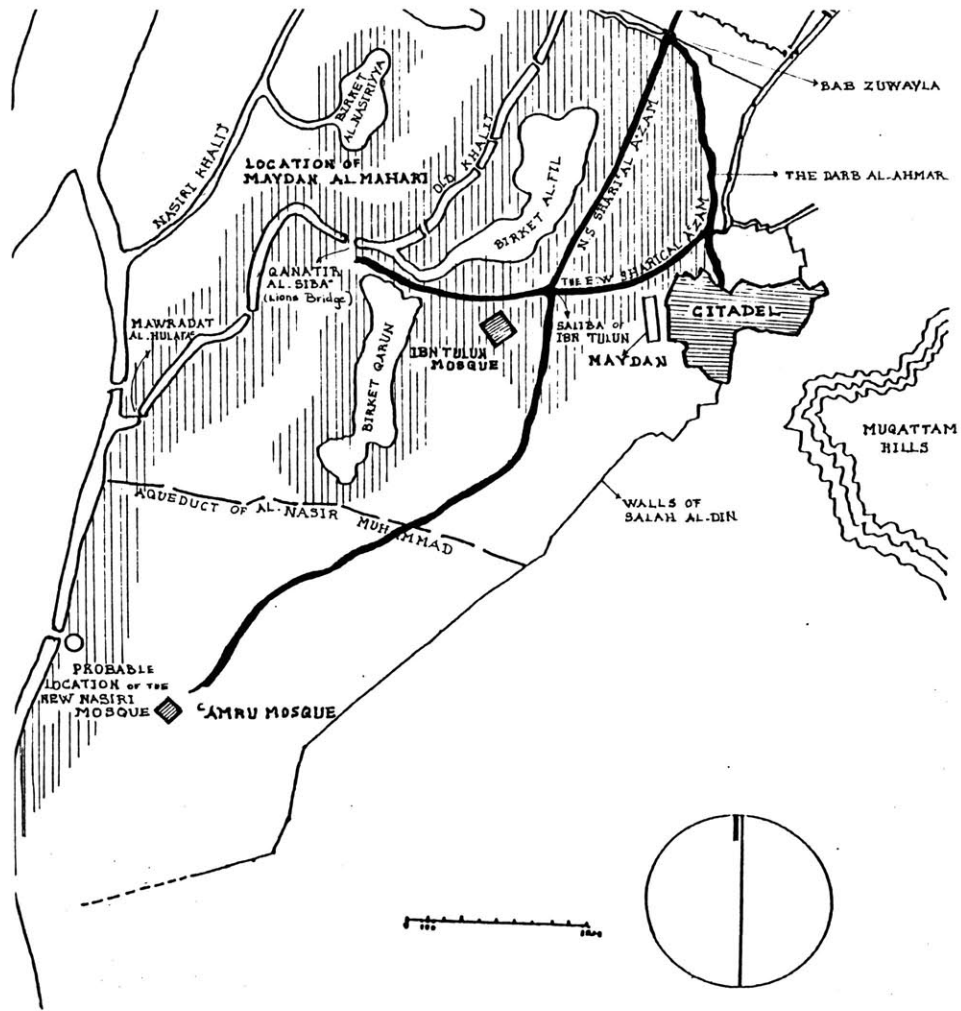


Fig 5. 3 Map of the Western Extension of the City.

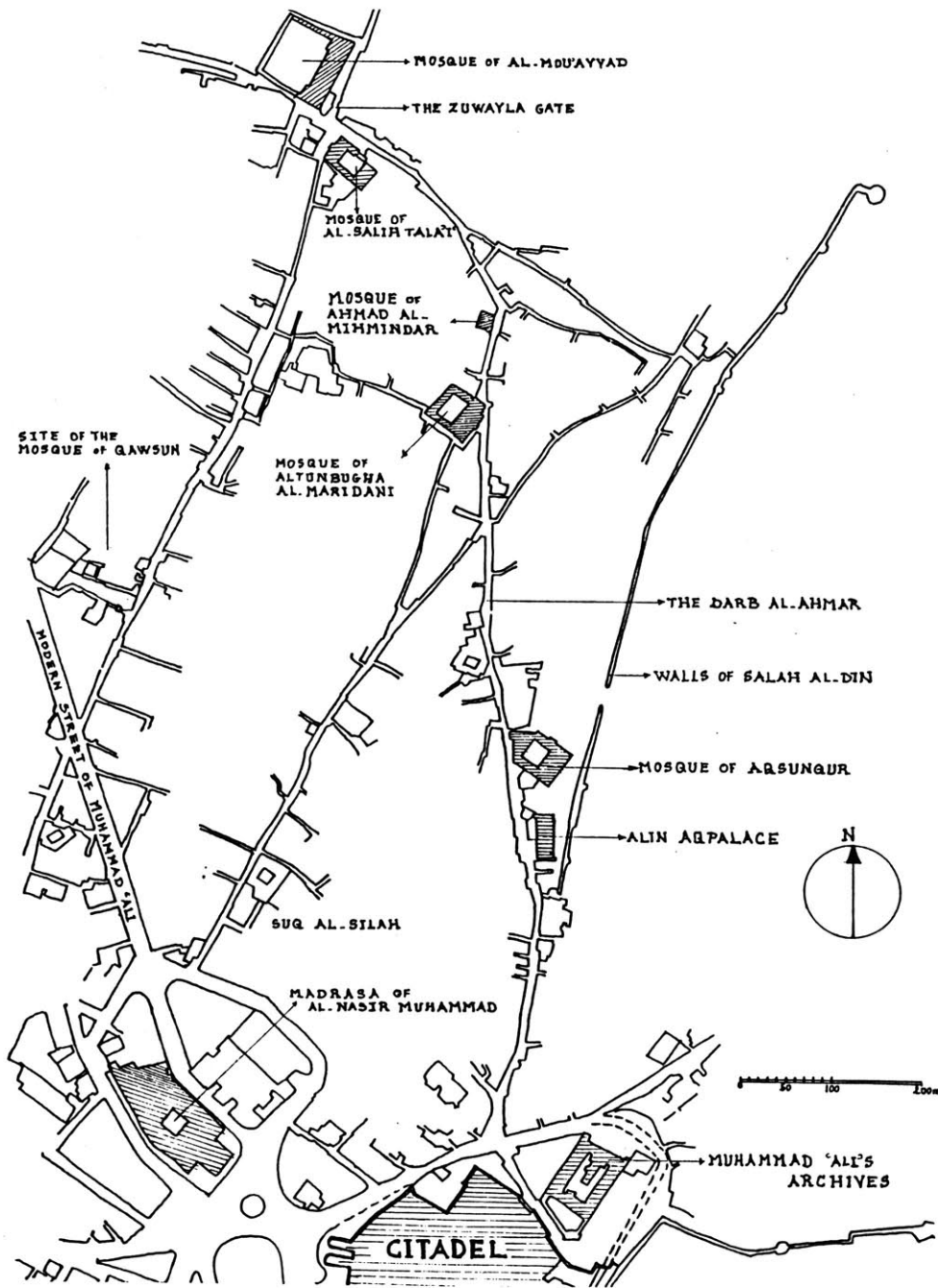


Fig 5. 4 Plan of the Darb al-Ahmar.

