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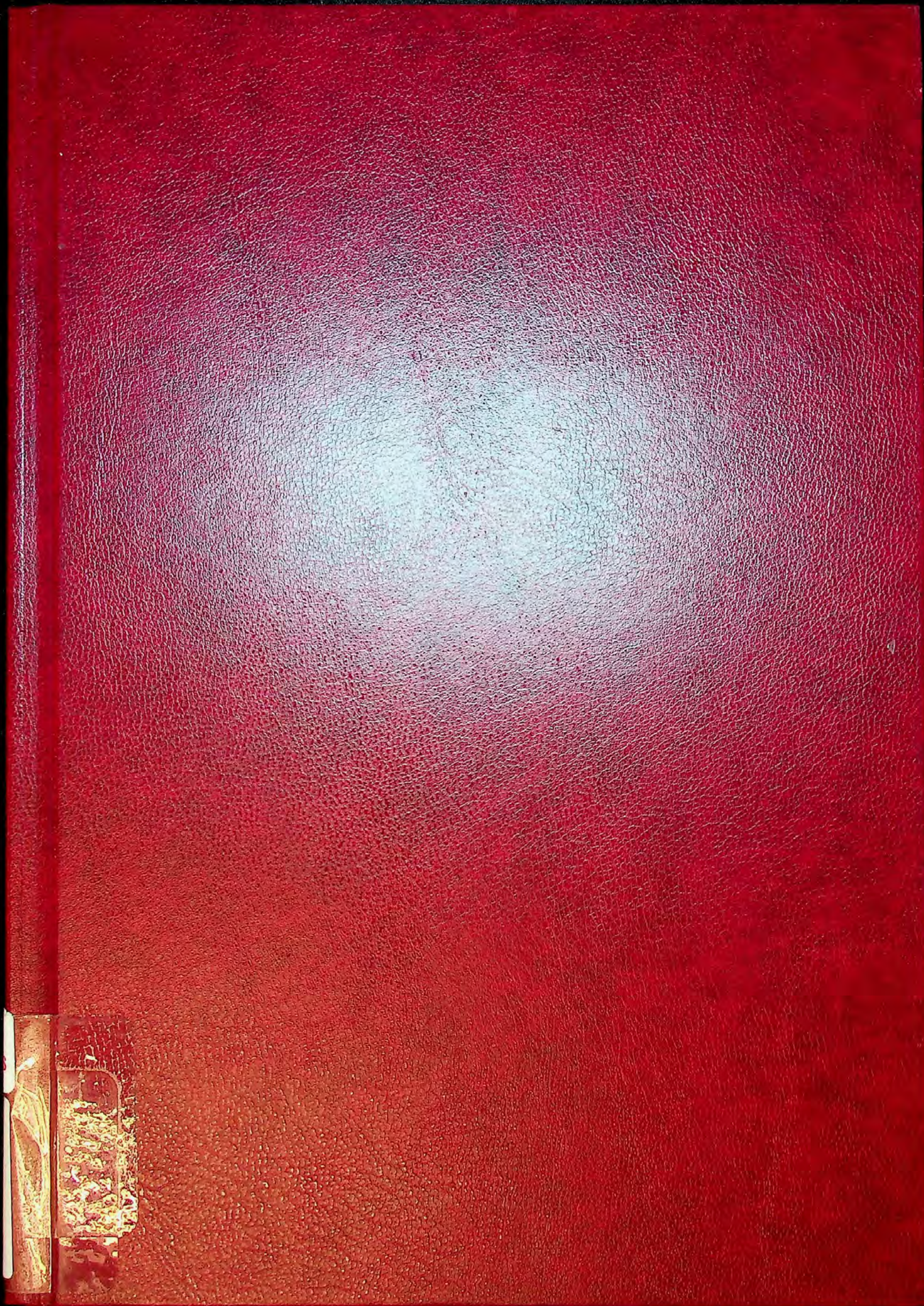
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The American University in Cairo

School of Humanities and Social Sciences

**The Mosque of Emir Altunbugha al-Maridani
in light of Mamluk Patronage under al-Nasir Muhammad Ibn Qalawun**

A Thesis Submitted to

The Department of Arab and Islamic Civilizations

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for

the degree of Master of Arts

by

Diana Isaac Bakhoun

B.A. Art

under the supervision of Dr. Bernard O'Kane

May 2009

12 JUL 2011

19 JUL 2011

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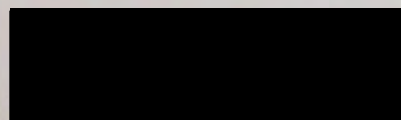
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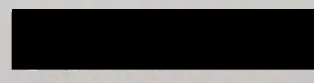
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For Laila and Ishak Bakhoun

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Abstract

The fourteenth century in Cairo witnessed the spread of monumental constructions, especially during the third reign of al-Nasir Muhammad (1310-40), marked by great growth and urban development. The sultan's evident love of building led to the creation of a vast building programme, where principal emirs were encouraged to undertake construction projects in different parts of the city. The traditional urban centre of the city was soon transformed, responding not only to the increasing needs of the growing population, but also to very carefully planned policies of the sultan.

In his attempt to pull the urbanization of the city toward the south-east in the direction of the Citadel, al-Nasir Muhammad encouraged his emirs to carry out construction projects between Bab-Zuwayla and the mosque of Ibn Tulun, starting from the area now known as Darb al-Ahmar up to al-Saliba Street.

The plurality of congregational mosques in the southern part of the city marked a turning point in the development of Cairo's neighborhoods and quarters. The area was soon to become a more desirable place to live, filled with mansions and palaces of the rich and powerful.

This thesis will discuss the historical significance of the architecture, decoration as well as location of the mosque of emir Altunbugha al-Maridani, one of the mosques constructed in the newly developed Darb al-Ahmar, highlighting some of its unique features which can further help us understand patterns of patronage during al-Nasir's third reign. The sultan was strongly involved in construction projects carried out by his emirs and often played a major role in the sponsorship of their edifices. The current study on the mosque of emir Altunbugha al-Maridani aims at pinpointing the sultan's personal involvement in various steps of the foundation process of the mosque, starting from the choice of its location, obtaining the building site, providing construction materials, funds, designers and craftsmen, to the choice of its decoration and possibly its inscription programmes. Therefore, the definition and question of patronage will be analyzed and it will be examined whether Altunbugha al-Maridani or al-Nasir Muhammad was the actual patron of the project.

The discussion will further aim at contextualizing the mosque in light of historical events of the time and examining whether these have contributed or influenced the building of this period, specifically the mosque of al-Maridani.

Contents

Acknowledgements	iv
Abstract	vi
List of Figures	ix
I. Historical Introduction. The Urbanization of al-Qahira under al-Nasir Muhammad Ibn Qalawun	
1. Al-Nasir's Patronage of Architecture	1
2. The Expansion of Cairo	2
3. Mamluk Ceremonial Culture	4
4. The Significance of the Southern Expansion	6
5. The History of al-Darb al-Ahmar	7
II. The Mosque of Emir Altunbugha al-Maridani	
1. The Founder	11
a) Emir Altunbugha al-Maridani	
b) Emirs and Governors of Aleppo under al-Nasir Muhammad Ibn Qalawun	
c) Altunbugha al-Hajib al-Nasiri	
d) 'Ali al-Mardini	
2. The Foundation	17
a) Mosque Location and Site in Medieval Times	
b) Brief Description of the Mosque	
c) Mosque Function	
d) Later History of the Mosque	
3. The Comité de Conservation des Monuments de l'Art Arabe	20
4. The Condition of the Mosque	20
a) The Early Years	
b) The Late 19 th Century	
c) The Original Condition of the Mosque	
d) Objects Transferred to the 'Museum of Arab Art'	
5. Restoration Works	22
a) The Entrance Portals and Minaret	
b) The Mosaics of the Mihrab	
c) The Minbar	
d) The Cupola in front of the Mihrab	
e) The Marble Fountain	
f) The Inscription Bands	
g) The Wooden Ceilings	
h) The Windows	
6. Additional Factors Threatening the Mosque	28
7. The Final Works	29

III.	The Mosque in light of State Patronage	
1.	The Concept of Patronage	31
2.	The Mosque in light of State Patronage	32
3.	Obtaining the Building Site	32
	a) Historical Background	
	b) The Framework of Waqf. Establishing Urban Nuclei.	
	c) A 'Legal' System Within the Framework of Waqf: Istibdal	
	d) The Absence of a Waqfiyya	
4.	The Construction Process	39
	a) Generous Donations by the Sultan	
	b) Building Materials and the Concept of Reuse	
5.	The Plan	41
	a) The Concept of a <i>Maqsura</i>	
	b) The Revival of the Riwaq-Type Plan and Its Symbolic Implications	
6.	Urban Considerations	47
	a) The Mosque and the Street	
	b) The Significance of the Mashrabiyya Screen	
7.	The Façade	50
8.	The Minaret	51
9.	The Inscriptional Programme	53
10.	Heraldry	55
11.	Mamluk Patronage and the Introduction of New Techniques	57
	a) Diplomatic Relations	
	b) Emir Sayf al-Din Aitmish al-Ashrafi al-Muhammadi	
	c) Tile Decoration	
	d) Stucco Decoration	
	e) The Decline of the Tabrizi Workshop	
	f) Syrian Influences	
12.	The Incorporation of Earlier Decorative Forms	74
IV.	Conclusion	78
	Bibliography	82
	Figures	87

List of Illustrations

FIGURE

- 1 Map showing the significance of al-Darb al-Ahmar
- 2 Cairo, Palace of Emir Qawsun
- 3 Map showing possible routes from Bab Zuwayla to the Citadel
- 4 Cairo, Palace of Alin Aq
- 5 Mosque plans in al-Darb al-Ahmar
- 6 Mosque of al-Maridani, qibla wall and portal opposite the mihrab
- 7 Aleppo, Mosque of Altunbugha
Cairo, Mosque of al-Nasir Muhammad
- 8 Mosque lamp of emir 'Ali al-Mardini
- 9 Mosque of al-Maridani, general views of decorative elements
- 10 Mosque of al-Maridani, sanctuary
- 11 Mosque of al-Maridani, muqarnas pendentives and ceilings
- 12 Mosque of al-Maridani, stucco decoration
- 13 Mosque of al-Maridani, courtyard
- 14 Mosque of al-Maridani, exterior
- 15 Mosque of al-Maridani, portals
- 16 Mosque of al-Maridani, tile panels
- 17 Mosque of al-Maridani, marble fountain
- 18 Mosque of al-Maridani before restoration
- 19 Objects moved from the mosque of al-Maridani to the 'Museum of Arab Art' (now the Museum of Islamic Art)
- 20 Mosque of al-Maridani, evidence of earlier restorations
- 21 Mosque of al-Maridani, documentation of Comité work
- 22 Mosque of al-Maridani, mihrab after restoration
- 23 Mosque of al-Maridani, minbar
- 24 Mosque of al-Maridani, wooden ceilings
- 25 Mosque of al-Maridani, windows
- 26 Mosque of al-Maridani after restoration by the Comité
- 27 Mosque of al-Maridani, inscription panel documenting restorations carried out by the Comité
- 28 Mosque of al-Maridani, foundation inscriptions on gateways
- 29 Mosque of al-Maridani, foundation inscription next to minbar
- 30 Mosque of al-Maridani, foundation inscriptions in sanctuary
- 31 Mosque of al-Maridani, reused column capitals and stone blocks
- 32 Mosque plans
- 33 Drawing of the Great Iwan of al-Nasir Muhammad at the Citadel
- 34 Mosque of al-Maridani, main portal
- 35 Mosque of al-Maridani, plan showing urban considerations
- 36 Mosque of al-Maridani, mashrabiyya screen and stone railing
- 37 Mosque of al-Maridani, minaret
- 38 Cairo, Mosque of al-Nasir Muhammad at the Citadel, minarets

- 39 Ilkhanid minarets
- 40 Mosque of al-Maridani, tile panels compared to other stucco panels in Cairo
- 41 Mosque of al-Maridani, rectangular tile panels
- 42 Mosque of al-Maridani, tile roundels compared to al-Aqmar
- 43 Konya, Sahip Ata Mausoleum
- 44 Mosque of al-Maridani, tile roundels
- 45 Mosque of al-Maridani,
sgraffiato technique compared to 'Ala' al-Din Mosque in Konya
- 46 Konya, Sirçali Madrasa, tile decoration
- 47 Mosque of al-Maridani, tile panel surrounds
- 48 Cairene and Ilkhanid stucco mihrabs
- 49 Ilkhanid stucco mihrabs
- 50 Cairo, Khanqah of Khawand Umm Anuk, mihrab and stucco roundels
- 51 Comparison of Cairene and Ilkhanid stucco roundels
- 52 Mosque of al-Maridani, tree representations in stucco
- 53 Cairo, Qa'a Ashrafiyya, tile decoration after restoration
- 54 Damascus, Great Mosque, mosaic decoration
Damascus, Qubbat al-Zahiriyya, mosaic decoration
- 55 Ewer of Shihab al-Din
- 56 Mosque of al-Maridani, mihrab
- 57 Comparison of marble dado in the mosque of al-Maridani and Qubbat al-Zahiriyya in Damascus
- 58 Mosque of al-Maridani, crenellations

CHAPTER ONE

Historical Introduction

The Urbanization of al-Qahira under al-Nasir Muhammad Ibn Qalawun

1. Al-Nasir's Patronage of Architecture

The fourteenth century in Cairo witnessed the spread of monumental constructions, especially during al-Nasir Muhammad's third reign (1310-40), marked by great growth and urban development. The sultan's evident love of building led to the creation of a vast building programme, where principal emirs were encouraged to undertake construction projects in different parts of the city.

A *Dīwān al-'Amā'ir* (construction administration) was established, to which a budget of 29 million *dirhams* from the state revenue was allocated on a yearly basis, and the sultan's expenditure on architecture reached an estimated 8,000 *dirhams* per day.¹ More than fifty mosques and *madrasas* are thought to have been built between 1293 and 1340, accounting for more than a quarter of the 198 monuments constructed during the entire Mamluk period.² Increased economic and political stability ensured the availability of lavish resources, and according to Ibn Taghribirdi, Cairo doubled in area.³ The traditional urban centre of the city was soon transformed, responding not only to the increasing needs of the growing population, but also to very carefully planned policies of the sultan.

Historians who compare him with his predecessors, acknowledge al-Nasir Muhammad's enthusiastic patronage of public works. Al-Maqrizi writes:

Al-Nasir was fond of architecture. From the time that he returned from al-Karak for his third sultanate, he kept on continuously building until his death. His expenditure was estimated at eight thousand *dirhams* per day. When he saw something he disliked, he demolished it entirely and rebuilt it to his satisfaction. No king before him equalled his expenditure on architecture. When al-Mansur Qalawun desired to build a covered *maṣṭaba* to sit on,

¹ Al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk* 2:2:537. Karim, *Mosque of Ulmas*, 145.

² Raymond, *Cairo*, 120.

³ Raymond, *Glory of Cairo*, 173.

protected from the heat of the sun, and al-Shuja'i wrote for him an estimate of its cost (four thousand dirhams), he took the paper from the hands of al-Shuja'i and tore it up. He said: "I sit in a *maq'ad* of four thousand dirhams! Erect me a tent when I descend [the Citadel], for I will not release anything from the treasury for such a thing." This was the case with al-Zahir Baybars and those who preceded him; they did not spend money but saved it conservatively and fearfully.⁴

2. The Expansion of Cairo

Whereas earlier Mamluk sultans encouraged the extension of Cairo towards the northern and western directions, al-Nasir Muhammad's promotion of urban development to the south had a more lasting success. This was largely due to the natural evolution of the physical aspect of the city, already laid out at the time of the Ayyubids.

The urbanization projects which began with the conquest of the Ayyubids were continued under the Mamluks, who constructed great sultanic foundations next to al-Salih's madrasa and mausoleum in the Qasaba, on the site formerly occupied by the great Fatimid palaces or what was once known as Bayn al-Qasrayn. The creation of building projects in this area, once the main avenue of medieval Cairo and the centre of a royal parade ground, was not only a way for the Mamluks to associate themselves with their predecessors, but also a way of asserting their legitimacy as rulers.⁵

On the other hand, there was clearly a shift in power to the Citadel, which soon witnessed rapid palatial developments and was once more the centre of the sultanic residences and the stage for Mamluk ceremonial.⁶ In his attempt to pull the urbanization of the city toward the south-east in the direction of the Citadel, al-Nasir encouraged his emirs to carry out construction projects between Bab-Zuwayla and the

⁴ Al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk* 2:2:537.

⁵ Fernandes, *Mamluk Architecture*, 108-110.

⁶ Behrens-Abouseif, *Citadel*, 66.

mosque of Ibn Tulun, starting from the area known as al-Darb al-Ahmar, once used as a cemetery and which was to become a major processional route, as far as al-Saliba Street (fig.1).⁷

There additionally existed a well-planned scheme to upgrade the quarter beneath the Citadel, the area known as Hadarat al-Baqar (the Rise of the Oxen), where sultan Hasan later constructed his mosque. A spectacular palatial complex was conceived, which consisted of the palaces of two of al-Nasir's favourite emirs and in-laws, Altunbugha al-Maridani and Yalbugha al-Yahyawī, in addition to four 'stables' for emirs Qawsun, Tashtumur and Aydighmish as well as another structure named *istabl al-Jawq*.⁸ The palaces were supplied with water via an aqueduct. Further west, a structure known as *istabl Baktimur*, the palace of Baktimur, was built on the site of the hippodrome of sultan Lajin.⁹ Many of the palaces have long disappeared, but the scale and grandeur of the palace of Qawsun is a testimony to the magnificence of these palatial complexes, which probably housed large stables due to their proximity to the horse market and hippodrome at Rumayla (fig.2). Additionally, emir al-Sunqur Sa'di, another son in law of al-Nasir, built his funerary *khānqāh* (1315-21) in the same quarter, and his monument is one of the earliest foundations of al-Nasir's third reign.¹⁰

The foundation of the mosque of al-Maridani was of substantial historical significance for al-Nasir's urbanization of the area south of Bab Zuwayla and it may

⁷ Blair & Bloom, *Art and Architecture*, 80.

⁸ Behrens-Abouseif, *Cairo of the Mamluks*, 56. The author argues that the term 'istabl' should be interpreted as a palace; the palaces in this area probably housed huge stables due to the connection to the horse market and hippodrome and were hence referred to as 'stables.' From al-Maqrīzī, *Khīṭaṭ* 2:71-73.

⁹ Ibid., 56.

¹⁰ Ibid., 166. The structure was used in the Ottoman period as a *tekke* for Mawlawi dervishes. It should be noted at this stage that as early as the late 13th century, with sultan Lajin's renovation of the mosque of Ibn Tulun in 1296-1298, the area around the mosque was brought back to life. In this same era, sultan Kitbugha constructed a *maydān* between Birkat al-Fil and Qal'at al-Kabsh, and shortly afterwards built the madrasa and mausoleum of Salar and Sanjar in 1303-4. Raymond, *Cairo*, 132-133.

be suggested that there existed a prospective plan to develop this artery into a processional route leading up to the Citadel.