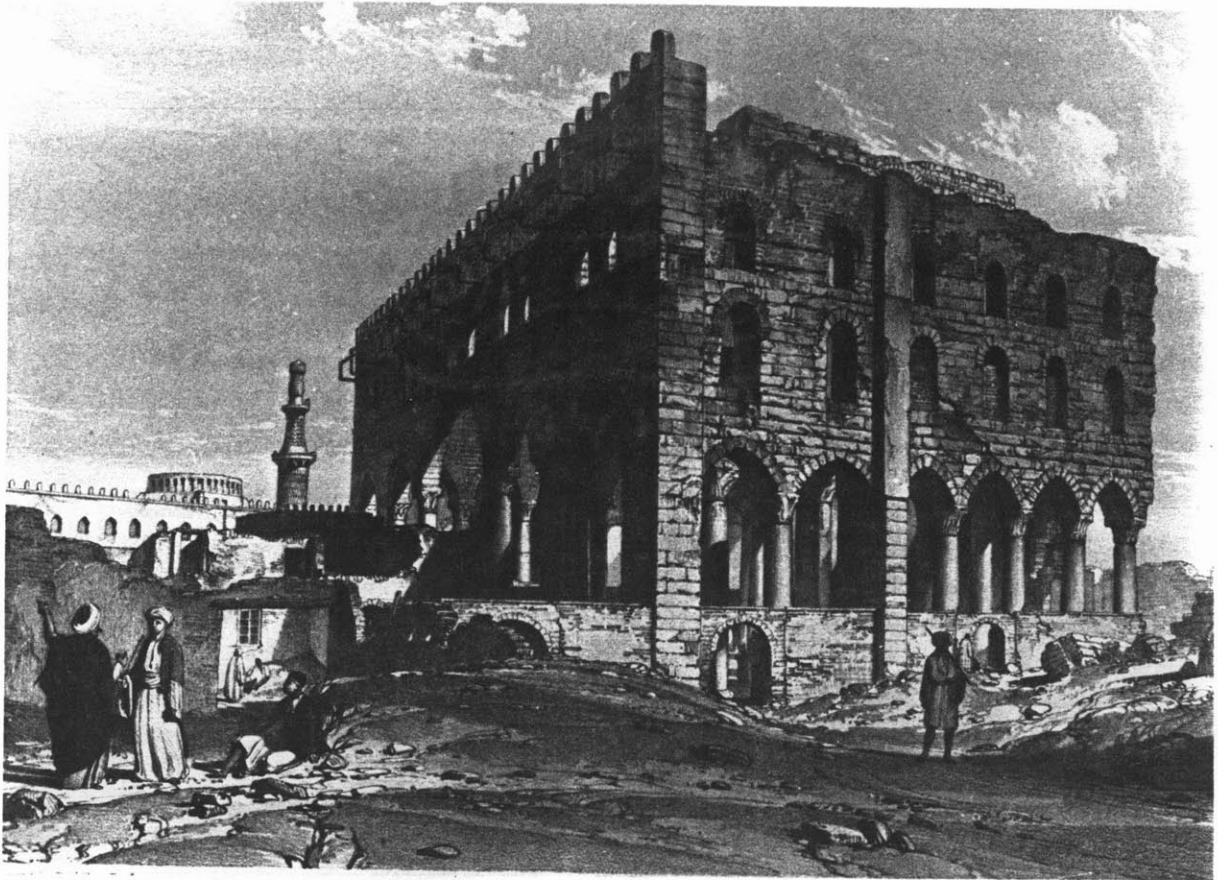


Fig 5. 5 The Great Iwan by Robert Hay.

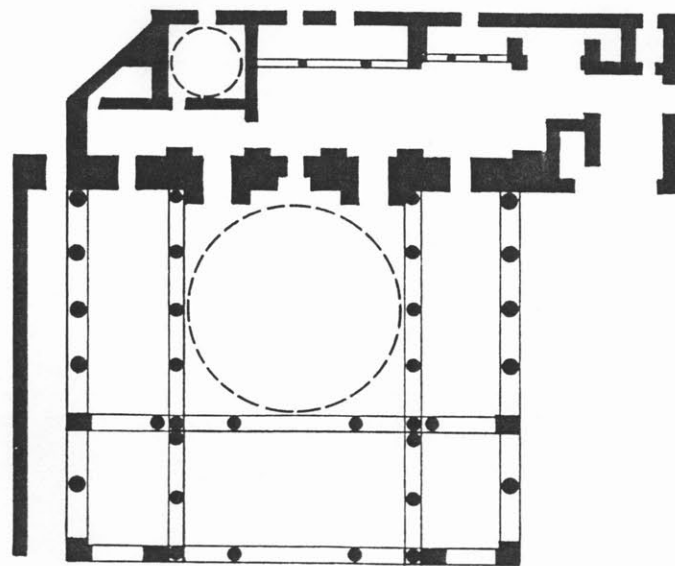
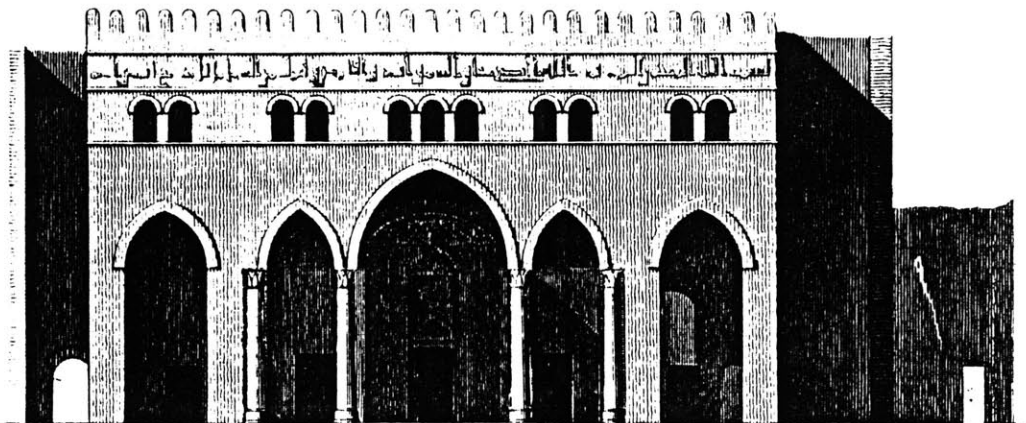


Fig 5. 6 Plan of the Iwan from the Description de l'Égypte.



Ech. des Fig. 1-7
0 4 8 12 16 20 Mètres

N. L. Roussier Sc^{pt}

Fig 5. 7 Main Façade of Iwan.

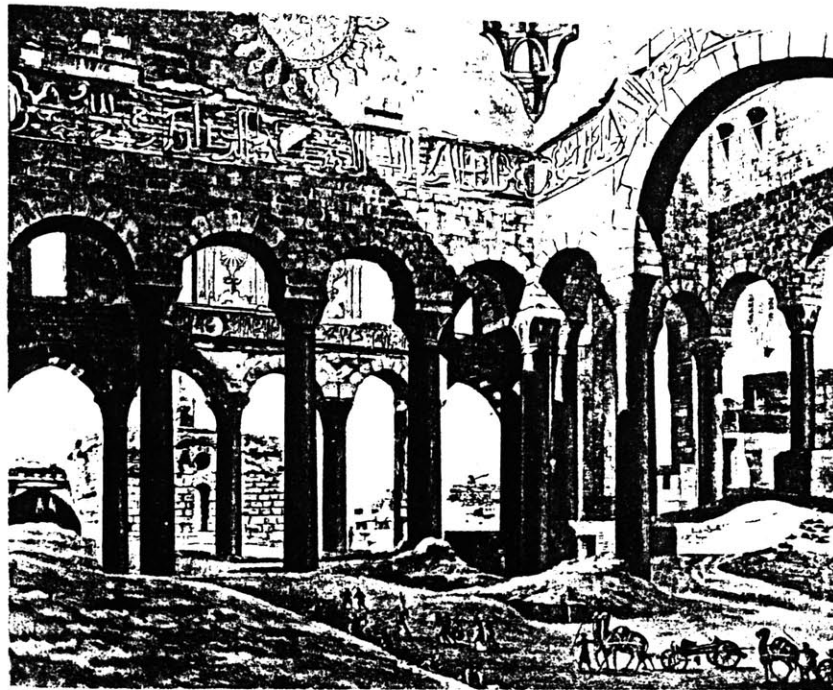


Fig 5. 8 Perspective of the Iwan.

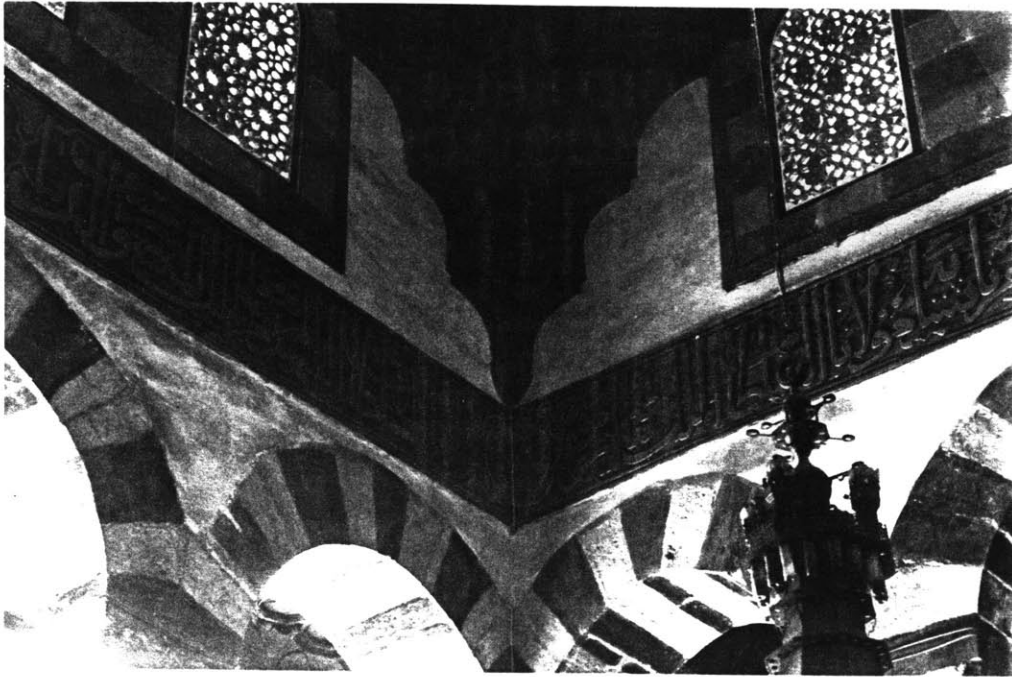


Fig 5. 9 Inscription inside the Dome of the Nasiri Mosque.