3. Mamluk Ceremonial Culture

Chroniclers' accounts provide detailed descriptions of the processions and ceremonial parades that crossed the streets of Cairo during the Mamluk period. This ceremonial culture not only shaped the look of the city, but also defined its importance as the centre of the sultanate and heart of an empire. The ceremonials included parades of the *maḥamal*, pilgrimage, as well as sultanic parades or events such as the opening of the *khalīj* in the summer, hippodrome events as well as hunts. Additionally, sultans like al-Nasir Muhammad were often actively engaged in the supervision and inspection of construction projects and public works in the city and celebrated their inauguration.¹¹

The procession of major sultanic ceremonials typically started at Bab al-Nasr along the Qasaba and all the way up to Bab Zuwayla. The routes the processions took from Bab Zuwayla up to the Citadel is a question that is still in need of much research. Historians' accounts are generally more detailed with regards to ceremonial parades that took place within the walled city of Cairo, especially in the area of Bayn al-Qasrayn. Until about the fifteenth century, neither al-Tabbana nor any of al-Darb al-Ahmar's monuments are mentioned explicitly in chroniclers' accounts of the parades that crossed this area to the Citadel. In one of Ibn Iyas' descriptions of al-Ghuri's processions, the historian mentions precisely that the parade passed by the mosque of al-Maridani.¹²

¹¹ 'Abd al-Fattāh, *Ba'd al-mulāḥazāt*, 1; Behrens-Abouseif, *Cairo of the Mamluks*, 27, 32.

¹² Ibn Iyās, *Badā'i' al-zuhūr* 4:421. In al-Maqrizi's description of al-Nasir's parade following his return from al-Karak for his third sultanate, the historian mentions how the sultan went to the Citadel passing through an area known as *Bayn al-'Arusatayn*. The text reads:

From Bab Zuwayla, a number of itineraries could be taken to reach the Citadel (fig. 3):

1. through the Khayamiyya, up to al-Saliba Street and Rumayla Square and from there to the Citadel through Bab al-Mudarraġ or Bab al-‘Azab.
2. through al-Darb al-Ahmar through Suq al-Silah and Rumayla up to the Citadel.
3. through al-Darb al-Ahmar and al-Tabbana to al-Mahgar and up to the Citadel through Bab al-Wazir.¹³

The two routes passing through al-Darb al-Ahmar were the shortest and most direct routes to the Citadel. The upgrading of the area of al-Darb al-Ahmar may thus have been a prospective plan of al-Nasir to create a processional route along this vibrant and direct artery leading to the Citadel. Al-Nasir’s reconstruction of the Iwan al-Kabir in 1334 may have acted as a catalyst to such a development. The positioning of major and impressive Mamluk monuments along a possible ‘prospective’ processional route was therefore carefully choreographed and both elements, the monuments and the processions, were tightly connected.

وسار إلى القلعة وخرج الناس بأجمعهم لمشاهدته. فلما بلغ بين العروستين ترجل سلا و سائر الأمراء، و مشوا إلى باب السر من القلعة ...

According to Ziyada, Bayn al-‘Arusatayn was one of the streets (*khatt*) connecting al-Qahira to the Citadel and its area originally housed a cemetery. The author states that Muhammad Ramzi Bey suggested that the street probably passed by the area currently occupied by Dar al-Mahfuzat, but no other primary sources refer to the exact location of this street. See al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk* 2:1:73.

¹³ In one of al-Maqrīzī’s descriptions of al-Nasir’s processions, he mentions how the sultan reached the Citadel through Bab al-Silsila. For a full description of al-Nasir’s procession see al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk* 1:3:939-40. Also see ‘Abd al-Fattāh, *Ba‘d al-mulāhazāt*.

4. The Significance of the Southern Expansion

Al-Nasir's expansion of al-Qahira beyond its walls, particularly to the south, was of substantial significance. Not only did it link the walled city to the Citadel, but extended its processional routes along which prestigious monuments were erected.¹⁴

A survey of the number of mosques and madrasas built in the various districts between 1298 and 1340 can better clarify Cairo's expansion under al-Nasir:

One in the north, eight in Husayniyya, six in the western zone (including Bulaq), ten in Qahira (already well supplied with religious edifices), sixteen in the zone between Bab Zuwayla and the Mosque of Ibn Tulun, six in the zone between the two canals, three in the south (Rawdah Island and Misr), four in the south cemetery.¹⁵

A significant number of the emiral foundations constructed in the southern outskirts of Bab Zuwayla were congregational mosques. As opposed to the Ayyubids, known to be strict Shafi'is who limited the number of congregational mosques, the Mamluks, who followed the Hanafi rite and whose law differed on the number of permitted congregational mosques, allowed the multiplicity of such structures. Between 1329 and 1340, three new congregational mosques were constructed between Bab Zuwayla and the Citadel: that of Ulmas (1329-30), Qawsun (1329-30), and the mosque of al-Maridani (1339-40). After the sultan's death, more mosques were constructed in this area, the best known of which were those of Aslam al-Silahdar (1344-45) and Aqsunqur (1346-47).¹⁶

The plurality of congregational mosques in the southern part of the city marked a turning point in the development of Cairo's neighbourhoods and quarters. The area was soon to become a more desirable place to live in, filled with mansions

¹⁴ Al-Harithy, *Patronage*, 226.

¹⁵ Raymond, *Cairo*, 136.

¹⁶ Williams, *Urbanization*, 36.

and palaces of the rich and powerful.¹⁷ Al-Maqrizi's account of the number of public baths in the southern zone provides a set of indicators to the distribution of the city's residential quarters and inhabitants: forty-six in Cairo (90.2%), four in the southern zone (7.8%), one in the western zone (2.0%) and none in Husayniyya.¹⁸

With time, al-Tabbana or al-Darb al-Ahmar developed to become one of medieval Cairo's most vibrant areas, resonating with life and bustling activity and a house to various decorative as well as building crafts.

5. The History of al-Darb al-Ahmar

Like many streets of medieval Cairo, the street connecting Bab Zuwayla with the Citadel is known by several names. The different parts of the area known as Suq al-Bastiyyin were divided into Khatt Suq al-Ghanam, Khatt al-Darb al-Ahmar, Khatt *jāmi'* al-Maridani, Khatt al-Tabbana, Khatt Bab al-Wazir as well as al-Mahgar.¹⁹

Until today, parts of this street retain their original name. The area accommodated a number of medieval monuments including mosques, madrasas, khanqahs, *sabīl-kuttābs*, palaces as well as dwellings, and its development acted as an extension of the walled city of Cairo.

The Fatimid capital al-Qahira founded in 969 was intended as a royal capital, housing the Fatimid court and its dependencies. Although designed primarily as a ceremonial capital, al-Qahira at the time was not totally inaccessible to the local population.²⁰ The local population resided primarily in al-Fustat to the south, outside the Fatimid city walls, yet its local markets catered to the needs of the Fatimid court

¹⁷ Ibid., 36.

¹⁸ Raymond, *Cairo*, 151.

¹⁹ Williams, *Islamic Monuments*, 75; 'Abd al-Wahhab, *Masājid*, 147. Bab al-Wazir was one of the medieval gates of the city and a cemetery known as Bab al-Wazir cemetery occupied its site. The gate lay in close proximity to the Mosque of Mangak al-Yusufi. Many high-ranking emirs were buried in this cemetery, which was well protected inside the city walls. Williams, *Islamic Monuments*, 70-71.

²⁰ El-Rashidi, *Darb al-Ahmar*, 1.

city. With time, an exceptionally large population resided in and around the court, and increased commercial activity took place in the city given al-Fustat's distance. Large numbers of shops and specialized markets began to appear.²¹ As early as the time of al-Hakim, slow migrations of Jews and Christians from al-Fustat are recorded to have taken place.²² With the increased lack of space, parts of the army were quartered beyond the city walls and other urban settlements stretched all the way to the northern outskirts as far as Matariyya. The zone stretching from al-Fustat to Matariyya was made up of interconnected settlements of varying significance.

The area now known as al-Darb al-Ahmar, a modest working-class neighbourhood, acted originally as cemetery grounds for the residents of Fatimid al-Qahira. However, the expansion of al-Qahira's city walls by the vizier Badr al-Jamali between 1087 and 1092 to incorporate areas originally regarded as suburbs is a testimony to the city's evolution and expansion.²³

As mentioned earlier, a major turning point in Cairo's urban history was the foundation of the Citadel on the Muqattam Hills during the Ayyubid period; "it was the construction of the Citadel, more than anything, that shaped urban development of al-Darb al-Ahmar, as we know it today."²⁴ The area was the hinge joining the Fatimid al-Qahira to the Ayyubid Citadel, which were combined, developed and expanded upon to form Mamluk Cairo.

²¹ Raymond, *Cairo*, 54-55.

²² Ibid., 77-79.

²³ It is recorded that in 1168, al-Fustat was largely destroyed in a fire ordered by the Fatimid vizier Shawar to thwart the potential advances of the Crusaders, and it has been suggested that the residents of the quarter moved to other areas around al-Qahira. Raymond, however, questions the extent of this destruction. The lack of archeological evidence, the absence of any mention of the destruction in the Geniza documents as well as the survival of the mosque of 'Amr and Qasr al-Sham at the heart of al-Fustat discredit the idea of a total destruction of the capital. Later evidence confirms that parts of the damage had been repaired; such reparations would have been impossible had the city been in a total state of ruin. Raymond, *Cairo*, 75-77.

²⁴ El-Rashidi, *Darb al-Ahmar*, 56.

Again, the city walls were expanded to connect the medieval ceremonial centre to the newly-founded seat of power; the new city wall bordered al-Darb al-Ahmar. Gradually, the city expanded beyond its walls and a cluster of residential and economic structures quickly developed around the historic city's ceremonial artery. The remnants of the palace of Alin Aq (c. 693/1293)²⁵ testify to the splendour and impressiveness of this early Bahri residence as well as to the significance of the quarter as early as the late 13th century, before al-Nasir's third reign (fig.4). Alin Aq was an emir as well as cupbearer to sultan al-Ashraf Khalil (689/1290-693/1293).²⁶ Even earlier, sultan al-Muzaffar Qutuz (657/1259-658/1260) had built a madrasa at Hadarat al-Baqar, west of the Citadel.²⁷

The steady and increased urbanization of al-Darb al-Ahmar can best be traced through the study of the development of mosque plans in the area between the thirteenth and fifteenth centuries, which evolved from being large symmetrical structures with open courtyards to irregularly-shaped buildings cleverly adapted to small land plots and often without a courtyard. The scarcity of construction spots in the area, the high urban density and the ingenuity of the architects can perhaps best be traced in the mosque of Qijmas al-Ishaqi (885-886/1480-81)(fig.5).²⁸

During the mid-seventeenth century, large-scale urban works took place in the area with the construction of the maq'ad of Radwan Bey south of Bab Zuwayla. A second major project that involved the renovation of al-Darb al-Ahmar and al-Tabbana was carried out by Ibrahim Agha, emir of the janissaries in about 1650. He renovated the area around the Aqsunqur mosque together with other religious, public as well as commercial structures along both sides of the street. The works

²⁵ The exact date is uncertain; Meinecke identifies the patron with emir Alin Aq al-Nasiri who died in 736/1336. Meinecke, *mamlukische Architektur*, 2:173.

²⁶ Williams, *Islamic Monuments*, 77.

²⁷ Behrens-Abouseif, *Cairo of the Mamluks*, 54.

²⁸ El-Rashidi, *Darb al-Ahmar*, 58-59.

attributable to him covered an area of some 150 meters in length and are documented in a series of *waqf* documents.²⁹

In the 19th century, a second wave of construction activity took place in al-Darb al-Ahmar, mainly by those who wished to reside in close proximity to Muhammad Ali's expansion of the Citadel.³⁰ Al-Darb al-Ahmar's close vicinity to the Citadel made it thrive till modern times. Until today, al-Darb al-Ahmar retains the delicate balance of a medieval quarter housing significant historic monuments and a residential quarter with a strong commercial base and a vibrant retail activity.³¹

²⁹ Raymond, *Cairo*, 219-220, 238.

³⁰ Williams, *Islamic Monuments*, 75.

³¹ In fact, most crafts associated with Egypt and sold at Cairo's principal bazaar, Khan al-Khalili, are products of al-Darb al-Ahmar. An exhibit and documentary movie on the crafts of al-Darb al-Ahmar, titled *Tracing the Past, Building Anew* served as an introduction to the variety of traditional crafts in the area. The exhibition was organized in 2005 by the Aga Khan Trust for Culture.

CHAPTER TWO

The Mosque of Emir Altunbugha al-Maridani

1. The Founder

Emir Altunbugha al-Maridani

Emir 'Ala' al-Din Altunbugha (Golden Bull)¹ ibn 'Abdallah al-Maridani (judging by his name, his original owner probably came from Mardin in Turkey)² was one of al-Nasir's royal *mamlūks* who quickly became one of his favourites and rapidly advanced to the highest ranks. Born c.720/1320,³ al-Maridani was purchased at a young age by al-Nasir Muhammad.⁴ He started his career as cupbearer or *sāqī* of al-Nasir Muhammad Ibn Qalawun. He later became emir *tablakhāna*,⁵ then 'emir of one hundred,' then 'commander of a thousand'⁶ and was given the sultan's daughter in marriage. In 743/1342 he was posted to Syria, first as governor of Hama for a duration of two months and later of Aleppo, where he died in Safar 744/1343 at the age of 24, only three years after the completion of his mosque.⁷ The mosque was

¹ Williams, *Islamic Monuments*, 87.

² Al-Shujā'i, *Tārīkh*, 266.

³ According to Mayer, he was aged 24 when he died in 744. Mayer, *Saracenic Heraldry*, 63.

⁴ Al-'Asqalānī, *al-Durār al-kāmina* 1:239.

⁵ The tablakhana housed the musical instruments which were played at the gateway to the sultan's palace. 'Abd al-Wahhab, *Masājid*, 147.

⁶ The extremely substantial income of the emirs was calculated according to the number of mamluks they trained. The income was derived from a proportion of taxes (*iqṭā'*) which was paid either in cash or as materials (such as wheat or barley for horses). Raymond, *Glory of Cairo*, 192. It is important to compare the income of emirs to the construction costs of their mosques. Al-Nasir Muhammad granted his closest emirs huge *iqṭā'āt* when compared to those granted before; the income from an average *iqṭā'* of an emir of one hundred was estimated at 100,000 dinars (one dinar equalling 10 dirhams). Levanoni, *A Turning Point*, 53-54. The cost of the mosque of al-Maridani exceeded 300,000 dirhams, excluding timber and marble offered by the sultan as well as spoils taken from pre-Islamic monuments. Al-Nasir's inaugural ceremony of the Qasr al-Ablaq at the Citadel cost 500 million dirhams or 25 million dinars (one dinar equalling 20 dirhams). On the other hand, the annual revenue dedicated for the running costs of the complex of Qalawun was estimated by al-Maqrizi at one million dirhams. The costs of palaces were much higher when compared to the construction costs of mosques, mainly due to their lavish furnishings and luxury items. Behrens-Abouseif, *Cairo of the Mamluks*, 47-48.

⁷ He became governor of Aleppo on 11 Jumada II, 743 and on the 14th of Jumada II emir Sayf al-Din Yalbugha was given the governorship of Hama in place of al-Maridani. Al-Shujā'i, *Tārīkh*, 240, 257; al-'Asqalānī, *al-Durār al-kāmina* 1:239; Ibn Taghrībirdī, *al-Nujūm*, 10:105.

under construction while the emir was seriously ill, a factor which is believed to have prompted him to give generous donations.⁸

The emir was "one of al-Malik al-Nasir Muhammad Ibn Qalawun's mamluks, and his *khāssakiyya*, one whom he loved to distraction, and to whom he extended rapid promotion until he awarded him the rank of emir of one hundred and commander of one thousand and gave him the hand of his daughter in marriage."⁹ Al-Maqrizi describes him as "a tall and handsome youth with a kind expression. He was generous and of wise judgement."¹⁰

Al-Maridani provides a good example of mamluk military training and advancement under al-Nasir. Under al-Nasir's predecessors, primarily Baybars al-Bunduqdari and Qalawun, strict training and advancement patterns as well as meticulous military criteria had been established to guarantee that mamluks received a proper military training before advancing to the higher ranks. Under al-Nasir Muhammad, however, many of these criteria were discarded with many emirs attaining the highest ranks without receiving a proper military training.¹¹ In most cases, the advancement of these mamluks was based solely on the sultan's personal feelings towards them. Altunbugha al-Maridani is a case in point; he became an emir at the age of sixteen, an indication that his military training had probably been insufficient to elevate him to the highest ranks.

Other emirs whose advancement to the highest ranks was quite rapid were Qultubugha al-Fakhri and Tashtamur Hummus Akhdar, Baktimur al-Saqi, Yalbugha al-Yahyawi, Qawsun, Maliktamur al-Hijazi, Tuquzdamur al-Hamawi, Bashtak,

⁸ Behrens-Abouseif, *Cairo of the Mamluks*, 183.

⁹ Ibn Taghrībirdī, *al-Nujūm* 10:105. Eight other favourite emirs were married to the sultan's daughters.

¹⁰ Al-Maqrīzī, *Khīṭat* 4:230.

¹¹ Levanoni, *A Turning Point*, 34.

Tughay al-Kabir, Tuqtamur al-Dimashqi and Tughaytamur al-'Umari.¹² According to Ibn Taghribirdi, all the above-mentioned were awarded the rank of commander of one thousand "before any of them had a moustache."¹³

و أما اقتناؤه المماليك الحسان، فأين الشيخ تقي الدين من مشترى الملك الناصر محمد بن قلاوون إلى حسان المماليك بأعلى الأثمان الذي لم يقع للملك الظاهر في مثلها حتى إن الملك الناصر محمد قدم جماعة من مماليكه ممن شغف بمحبتهم و أنعم عليهم بتقادم ألوف بمصر و لم يطر شارب واحد منهم مثل بكتمر الساقى و يلبغا اليحياوى و الطنبغا الماردينى و قوصون و.....

The sultan's favour of al-Maridani is evident in a number of incidents. A story recorded by al-Maqrizi expresses how al-Nasir Muhammad valued al-Maridani's opinion. In the events of the year 735/1334, the historian records al-Nasir's proposal to rebuild *qanāṭir al-Siba'* (The Bridge of Panthers), which was originally constructed by al-Zahir Baybars al-Bunduqdari. This incident was often regarded as an attempt by al-Nasir to eliminate the memory of Baybars, the founder of the Mamluk sultanate and a prolific builder. Al-Maqrizi records that:

It [the qanatir] was originally built by al-Malik al-Zahir Rukn al-Din Baybars al-Bunduqdari. He placed on it panthers of stone, for his emblem was in the shape of a panther. It was then called qanatir al-Siba' for that reason. It was lofty and high. After al-Malik al-Nasir Muhammad Ibn Qalawun built the royal maydan, on the site of Bustan al-Khashshab by Mawridat al-Balat, he frequently went there and had to go over qanatir al-Siba' in order to reach the maydan from the Citadel. He was discomfited by its height and told the emirs: "When I ride to the maydan across this bridge, my back hurts from its height." It is said that though he spread that excuse, the reason was his dislike of having to look at an edifice of one of the kings who preceded him, and his hatred of having anyone other than himself be associated with something by name. Whenever he passed by it, he saw the panthers, which were the emblem of al-Malik al-Zahir, and wished to remove them so that the bridge would be attributed to him and known by his name."¹⁴

¹² Ibid., 39.

¹³ Ibn Taghribirdi, *al-Nujūm* 11:292.

¹⁴ Al-Maqrīzī, *Khīṭat* 3:488-490.

Al-Nasir Muhammad consequently ordered that the qanatir be reconstructed at a shallower angle and that the reconstruction not include the panthers, until al-Maridani got involved.

Emir Altunbugha al-Maridani fell ill, went to the royal maydan, and stayed there. The sultan [al-Nasir] visited him frequently. Al-Maridani was made aware of the public's talk that the sultan only destroyed qanatir al-Siba' in order for it to become attributed to him, and that he ordered Ibn al-Marwani to break to pieces the stone panthers to throw them in the river. It is said that he [al-Maridani] was healed after the completion of the construction of the *qantarrah* and rode to the Citadel. The sultan was happy to see him, for he had loved him. He asked him about his health and conversed with him until the *qantarrah* was mentioned. "How do you like its construction?" asked the sultan. "By God, the likes of it has never been made," he replied, "but it is not finished." "How?" [asked the sultan]. "The panthers which were there have not been put back, and the people say that the sultan's purpose in removing them was because they are the emblem of another sultan." The sultan was ill-humoured."¹⁵

It was then, that the sultan, on the advice of emir Altunbugha al-Maridani, ordered that the panthers be returned to their original location.

In another incident, Ibn Taghribirdi records how the sultan had ordered the construction of a *hawsh* whose establishment was supervised by Aqbugha 'Abd al-Wahid. Aqbugha forced the labourers to work night and day in the hot summer heat. Several labourers died in the course of construction. Al-Maridani became the people's advocate in their plea to be freed from forced labour. That the people approached al-Maridani with their request reveals something of his status and close relationship with the sultan.¹⁶

Following the death of al-Nasir Muhammad, however, his son al-Mansur Abu Bakr took the throne and imprisoned al-Maridani in 742/1341. After al-Mansur was deposed and replaced by his brother al-Ashraf Kuchuk in the same year, al-Maridani was released. As mentioned earlier, during the reign of al-Salih Isma'il ibn

¹⁵ Ibid., 491.

¹⁶ Ibn Taghribirdi, *al-Nujūm* 9:119-120.

Muhammad ibn Qalawun, Altunbugha al-Maridani was appointed governor of Hama in the year 743/1342 and later of Aleppo, where he died in 744/1343.

Emirs and Governors of Aleppo under al-Nasir Muhammad Ibn Qalawun

It should be noted that Altunbugha al-Maridani al-Saqi may often be confused with another emir under al-Nasir Muhammad, who also served as governor of Aleppo but who is known by a number of different names. A lot of confusion arose from my reviews of historians' accounts and modern sources. In the following, I have attempted to clarify some of these confusions.

The main objective of this summary is to shed some light on this other emir and to clarify that any Syrian influences found in the mosque of al-Maridani could not be ascribed to the fact that al-Maridani served as governor of Aleppo. There are a number of Syrian-inspired motifs in the decorative programme of the mosque, including the portal opposite the *mihrāb* and the unique tree representations in stucco on the *qibla* wall (fig. 6). These have often been attributed to Syria because al-Maridani was believed to have served as governor of Aleppo during his early years predating the construction of his mosque. However, al-Maridani served in Aleppo towards the end of his career and died there. The reason why scholars attributed these influences to the emir's service in Aleppo was because al-Maridani was confused with another 'Altunbugha.'

Altunbugha al-Hajib al-Nasiri¹⁷

Altunbugha al-Hajib al-Nasiri also served under al-Nasir Muhammad and was posted as governor of Aleppo in 714/1314, where he constructed a mosque, probably

¹⁷ This is the name given by al-'Asqalānī. See al-'Asqalānī, *al-Durār al-kāmina* 1:239.

known today as the Altunbugha Mosque.¹⁸ The mosque known to us today was built between 1318 and 1324 on the eastern city wall of Aleppo in an area known as Sahat al-Mila. An inscription on the western gate identifies the founder as 'Ala' al-Din Altunbugha. The mosque is a very small and simple structure, but its portal composed of a semi dome on *muqarnas* tiers has often been compared to that of al-Nasir's mosque at the Citadel, constructed during the same year and which itself bears close resemblance to the north-western gateway of the mosque of al-Maridani in Cairo (fig. 7). Altunbugha al-Nasiri returned to Egypt as an emir in 727/1326 and was posted again to Aleppo in 731/1330 for a year. He died in 742/1341, less than two years before Altunbugha al-Maridani.¹⁹

'Ali al-Mardini

'Ali Al-Mardini was another mamluk of al-Nasir Muhammad who came to Cairo in 728/1327-8. He was appointed viceroy of Syria in 753/1352 and later in 762/1360. He served as governor of Aleppo in 759/1357 and died in Cairo in 772/1370. This figure should generally not be confused with Altunbugha al-Maridani, but it should be noted that an enamelled glass lamp at the Museum of Islamic Art bears his name and is believed to come from the mosque of Altunbugha al-Maridani in Cairo (fig. 8).²⁰

¹⁸ Meinecke states that the mosque was built by the governor Altunbugha al-Salihi, possibly a different name for Altunbugha al-Hajib. Meinecke, *mamlukische Architektur*, 67. The emir was also known as Altunbugha al-'Ala'i. Mayer's account of this emir is analogous with al-'Asqalanī. Mayer, *Saracenic Heraldry*, 62-63. In his accounts of the year 720, al-Dawadari mentions 'Ala' al-Din Altunbugha as governor of Aleppo, but there's no mention of the mosque. Al-Dawādārī, *Kanz al-durar*, 297. However, the fact that the mosque we know today was built between 1318 and 1324 may indicate that it was probably constructed by this emir, who served as governor until 1326.

¹⁹ Al-'Asqalanī, *al-Durār al-kāmina* 1:239.

²⁰ Mayer, *Saracenic Heraldry*, 55-56. Wiet, *Catalogue général*, No. 294, Plate LXII.

2. The Foundation

Mosque Location and the Site in Medieval Times

The jami' of emir Altunbugha al-Maridani is located on al-Darb al-Ahmar Street, also known as al-Tabbana, which begins outside Bab Zuwayla. The street is a major artery of the city and one that provides a direct route to the Citadel. The north-western façade faces a small alley known as Harat al-Maridani, named after the mosque.

In medieval times, the site on which the mosque was constructed was originally part of a Fatimid cemetery that was later replaced by fine houses and dwellings. Al-Maqrizi's comment on how the owners "had spent a lot of money on construction"²¹ is an indication of the extent to which the area was a vibrant and well-to-do residential quarter. Opposite the mosque lay the *rab'* of emir Sayf al-Din Tughay.²²

Brief Description of the Mosque

The mosque of al-Maridani is one of the finest monuments of fourteenth-century Cairo. The historian, al-Yusufi, praised it as one of the most lavishly and finely decorated.²³ Construction work on the mosque began in 735/1334 and was completed in 740/1339-40.²⁴

The mosque follows the *riwāq* plan with an open courtyard and a dome in front of the mihrab (fig. 5.1). Three axial entrances lead to the courtyard, which is separated from the prayer hall by a fine *mashrabiyya* screen (fig. 9.1). The side *riwaqs*

²¹ Al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk* 2:2:385.

²² Ibid.; al-Shujā'ī, *Tārīkh*, 32. Maher, quoting Muhammad Ramzi, states that the *rab'* of emir Tughay was not located on al-Darb al-Ahmar Street but rather on al-Hilmiyya Street. No evidence is available to substantiate this theory. Maher, *Masājid*, 216.

²³ Behrens-Abouseif, *Cairo of the Mamluks*, 183.

²⁴ Al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk* 2:2:385.

are separated from the north-eastern and south-western entryways by finely decorated carved stone railings, and their arcades are supported on pre-Islamic columns and capitals (figs. 9.2-3). The sanctuary is decorated with a fine marble dado and a mihrab composed of tile mosaics and mother-of-pearl inlay. A marble *dikkat al-muballigh* is placed opposite the mihrab (fig. 10).

The dome in front of the mihrab is supported on a painted wooden muqarnas pendentive and carved, gilt and painted wooden ceilings adorn the sanctuary and side riwaqs (fig. 11). Different types of stucco decoration, including *bukhariyyas*, roundels and tree patterns decorate the higher portion of the walls (fig. 12).

The façade of the courtyard is decorated with pointed arches of varying spans, framed with a continuous stucco moulding (fig. 13.1). The spandrels are decorated with keel-arched niches and roundels (fig. 13.2). Carved domical structures decorate the corners and sides of the courtyard, but the function of these is a matter of speculation (fig. 13.3).

The minaret is located next to the main portal, on al-Tabbana Street and is the earliest minaret in Cairo with an entirely octagonal shaft (fig. 14.1). A fine inscription band runs along the façade, which is adorned with window recesses of a double-arched composition decorated with a complex star pattern and topped by a muqarnas cresting (figs. 14.2-3). Only the south-eastern façade and the eastern and southern corners of the mosque are broken by window recesses; the remaining walls are solely decorated with the inscription band, which frames the walls of the mosque.

The north-eastern and north-western portals are highly decorated with *ablaq* patterns, joggled voussoirs, muqarnas cresting as well as inscription bands (fig. 15). All three entrances are topped on their interior face with tile panels of different

arabesque designs in various colours. On the north-western portal, a tile roundel is used on both faces of the entryway (fig. 16).

The mosque was restored by the Comité de Conservation des Monuments de l'Art Arabe in the late 19th and early 20th century. The marble fountain in the courtyard was taken from the mosque of sultan Hasan during the course of restorations (fig. 17.1). In the bad state in which the mosque is today, it still manages to retain a great deal of its original splendour and retains its status as one of the most beautiful mosques of 14th-century Cairo.

Mosque Function

Following its inauguration in Ramadan 740/1339-40, the mosque served as a Friday mosque. In the absence of a tomb chamber, there was clearly no intention for the emir to be buried there; the patron was perhaps still too young to consider where he was to be buried.

Later History of the Mosque

Following the death of emir Altunbugha, emir Sarghitmish (d. 1358) endowed a class in Hanafi jurisprudence to be taught in the mosque, prior to the construction of his own madrasa on the Saliba Street which was built in 757/1356.²⁵ It has therefore been suggested that the mosque may have housed some informal teaching much earlier as well.²⁶ However, we have no concrete evidence for this.

²⁵ Berkey, *Transmission of Knowledge*, 53.

²⁶ Seton-Watson, *Darb al-Ahmar*, 78.

3. The Comité de Conservation des Monuments de l'Art Arabe

The prime objective of the Comité de Conservation des Monuments de l'Art Arabe was the preservation of historic monuments, and not their complete restoration. However, in a few cases, the chief architect of the Comité, Max Herz Pasha, opted for restoration, mainly in buildings well represented in the architectural history of the city and where the style could be recreated on the basis of analogy; the Mamluk period is a case in point.²⁷ The main drive behind this approach was to bring the mosques back to their original purpose, where worship and teaching could be resumed.

When the Comité visited the mosque of al-Maridani in the late 19th century, the mosque was found to be in a ruinous condition. Following an assessment of the mosque's condition, the Deuxième Commission (the technical commission of the Comité, which was responsible for recommending a course of action to be taken regarding the preservation of historic structures) decided to undertake restoration works to revitalize the historic mosque and bring back some of its original glory.

Some parts of the structure were completely dismantled and rebuilt. For historical accuracy, it is important to make readers aware of the condition of the mosque at the time, and the restoration works carried out at the mosque before an analysis of the mosque is conducted.

4. The Condition of the Mosque The Early Years

In 1884, when the Comité first visited the monument, the south-eastern angle of the mosque was in a state of ruin and the western side of the structure was leaning considerably. Specific urgent measures needed to be undertaken to avoid a sudden crumbling of parts of the mosque. On the interior, parts of the arcades had fallen

²⁷ Ormos, *Preservation*, 126-127, 130.

already and the rest were not properly aligned and out of angle. It was therefore urgent to reinforce some of the arcades in the interior and the western sides as well as consolidate the walls of the mosque (fig. 18). Additionally, some of the windows in the north-eastern façade needed to be fixed and restored. It was agreed that the south-eastern angle of the mosque be demolished and rebuilt in its primitive form.²⁸

The Late 19th Century

In 1892, the Deuxième Commission visited the mosque after it had been fixed in 1885, but the state of things had not changed much. Additional restoration works were necessary to enable worshippers to go and pray in the mosque without being endangered.²⁹ The windows and their stuccowork, the wooden doors, the marble dado on the walls as well as the mosaics of the mihrab needed to be restored to their original state.³⁰ In 1896, a sum of 1500 Egyptian pounds was allocated for the restoration of al-Maridani.³¹

The Original Condition of the Mosque

The Comité Bulletins provide an insight into the original condition of the mosque and to parts of the decorative programme which have long disappeared. According to the bulletins, the internal walls of the mosque were originally covered with a fine marble dado of various types, four meters in height. However, by 1894, the only marble that was still in place was that framing the sanctuary area.³²

²⁸ *Comité Bulletin* 1884, 19.

²⁹ *Comité Bulletin* 1892, 70.

³⁰ *Comité Bulletin* 1894, 130.

³¹ *Comité Bulletin* 1896, 128.

³² *Comité Bulletin* 1894, 126.

Objects Transferred to the 'Museum of Arab Art'

The Comité transferred a number of precious objects from the mosque to the Museum of Arab Art, today the Museum of Islamic Art. In 1886, it was suggested that the bolts of the portals, containing the rank of emir Altunbugha, be transferred to the museum (fig. 19.1).³³ Today, the three wooden doors of the mosque no longer retain their original decoration, but according to 'Abd al-Wahhab, they were originally covered with a bronze revetment with a design that combined central star shapes.³⁴ This may be true considering the stellar shape of the bolt.

In 1903, it is reported that the Museum of Arab Art housed 25 fragments of sculpted window frames from the mosque. Seven of these objects were kept at the museum while eighteen were taken by the chief architect to complete missing parts of the decoration.³⁵

Two enamelled glass lamps are currently found in the collection of the Museum of Islamic Art and are believed to come from the mosque of al-Maridani. The first, mentioned above, bears the name of emir 'Ali al-Mardini (fig. 8).³⁶ The second is in a fragmentary condition and is built up of four fragments. It carries the name of Altunbugha al-Saqi al-Nasiri as well as his cupbearer blazon (fig. 19.2).³⁷

5. Restoration Works

As mentioned earlier, the Comité carried out major restoration works at the mosque of al-Maridani and until today, traces of the restorations can clearly be

³³ Ibid., 129. Also see Mayer, *Saracenic Heraldry*, 63-64. Plate XXI.1.2. Museum of Islamic Art, Cairo, Nos. 3105, 3106.

³⁴ 'Abd al-Wahhab, *Masājid*, 151.

³⁵ *Comité Bulletin* 1903, 6.

³⁶ Wiet, *Catalogue général*, No. 294, Plate LXII. Mayer, *Saracenic Heraldry*, 55-56.

³⁷ Ibid., Nos. 4065, 5880, 5881, 5882, Plate IX. Mayer, *Saracenic Heraldry*, 63.

observed at the mosque. The following is a summary of the restoration works carried out at the different parts of the structure.

The Entrance Portals and Minaret

After a thorough examination of the main/north-eastern portal and its sides, it was suggested that the sides as well as the great vault covering the entryway were a result of an earlier restoration. The Comité confirmed the hypothesis pointing out the lack of harmony between the different parts of the entryway and comparing the simplicity and unembellished surface and spandrels of the vault to the highly decorated portal covered with fine joggled voussoirs and an elaborate muqarnas hood.³⁸ The fact that the long inscription running along the external facades of the mosque is not continued around the great vault is another indication that restoration works were carried out at the entrance portal and the base of the minaret at an unknown point in time.³⁹ In addition to the inscription band, the crenellations are also discontinued at the base of the minaret and the recess on the right side of the entrance as well as the upper corner column are not found on the left side (fig. 20).

A part of the top bulb of the minaret had disappeared but was restored following traces of the original bulb which were still available at the time the restorations took place as well as according to the shape of the bulb of the pulpit, which was original (fig. 18.1).⁴⁰

³⁸ *Comité Bulletin* 1894, 128.

³⁹ 'Abd al-Wahhab, *Masājid*, 149.

⁴⁰ Behrens-Abouseif, *Minarets*, 88. Karnouk, *Minbar*, 124. Due to the restorations that took place at the base of the minaret, 'Arafa suggested that the whole minaret may have been a later reconstruction that took place after the construction of the mosque of sultan Hasan. The author consequently argued that the minaret of sultan Hasan may have been the earliest completely octagonal minaret in Cairo. 'Arafa, *Masjid Alṭunbughā al-Māridānī*, 110-113.

The entrance portal⁴¹ needed to be repaired, especially the large niche, and a new iron grille needed to be installed to protect the entrance from being misused, on the condition that the grille be entirely isolated from the walls of the mosque.⁴²

The restoration of the south-western entryway is recorded on the lower part of the gateway giving the date 1317/1899 (fig. 21).

The Mosaics of the Mihrab

The sanctuary originally housed parts of mosaics adorning the mihrab that were very skilfully executed.⁴³ In 1900, it was agreed that the mihrab be consolidated and restored.⁴⁴ In a visit to the mosque in 1901, the restoration of the mihrab mosaics were running according to schedule. During the course of some excavations, the architect in chief recovered the remains of a beautiful mosaic that bore great resemblance to the mosaics of the mihrab and it was agreed to restore it as well.⁴⁵ In a later report of the same year, the contractor responsible for the restoration of the mihrab is blamed for cleaning a part of the mosaics in such a way that it can no longer be differentiated between the old and the new (fig. 22). The technical committee decided to fine him.⁴⁶

The Minbar

Restoration works were also undertaken on the minbar.⁴⁷ It is believed that around forty of the inlaid pieces of the minbar were stolen ten years prior to the

⁴¹ It is not specified which gate is meant here, but the main/north-eastern portal is probably the one in question.

⁴² *Comité Bulletin* 1893, 89.

⁴³ *Comité Bulletin* 1894, 126-127.

⁴⁴ *Comité Bulletin* 1900, 45.

⁴⁵ *Comité Bulletin* 1901, 8.

⁴⁶ *Ibid*, 87.

⁴⁷ *Comité Bulletin* 1902, 117.

foundation of the Comité and were moved to Europe, but returned to Egypt in 1901 to be sold there. The pieces were bought by the Comité for the price of LE 80 and were returned to their original locations in the minbar.⁴⁸ It is unlikely that all of the stolen pieces were recovered.

Lane-Poole mentions parts of the minbar which were comprised in a French table that belonged to the M. Meymar collection, then at the South Kensington Museum (the Victoria and Albert Museum). The panels had been originally placed above or below the doors of the minbar or above the small doors usually found on the sides of the minbars.⁴⁹ The inscription on the panels reads:

ذخر الأراامل و المنقطعين، كهف الفقرا و المساكين، العبد الفقير الى الله تعالى، الطنبغا الساقى الملكى الناصرى.

Provider for the widowed and destitute, Refuge of the poor and miserable, The humble servant of God most high, Altunbugh, the cupbearer, the mamluk of al-Malik al-Nasir.⁵⁰

The restoration works of the minbar were completed in 1902. Unfortunately, the inlaid pieces of the minbar were stolen in 2008 and have not been recovered (fig. 23).

The Cupola in front of the Mihrab

In 1897, the cupola in front of the mihrab was reconstructed in reinforced concrete (Système Hennebique), because it was believed to yield a better technical outcome than hollow bricks.⁵¹ It was the same system used for the reconstruction of the dome of the mausoleum of sultan Qalawun. After the arcades had been properly

⁴⁸ 'Abd al-Wahhab, *Masājid*, 150. There is no other evidence confirming the return of the stolen pieces. According to 'Arafa, the restorations on the minbar were recorded on some of the inlaid pieces giving the date 1320/1902. 'Arafa, *Masjid Altunbughā al-Māridānī*, 28.

⁴⁹ Traces of such doors are visible in the pre-restoration images of the Comité, but are no longer visible after the restoration. They have probably been replaced by a star pattern (figs. 23.1-2).

⁵⁰ Lane-Poole, *Art of Saracens*, 117.