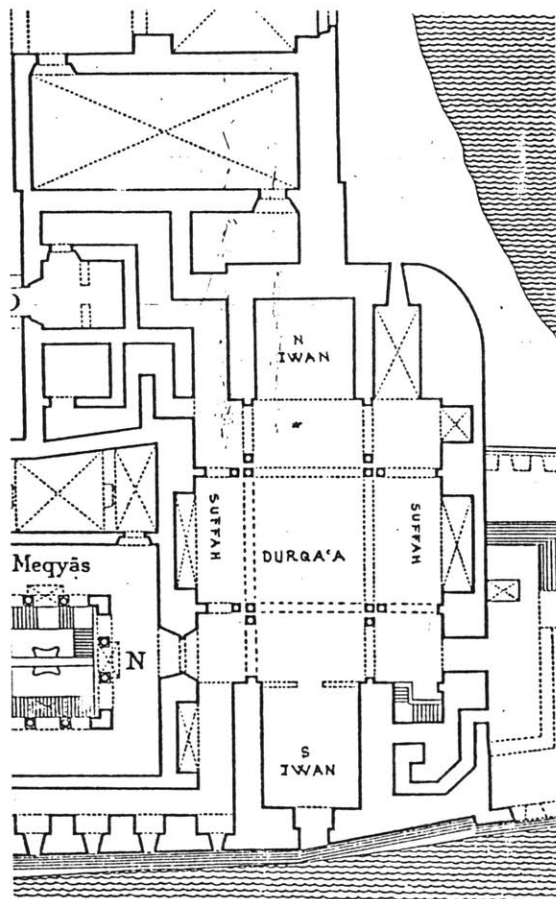


Fig 5. 10 Plan of the Qa'a of al-Salih Najm al-Din Ayyub.

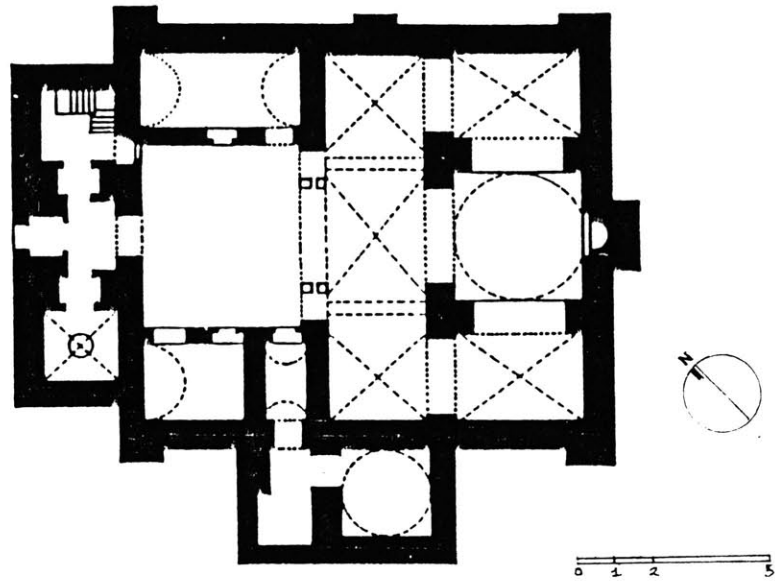


Fig 5. 11 Plan of Mashhad al-Juyushi.

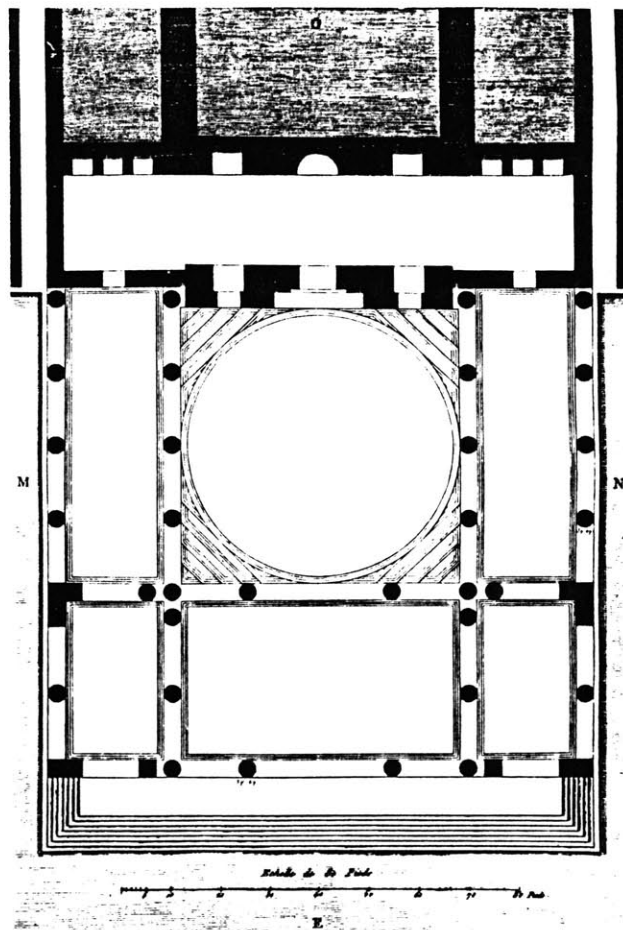


Fig 5. 12 Plan of the Iwan by Cassas.

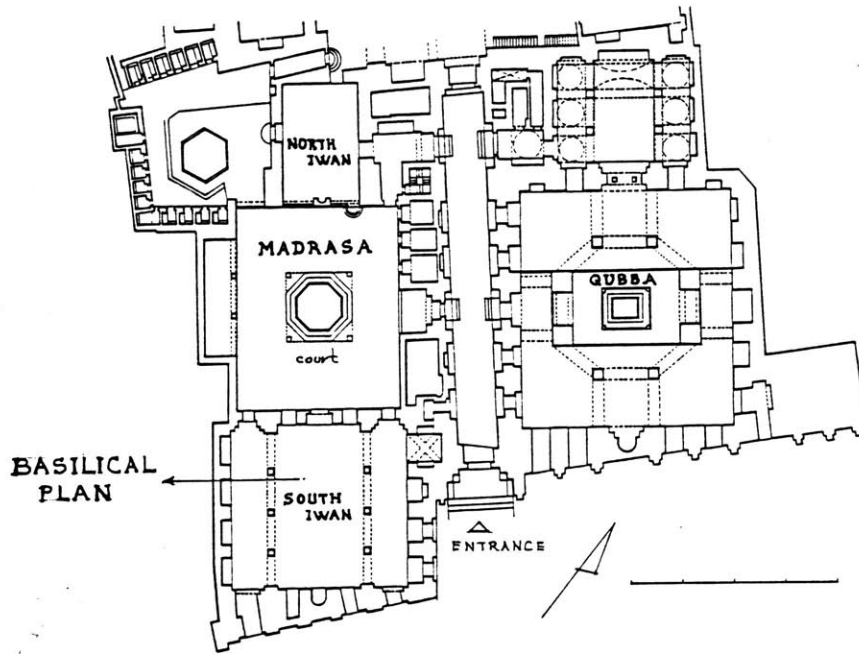


Fig 5. 13 Plan of the Madrasa of Qalawun in Bayn al-Qasryn.

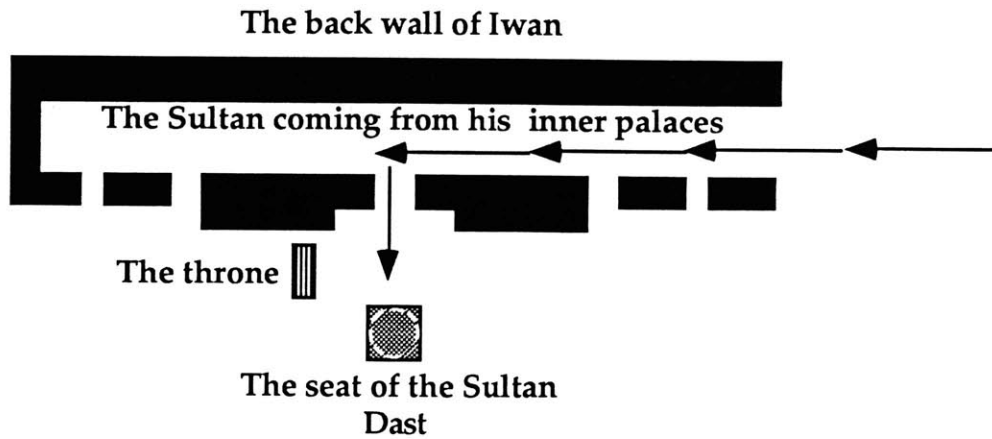


Fig 5. 14 The Sultan Enters the Iwan.