⁵¹ *Comité Bulletin* 1897, 56, 148.

aligned to the qibla, the columns were brought back to their original positions and the arcades were re-covered with the old ceiling.⁵²

The Marble Fountain⁵³

At first, the Comité wanted to supply the mosque with a fountain that was to be built on the model of the fountain of the mosque of Sultan Hasan.⁵⁴ However, in 1903, it was agreed that the smaller marble basin in the *ṣaḥn* of the mosque of Sultan Hasan be moved to al-Maridani.⁵⁵ Drawings and pictures predating the restoration of the mosque of Sultan Hasan show this smaller fountain standing in the south-western corner of the *saḥn*, next to the large one found today (fig. 17.2). The smaller fountain was a later addition to the mosque of Sultan Hasan that took place in Ottoman times and did not belong to the original complex.⁵⁶ Additionally, water canalization was to be installed for the fountain.⁵⁷ The transfer of the fountain is recorded on a marble plaque on the north-eastern side of the basin (fig. 17.3); the text reads:

نقلت لجنة الآثار العربية هذا الحوض والقبه علوه من جامع السلطان حسن الى هذا الجامع في عصر خديو
مصر عباس حلمي الثاني اطل الله سنة ايامه وذلك في سنة احدى وعشرين وثلاثمائه والى هجريه.

The Comité de Conservation des Monuments de l'Art Arabe has transferred this fountain and its dome from the mosque of Sultan Hasan to this mosque during the reign of the Khedive of Misr 'Abbas Hilmi II, may God prolong his days, during the year 1321 of the hijra of the Prophet.

⁵² Ibid., 110. Parts of the old ceiling were probably dismantled during the course of restorations and the alignment of the arcades; the ceiling was returned to its original position after the reconstruction of the arcades had been complete. However, it is clear from the Comité reports that the south-eastern angle of the mosque was in a state of ruin and it is therefore possible to surmise that parts of the ceiling in this area were found on site.

⁵³ Based on the Comité drawings of 1898, 'Arafa has been able to reconstruct the approximate location of the original fountain in the courtyard. The drawings also refer to two wells inside the mosque, one next to the fountain in the middle of the courtyard and the second next to *bāb al-sirr* in the south-western wall; the latter was intended to serve the inhabitants of the area as well as the separate *mīdā'a* and latrines outside the mosque. 'Arafa, *Masjid Aḥtunbughā al-Māridānī*, 85-88, 90-91; Mubarak, *al-Khiṭaṭ al-Tawfiqīyah*, 266.

⁵⁴ Comité Bulletin 1894, 130.

⁵⁵ Comité Bulletin 1903, 6.

⁵⁶ Ormos, *Preservation*, 139.

⁵⁷ Comité Bulletin 1906, 28.

The Inscription Bands

In 1892, a number of plaques containing inscription bands which had fallen off were restored and retuned to their original positions.⁵⁸

The Wooden Ceilings

In a report outlining the restoration expenses, a number of other elements are mentioned. With the restoration of the arcades came the restoration of the original wooden ceilings, some of which were restored while others needed to be replaced. Samples were prepared for the repainting of the wooden ceiling and the question arose whether to apply fresh hues or to choose colours toned according to the contemporary condition of the ceilings.⁵⁹ The Comité was often subjected to various criticisms regarding the restoration methods used for the ceilings, specifically repainting, while others thought it right.⁶⁰ The German Egyptologist and historian of art and architecture, Ludwig Borchardt, wrote the following on Herz Pasha's methods of restoration:

Some criticisms which have been made about the colour reconstruction of the decorations on the ceilings in various mosques cannot be directed against Herz Pasha alone. Particularly for these works he had large scale samples prepared in order to determine whether the colours would look better in today's tones, just as they would appear centuries after their first application, or in the way they looked when they were freshly applied. Finally a decision was made in favour of freshly applied glowing tones leaving it to time to reconcile them with each other, just as previously. This decision was perhaps the right one and the criticisms will die away in one or more decades.⁶¹

⁵⁸ *Comité Bulletin* 1894, 129.

⁵⁹ *Comité Bulletin* 1899, 113.

⁶⁰ Ormos, *Preservation*, 134.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 135. From Ludwig Borchardt, "Maz Herz-Pasha," *Zentralblatt der Bauverwaltung* 39 (1919), 368. Original in German.

In the case of al-Maridani, it was decided that the old parts of the ceiling be preserved in their original state without any retouching (fig. 24).⁶²

The Windows

Fragments of plaster gratings of the original stucco windows were presented to the Comité by Herz Pasha and it was decided that stucco be used for the manufacture of the windows instead of the brass-wire gratings which were initially planned (fig. 25).⁶³ The restoration of the windows is recorded on the coloured glass windows mentioning the *Comité* (fig. 25.3). On another occasion, Herz Pasha advised the committee that he was able to make the glass of the windows shine by cleaning it.⁶⁴ It is still unknown whether the original windows were adorned with coloured glass on their interior surface or not. In 1902, it is reported that an explosion of gunpowder which took place in the storerooms of the Citadel was responsible for damaging the stained glass windows of the mosques of Ibn Tulun and al-Maridani. An indemnity was paid by the administration of the waqf to the committee to repair the damages.⁶⁵

6. Additional Factors Threatening the Mosque

It is clear from the reports that the amount of garbage surrounding the mosque constituted a great danger on the walls and foundations. Consequently, the Comité requested that the Ministry of Public Works include the streets surrounding al-Maridani on its cleaning list.⁶⁶

⁶² *Comité Bulletin* 1899, 110.

⁶³ *Comité Bulletin* 1898, 75.

⁶⁴ *Comité Bulletin* 1901, 65.

⁶⁵ *Comité Bulletin* 1902, 120.

⁶⁶ *Comité Bulletin* 1899, 66.

7. The Final Works

The mosque was repainted in 1902⁶⁷ and repairs of the mosque floor were executed.⁶⁸ By 1903, the restoration works at the mosque of al-Maridani were almost complete, including the repairs of the sahn (fig. 26).⁶⁹ The restoration carried out by the Comité is documented on a large panel on the north-eastern side of the sanctuary (fig. 27). The text reads:

عنيت لجنة حفظ الآثار العربية المؤسسه بالقاهرة سنة ١٢٩٩ هجريه بعماره هذا الجامع المبارك والاثار
الذى ليس فى جماله يشارك فجددت ما تشعث من جدرانه وابدلت ما تداعى من اساطينه وعمدانه واصلحت
وزره الرخام التى تكسو اسفال حيطانه واكملت ما نقص من قطع فسيفساء المحراب واعادت لحالته الاولى
كلا من المنبر والشبابيك والابواب وانشأت فوق محرابه قبه رمت مقرنصاتها الظريفه وذهبت احداها فغدت
كما كانت زاهيه لطيفه وبنيت الطبقه العليا من منارته ورممت جميع سقوفه ومقصورته وكان الشروع فى
ذلك كله سنة ١٣١٤ وتمامه فى سنة ١٣٢١ فى عصر خديو مصر الاعظم ومليكه الافخم عباس حلمى
الثانى بلغه الله غايه الامانى بمحمد واله وصحبه وانصاره امين يارب العالمين كتبه احمد يوسف سنة
١٣٢١.

The Comité de Conservation des Monuments de l'Art Arabe, founded in Cairo in 1299 of the hijra of the Prophet, has restored this blessed mosque and monument whose splendour is unequalled. It renewed its ruined walls and made the necessary replacements of its columns as well as restored the marble dado covering the lower parts of the walls; it also completed missing parts of the mother of pearl inlay in the mihrab and restored the minbar, windows and doors to their original condition; it constructed a dome over its mihrab and restored its muqarnas pendentives, one of which has been gilded and returned to its original brightness; it constructed the top bulb of the minaret and restored all of the mosque's ceilings as well as the *maqṣūra*. This was started in the year 1314 of the hijra of the Prophet and was completed in 1321 during the reign of Egypt's greatest Khedive and most splendid King 'Abbas Hilmi II, may God grant him the best of wishes [from] Muhammad and his family and his companions and those who supported him; Amen, God of the Worlds; written by Ahmad Yusef in the year 1321.

Some final additions took place in the following period. The installation of electricity and lighting was commenced, and electrical lighting was preferred over the installation of gas as it facilitated the multiplicity of lamps and the installation of

⁶⁷ *Comité Bulletin* 1902, 83.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 117.

⁶⁹ *Comité Bulletin* 1903, 6.

lighting fixtures in various corners of the mosque. It was also considered more aesthetically pleasing.⁷⁰

Finally, by 1912, there are accounts in the Comité reports about how worship was resumed, students used the mosque for teaching, and visitors and tourists frequented the mosque from time to time.⁷¹

⁷⁰ *Comité Bulletin* 1905, 15.

⁷¹ *Comité Bulletin* 1912, 55.

CHAPTER THREE

The Mosque in light of State Patronage

1. The Concept of Patronage

The definition of patronage has often been a subject for discussion and debate. Especially in royal constructions, matters of patronage are often hard to define. Is the patron the person giving the order of construction and whose name is mentioned in the foundation inscription preceded by "has ordered construction" (*'amara bi inshā'*), or is it the person who undertakes the construction process and is involved in the funding of the construction at his own expense?¹ In some cases, references to the name of the sultan in the foundation inscription are a clear indicator to the sultan's personal contribution to the project, donating money or building materials, the references being a gesture of gratitude and appreciation.²

In the case of the mosque of al-Maridani, the foundation inscription clearly states that Altunbugha al-Maridani "has ordered the construction of this blessed mosque."³ However, chroniclers' accounts clearly state that the mosque was commissioned by the sultan who paid for its construction and supplied it with generous funds.

The discrepancies between chroniclers' accounts, waqf documents and the foundation inscriptions on the buildings themselves make it hard to define who the real patron was. On the other hand, the factors influencing the choice of monuments to be built and the choice of their locations are questions that remain to be answered.⁴

¹ Fernandes, *Mamluk Architecture*, 113-114.

² Ibid., 115.

³ O'Kane, *Inscriptions*, Nos. 120.4-5, 120.8.

⁴ Fernandes, *Mamluk Architecture*, 119.

2. The Mosque in Light of State Patronage

Numerous studies have been conducted on the patronage of al-Nasir Muhammad and on his sponsorship of large-scale urban projects. The sultan was also strongly involved in construction projects carried out by his emirs and often played a major role in the sponsorship of their edifices. The current study on the mosque of emir Altunbugha al-Maridani aims at pinpointing the sultan's personal involvement in various steps of the foundation process of the mosque, starting from the choice of its location, obtaining the building site, providing construction materials, funds, designers and craftsmen, to the choice of its decoration and possibly its inscription programmes.

3. Obtaining the Building Site Historical Background

The site on which the mosque was constructed, originally part of a Fatimid cemetery and later occupied by residential constructions, was cleared by the sultan especially for the construction of this mosque.

In his *Khitat*, al-Maqrizi reports that:

The mosque is next to Khatt al-Tabbana outside Bab Zuwayla. Its site was originally a cemetery for the people of al-Qahira; then 'amākin [houses] were built, then in the year 738 the amakin were taken from their owners and their purchase was organized for purposes of building, and the price was not just, and the amakin were demolished and this mosque was built in their place. And the cost of it exceeded 300,000 dirhams – more than 15,000 *dinārs* – excluding timber and marble, and in addition to that there was a contribution from the sultan, and the columns were taken from the Rashida jami' and the mosque was built on them, and it was one of the loveliest mosques. The first *khutba* was given in it on Friday 14 Ramadan 740, and the shaykh Rukn al-Din 'Umar b. Ibrahim al-Ja'bari gave it, and he refused payment.⁵

⁵ Al-Maqrīzī, *Khīṭaṭ* 4:1:227.

And in his *Suluk*, the historian reports that:

And in this year [735/1334] the sultan was completely infatuated with his mamluk Altunbugha al-Maridani and doted on him and promoted him, and he wished to build a jami' for him facing [*tujāh*] the rab' of the emir Sayf al-Din Tughay outside Bab Zuwayla, and he purchased a number of houses from their owners to satisfy them. And the sultan authorized the foundation [of the mosque], and he summoned the owners of the properties and said to them, 'This land is the sultan's and you will have the value of the building [*al-binā*'], and he kept on at them until they were bought from them for half the value written in their deeds, and they had spent a lot of money on construction after purchasing them, and they got nothing back. And al-Maridani started his jami' until it was complete and in the most perfect smartness, and the cost was 300,000 dirhams in round numbers, and that was excluding what the sultan gave him of wood and marble and other things. The shaykh Rukn al-Din 'Umar b. Ibrahim al-Ja'bari gave the khutba there, and he did not accept a fee.⁶

The various foundation inscriptions on the entrance portals and walls of the mosque confirm al-Maqrizi's accounts. The foundation inscription above the main entrance (fig. 28.1) reads:

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم، إنما يعمر مساجد الله من آمن بالله و اليوم الآخر و كان الفراغ من هذا الجامع المبارك في شهر رمضان المعظم سنة أربعين وسبعمئة.

Basmala, Qur'an (9:18). The completion of this blessed mosque was in the great month of Ramadan in the year 740.⁷

The inscription above the north-western entrance (fig. 28.2) reads:

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم محمد رسول الله والذين معه أشداء على الكفار رحماء بينهم تراهم ركعاً سجداً يبتغون فضلاً من الله ورضواناً. أنشأ هذا الجامع المبارك من فضل الله وكرمه العبد الفقير إلى الله تعالى الطنبغا الملكي الناصري وذلك في شهور سنة تسع وثلاثين وسبعمئة للهجرة النبوية عليه السلام.

Basmala, Qur'an (48:29). Has constructed this blessed mosque through the grace of God and His kindness, the humble one ever in need of God Most High, Altunbugha al-Maridani, the (officer of) al-Malik al-Nasir (Muhammad) during the months of the year 739 of the hijra of the Prophet, peace be upon him.⁸

⁶ Al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk* 2:2:385. Also see Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Nujūm* 9:112.

⁷ 'Abd al-Wahhab, *Masājid*, 149; O'Kane, *Inscriptions*, No. 120.1.

⁸ 'Abd al-Wahhab, *Masājid*, 151; O'Kane, *Inscriptions*, No. 120.8.

A panel on the qibla wall next to the minbar (fig. 29) reads:

بسملة، أمر بإنشاء هذا الجامع المبارك العبد الفقير إلى الله تعالى الراجي عفو ربه الطنبغا الساقى الملكى
الناصرى و ذلك فى شهور سنة أربعين وسبعمائه و صلى الله على سيدنا محمد و اله.

Basmala, has ordered the construction of this blessed mosque, the humble servant ever in need of God Most High, requesting the forgiveness of his Lord, Altunbugha, the royal cupbearer, (officer of) al-Malik al-Nasir (Muhammad). This was in the months of the year 740/1339-40. May God bless our lord Muhammad, and his family.⁹

Two inscription panels which have probably been moved from their original location are found on the north-eastern wall of the sanctuary (fig. 30). The text reads:

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم (أمر بإنشاء هذا الج-امع العبد (أ)لفقير إلى الله تعالى (أ) لطنبغا الساقى
الناصرى.

Basmala, Has ordered the construction of this congregational mosque the humble servant ever in need of God Most High Altunbugha, the cupbearer, (officer of) (al-Malik) al-Nasir (Muhammad).¹⁰

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم وكان الفراغ منه فى شهر رمضان المعظم سنة أربعين وسبعمائه.

Basmala. Its completion was in the month of Ramadan the great in the year 740/March 1340.¹¹

The Framework of Waqf. Establishing Urban Nuclei.

The framework of waqf was used by Mamluk emirs to secure sources of revenue for religious institutions in perpetuity, and waqf documents constitute a very valuable source for the preservation of Cairo's urban development and history. Waqfs were credited for the foundation of numerous religious institutions, whose mere existence became a driving force in creating a nucleus of an urban centre.¹² However, founders generally had to fulfil a number of requirements to construct their religious foundations:

1. Secure the building plot on which the foundation was to be constructed
2. Secure sources of revenue

⁹ 'Abd al-Wahhab, *Masājid*, 150; O'Kane, *Inscriptions*, No. 120.5.

¹⁰ O'Kane, *Inscriptions*, No. 120.5 A.

¹¹ Ibid., No. 120.5 B.

¹² Fernandes, *Istibdal*, 203.

3. Provide evidence and documentation for their ownership of the income-generating endowed properties.¹³

In a study conducted by Denoix on the waqf's geographical distribution in Cairo,¹⁴ it was realized that throughout the early Mamluk period, there was a tendency to place revenue-generating estates (*mawqūfāt*) in close proximity to the religious foundations, thus establishing a foundation of religious, educational, commercial as well as residential services within the same quarters. Sultan Qalawun's waqfs of the late thirteenth century in the area of Bayn al-Qasrayn confirm this scheme.¹⁵ With the saturation of the main avenues of medieval Cairo during the first half of the sixteenth century, secondary axes were chosen for the establishment of revenue-producing structures.

Thus, during the Bahri Mamluk period, the waqf was not merely a system of generating funds, but a system of developing the urban centre, which ultimately led to increased construction activity in the city. During the Burji Mamluk period, with the saturation of the city, the waqf's primary objective returned to being a system of upkeep, maintenance and repair.

The areas outside the walled city of al-Qahira or on the periphery of major urban centres generally consisted of large agricultural areas, cemeteries, or gardens, which were mostly held as *hikr* (a long term lease).¹⁶ Eventually, these areas developed into urban nuclei, especially the area outside Bab Zuwayla, where al-Maridani constructed his mosque. To obtain the building plot, however, it was necessary to get the permission of the owners whose houses occupied the land desired

¹³ Ibid., 204.

¹⁴ Denoix, *Waqf*.

¹⁵ Ibid., 193.

¹⁶ Fernandes, *Istibdal*, 204.

by the patron and to give them something in return. In many instances, patrons manipulated the law without legal justification and used various forms of illegal acquisition for their own benefit.

A 'Legal' System Within the Framework of Waqf: *Istibdal*

A "legal" system within the framework of waqf was *istibdal*, literally meaning exchange. For example, if a patron needed a site, which housed revenue-generating properties as part of another waqf, for his own construction, he would acquire it by means of offering alternative revenue-generating structures in another part of the city, thus making the land free for his own foundations; the land would become his *milk* or private property, which gave the owner the freedom to do whatever he wished with the site in question.

It was a system that developed as a result of the scarcity of construction plots, especially in the prestigious areas of Cairo, commonly favoured by emirs and members of the elite. The process was first regarded as illegal by religious scholars, mainly in cases where the transaction involved properties that were part of a waqf, because the stipulations outlined in the *waqfiyyas* prohibited such transactions and exchanges.¹⁷ A second method of obtaining land was through confiscation, but *istibdal* was generally considered a more "legitimate" way as it was given "an aura of legality."¹⁸ By the fifteenth century, qadis were urged to legalize *istibdal* and a new wave of construction activity took place in the city.

¹⁷ Fernandes provides ample examples of cases where qadis refused to give permissions of *istibdal* and even wrote booklets on its prohibition. *Ibid.*, 207.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 205.

Al-Maqrizi outlined the steps which founders needed to follow in order to acquire property by means of *istibdal*.

1. The petitioner for an *istibdal* needed to get two witnesses who would claim that the property was falling into ruin and consequently represented an element of danger to passers-by in the street.
2. Two experts needed to estimate the value of the ruined property and additionally needed to declare how the property represented a danger to passers-by and as a consequence would recommend its sale as a building or as building material (in cases where structures were in a ruined condition).¹⁹

Sultans and emirs often misemployed *istibdal* when they needed land to construct their religious and secular foundations as well as their revenue-generating properties.²⁰ Using the power of their position and authority, rulers urged controllers to sell the *waqfs* of a deceased person. Al-Nasir Muhammad made use of this system of transaction, and a number of his major projects were built on land acquired through *istibdal*.

Ibn Duqmaq records that, when al-Nasir Muhammad was establishing his *jami'* al-jadid north of al-Fustat, "he destroyed the silos, adding to them [their land] part of the road and the land of the *aḥwāsh* (plural of *ḥawsh*, which is a type of popular dwelling). He bought the houses in the proximity of the *ahwash* and the *zāwiyas* and he destroyed all the buildings standing on the land."²¹ Al-Nasir

¹⁹ Ibid., 208.

²⁰ The complex of al-Ghuri in al-Azhar area and the mosque of al-Mu'ayyad inside Bab Zuwayla are two examples.

²¹ Ibn Duqmāq, *Kitāb al-intiṣār*, 77.

additionally used the procedure to obtain land for some of his favourite emirs, including Yalbugha al-Yahyawī, Qawsun and Altunbugha al-Maridani.

In the case of the mosque of al-Maridani, al-Nasir Muhammad clearly acquired the land through *istibdal*, obtained the properties and houses and had them demolished, thus clearing the land for the construction of the mosque.²² However, the houses were probably not in a ruinous condition as is made clear in Maqrizi's account.²³ The owners had spent a considerable amount of money on their construction and got back half its value. However, it was the position and power as well as personal involvement of the sultan in securing the building site, which enabled al-Maridani to obtain such a location.

The Absence of a Waqfiyya

Unfortunately, no waqfiyya of the mosque has survived. However, upon considering the pattern suggested by Denoix as well as the general pattern remaining today on the street, one may conjecture that the revenue-generating establishments of the mosque of al-Maridani lay in close proximity to the mosque and that the mosque may have formed a part of larger complex.²⁴ As most emiral and religious foundations on the street are adjoined by commercial and residential income-generating properties, the same may have been true for the mosque of

²² Fernandes, *Istibdal*, 211.

²³ Al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk* 2:2:385.

²⁴ There is evidence that a *mida'a* and latrines belonging to the mosque lay in close proximity to the western corner of the structure. 'Arafa was able to find mention of these in a waqf document which reads:

كان جاري في ملك يحيى بن أحمد المجاور (للزاوية) التي هناك تجاه باب سر جامع المارداني.

According to 'Arafa, the *mida'a* and latrines were restored by the Comité. There was additionally a waterwheel south of the western *riwaq*, but no traces of it can be recovered today, although it was still standing in 1901 when the Comité restored the mosque. The *mida'a* and waterwheel were mentioned by 'Ali Mubarak who wrote:

... و له ثلاث ابواب: احدها بشارع التبانة و آخر بحاره المارداني و الثالث بعطفه الطرلوى و مطهرته مع الساقية منفصلة عنه في العطفه المذكوره و هو الآن معطل و محتاج الى العماره و اوقافه تحت نظر ديوان الاوقاف و ايرادها سنويا خمسة آلاف و مائتان وعشرة قروش.

'Arafa, *Masjid Altunbughā al-Māridānī*, 85-88; Mubarak, *al-Khitat al-Tawfiqiyah*, 266.

al-Maridani.²⁵ The mosques of al-Salih Tala'i' (555/1160), Aslam al-Silahdar (746/1344) and Umm al-Sultan Sha'ban (770/1369) are a few examples. This would have further encouraged the urbanization of the area and the equipping of the quarter with various services.

4. The Construction Process Generous Donations by the Sultan

Al-Nasir Muhammad was well aware of the power of architecture in conveying messages of political power while maintaining the memory of the ruler in perpetuity. He therefore encouraged his emirs to build extensively all over Cairo.

A major patron of urbanism, al-Nasir supplied his emirs with generous funds, and Altunbugha was one among four of al-Nasir's emirs to receive a 200,000 dinar grant by the sultan in 738/1337, three years prior to the completion of his mosque.²⁶ In that same year, the sultan constructed two palaces for two of his emirs, one for Yalbugha al-Yahyawī and the second for Altunbugha al-Maridani. Both palaces were placed at strategic locations opposite the Citadel across from the Rumayla, so as to be visible from al-Nasir's palace at Qal'at al-Jabal (the Citadel).²⁷ He additionally ordered Qawsun to expand his stables in Rumayla and turning the structure into a large palatial complex by incorporating structures that belonged to other emirs. The whole procedure was supervised by al-Nasir's *shadd al-'amā'ir* (superintendent of construction), Aqbugha 'Abd al-Wahid.²⁸ Maqrizi records that:

In this month [Safar 738] the sultan built a palace for the emir Yalbugha al-Yahyawī and a palace for the emir Altunbugha al-Maridani facing [tujah] the hammam of al-Malik al-Sa'id near the Rumayla under the Citadel, and he took a part [of the site] for that from the istabl of emir Aydaghmish and a part from the istabl of the emir Tashtamur al-Saqi and part from the istabl of the

²⁵ Seton-Watson, *Darb al-Ahmar*, 78.

²⁶ Ibn Taghrībirdī, *al-Nujūm* 9:119.

²⁷ Ibid., 123.

²⁸ Al-Shujā'i, *Tārīkh*, 25.

emir Qawsun. And he came down [from the Citadel] in person to see that his order was carried out. And the sultan ordered the emir Qawsun to buy the *amlāk* next door to his istabl on the Rumayla...[and enlarge his palace].²⁹

The idea was that the grandeur and magnificence of these emirs' palaces would reflect the glory and power of al-Nasir.

Building Materials and the Concept of Reuse

The concept of reuse had always played a major role in the formation of Cairo's urban history, and the reuse of spoils from pre-Islamic as well as early Islamic monuments was a common practice during the Mamluk period that not only helped reduce the construction cost of these lavishly decorated structures, but possibly conveyed political messages rivalling previous dynasties.³⁰

The columns in the sanctuary and riwaqs of the mosque of al-Maridani were spoils taken from the Fatimid mosque of Rashida in al-Fustat and are originally spoils from ancient monuments.³¹ The mosque of Rashida was constructed by the Fatimid caliph al-Hakim in 393/1002-3 on the outskirts of al-Fustat; it was built on the site of a Jacobite church that was surrounded by Jewish and Christian graveyards. The mosque was completed in Ramadan 395/1005 but was torn down in 401/1010-11 apparently because the mihrab was not properly aligned to the qibla direction. In 403/1014, the mosque was rebuilt after the direction of Mecca had been properly calculated.³² At around the year 738/1337, the mosque fell into ruin and some of its

²⁹ Al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk* 2:2:438-9.

³⁰ A good example is the Gothic doorway from the Crusader church at Acre, used at the madrasa-mausoleum of al-Nasir Muhammad at Bayn al-Qasrayn.

³¹ Al-Maqrīzī, *Khīṭaṭ* 4:1:227. According to 'Abd al-Wahhab, al-Maqrizi denies the destruction of the mosque of Rashida in another place and states that the mosque was still standing until after the year 806/1403. 'Abd al-Wahhab, *Masājid*, 148.

³² Al-Maqrīzī, *Khīṭaṭ* 4:1:126-29. Also see Sanders, *Ritual*, 54-55.

materials were reused in the mosque of al-Maridani.³³ It is not unlikely that some of the columns now used at the mosque of al-Maridani belonged to the original Jacobite church in al-Fustat. It is, however, unreasonable to assume that all columns used in the mosque came from the same location; this is attested by the variety of building materials, including granite, which was almost certainly reused from Pharaonic monuments. Additionally, the pedestals supporting the different columns needed to be adjusted to the height of each column, which suggests that the columns probably came from different sites. However, in terms of variety of materials, sizes, shapes, designs and capitals, the columns in the mosque of al-Maridani, which have been reused from various sources, such as Pharaonic, Ptolemaic, Roman and Christian monuments, showcase the sultan's diverse and far-reaching authority. Due to the abundance of spolias, column capitals were used as bases (figs. 9.3, 31).

In addition to supplying his emirs with building sites, materials and funds necessary for construction, the sultan provided craftsmen and in some cases architects. The mosque of al-Maridani was designed by the chief architect of the court, *mu'allim* Ibn al-Suyufi, the *ra'is al-muhandisīn*, a special mark of the sultan's favour of his emir.³⁴

5. The Plan

The Concept of a *Maqsura*

The mosque of emir Altunbugha al-Maridani (738-40//1338-40)³⁵ is not only the grandest of the congregational mosques constructed in al-Drab al-Ahmar, but also a perfect example of Mamluk mosque architecture modelled after al-Nasir's mosque at the Citadel.

³³ Al-Harithy, *Patronage*, 225.

³⁴ Al-Maqrīzī, *Khīṭat* 4:2:542.

³⁵ Al-Shujā'ī mentions the construction of the mosque in the happenings of the year 738/1337. Al-Shujā'ī, *Tārīkh*, 32.

The earliest substantial construction project of a congregational mosque founded by al-Nasir Muhammad during his third reign was the New Mosque or al-jami' al-jadid, constructed from 711/1311-712/1312 on the southern outskirts of al-Qahira in the area of al-Fustat. The original structure is no longer extant but the plan can largely be reconstructed through detailed historical descriptions.³⁶ It was a riwaq-type mosque where each aisle parallel to the qibla contained 13 bays, the area of the mihrab and minbar was topped by a large dome (maqsura); the structure was accessible through three entrances placed axially, one opposite the mihrab and two others on the lateral sides of the courtyard.³⁷ The same plan served as the model for at least three other mosques constructed during the third reign of al-Nasir Muhammad: the royal mosque of al-Nasir Muhammad at the Citadel (718-35/1318-35), the now largely lost mosque of emir Qawsun al-Nasiri south of al-Qahira (730/1329-30) and the mosque of al-Maridani.³⁸

These mosques clearly draw upon the model provided by the congregational mosque built by al-Zahir Baybars in Husayniyya (665-667/1266-1269), which itself followed the great arcaded mosques of the Umayyad, Abbasid, Tulunid and Fatimid periods such as the mosques of 'Amr, Ibn Tulun and al-Hakim. However, in the mosque of al-Zahir Baybars, the large clear space fronting the mihrab was a breakthrough in the mosque architecture of Cairo, where the dome above the mihrab occupied nine bays (maqsura) as opposed to one bay previously. Although the dome spans in the mosque of al-Nasir at the Citadel (14 m) and the mosque of emir Qawsun (15 m) are comparable to the 15.5 m span at the mosque of al-Zahir Baybars, these

³⁶ Ibn Duqmāq, *Kitāb al-intiṣār* 1:76.

³⁷ For a reconstruction of the plan see Meinecke, *mamlukische Architektur*, 60.

³⁸ The mosque of emir Husayn (719/1319), of which little remains today, also had a riwaq plan, further supporting the revival of this plan under al-Nasir Muhammad, yet with a mausoleum behind the qibla wall. Karim, *Jawāmi'*, 156-158. Behrens-Abouseif, *Cairo of the Mamluks*, 73-77.

mosques are generally much smaller and their size accounts for almost a little more than a quarter of the mosque at Husayniyya (fig. 32).

This reduction in size may have been determined by the availability of building plots, or by a conscious choice of the sultan. A consequence of the reduction in size of the structure was the increasingly predominant visibility of the qibla dome or maqsura, the area reserved for the sultan. This interpretation is of substantial importance considering the plan and layout of al-Nasir's Iwan al-Kabir at the Citadel, constructed in 715/1315 and supplied with a huge dome in 733/1333 on the order of the sultan. The large dome acted as a focal point and centre of attention, and thus stood as a symbol of power and domination (fig. 33).³⁹

As in the mosque of al-Nasir at the Citadel, the mosque of al-Maridani has a riwaq-type plan with a sanctuary of four aisles, each of which contains eleven-bays, and a maqsura topped by a large dome (figs. 32.2, 32.4). It follows the classical riwaq-type plan with three entrances placed axially, one opposite the mihrab and the lateral ones in the side walls of the mosque.

The Revival of the Riwaq-Type Plan and Its Symbolic Implications

One of al-Nasir's major contributions to Cairene architecture was the revival of the riwaq-type mosque. With the exception of the mosque of al-Zahir Baybars in Husayniyya, this type of building had fallen into disuse for more than a century (555-711/1160-1311).⁴⁰

The multiplicity of congregational and neighbourhood mosques under the Mamluks was generally attributed to the increasing needs of the growing population and to the growth of the city at large. The construction of mosques was in some cases

³⁹ Meinecke, *mamlukische Architektur*, 61-62.

⁴⁰ Al-Harithy, *Patronage*, 226. For a reconstruction of the Iwan al-Kabir see Mostafa, *Ceremonial-Urban Dynamic*.

a direct response to the needs expressed by the inhabitants of a specific area.

According to Baybars al-Mansuri, al-Nasir's construction of al-jami' al-jadid was such a response, and it saved the worshippers the trouble of walking to other mosques for Friday prayer.⁴¹ Around forty new mosques were founded in the Mamluk capital between 1310 and 1340.⁴² Al-Harithy, however, pinpoints the ideological significance of this incident.

The patronage of early Mamluk sultans was generally explained in terms of their reliance on Ayyubid forms, mostly madrasas, as a way of legitimizing their rule after illegally seizing the throne from their Ayyubid masters. Their sponsorship of madrasas displayed their commitment to the revival of Sunni law and demonstrated how they were legitimate heirs to the Ayyubids.⁴³ Under al-Nasir Muhammad, however, a change in ideology took place. Born as a free ruler and not a slave soldier, al-Nasir sought to dissociate himself from the Ayyubid past. Rather, the sultan wished to associate himself with a much older tradition of Islam, the glorious caliphal tradition of founding great congregational mosques.⁴⁴

The shift in authority from the Shafi'i to the Hanafi rite may have been quite influential. Shafi'i law prohibited the multiplicity of congregational mosques and even though the Ayyubids followed the Hanafi rite, Shafi'i law predominated during their rule, and it was Shafi'i qadis who were raised to the position of *qādī al-quḍāh* (chief justice). Only one congregational mosque was allowed in every city and it was from that mosque that the Friday khutba was given. In Cairo, no congregational mosques were built in the Ayyubid period, and the Friday khutba was given from al-Azhar mosque.

⁴¹ Fernandes, *Mamluk Architecture*, 113. From Baybars al-Mansūrī, *al-Tuhfah al-mulūkīyah*, 111-112.

⁴² Al-Shujā'ī, *Tārīkh*, 115-117. The historian additionally mentions the foundation of eight khanqahs.

⁴³ Al-Harithy, *Patronage*, 219.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 236.

With the accession of the Mamluks, the Shafi'i restriction gradually lost its dominance and Baybars appointed four qadis for each of the four rites of Islamic law, Maliki, Hanafi, Shafi'i and Hanbali. On the other hand, the Hanafi rite gradually gained in importance and popularity. "The shift away from Shafi'i dominance, combined with al-Nasir's patronage, resulted in the large number of congregational mosques."⁴⁵

A second hypothesis proposed by al-Harithy is al-Nasir's intention to compete with the memory of al-Zahir Baybars, the founder of the Mamluk sultanate, a prolific builder and one of the major Mamluk patrons of urbanism. For al-Nasir Muhammad, Baybars stood as a symbol of political and military history, a rival he needed to compete with. This sense of competition was even reflected by Mamluk historians who remark on how al-Nasir constructed the Qasr al-Ablaq at the Citadel to compete with Baybars' Ablaq Palace in Damascus.⁴⁶ Maqrizi states that: "In this year [713/1313] [al-Nasir] began construction of al-Qasr al-Ablaq on the site of the royal stable at the beginning of the year, and [it] was completed on the seventh of Rajab. He intended it to rival the palace of al-Zahir Baybars outside of Damascus; he recruited craftsmen from Damascus and called on the craftsmen of Egypt."⁴⁷ The same was true for the sultan's interest in the foundation of new suburbs, such as Siryaqus on the northern outskirts of the city, which was meant to rival Baybars' suburb of Husayniyya.

A third reason for the construction of mosques, often mentioned in waqf documents and other sources, was the desire to follow the sayings of the Prophet. In a number of *ḥadīths*, the Prophet encouraged the building of mosques saying, "After

⁴⁵ Ibid., 232-33.

⁴⁶ I had already commented on al-Nasir's destruction and reconstruction of Baybars' qanatir al-siba' (the bridge of panthers) in Chapter Two.

⁴⁷ Al-Maqrizī, *Sulūk* 2:1:129.

the death of an individual, three of his deeds will survive. Among the three, the most important is the construction of a house for God." He also says, "He who builds a house for God, no matter how small its size, God will build a place for him in heaven," a saying often found on the walls of mosques. The reward in the afterlife was of considerable importance in matters of patronage.⁴⁸

Thanks to the reintroduction of the multiplicity of congregational mosques under the Mamluks, over thirty *riwaq*-type mosques were built during al-Nasir's reign alone.⁴⁹ Three of these were built by the sultan himself, namely the *jami'* al-jadid (711-12/1311-12) north of al-Fustat on the Nile shore, the mosque of al-Sayyida Nafisa (714/1314), constructed around the mausoleum of Sayyida Nafisa, and the royal mosque at the Citadel (718-735/1318-1334), the only one that remains today.⁵⁰ The sultan's emirs as well as ladies of the court built other congregational and neighbourhood mosques. The mosques of emir Husayn (719/1319), Ulmas al-Hajib (729/1328-29), Qawsun al-Nasiri (730/1329), Bashtak al-Nasiri (736/1335),⁵¹ Sitt Hadaq/Sitt Miska al-Qahramaniyya (746/1345), and Aqsunqur (748/1347) are some examples. Following the death of al-Nasir, the use of the *riwaq* plan declined towards the end of the 14th century.⁵²

⁴⁸ Fernandes, *Mamluk Architecture*, 113.

⁴⁹ Al-Harithy, *Patronage*, 226.

⁵⁰ The other two mosques have not survived, but a brief description given by Ibn Duqmaq explains that they followed a *riwaq* plan. Ibn Duqmāq, *Kitāb al-intisār* 1:76, 124.

⁵¹ This is the date given by al-Maqrizi. However, an inscription carved on the door of the minaret leading to the roof of the mosque gives a completion date of 727/1326-27. Today, the portal and the minaret are the only remaining elements of the original structure. Al-Harithy, *Patronage*, 231.

⁵² Behrens-Abouseif, *Cairo of the Mamluks*, 73.

6. Urban Considerations

The Mosque and the Street

While the design repertory of the mosque displays a variety of contemporary ideas, it introduces new vocabulary and develops existing ideas into more complex forms. Ibn al-Suyufi introduced new ideas that made good use of the urban context of the mosque and served its overall function.

In riwaq-type mosques, it was common that the entrance opposite the mihrab be used as the main entrance to the mosque, as it created a sense of directionality towards the qibla; this was the case at the mosque of al-Nasir at the Citadel. At al-Maridani, the north-eastern entrance acted as the main entrance; this was largely due to the importance of al-Darb al-Ahmar Street as a major urban thoroughfare. The mosque is perfectly aligned to the qibla, and the only irregularity in the plan is caused by the stepped arrangement of the eastern corner of the building, which helped adjust the façade to the curve of the street (fig. 5.1). The jagged corners at the edge of the building create the appearance of a *pīshṭāq* as they join the entrance portal and consequently give it an added emphasis.

In search of visual prominence, the architect wished to establish a monumental presence of the mosque by making it project into the main street, a practice commonly used by earlier Mamluk sultans in the Bayn al-Qasrayn area. This was not only meant to create an imposing effect on passers-by and act as a crowd-stopper, but was necessary to enable the architect to create a portal on the main street, "one of the major ceremonial streets of Cairo through which the sultan's procession passed on its way to the Citadel from Bab al-Nasr."⁵³ The main portal is set in a deeply recessed pointed arch, richly decorated with carved and inlaid marble panels, joggled voussoirs and topped by a stalactite cresting (fig. 34).

⁵³ Al-Harithy, *Patronage*, 232.