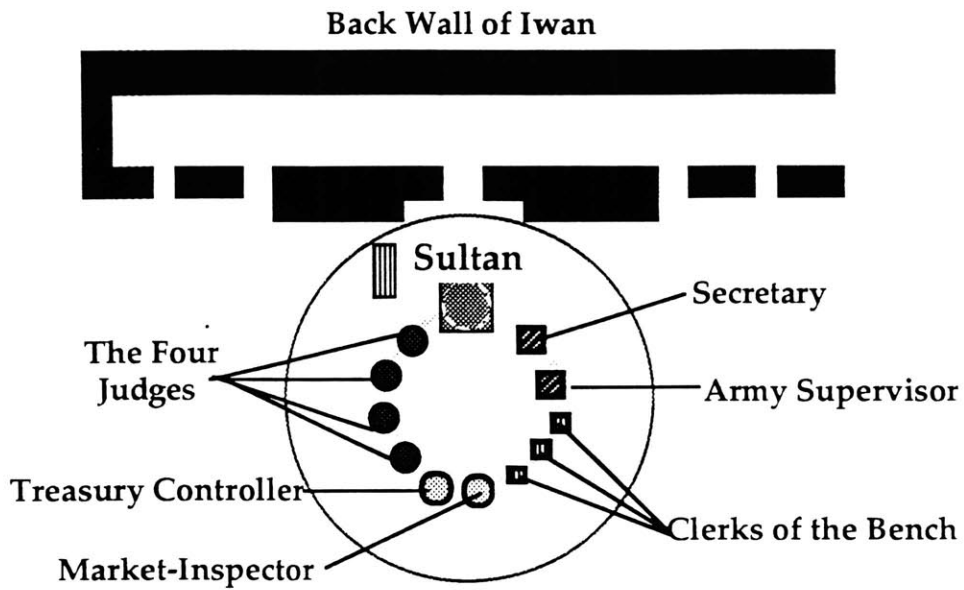


Fig 5. 15 The Circle around the Sultan.

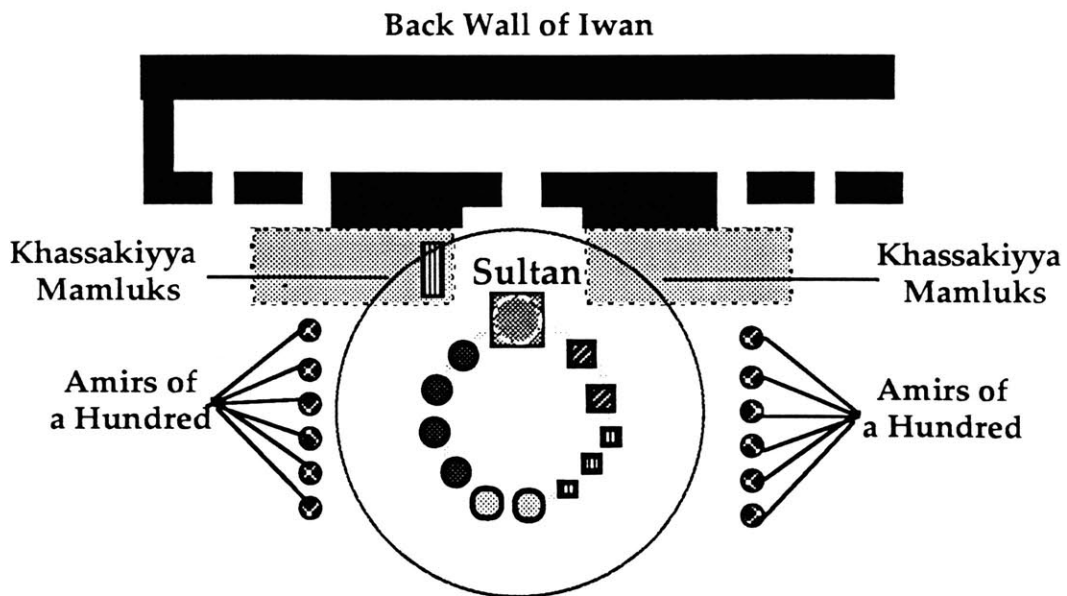


Fig 5. 16 Amirs Seating around the Sultan.

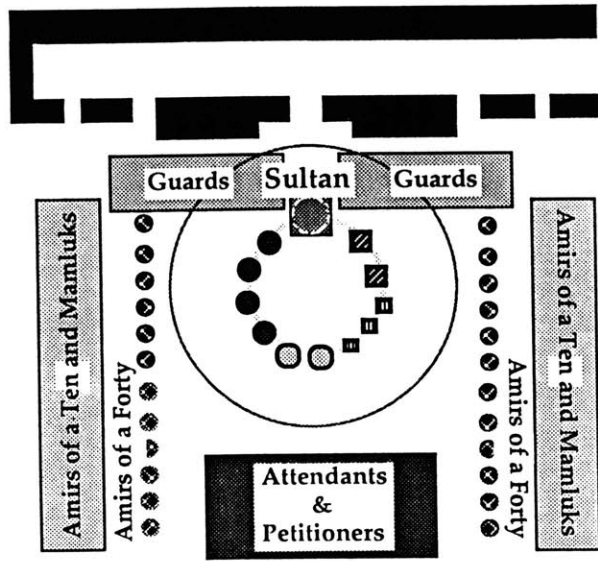


Fig 5. 17 The Full Arrangement on Dar al-'Adl's Days.

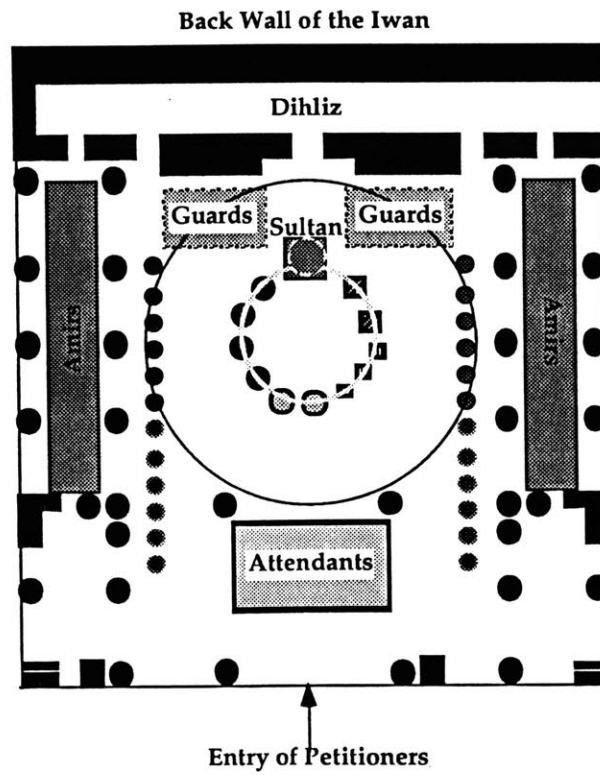


Fig 5. 18 The Plan of the Iwan and the Order of Seating.

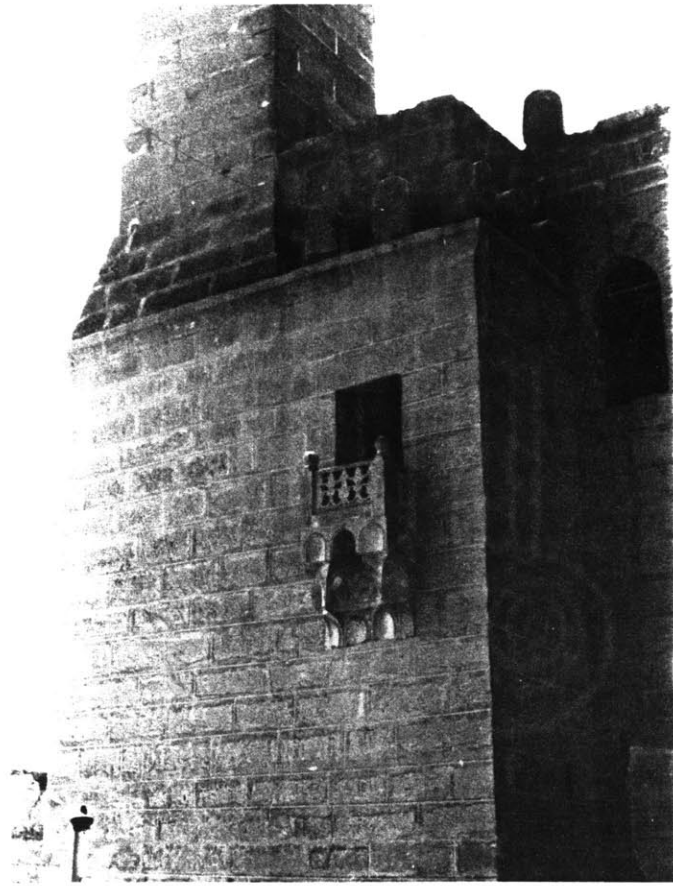


Fig 5. 19 The Base of the Mosque's Eastern Minaret.