As mentioned earlier, the street, providing a direct access to the Citadel from Bab Zuwayla, was probably a centre of Mamuk ceremonial, where coronation or viceroy parades as well as folkloric celebrations such as the *mawlid al-nabawi* or the mahmal took place.⁵⁴ Such activities would have greatly added to the value of the street's location as a site for Mamluk foundations.⁵⁵

The positioning of the mosque and its jutting into the street further allowed the street to expand in the area fronting the main entrance, a layout referred to by al-Harithy as an "urban pocket" or a "special pause along major spines or paths" that helped generate a space of social interaction and gathering as well as redirect the attention of observers (fig. 35).⁵⁶ The urban pocket would naturally become a more heavily used part of the street. Without a portal on the main thoroughfare, the architect would have failed to attract people into the mosque. The chamfering was thus necessary to avoid blocking the street entirely. However, at the same time, the internal symmetry of the mosque was maintained by constructing a small cell on the southern corner of the building (fig. 35).

The urban setting of the mosque of al-Maridani along al-Darb al-Ahmar Street on one side and the alley linking al-Darb al-Ahmar with Khayamiyya Street, another major thoroughfare, on the other side, suggested that the mosque could be used as

⁵⁴ More evidence is still needed to prove that the street was used for ceremonial as early as the 740s. Many descriptions of the parades, provided by al-Maqrizi, record how the parades started at Bab al-Nasr and continued through Bab Zuwayla and up to the Citadel, but in none of the descriptions is the exact route leading from Bab Zuwayla to the Citadel described in detail. Seton-Watson was not able to find mention of the Tabbana Street prior to the reigns of Qaytbay and al-Ghuri. In a description of al-Ghuri's ceremonial procession through Cairo that took place in Dhu'l Hijja 920/1515, Ibn Iyas writes "and they continued in this procession until they got to the Maridani mosque and the Sultan Hasan madrasa, and then they crossed the Rumayla...." Ibn Iyas, *Badā'i' al-zuhūr* 4:421. For more information see 'Mamluk Ceremonial Culture,' p.4 of this thesis.

⁵⁵ Seton-Watson, *Darb al-Ahmar*, 165.

⁵⁶ Al-Harithy, *Concept of Space*, 84.

a shortcut between the two streets (fig. 35).⁵⁷ The stone railings separating the entrance porch from the prayer area by the north-eastern and south-western portals verify this suggestion (figs. 9.2, 36.2). Al-Harithy described Mamluk monuments as being "complex mediators between interior architectural spaces and exterior urban spaces," which is very true in the case of al-Maridani.⁵⁸

Passers-by had the option of either following the staggered corners of the mosque walls or crossing the mosque's courtyard to any of its other two gates. The overall layout of the mosque thus helped attract passers-by into the courtyard, creating an urban dialogue, while an elaborate mashrabiyya screen provided privacy to worshippers in the prayer hall and secluded it from the courtyard (fig. 36.1).⁵⁹

It is important to note here that a similar wooden screen separates the street from the entrance portico of the mosque al-Salih Tala'i, which lies in great proximity to the Maridani mosque and may suggest a source influence; this screen was originally in the same position as at al-Maridani, and was later moved. Another screen was also found in the mausoleum of Qalawun at Bayn al-Qasrayn and may have also influenced that of al-Maridani. However, the occurrence of a mashrabiyya screen around the sanctuary is in itself a unique feature.⁶⁰

The Significance of the Mashrabiyya Screen

The scarcity of good wood made it highly prized and the screen in al-Maridani is one of the few surviving examples of wooden screens in mosques.⁶¹ Wood was

⁵⁷ 'Asfour, *Mamluk Aesthetics*, 243.

⁵⁸ Al-Harithy, *Concept of Space*, 73.

⁵⁹ 'Asfour, *Mamluk Aesthetics*, 243-244. 'Asfour also noted that the madrasa of Ahmad al-Mihmindar (1324-25) had a corridor which was meant to encourage people to use the madrasa as a shortcut.

⁶⁰ One may question whether the occurrence of wooden screens covering the sanctuary area in mosques may have been influenced by similar examples in Cairene Coptic churches.

⁶¹ Behrens-Abouseif, *Islamic Architecture*, 114.

used primarily for decorative purposes.⁶² The ample use of wood not only in the screen but in the numerous ceilings covering the riwaqs as well as in the jambs of the lower windows testifies to the abundant donations made to the mosque. According to Caroline Williams, this screen is an early example of mashrabiyya work and belongs to the earliest periods of that craft.⁶³ Waqf documents indicate that turned wood was a Cairene specialty and was used for several purposes other than screen walls, including lanterns, loggias as well as the doors of niches that held water jars.⁶⁴

One of the major utilizations of mashrabiyya was for privacy. By preserving the privacy of the sanctuary, the mashrabiyya screen helped separate the activity taking place in the sanctuary area from other activities in the mosque. Additionally, mashrabiyyas provided shade and protection from the hot summer sun as well as the cold winter. Had the latter purpose been the major concern of the architect, however, he would have built a screen around all four sides of the sahn.

7. The Facade

It was very uncommon for Mamluk mosques to be freestanding. This was due to the increased congestion of the urban capital and high land prices. Al-Maridani's mosque was connected on its northern side to other structures.⁶⁵ It may once have been connected to other structures on its north-eastern and north-western façades as it lacks any fenestration on these sides.⁶⁶ However, the appearance of fenestration on the

⁶² Williams, *Islamic Monuments*, 88.

⁶³ Ibid. The occurrence of wooden screens at the mausolea of Qalawun and al-Nasir Muhammad may indicate that mashrabiyya screens were not uncommon; however, the use of turned wood in royal mausolea testifies to its high value.

⁶⁴ Behrens-Abouseif, *Cairo of the Mamluks*, 96.

⁶⁵ The Comité reports suggest that, in its original stage, the mosque had been freestanding and was surrounded by public alleyways and that the house currently attached to the north-eastern wall of the mosque was added at an unknown point in time. *Comité Bulletin* 1894, 126.

⁶⁶ As mentioned earlier, Mubarak and 'Arafa had commented on the presence of a mida'a and latrines as well as a waterwheel in close proximity to the mosque, but not directly adjacent to it. Their remote location may have been intentional, primarily to separate these activities from the mosque, or it may

south-eastern and south-western facades, as well as the eastern corner of the mosque, is an indication of the importance of these streets.

The type of fenestration used in al-Maridani is a variation on the "Qalawun set" or the type of tripartite window with an oculus in the middle, placed above two arched windows. Here, the oculus was not entirely eliminated but rather creatively incorporated into the arched windows and integrated into the star pattern (fig. 14). The double-arched window corresponds to a single-arched window on the interior of the mosque and is composed of a stucco grille filled with coloured glass. The internal arched window was not only a decorative device, but also a relieving device that reduced the effect of the weight of the wall.⁶⁷ It did not serve so much as a major light source as the mosque was often flooded with light from the courtyard.

In the lower parts of the walls, large rectangular windows with iron grilles, similar to those used in sabils, helped establish visual contact between the mosque and the street, and passers-by could listen to the prayers conducted in the mosque.

8. The Minaret

The main street façade is further accentuated by the dome and minaret placed on the eastern corner of the building. Early Bahri minarets were characterized by having a square base with rounded or octagonal upper stories topped by a fluted dome. The minaret of al-Maridani showed new elements that were to become distinguishing marks of later Mamluk minarets and the precedent of the commonly known "Circassian" minaret (fig. 37).⁶⁸

have been determined based on the locations of structures surrounding the mosque. Mubarak, *al-Khiṭaṭ al-Tawfiqīyah*, 266; 'Arafa, *Masjid Alṭunbughā al-Māridānī*, 85-88.

⁶⁷ Behrens-Abouseif, *Cairo of the Mamluks*, 85.

⁶⁸ Williams, *Urbanization*, 40.

It was the first minaret in Cairo that was octagonal from top to bottom, topped by a new type of pear-shaped crown supported on eight columns. Octagonal minarets had existed earlier in Mesopotamia and Syria, and Creswell suggested that the introduction of this new type of minaret must have been due to foreign influence. Doris Behrens-Abouseif, however, suggests that the development of an entirely octagonal minaret was a natural step in the evolution of earlier Cairene minarets, in which the first and upper stories were often octagonal.⁶⁹

The introduction of this new form had a tremendous effect on shaping Cairo's skyline. Another minaret in Cairo designed by the royal chief architect mu'allim al-Suyufi is that of the Aqbughawīyya madrasa (740/1340) in al-Azhar. The madrasa was built by emir Sayf al-Din Aqbugha (White Ox) 'Abd al-Wahid in the *ziyāda* of al-Azhar mosque, to the left of the main entrance. In his description of the madrasa, Maqrizi states that "this [minaret] and the madrasa was built by the master mu'allim Ibn al-Suyufi, ra'is al-muhandisin (head of engineers) in the Nasiriyya days [the reign of sultan al-Nasir Muhammad]. He supervised the building of the mosque of al-Maridani outside Bab Zuwayla as well as constructed its minaret."⁷⁰ The top of Aqbugha's minaret collapsed a long time ago causing the minaret of al-Maridani to be the earliest extant example to display the bulbous top.⁷¹

According to al-Maqrizi, Aqbugha seized the land of his complex by extortion; the materials for his madrasa were illegally taken over or stolen from other buildings, and the structure was constructed by labourers who were underpaid and beaten.⁷² The emir is additionally described as "a servant worthy of his master - there

⁶⁹ Behrens-Abouseif, *Minarets*, 87.

⁷⁰ Al-Maqrīzī, *Khīṭaṭ* 4:2:542.

⁷¹ The upper bulb of the minaret was restored by the Comité, but the restoration followed traces of the original bulb. Doris Behrens-Abouseif thus suggests that this minaret was the earliest minaret in Cairo with a bulbous top supported on eight columns. Behrens-Abouseif, *Minarets*, 88.

⁷² Al-Maqrīzī, *Khīṭaṭ* 4:2:542.

was nobody meaner, crueller, nor harder of heart.”⁷³ However, the sultan apparently held his emir in high esteem and, like al-Maridani, raised him to the highest ranks. Having been a purchased slave, Aqbugha rose from being a *shadd al-‘amā’ir* (superintendent of construction) to *muqaddam mamālīk* (commander of the sultan’s mamluks) and in 732/1331, he became *uṣṭadār al-sulṭaniyya* (supreme majordomo) where he was in charge of the administration of all the supplies of the sultan’s household and the mamluks.

In this sense, Aqbugha and al-Maridani both held prominent positions in al-Nasir’s court and were two of his favourite emirs. Al-Maqrizi also comments on al-Nasir’s favourite wife Tughay saying that “it is said that she is the sister of the emir Aqbugha ‘Abd al-Wahid,”⁷⁴ which may have been a major factor contributing to this emir’s rapid advancement.

9. The Inscriptional Programme

A Qur’anic inscription (36:1-18) runs along the top of the façade.⁷⁵

In the Name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful.

1. Ya Sin
2. By the law-holding Qur’an,
3. You are truly of those sent,
4. On the path that is straight,
5. A revelation from the Mighty, the Merciful,
6. That you may warn a people whose ancestors were never warned; thus they are heedless.
7. The Word has been realized against most of them, yet they have not faith.
8. Surely We have put on them fetters reaching to their chin, so they are stiff-necked.

⁷³ Ibid., 542-544.

⁷⁴ Williams, *Sitt Hadaq*, 61.

⁷⁵ According to ‘Arafa, the band starts with *sūrat al-Imrān* (chapter three of the Quran) 1-13, then surat Ya Sin (chapter 36 of the Quran) 1-16, then surat al-Mulk (chapter 67 of the Qur’an) 1-16. ‘Arafa, *Masjid Aṭṭunbughā al-Māridānī*, 80-81. According to the *Inscriptions* project, Qur’an 67:1-5 is found in the first bay N of the qibla wall and Qur’an 3:190-192 is found in the second bay S of the qibla. Qur’an 3:8-13 is found on the exterior band running around the facades and the sura of Ya Sin, Qur’an 36:1-21, is found on the interior in the first bay from the court. O’Kane, *Inscriptions*, Nos. 120.19, 120.2, 120.26, 120.22.

9. We have set a bar before them, a bar after them, and covered them so that they see not.
10. Whether you warn them or warn them not, it is the same: they do not have faith.
11. You warn only one who follows the Reminder and dears the Beneficent in secret. To such bear tidings of forgiveness and of rich reward.
12. It is We who bring the dead to life, and inscribe what they have sent before them and the traces that they left behind; everything We have kept in clear register.
13. Coin for them a similitude: the people of a city when those sent came to it.
14. When we sent to them two men, they called them both liars, so We sent them a third reinforcement. They said, "We have surely been sent to you."
15. They said, "You are only mortals like us: The Beneficent has sent nothing down. You only speak lies."
16. They said, "Our Lord knows that we are sent to you;
17. Our duty is only to deliver the clear message."
18. They replied, "We feel you augur ill. If you desist not, we shall stone you, and painful chastisement will come upon you from us."

The occurrence of this sura on a mosque façade in Cairo is unique and therefore historically significant as it survives on only one other medieval mosque in Cairo, namely the mosque of Sitt Hadaq, founded in 741/1340, the same year of construction of the mosque of al-Maridani.⁷⁶ An inscription panel above the door of the minbar dates the completion of the mosque to 746/1345.⁷⁷ The mosque of Sitt Hadaq is located outside the walls of medieval Cairo in a district known as Darb al-Gamamiz or Suwayqat al-Siba'iyyin and is the only remaining mosque built by a woman during the sultan's reign.⁷⁸

Sitt Hadaq, also known as Sitt Miska (Lady Musk), was a slave woman who was a brought up in the sultan's household. Admiring her competence and talent, the sultan appointed her as *dāda* (nursemaid) of his children. She was later appointed superintendent (*qahramāna* or *qahramāniyya*) of the royal harem and was responsible for administering multiple affairs, including the organization of royal festivities and

⁷⁶ Williams, *Sitt Hadaq*, 58.

⁷⁷ Creswell, *Brief Chronology*, 101.

⁷⁸ Williams, *Sitt Hadaq*, 55.

weddings. She is believed to have wielded great influence in the sultan's household and was often involved in profitable building enterprises, which granted her a great amount of wealth.⁷⁹

Under Islamic tradition, the sura of Ya Sin is believed to have exceptional mythical and protective powers and was considered by the Prophet as "the heart of the Qur'an." The name "Ya Sin" is believed to be a mystical name for the Prophet Muhammad. In this context, one may surmise that the emir requested that this inscription be added to the exterior façade of his mosque to receive blessings during his illness. Passers-by, most of whom would have known the sura by heart, would recite it and ask God for the emir's recovery.

10. Heraldry

Blazons played a major role in Mamluk society and can help explain the structure of Mamluk rule and the types of office at the time. They were among the privileges accorded to emirs and denoted their symbolic titles. Apart from the sultan, emirs were the only group of dignitaries who are known to have used blazons.⁸⁰ Blazons represented the office held by any emir and were embroidered on ceremonial gowns and decorated artefacts; gilded blazons were also displayed on monuments on festive occasions.⁸¹

The emblems found at the mosque of al-Maridani on the bronze bolts of the gateways⁸² and the mosque lamp,⁸³ now at the Museum of Islamic Art, display the

⁷⁹ Levanoni, *A Turning Point*, 184.

⁸⁰ Mayer, *Saracenic Heraldry*, 3.

⁸¹ Behrens-Abouseif, *Cairo of the Mamluks*, 38.

⁸² Mayer, *Saracenic Heraldry*, 63-64. Plate XXI.1.2. Museum of Islamic Art, Cairo, Nos. 3105, 3106.

⁸³ Wiet, *Catalogue général*, Nos. 4065, 5880, 5881, 5882, Plate IX; Mayer, *Saracenic Heraldry*, 63.

rank of a cupbearer or saqi (fig.19).⁸⁴ It was common for emirs to perpetuate the memory of their early achievements by displaying the blazons they held during their early careers, and they retained their blazons for the whole of their lives.⁸⁵

Blazons were often accompanied by calligraphic inscriptions which included honorific titles. The inscription on the glass lamp from the mosque of al-Maridani reads:

المقر العالی العلانی ال[طنبغ]ا الساقی الناصری

His High Excellency 'Ala' al-Din Al[tunbugh]a, cupbearer of (al-Malik al-Nasir).⁸⁶

The inscription emphasized the emir's rank and simultaneously propagated the sultan's name through the inclusion of the princely title 'al-Nasiri'.⁸⁷ Such honorific inscriptions and blazons were also used on glazed earthenware.⁸⁸ A potsherd, now at the Museum of Islamic Art in Cairo, has a similar type of text and displays a part of a cupbearer blazon. The text reads:

...العلانی الطنبغا الساقی الملکی الن[اصری]...

... 'Ala' al-Din Altunbugha, the cupbearer of al-Malik al-N[asir]...⁸⁹

The use of blazons on Mamluk monuments emphasized the glory of Mamluk aristocracy; it glorified the sultan and the emir and perpetuated their names.

⁸⁴ The cup was one of the most frequently occurring blazons in Mamluk society. However, the cupbearer (saqi) should not be confused with a taster (*jāshangīr*), which used the round table. Mayer, *Saracenic Heraldry*, 5.

⁸⁵ Ibid., 5-7.

⁸⁶ Ibid., 63.

⁸⁷ Behrens-Abouseif, *Cairo of the Mamluks*, 39.

⁸⁸ According to Behrens-Abouseif, this princely epigraphic style was used on a type of pottery, known as *sgraffiato*, made of incised, glazed red earthenware and was manufactured in Bahnasa in Upper Egypt. Ibid., 39.

⁸⁹ Mayer, *Saracenic Heraldry*, 64. Museum of Islamic Art, Cairo, No. 5106.

11. Mamluk Patronage and the Introduction of New Techniques Diplomatic Relations

Under the Mamluks, especially al-Nasir Muhammad, there was a constant concern to reflect political relations and diplomatic happenings in the architecture of the time. The Mongols had always been a major threat to the Mamluk empire and constantly formed a major foreign policy concern for the Mamluk Sultanate. Mamluk history can hardly be comprehended without an understanding of the impact of its preoccupation with the Mongols, be it war with the Ilkhanids or relations with the Golden Horde. Many of the Sultanate's resources were devoted to fighting the Mongol threat.⁹⁰

In 699/1299, during the second reign of al-Nasir Muhammad Ibn Qalawun, the Mamluk army defeated the Mongols led by the Ilkhanid ruler Ghazan Khan at Shaghab.⁹¹ The Mongol threat was completely eliminated during al-Nasir's third reign when the Mongols were forced to retreat beyond the Euphrates during their attempt to invade Syria in 1312 under the leadership of Uljaitu, Ghazan's successor.⁹²

Freed from political unrest, al-Nasir Muhammad promoted vast building projects, and Cairo soon witnessed the spread of monumental religious and secular structures. The general prosperity was reflected in the encouragement of trade as well as the establishment of diplomatic relations to further strengthen his political connections. He is believed to have received eight embassies in the year 716/1316 including representatives from the Byzantine Emperor, the Khan of the Golden Horde

⁹⁰ Amitai, *Mamluks*, 119.

⁹¹ Al-Dawādārī, *Kanz al-durar* 9:85-88; al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk* 1:3:930-38.

⁹² Al-Harithy, *Patronage*, 222.

as well as the Ilkhanid ruler Abu Sa'id.⁹³ Intermarriage and family alliances played an added role in strengthening cultural affinities with the Mongols.⁹⁴

The Bahri Mamluk period in Cairo witnessed the spread of art and architectural styles that were clearly unique to the Cairene tradition. The new decorative forms were not only novel stylistically, but also technically, introducing new expertise and skills previously unfamiliar to Cairene craftsmanship.