Fig 5. 20 View of the Mosque's Façades.



Fig 5. 21 The Southwestern Door of the Mosque.



Fig 5. 22 Mayer's Print of the Mosque's Façade.

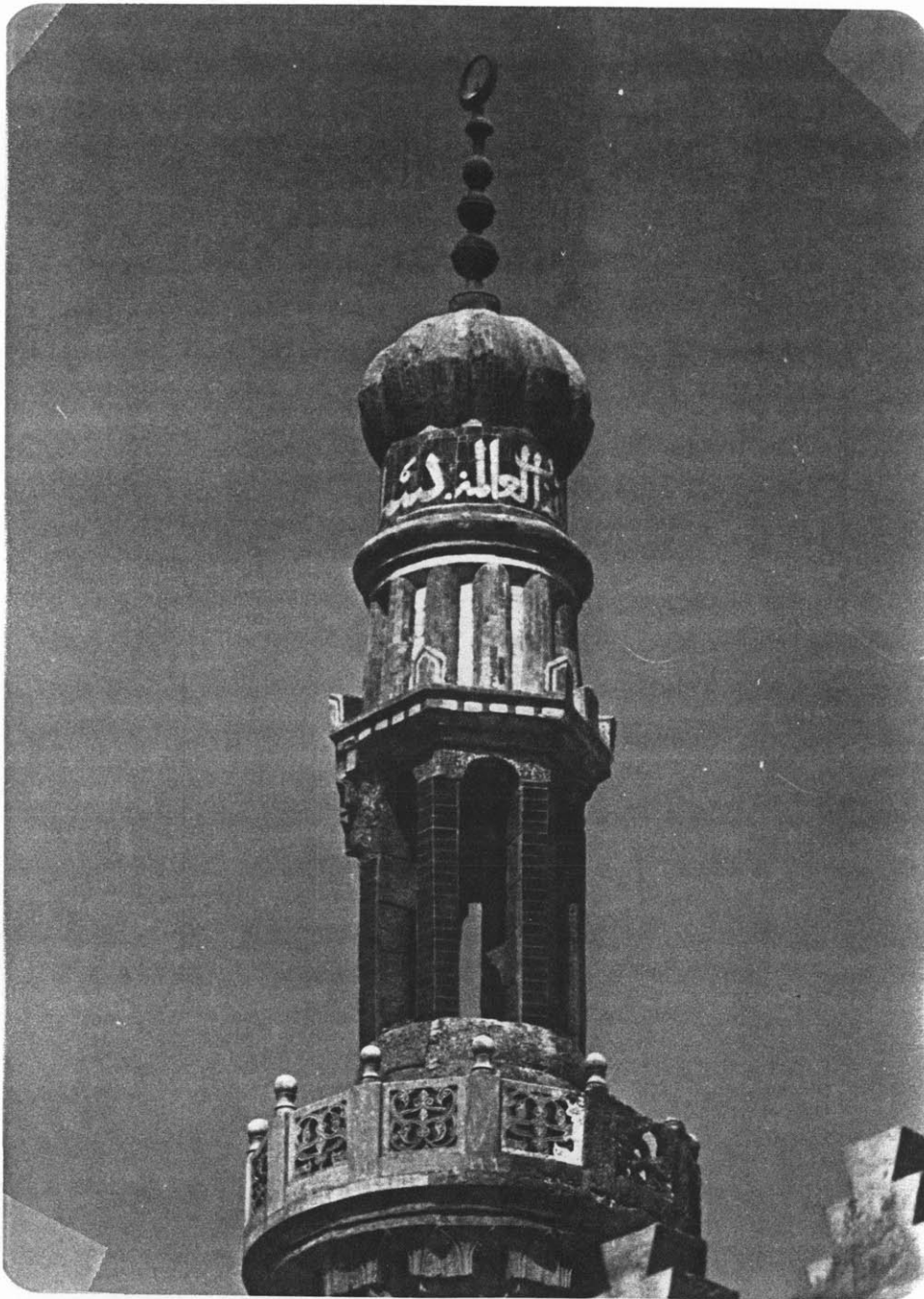


Fig 5. 23 View of the Western Minaret.

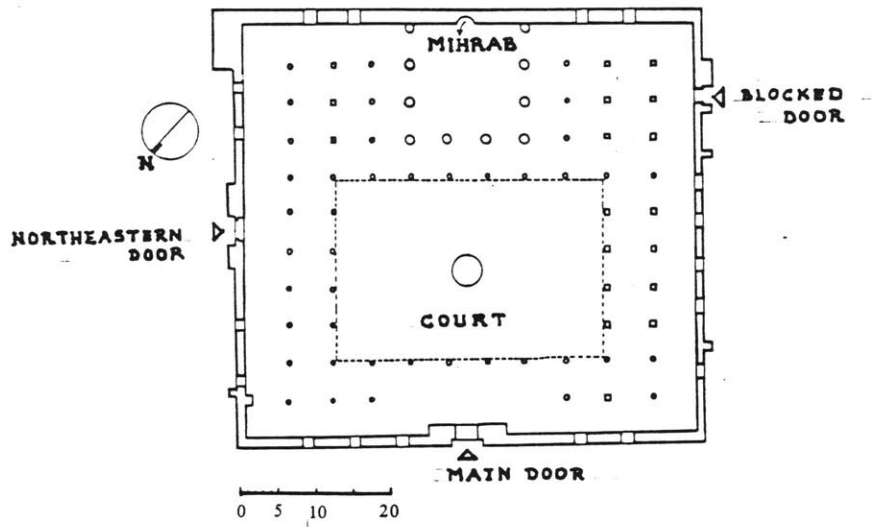


Fig 5. 24 Plan of the Mosque.

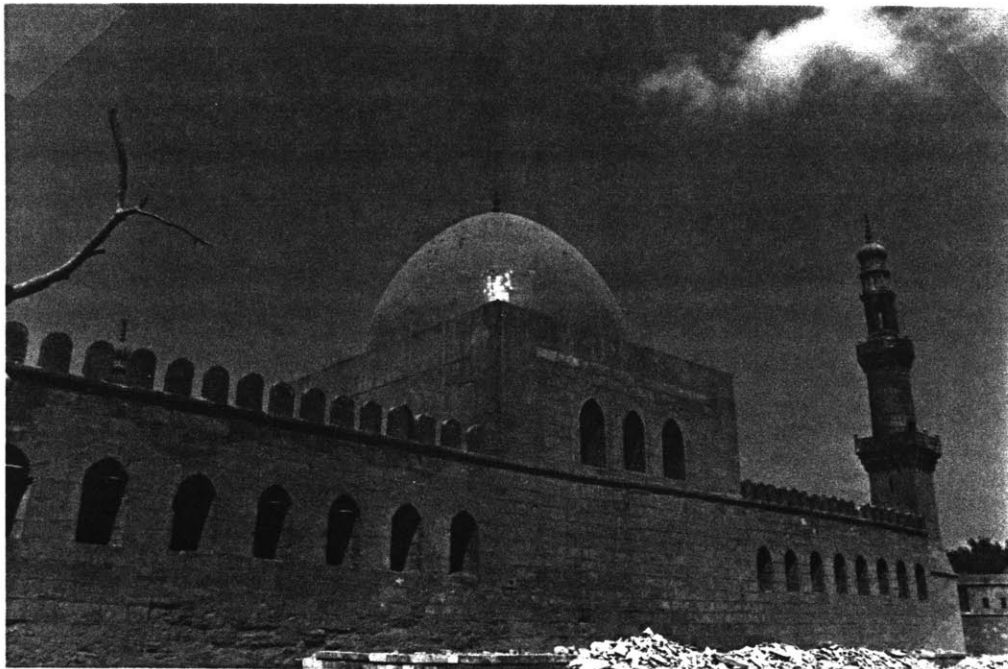


Fig 5. 25 Back Wall of the Mosque.

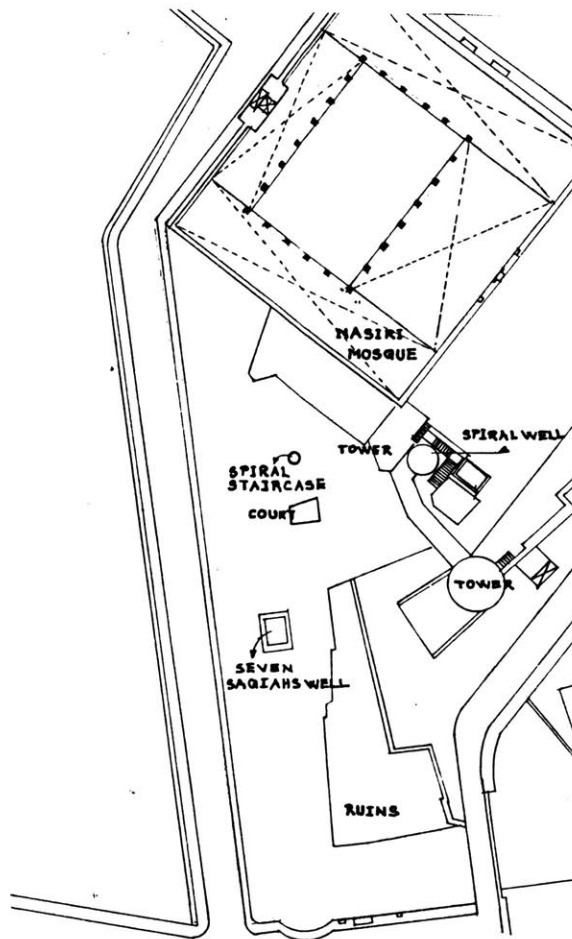


Fig 5. 26 Area South and West of the Nasiri Mosque.

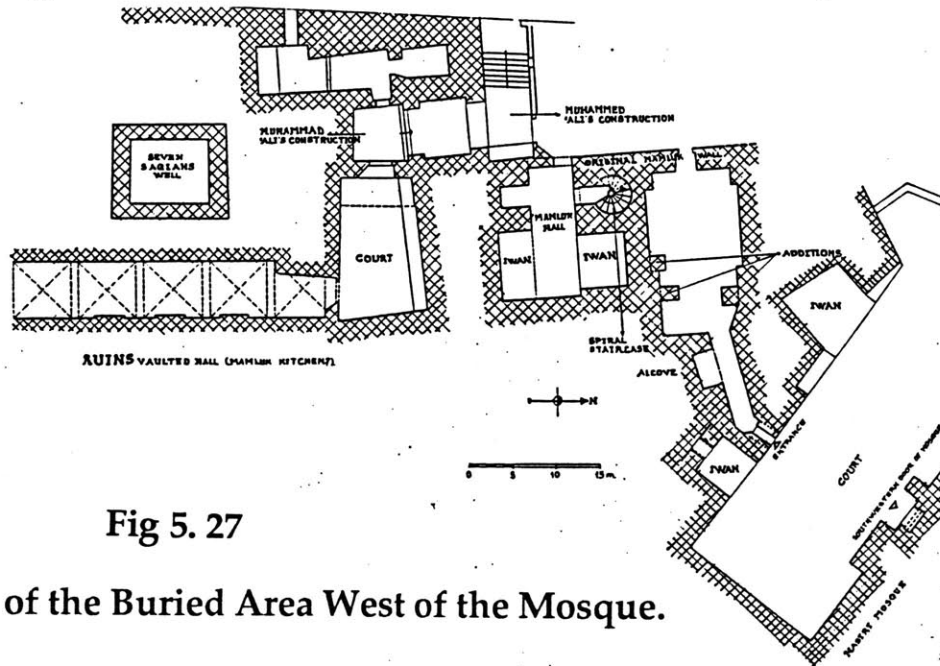


Fig 5. 27

Plan of the Buried Area West of the Mosque.



Fig 5. 28 The Corridor and the Vaulted Hall.

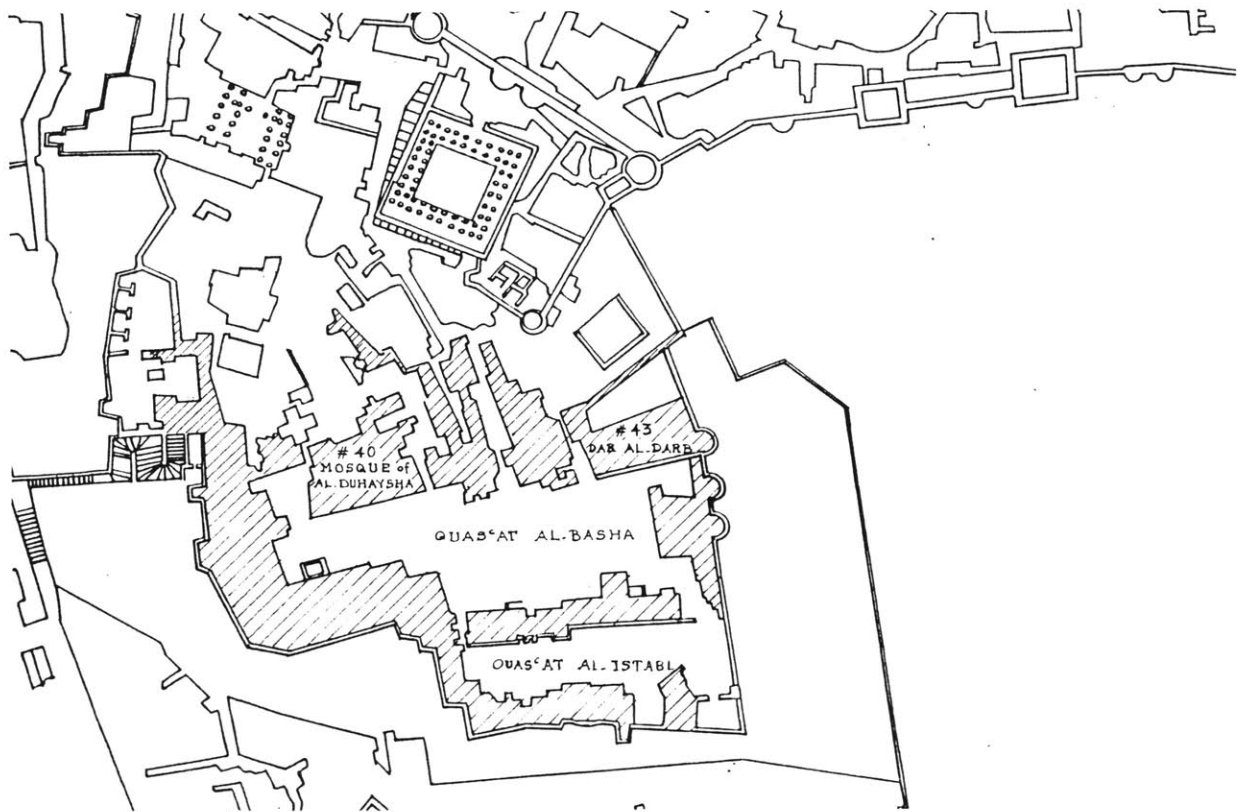


Fig 5. 29 Map of the hosh' s Surroundings.