The introduction of new techniques was generally accounted for by the prosperity of trade or diplomatic relations, where a general milieu of economic and political stability and peace encouraged not only the exchange of objects, but also of artists and artisans. The introduction of Persian influences to the Cairene Mamluk architecture is a case in point. The fact that there was Ilkhanid influence on Mamluk art and architectural decoration is well documented, and accounts of chroniclers often refer to architects, masons, calligraphers as well as Sufis who came to Cairo from the Ilkhanid domain.⁹⁵ Mongols additionally played a role in the Mamluk army as soldiers or officers; they were either mamluks of Mongol origin or Mongol tribesmen who came to Egypt as *wāfīdīyah* or *musta'minūn* (refugees).⁹⁶

Emir Sayf al-Din Aitmish al-Ashrafi al-Muhammadi

Emir Sayf al-Din Aitmish al-Ashrafi al-Muhammadi was one of the mamluks employed by al-Nasir Muhammad in his diplomatic relations with the Ilkhanid state. He was originally purchased by Qalawun, who gave him to al-Ashraf Khalil, and was therefore commonly referred to as Aitmish al-Ashrafi (a *nisba* to al-Ashraf Khalil)

⁹³ Al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk* 2:1:163-64.

⁹⁴ Al-Nasir Muhammad was married to a Mongol princess following his peace treaty with the Ilkhanids.

⁹⁵ Kahil, *Sultan Hasan*, 150.

⁹⁶ Amitai, *Mamluks*, 119.

al-mughuli (a Mongol). He first came to attention as a trusted envoy of al-Nasir Muhammad during his exile in al-Karak in 1309-10. When al-Nasir Muhammad left al-Karak to regain the throne during his third rule, he appointed Aitmish as governor of al-Karak, where he remained until 1311.⁹⁷

Emir Aitmish is known to have had excellent diplomatic skills and was well acquainted with the Mongol language, Mongol lands as well as Mongol laws, culture and traditions, assets which were primary considerations for choosing him as a diplomatic envoy.⁹⁸ He became a trusted member of sultan al-Nasir Muhammad's circle, although never rising above the rank of an emir of forty.⁹⁹ Following the proposed peace negotiations, the Ilkhanid ruler Abu Sa'id (reigned 717/1317-736/1335) had stipulated that the Mamluks' representative be a man of "confirmed religion and honesty."¹⁰⁰ It is therefore that Aitmish was sent by al-Nasir Muhammad on a number of diplomatic missions to Persia, particularly to the Ilkhanid state, which ultimately led to the Peace of Aleppo in 1322-23.¹⁰¹

As a result of the peace treaty, many decorative objects were exported to Cairo, some of which were intended as gifts for the sultan while others may have been sold in local markets. Maqrizi records the valuable gifts taken by Aitmish on his diplomatic missions, but the gifts he received in return for the sultan are frequently not documented.¹⁰²

In his accounts of the year 1330, Maqrizi records that a *banna* (master mason) accompanied Aitmish from Tabriz and was responsible for the foundation of a court

⁹⁷ Ibid., 124.

⁹⁸ Al-'Asqalānī, *al-Durār al-kāmina* 1:453-454 (quoting al-Safadi).

⁹⁹ Amitai, *Mamluks*, 124.

¹⁰⁰ Little, *Notes on Aitamiš*, 391.

¹⁰¹ Aitmish died in Safad in 737/1336 after receiving its governorship a few months earlier. Amitai, *Mamluks*, 124-125.

¹⁰² The khanqah of Baktimur owned a Qur'an commissioned by Uljaitu as a gift to al-Nasir Muhammad, which the sultan gave to his emir and son in law Baktimur as a sign of royal favour. Behrens-Abouseif, *Cairo of the Mamluks*, 35.

workshop in Cairo during the 1330s and 1340s, and the training of other artisans in the Tabrizi tradition. The craftsman was additionally accredited with the construction of the two minarets at the mosque of Qawsun in Cairo, which he built on the model of the mosque of 'Ali Shah in Tabriz (c.1318-22).¹⁰³ Additionally, Evliya Celebi mentioned that one minaret located at the southern entrance to the mosque was decorated with tiles.¹⁰⁴ It is interesting to note that the peace treaty signed in Tabriz and brought back by Aitmish in 1323, carried the signature of the Ilkhanid vizier 'Ali Shah, whose minarets in Tabriz acted as prototypes for the minarets of Qawsun in Cairo.¹⁰⁵

The minarets of the mosque of al-Nasir Muhammad at the Citadel (originally built in 1313 and reconstructed in 1335) are unparalleled in Egypt (fig. 38). Both are decorated with tiles of blue, cobalt blue, white and turquoise mosaic. Meinecke attributes these minarets to the same craftsman who worked on the construction of the Qawsun minarets. Behrens-Abouseif, quoting Ülkü Bates, additionally suggests that an Anatolian derivation should also be considered, where tile mosaics were extensively used and were often combined with masonry, as opposed to the brick common in Iran.¹⁰⁶

The form of both minarets, topped by a bulbous crown, was clearly unique in Cairo and was inspired by Ilkhanid examples which were not only common in mosques but also in mausolea. The minaret of the shrine of 'Abd al-Samad in Natanz (1299-1312) as well as those crowning the entryway of the Friday mosque of Yazd are similar examples (fig. 39). Both structures were built in the Ilkhanid period, but

¹⁰³ Al-Maqrīzī, *Khīṭaṭ* 4:1:223.

¹⁰⁴ Behrens-Abouseif, *Cairo of the Mamluks*, 172. Al-Jabarti had recorded the collapse of the second minaret in 1801.

¹⁰⁵ Meinecke, *Fayencemosaikdekorationen*, 91.

¹⁰⁶ Behrens-Abouseif, *Cairo of the Mamluks*, 177. See Bates, *Evolution of Tile Revetment*, 39, 45 n. 5. This suggestion will be more relevant for the discussion of the tile panels at the mosque of al-Maridani.

the minarets at Yazd unfortunately do not retain much of their original decoration; however, the decoration at Natanz is all original. The shape of the minarets, and not necessarily the types of tiles used, is clearly linked to al-Nasir's mosque minarets at the Citadel.

The introduction of a new repertory rapidly led to the infiltration of Ilkhanid architectural decorative styles in Cairo, and the introduction of new techniques primarily in tile decoration and stuccowork, another Ilkhanid specialty.

Tile Decoration

The use of colour and glazed tile decoration became increasingly important during the Ilkhanid period, primarily for the embellishment of exteriors. In Cairo, the earliest known example of the appearance of tile decoration is on the minaret of the khanqah of Baybars al-Jashankir, which forms the earliest example in the Muslim architecture of Egypt, and later on the mosque of Almalik al-Jukandar, two examples which have largely been destroyed and were technically primitive still.

In the 1330s, however, one begins to recognize the evolution of technically advanced tile decoration, which was clearly foreign to the Cairene tradition and which was used monumentally and displayed a variety of colours, two practices previously unknown in Egypt. Michael Meinecke identified thirteen Bahri Mamluk monuments in Cairo with tile and faience mosaic decoration, most built between 1330 and 1350. These were:

1. The Khanqah of Baybars al-Jashankir (1310), minaret
2. The Mosque of Emir Almalik al-Jukandar (1319-20), qibla wall
3. The Mosque of Emir Qawsun (1330), minarets
4. The Iwan al-Kabir of Sultan al-Nasir Muhammad (1334), dome

5. The Mausoleum of Emir Tashtamur (1334), dome base
6. The (so-called) Mausoleum of Ibn Ghurab (1335), dome base
7. The Mosque of al-Nasir Muhammad (1335), minarets
8. The Mosque of Altunbugha al-Maridani (1340), portals
9. The Khanqah of Shaykh Nizam al-Din Ishaq (1340), portal
10. The Mosque of Emir Aslam al-Silahdar (1345), dome base
11. The (so-called) Sabil of al-Nasir Muhammad (1346), base
12. The Khanqah of Princess Tughay (1348), dome base
13. The Mosque of Sultan Hasan (1361), mausoleum window frames¹⁰⁷

The mosque of al-Maridani displays the use of tile decoration on four architectural parts of the structure. The use of tile decoration in this mosque is relatively restricted in terms of scale, yet remains technically high in standard. Rectangular tile panels are found on the inner sides of the windows over the north-eastern as well as south-western entryways. Tile roundels occupy the central medallion of the north-western entryway on its inner and outer sides (fig. 16). All panels are placed strategically in prominent positions above the entryways to the mosque.

The panels are composed of an arabesque design set on a vegetal scroll background. The designs had earlier precedents in Cairene architecture which were produced in stone or stucco, but the example in al-Maridani is the earliest surviving to be carried out in glazed tile decoration. The design and structure of the rectangular tile panels are comparable to the stucco grille at the madrasa of emir Qarasunqur. They also bear very close resemblance to the stone screen at the funerary complex of Sanjar

¹⁰⁷ Meinecke, *Fayencemosaikdekorationen*, 86-87.

al-Jawli (1303-4) (fig. 40). Meinecke thus suggests that, in terms of decorative repertory, it is quite obvious that the designs chosen for the decoration drew upon local rather than international designs. The same holds true for the analysis of the tile roundels adorning the north-western portal.¹⁰⁸

The question of whether these tile panels were products of the Tabrizi tile workshop is a matter of controversy, and the question of where the craftsmen got their inspiration still needs further research. In either case, the panels look very different from other tilework in Cairo; at the same time, there is no evidence of any Iranian parallels, neither in terms of design, nor in terms of technique.

Rectangular Tile Panels Above the North-Eastern and South-Western Entryways

In both panels, vegetal scroll ornaments form the basis of the design. The panel above the north-eastern entryway is composed of white and cobalt blue tile panels combined together to form an overall arabesque design framed by a dark blue rectangle. The panel above the south-western entryway follows the same technique but has a different arabesque composition and is executed in white and turquoise glazed tiles surrounded by a cobalt blue rectangular framing (fig. 41).¹⁰⁹ While both panels retain the same width, the one above the north-eastern entryway is longer, which allows for the display of a larger portion of the arabesque pattern.¹¹⁰

Tile Roundels Above the North-Western Entryway

Two tile roundels are found on both sides of the north-western entryway. The panel on the inner side combines three different colours: white, turquoise and dark

¹⁰⁸ Ibid., 109.

¹⁰⁹ Today, the panel above the south-western entryway is in a fragmentary condition; parts of it are found in the space between the tile panel and the iron grille overlooking the street.

¹¹⁰ Meinecke, *Fayencemosaikdekorationen*, 109.

blue.¹¹¹ At the centre of the panel is a roundel with the name 'Muhammad,' a reference to the Prophet but one that may also allude to the sultan, al-Nasir Muhammad. The inscription is placed at a strategic location opposite the mihrab and one that is visible from different parts of the mosque (fig. 42.1).

The outer roundel combines the same three colours but houses a highly concentric design. According to a drawing by Jules Bourgoïn (1892), the central medallion housed the word 'Allah' in *naskhi* script. Meinecke reinforces his hypothesis about the local origins of the design repertory for these panels by stating that the general layout of this roundel with the inscription surround goes back to the roundel above the entryway of the mosque of al-Aqmar (519/1125) (figs. 42.2-3).¹¹²

Analysis

The tile panels in question are very fine and highly advanced examples of Cairene tilework. Due to the highly technical qualities needed for the production of these panels, similar panels are quite rare. One earlier example discussed by Meinecke is at the Sahip Ata mausoleum in Konya (682/1283),¹¹³ but the design is composed of a geometric pattern and was probably executed in one colour (fig. 43). In terms of vegetal ornamentation, a number of Cairene precedents could be discussed, but these were mainly executed in stone or stucco.¹¹⁴

The main question is whether these panels are made up of separate pieces of tile attached together or whether they form one unit composed of different colours.

¹¹¹ Meinecke suggests that a major technical breakthrough in this panel is the use of two different shades of green, a bright turquoise and a more toned down 'bottle green.' This is a rarity which was introduced in Iran after the mid-fourteenth century. However, upon examining the panels, I have not been able to identify the different shades referred to by Meinecke. A slightly different shade of green is found on the outer roundel of the north-western portal in the border which supposedly framed the word 'Allah' (fig. 42.2). Ibid., 112.

¹¹² Ibid., 110.

¹¹³ Meinecke, *Sakralbauten* 2:374.

¹¹⁴ Meinecke, *Fayencemosaikdekorationen*, 110. *Sakralbauten* 2:369.

There are clear 'joints' between the different pieces, but these lines may have been drawn to avoid the colours from running over one another (fig. 44.1). No joints are clearly visible on the back side of the panels, which look as though they were produced out of a single block (fig. 44.2). However, it also seems that a plaster coating may have been added to the backs of the tile panels to strengthen the attachment of the different pieces to one another.

Another peculiarity of the panels is the use of the *sgraffiato* technique for the swirls of the vegetal ornamentation. According to Meinecke, the technique was first used at the 593/1196-7 mausoleum at Maragha where the background had been scratched away making the glazed foreground stand out. It was later used at the Şifaiye madrasa in Sivas (1220) as well as the mihrab of the Ala' al-Din Mosque in Konya (c.1235) (fig. 45).¹¹⁵

It is still unclear where the craftsmen got their inspiration and technique. Anatolia, rather than Iran, may be a more plausible source of inspiration.¹¹⁶ A very similar design is found in the tile panels framing the iwan of the Sirçali Madrasa in Konya (640/1242-43) (fig. 46). The pattern used at al-Maridani for the rectangular tile panels is very similar to that executed at the Anatolian madrasa in turquoise and dark blue. In Konya, however, the design is composed of carved tile panels embedded in a plaster coating. The technique is not entirely different from the Cairene examples, except that the ones at al-Maridani are executed on a much larger scale and are not embedded in plaster. However, the fact that Meinecke, who is an expert on Anatolian Seljuq tilework, managed to find only few possible Anatolian parallels, makes this hypothesis in need of further research.

¹¹⁵ Meinecke, *Sakralbauten* 1:21-22, 165.

¹¹⁶ As mentioned earlier, Bates proposed an Anatolian derivation for the minarets of al-Nasir Muhammad at the Citadel. See p. 60 of this thesis.

According to Meinecke, Azerbaijan may be another possible source of inspiration. He suggests that the technique used in Konya was also found at the mausoleum of Uljaitu at Sultaniyya (705/1305) and the tomb tower at Barda (722/1322). On the basis of the connection with Ilkhanid decoration, Meinecke thus suggests that the craftsmen working on these panels were those trained by the Tabrizi master brought to Cairo in 1323.¹¹⁷

The two rectangular panels and the internal north-western roundel should generally be considered as integral parts of the overall decorative programme of the mosque. The walls surrounding these panels are covered with a low-relief carved stone revetment, which would have been originally painted (fig. 47). It should be noted that such relief carvings forming an overall wall pattern were not very common in Cairo and should therefore be examined in terms of their connection with the tile panels.¹¹⁸ Meinecke thus suggests that the overall designs of the panels and their surrounds were products of the Tabrizi master, and consequently infers that the master worked at the royal court workshop under the supervision of mu'allim al-Suyufi.¹¹⁹

The lack of concrete parallels certifies that more evidence is needed to prove any hypothesis about the possible origin of these panels and the craftsmen who produced them. The fact that most other tilework in Cairo was executed in tile mosaic makes these panels unique. The choice of four different designs with different sizes, shapes and proportions could be suggestive of an experimental approach rather than the adoption of a well-established tradition. The panels are therefore highly significant for the architectural history of tile decoration in Cairo.

¹¹⁷ Meinecke, *Fayencemosaikdekorationen*, 111.

¹¹⁸ Similar carved surfaces were in fact much more common in stucco; this type of overall decoration may be regarded as a possible precedent to the carved masonry domes of the later Mamluk period.

¹¹⁹ Meinecke, *Fayencemosaikdekorationen*, 112.

Stucco Decoration

The influence of the Tabrizi workshop should perhaps be examined with regards to the influence it exerted on stucco decoration. The team of artists, or workshop, that was responsible for the tile decoration on Cairene monuments has also been credited with the execution of stucco decoration.

By the first quarter of the fourteenth century, the tradition of Mamluk stucco decoration had become well established, and in Iran stucco decoration reached its apogee under the Ilkhanids. Several buildings in Cairo display stucco decoration that was alien to the tradition of the Mamluk period, some of which can still be observed today while others are no longer extant.

One of the earliest examples is in the complex sponsored by al-Nasir Muhammad for himself. The mihrab of the madrasa of al-Nasir Muhammad at Bayn al-Qasrayn (1296-1304) (figs. 48.1-2) is quite exceptional in Mamluk architectural decoration and clearly derives from Persian prototypes. The high-relief carving on the conch of the mihrab with its pierced bosses closely resembles Ilkhanid stucco as well as *repoussé* metalwork. Laila Ibrahim has suggested that the closest parallel is to be found in the mihrab of the Great Mosque at Urmiyya/Rizaiyya (1277) (fig. 48.3).¹²⁰ However, upon closer examination, one would realize that both mihrabs share the same bulbous qualities but not the same designs. The stucco mihrab found at Pir-i Bakran (1299-1312) and particularly the spandrel design of the mihrab added by Uljaitu to the Great Mosque of Isfahan (1310) (fig. 49), provide much closer parallels because they share similar arabesque designs.¹²¹ However, one should note that by the time the madrasa of al-Nasir had been completed in 1303, Mamluk-Mongol relations

¹²⁰ Ibrahim, *Hānqāh of Qawsun*, 50.

¹²¹ Stucco mihrabs with bulbous elements were common in Iran as early as the 10th century. A good example is the mihrab at the Na'in Friday Mosque, dated c. 960, as well as the much later mihrab at the Seljuq mausoleum of Gunbad-i Alaviyyan in Hamadan, datable to the mid-12th century.

had not been well established. This suggests that, unless the conch was decorated at least a decade later, the craftsmen who worked on it are likely to have been refugees rather than craftsmen brought as a result of diplomatic relations.¹²²

However, the now ruined Qasr al-Ablaq of al-Nasir Muhammad at the Citadel, known to us through the *Description de l'Egypte*, was also decorated with a medallion, probably in stucco, which is stylistically very close to the Ilkhanid tradition. The medallion involved the use of hollow appliqué bosses, similar to those discussed earlier in connection with the madrasa of al-Nasir Muhammad. Such bosses were very rare in Cairo and their use is restricted to very few but significant buildings. A third example where these bosses occur is in the spandrels of the mihrab of the khanqah of Princess Tughay, also known as Khawand Umm Anuk (pre-1349) (fig. 50), al-Nasir's favourite wife.¹²³

A fourth example is a stucco roundel at the khanqah of emir Qawsun in Cairo, displaying an inscription surround in a fragmentary condition (figs. 51.1-2). The major peculiarity of the surround is the use of the initial formula *mimma 'umila bi-rasm*, commonly known from portable objects, but most unusual on architectural monuments.¹²⁴ A careful study and analysis of the meaning of this formula suggested that the roundel was manufactured in a separate workshop, probably under royal control, to an order made by the sultan for his emir, the occurrence of the formula being an official recognition of this fact.¹²⁵ During the Mamluk period, marble and wooden panels were readily transferable from one monument to the other and the

¹²² Behrens-Abouseif, *Cairo of the Mamluks*, 154-155.

¹²³ According to Ibrahim, the examples proposed here cannot be attributed to the same craftsman, but it is very likely that all of these could have been made under his supervision in the newly founded court workshop. Ibrahim, *Hānqāh of Qawsun*, 57.

¹²⁴ Laila Ibrahim records three examples of the use of this formula in an architectural context, which are a stone slab at the mausoleum of Tastimur in the Eastern Cemetery, a wooden panel from the ceiling of the western iwan at the palace of Bashtak and two marble panels from the madrasa of Sarghitmish. Ibid., 50.