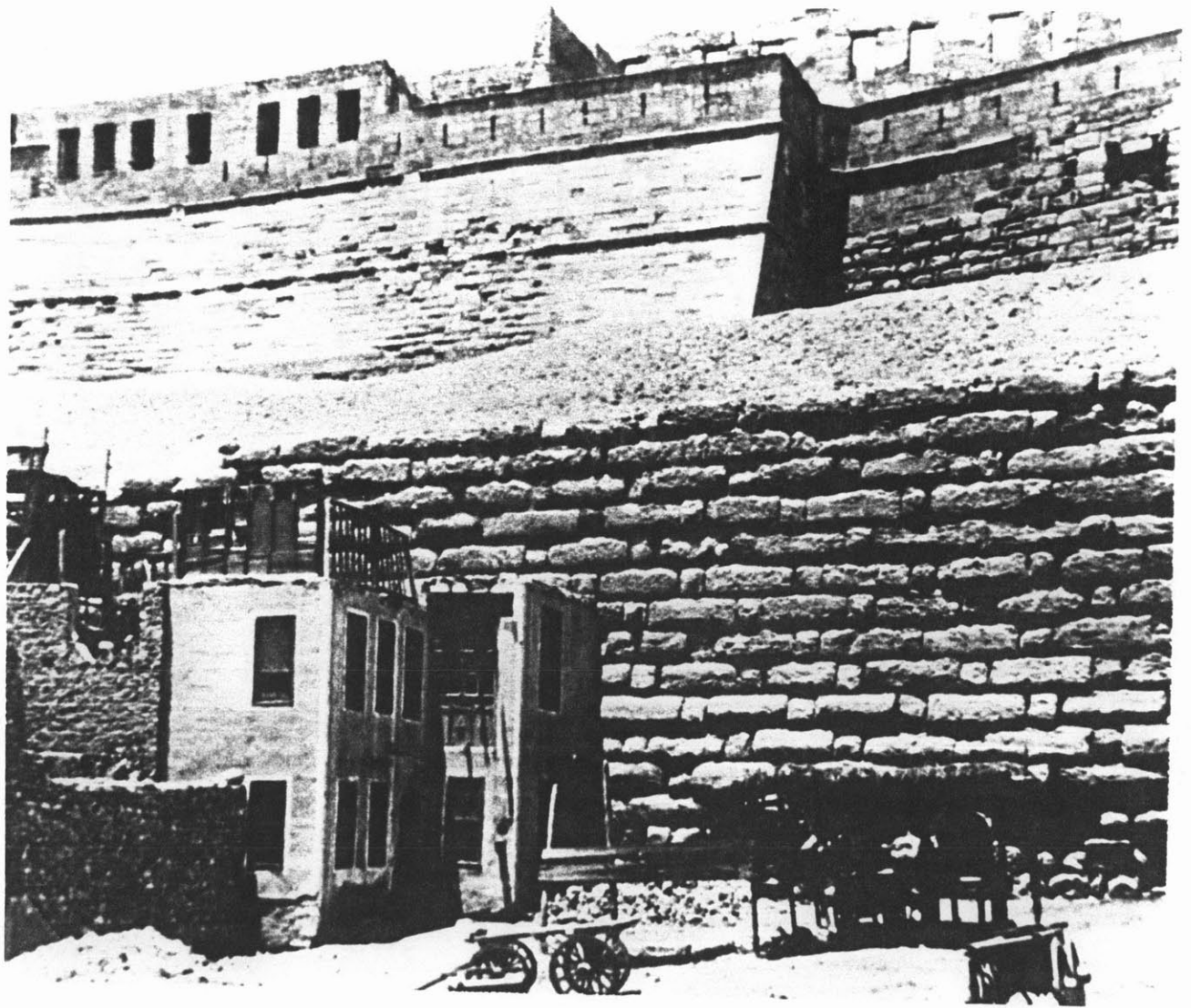


Fig 5. 30 View of the Southern Wall of the Southern Enclosure.

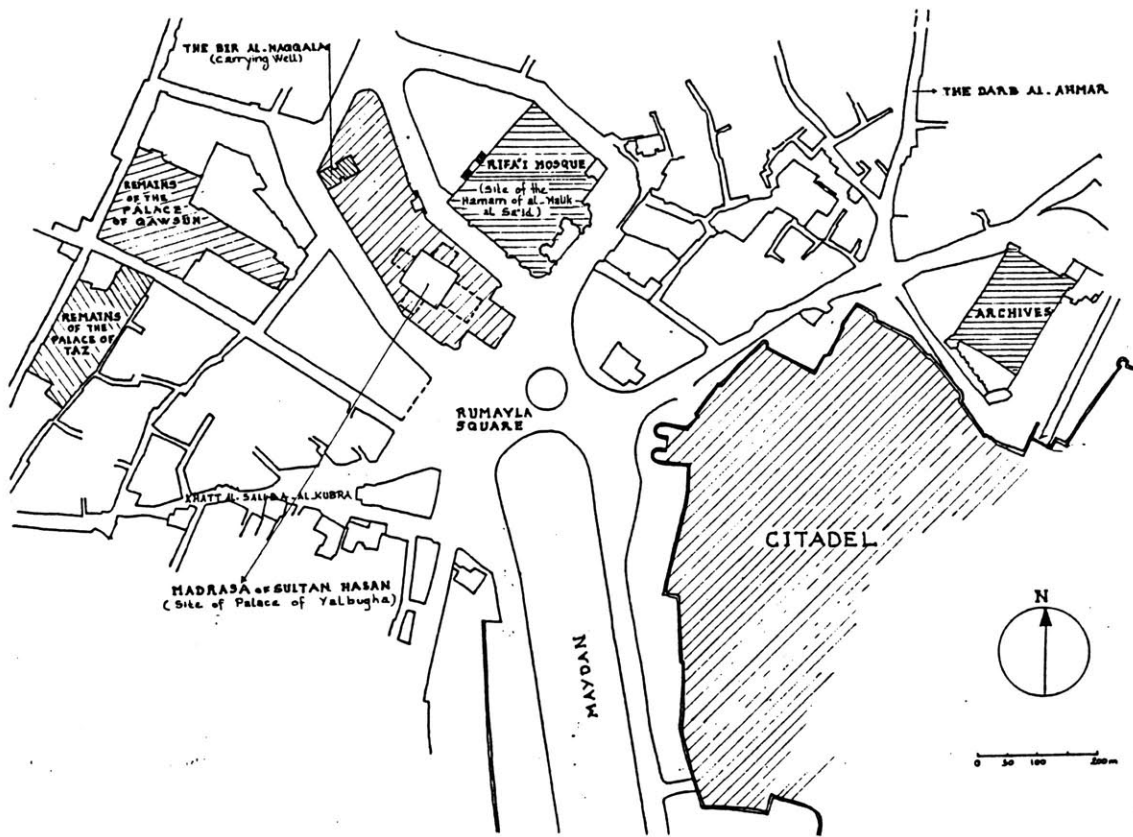


Fig 5. 31 Location of the Three Princely Palaces.

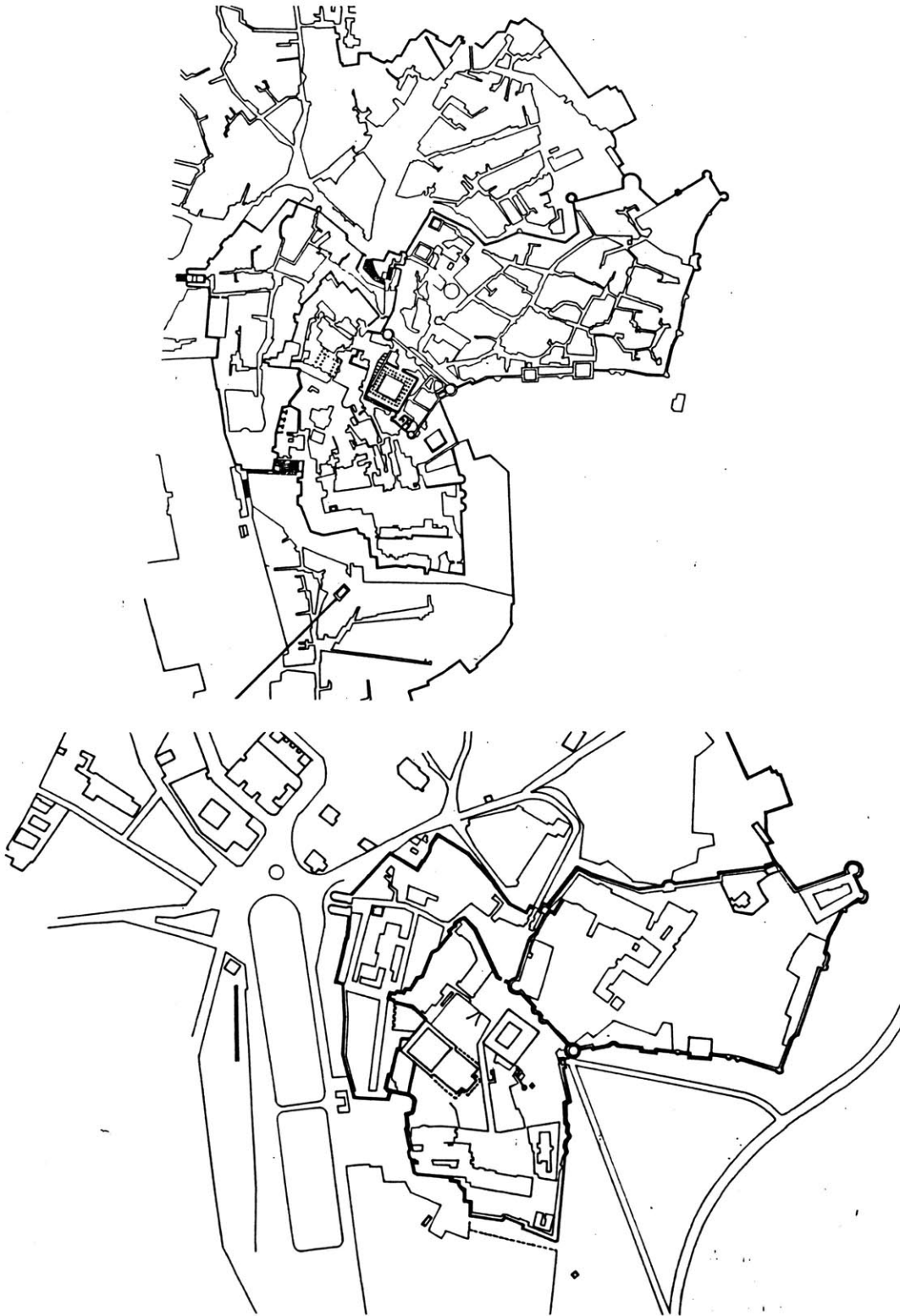


Fig 5. 32 Comparison between the Southern Enclosure's Old and New Outlines.

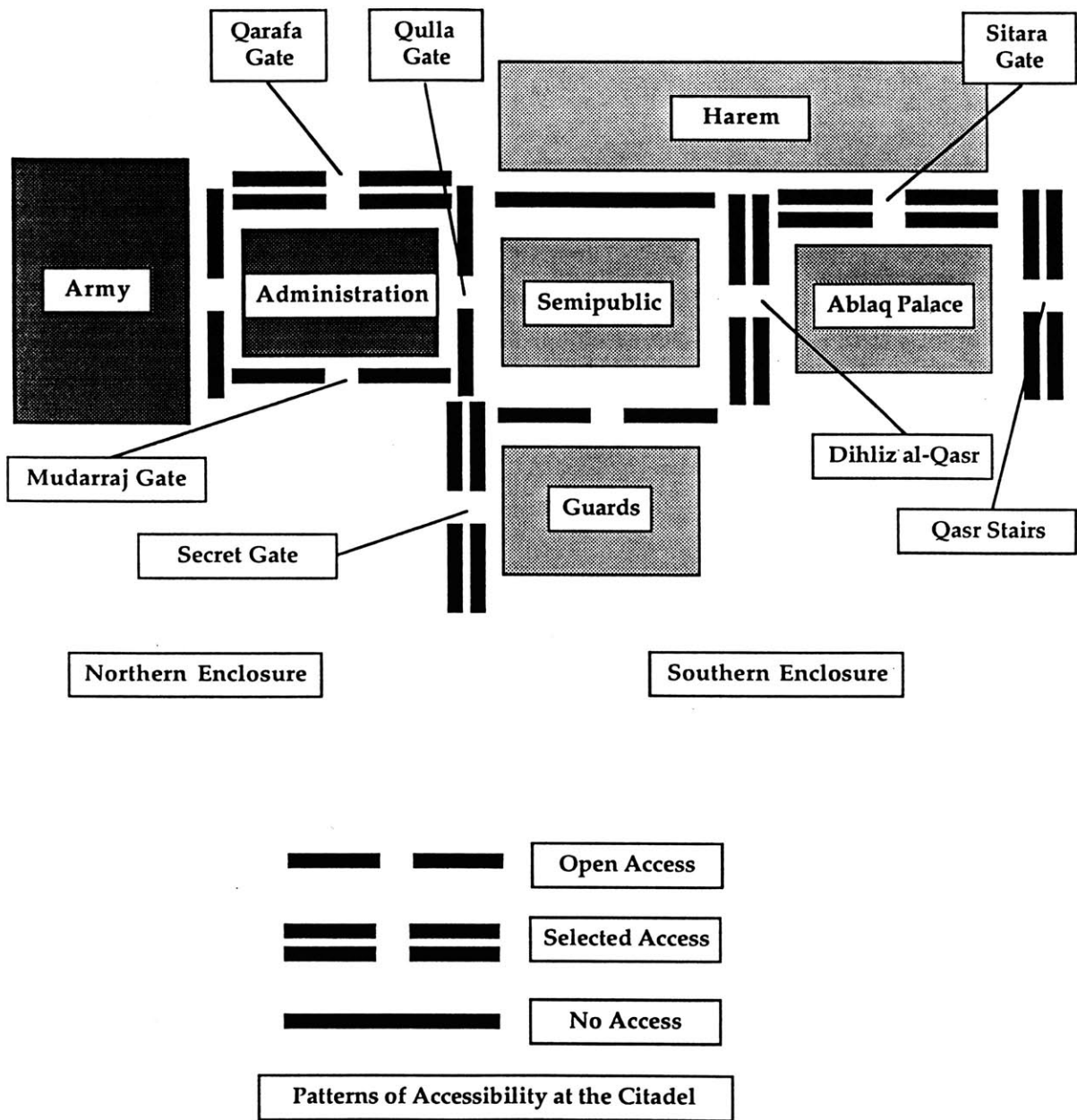


Fig C. 1 Patterns of Accessibility at the Citadel as Arranged by al-Nasir Muhammad.

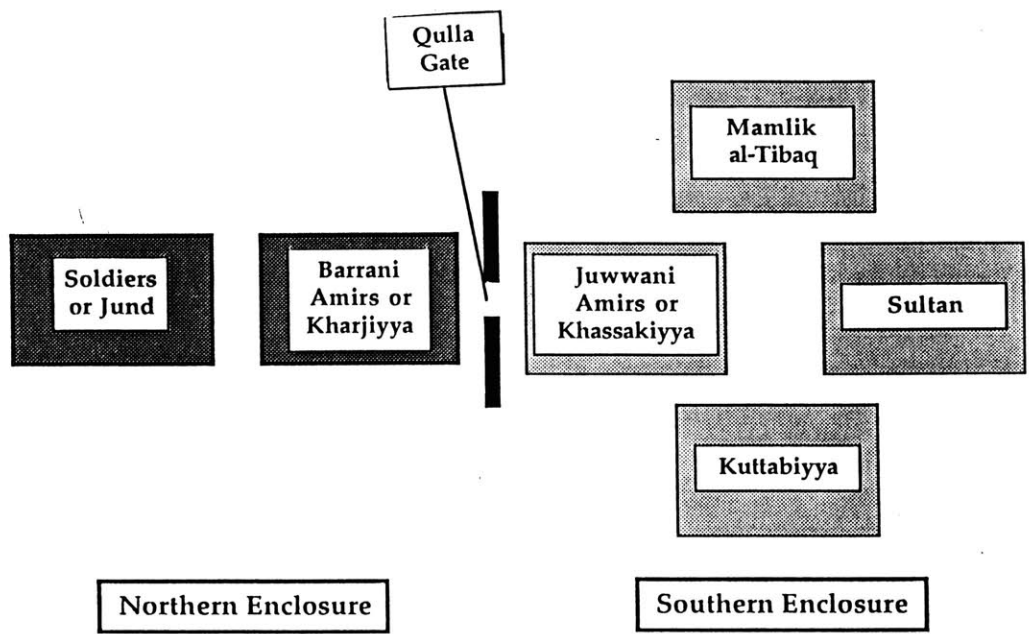


Fig C. 2 Order of Arrangement in the Mamluk Hierarchy as Translated in the Citadel.

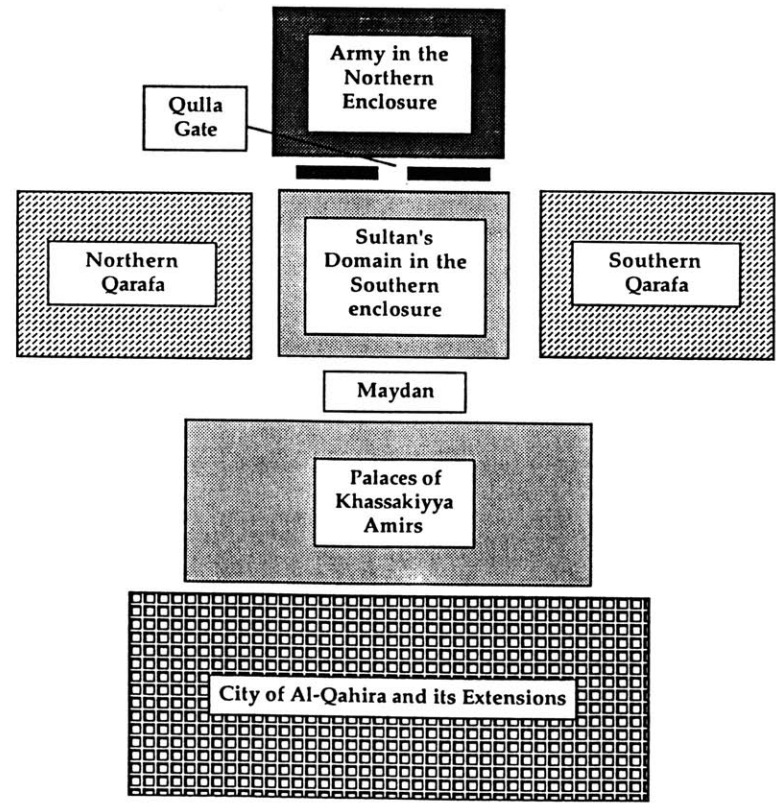


Fig C. 3 The Centrality of the Citadel in the City.