¹²⁵ Ibid., 50-57.

occurrence of this formula may suggest the manufacture of the roundel in a separate workshop rather than on site.

It has therefore been suggested that the court workshop in which this roundel was manufactured was that founded by the Tabrizi craftsman brought by Aitmish as a diplomatic gift.¹²⁶ J.M. Rogers compares the stucco roundel in question with a very close parallel at the Madrasa-yi Shamsiyya at Yazd (figs. 51.3-4), which was dated by Wilber to 1365.¹²⁷ Pickett, however, proposes a much earlier dating and suggests that the madrasa was at least finished in 1332 following the death of Shams al-Din, whose body was brought from Tabriz to be buried inside the madrasa.¹²⁸ On this basis, the madrasa could therefore be considered a major source of inspiration or a direct prototype for the khanqah of emir Qawsun in Cairo. Yazd had not only been one of the major weaving centres of Iran, but had an additional importance for the Mamluks as a slave market. The most plausible date for the establishment of Yazd as a slave market, as proposed by Rogers, is 1322, following the Peace of Aleppo. One of the conditions outlined in the treaty was that the Bahri Mamluks be allowed to purchase slaves from Ilkhanid domains and that al-Magd al-Sallami, a major slave merchant of the period, be allowed to travel between Egypt and the Ilkhanid state for this reason.¹²⁹ In conclusion, one may thus suggest the possibility that Yazdi craftsmen

¹²⁶ Very little is known about the organization of the craft in Mamluk Cairo and Ilkhanid Iran and signatures of stucco workers are very rare. One recorded inscription characterized the stucco worker as the *gassas* (the mosque of Bayazid at Bistam); a second inscription of the same sanctuary characterizes him as the *banna* (commonly used to refer to a master mason). There are other cases where the term *banna* is used to refer to a ceramics craftsman: (a) a faience mihrab from Iran now in the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York signed *Hasan b. 'Ali b. Ahmad b. Babuy al-banna*; (b) a star tile allegedly commemorating the construction of the mausoleum of 'Abd al-Samad in Natanz signed *Ibrahim b. Isma'il al-banna al-Isfahani*; (c) a faience medallion in the iwan of the Sirçali Madrasa at Konya signed *Muhammad b. Muhammad b. 'Uthman al-banna al-Tusi*. Laila Ibrahim thus concluded that several crafts may have been practiced by the same master mason. *Ibid.*, 56-57.

¹²⁷ Rogers, *Origins*, 60-61.

¹²⁸ Pickett, *Persian Tilework*, 143. This dating is also confirmed by an inscription.

¹²⁹ Rogers, *Origins*, 63.

also came to Cairo to work on the massive architectural projects undertaken in the city.

The question is whether there are similar links between the examples discussed above and the stucco decoration at al-Maridani (fig. 12). Very few stucco roundels on the qibla wall of al-Maridani remain intact. The density and quality of the decoration as well as the size of the roundels are not comparable to the examples at the khanqah of Qawsun. The stucco medallions known as bukhariyyas are finely executed but their decoration doesn't compare to the examples at the khanqah.¹³⁰ The tree representations discussed below in connection with Syrian influences may perhaps be related to Iran in terms of subject matter but not really in terms of the quality of execution.

Given the evidence available today, one could assume that the influence of the Tabrizi workshop on the mosque of al-Maridani was relatively limited. The craftsmen working on the mosque were certainly inspired by other works carried out by the workshop, but were not directly affected by them. The decoration of the tile panels as well as the tree representations in stucco seem to be still experimental and are not found later in any other monuments. On the other hand, parts of the decoration which have been a Cairene specialty and in which the craftsmen were already talented, were executed according to very high standards of perfection. However, one should always consider the extensive restorations carried out at the mosque; original parts of the decorations may have been lost and it is therefore more difficult to be certain of the sources of inspiration. Restoration and cleaning may help reveal new evidence, but until these are carried out, no final conclusions can be reached.

¹³⁰ The first recorded appearance of bukhariyyas in Cairo is in the domes of the mausoleum of Salar and Sangar al-Jawli (1303). Ibrahim, *Hānqāh of Qawsun*, 51.

The Decline of the Tabrizi Workshop

The scarcity of available material could be misleading in the examination of the extent of the influence exerted by the Tabrizi workshop in Cairo. However, based on the current evidence, one should assume that following the death of al-Nasir Muhammad, the influence of the Tabrizi workshop declined and the tile decoration adorning the windows of the mausoleum of the Sultan Hasan complex seem to have been one of the last undertakings of the workshop in Cairo. In terms of stucco decoration, the richly ornamented stucco roundels at the mosque of Aslam al-Silahdar (745-46/1344-45) and the nearly contemporary khanqah of princess Tatar al-Hijaziya (748/1348) were the last products of stucco ornamentation for at least a decade.¹³¹

Following the death of Abu Sa'id in 1335, there was a rapid disintegration of the Ilkhanid empire and there was a demise in the imperial building tradition. With the ensuing turmoil and the Black Death of 1348, many artists fled to Cairo and brought with them new building techniques and motifs, which included complex muqarnas vaults, and chinoiserie patterns. The stone architecture of Anatolia seems to have had lasting effects on Mamluk facade decoration. The disappearance of Persian styles of tilework in Cairo may have been the result of these circumstances.

Additionally, Timurid architectural decoration and tilework exerted more influence on the architecture of Mughal India than in the west. On the other hand, there was an increasing interest in the use of stone as a building and decorative material, which seems to have affected the use of tile mosaic for decoration.

The architecture of the later Bahri and the Burji Mamluk periods was thus highly reliant on stone decoration, and great advances were achieved in the decoration

¹³¹ Meinecke, *mamlukische Architektur* 1:129.

of domical structures, minarets and portals, a factor that gave Cairo its unique architectural style.

Syrian Influences

When writing about the special diwan established by al-Nasir for his construction of public works, Maqrizi states that: "He [the sultan] built extensively, assigned Aqsunqur to manage construction, and brought construction workers from all over Syria."¹³²

The Gateway Opposite the Mihrab

Of the two subsidiary portals providing access to the mosque, the north-western one is particularly fine, placed at the centre of the north-western façade on the axis of the mihrab. It is of the stalactite type and bears a close resemblance to the main portal of al-Nasir's mosque at the Citadel as well as to many Syrian examples (figs. 6.1, 7).

Naturalistic Tree Representations

One of the unique features of the mosque is the appearance of naturalistic tree representations in stucco on the wall just below the dome. These are unrepeated in the religious architecture of Cairo (fig. 52). Caroline Williams suggests that these representations might allude to the Qur'anic verse, "A goodly saying as a goodly tree-its roots firm, and its branches in heaven" (14:24).¹³³ However, there are a number of references to trees in the Qur'an which might have different connotations.

¹³² Al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk* 2:1:130.

¹³³ Williams, *Islamic Monuments*, 99.

It is important to note here that similar tree representations were found in mosaic in the excavated *qā'a* Ashrafiya at the Citadel (1291) (fig. 53). These bore great resemblance to the landscapes of buildings and trees known from the Dome of the Rock, the Great Mosque of Damascus as well as Qubbat al-Zahiriyya (fig. 54), and soon became popular in Mamluk metalwork.¹³⁴ A brass ewer made for Shihab al-Din Ahmad (d. 742/1342), a near-contemporary of the mosque, bears representations with a pronounced likeness to those in the mosque; the ewer is now in the Museum of Islamic Art in Cairo (MIA 15126) (fig. 55).¹³⁵ The manufacture of similar designs in stucco was very unusual in Cairo. I would assume that the stucco at al-Maridani would have been originally painted, but no traces of paint can be seen today.

It has often been assumed that al-Maridani, having spent a substantial time as governor of Aleppo, was clearly well aware of the above-mentioned representations and therefore adopted them in his mosque. We have already negated this hypothesis as al-Maridani was governor of Aleppo during the latter part of his career and died there. However, such representations may have been products of the Syrian craftsmen working under al-Nasir Muhammad, considering the prestige accorded to the decoration of the early Islamic monuments in Damascus, Jerusalem and Medina.¹³⁶

Additionally, some of the most prevalent appearances of naturalistic landscapes and trees are known to have begun in Iran during the Ilkhanid period. The Ilkhanid shrine of Pir-i Bakran at Linjan (c.1303), discussed in connection with the stucco decoration, housed representations of landscapes with trees.¹³⁷ This is again

¹³⁴ O'Kane, *Arboreal Aesthetic*, 234.

¹³⁵ O'Kane, *Mutual Influences*, 165; *Arboreal Aesthetic*, 234. Similar trees also appear on a box for Aydemir al-Ashrafi (dated c. 1371).

¹³⁶ The last major recorded restorations of the Dome of the Rock and the Great Mosque of Damascus took place during the third reign of al-Nasir Muhammad. Flood, *Umayyad Survivals*, 72.

¹³⁷ O'Kane, *Arboreal Aesthetic*, 223, 240.

a reminder of al-Nasir's diplomatic relations with the Ilkhanid state as well as the general interest in Damascene decorations, both of which may suggest sources of influence.

12. The Incorporation of Earlier Decorative Forms

The interior of the sanctuary is particularly fine with a mihrab fashioned in the same style as that at sultan Qalawun's mausoleum, decorated with mosaic of coloured stone and mother of pearl inlay, turquoise glass colonettes and joggled voussoirs (figs. 22, 56). The glass mosaic decoration at the mausoleum of al-Nasir's father was clearly influenced by the Damascene Umayyad mosque. It has been suggested that Syrian craftsmen were brought to Cairo to work on Qalawun's funerary complex.¹³⁸ However, it is also important to note here that the last major recorded restorations of the Dome of the Rock and the Great Mosque of Damascus took place during the reign of al-Nasir Muhammad, another reason for the appearance of these parallels.¹³⁹ Like at the mosque of al-Nasir at the Citadel, marble dados originally covered all four sides of the mosque of al-Maridani.¹⁴⁰ Today, most of the marble has disappeared and the marble that is still in place is restricted to the qibla riwaq but is in a fragile condition (figs. 10.1-2).

There were a number of wooden domes in Mamluk Cairo;¹⁴¹ these were mainly built over the mihrab area or over mausolea. The domes of the mosques of Baybars al-Bunduqdari (no longer extant) and al-Nasir Muhammad at the Citadel are

¹³⁸ Flood, *Umayyad Survivals*, 68.

¹³⁹ Ibid., 72.

¹⁴⁰ *Comité Bulletin* 1894, 126.

¹⁴¹ There is no concrete evidence that the original dome at the mosque of al-Maridani was constructed of wood; however, upon considering contemporary parallels, such as the dome of the mosque of al-Nasir Muhammad at the Citadel which was originally constructed of wood, it may be suggested that the dome of al-Maridani was a wooden construction.

examples of this type of dome. It was a common practice for wooden domes to be supported on wooden muqarnas pendentives. The dome over the mihrab area at al-Maridani is also supported on a wooden muqarnas pendentive. The earliest extant example of a wooden muqarnas pendentive is that in the dome added in 1295-6 by Sultan Lajin above the mihrab of the mosque of Ibn Tulun.¹⁴² Externally, the zone of transition supporting wooden domes is entirely different from that of stone and brick domes, as it lacks the stepped profile and is hidden behind a screen wall or encased in a rectangular base, as in the case of al-Maridani and al-Nasir Muhammad at the Citadel.¹⁴³

Taking a closer look at the decoration of the prayer hall, one could recognize that some of the marble patterns decorating the wall were also inspired by patterns in the Qubbat al-Zahiriyya in Damascus (fig. 57). Throughout the Mamluk period, the design based on arrow shafts is found simultaneously in buildings in both Egypt and Syria. Caroline Williams provides some examples to emphasize how the same decorative repertory was found in both areas during the same period. Some examples are:¹⁴⁴

Madrasa Zahiriyya (1277), Damascus, tomb chamber, qibla wall

Mausoleum of Zayn al-Din Yusufi (1298), Cairo, entrance to the tomb chamber

Khanqah-madrasa of Sultan Baybars al-Jashankir (1309-10), Cairo, tomb chamber, qibla wall

Madrasa-mosque of al-Burtasi (1290-1324), Tripoli, qibla wall

Madrasa Qartiwiyya (1316-26), built by the governor of Tripoli, qibla wall

Mosque of al-Qassab (early 14th c.), Damascus, qibla wall

¹⁴² Behrens-Abouseif, *Cairo of the Mamluks*, 82. Lane-Poole, *Art of Saracens*, 63-64. The upper part of the dome comprising the dome itself and the eight windows in the octagonal drum are much later. Creswell, *EMA* 2:350.

¹⁴³ Behrens-Abouseif, *Cairo of the Mamluks*, 82.

¹⁴⁴ Williams, *Sitt Hadaq*, 63.

Mosque of Taynal (1336), built by the governor of Tripoli, portal

As mentioned earlier, the decoration in the Qubbat al-Zahiriyya as well as at the mausoleum of Qalawun in Cairo is known to have been greatly influenced by decorative patterns from the Great Mosque of Damascus, and Mamluk interest in copying patterns from the Umayyad mosque was not negligible.¹⁴⁵

Other elements in the courtyard exhibit the conservative use of decorative features known from previous buildings. The stepped crenellations with arabesque designs are in the same style adopted in Qalawun's complex on the Qasaba (fig. 58), while the use of keel arches with lozenges and medallions decorating the spandrels of the arcades goes back to the local tradition adopted in al-Azhar mosque (fig. 13.2). Decorative structures, similar to *mabkhara* minarets, decorate the corners and the middle of each side of the courtyard, another feature borrowed from the mosque of al-Nasir Muhammad at the Citadel (fig. 13.3). These go back in time to the mosque of Ibn Tulun where they were placed at the outer corners of the mosque on the same level as the crenellations. Scholars have suggested that these were possibly used as posts for stretching an awning over the courtyard, but the validity of the theory is questionable considering the strength of these posts and the heaviness of the canvas awning.

Humphreys speaks extensively in his essay on the "Expressive Intent of Mamluk Architecture" about the metaphorical qualities of monuments and how they remind the beholder of similar structures that he has seen earlier. The mosque of al-Maridani is clearly an example that encourages the revival of decorative forms adopted in earlier structures in different parts of the Islamic world while maintaining

¹⁴⁵ For more information on influences of the Great Mosque of Damascus on Qalawunid architecture, see Flood, *Umayyad Survivals*.

a sense of uniqueness, variation and individuality.¹⁴⁶

¹⁴⁶ Humphreys, *Expressive Intent*, 73.

CHAPTER FOUR

Conclusion

The early Mamluks, who were slave soldiers illegally raised to the throne, seizing it from their Ayyubid masters, were in constant search for ways to legitimize their rule over Egypt. At the time, "their sponsorship of madrasas displayed a commitment and devotion to the Ayyubid Sunni revival and thus made them legitimate heirs of the Ayyubids."¹ However, al-Nasir's reign was markedly different from those of his predecessors. A freeborn ruler, al-Nasir's patronage of architecture followed different practical and symbolic goals and objectives.

The multiplicity of congregational mosques built during al-Nasir's reign stood in sharp contrast to the Shafi'i laws adopted by the Ayyubids and was the "most striking expression of the Mamluk commitment to Islam."² The revival of the *riwaq*-type mosque linked the sultan to the great caliphal tradition of founding great congregational mosques, and the establishment of a huge *maqsura* glorified the sultan.

The creation of religious centres further supported the development of new neighbourhoods and led to the overall growth of the city. The development of al-Darb al-Ahmar as a link between the walled city and the Citadel, helped create a strong urban setting for Mamluk ceremonial, where mosques like that of al-Maridani served as symbols of the power and grandeur of the state, as well as combined social and ceremonial space.

Al-Nasir's patronage of architecture was thus a visible symbol of power. Having experienced treachery and humiliation under the powerful emirs of the Mansuriyya, the sultan clearly wanted to consolidate his rule and establish strong ties and dominion over his own emirs as well as win their loyalty; one way of doing that

¹ Al-Harithy, *Patronage*, 219.

² Lapidus, *Mamluk Patronage*, 176.

was through patronage.³ He built palaces and religious structures for them as well as married them to his daughters. The construction initiatives taken by the emirs were not in competition with those of the sultan but extensions of his own image.⁴

The mosque of emir Altunbugha al-Maridani is one among numerous mosques constructed during the reign of al-Nasir Muhammad. It is not monumental in size, but is considerably larger than many of the other emiral mosques and is a reflection of the sultan's favour of this emir. When considering the young age of emir Altunbugha al-Maridani and his inevitable lack of experience in terms of building projects, it becomes clear who the real patron was. Historical accounts emphasize the sultan's involvement in the project, taking the initiative for construction, choosing and acquiring the location through *istibdal*, donating money, building materials and craftsmen, but no references are made with regards to the emir's personal involvement in the project. Additionally, the main foundation inscription on the main/north-eastern portal fails to mention the name of the emir; in all other foundation inscriptions referring to Altunbugha al-Maridani, references to the sultan's name are made through the inclusion of the emir's honorific titles. The inclusion of the emir's blazon on the bolts of the portal as well as the mosque lamps defines his role in terms of his relationship and connection with the sultan. The emir was thus intentionally given access to what the sultan had, to fit within the sultan's overall plan.

The decorative repertory and symbolism in the mosque aims at communicating messages of the sultan. The deliberate revival of archaic forms from the Great Mosque of Damascus was a way of linking al-Nasir to the glories of the past

³ Amitai, *Military Elite*, 145.

⁴ Behrens-Abouseif, *Patrons of Urbanism*, 273.

and its architectural heritage. The importation of new styles and techniques reflected his diplomatic relations to different states.

In that sense, the patronage of al-Nasir Muhammad was strongly shaped by a number of essential components, which fashioned his urbanization and architectural programmes. First came his interest in accentuating major thoroughfares connecting the old city to his seat at the Citadel, and his favour of specific emirs determined his choice of patrons as well as the scale of the constructions. Secondly came his interest in reflecting his far-reaching diplomatic relations. The importation of new styles and techniques, primarily from Iran, Anatolia and Syria, acted as a propaganda tool and was expressive of the patron's far-reaching political relations as well as family ties. The amount of time spent by emir Altunbugha al-Maridani in Aleppo is not considerable, and is unlikely to have influenced the decoration of the mosque. On the other hand, the sultan's awareness of decorative forms from foreign lands and his deep insight into the effect these would have on the local population of Cairo, acted a stimulus for his choice of specific decorative programmes.

The examination of the mosque in light of the historical events of the time has resulted in a better understanding of how foreign relations influenced the building of this period. The appropriation of foreign techniques, probably undertaken by local craftsmen, and influenced by local motifs, was possibly intended as an experimentation to be perfected in later projects carried out by the sultan, the emirs' projects being the experimental precedents. However, such experiments were instrumental in giving the monuments a sense of uniqueness.

Al-Nasir Muhammad was clearly a visionary patron of architecture who was well aware of the power of architecture as a propaganda tool. The concept of "monumentality" was highly regarded and the imperial projects were additionally

driven by a sense of competition, rivalling previous dynasties and rulers.⁵ In architectural projects, monumentality was expressed through the size and the cost of construction as well as the amount of spolia and precious materials. The purpose of construction and the choice of location were clearly driven by the personal desires and overall urbanization plans of the sultan.

The architectural meaning and decorative analysis of the mosque of al-Maridani is still in need of much exploration. "Architecture must by its very nature have meaning, for it is a human artefact as completely as is language, and as such it represents a pattern of human intentions and motives," giving buildings intellectual and social meaning.⁶

⁵ O'Kane, *Monumentality*, 499.

⁶ Humphreys, *Expressive Intent*, 71.

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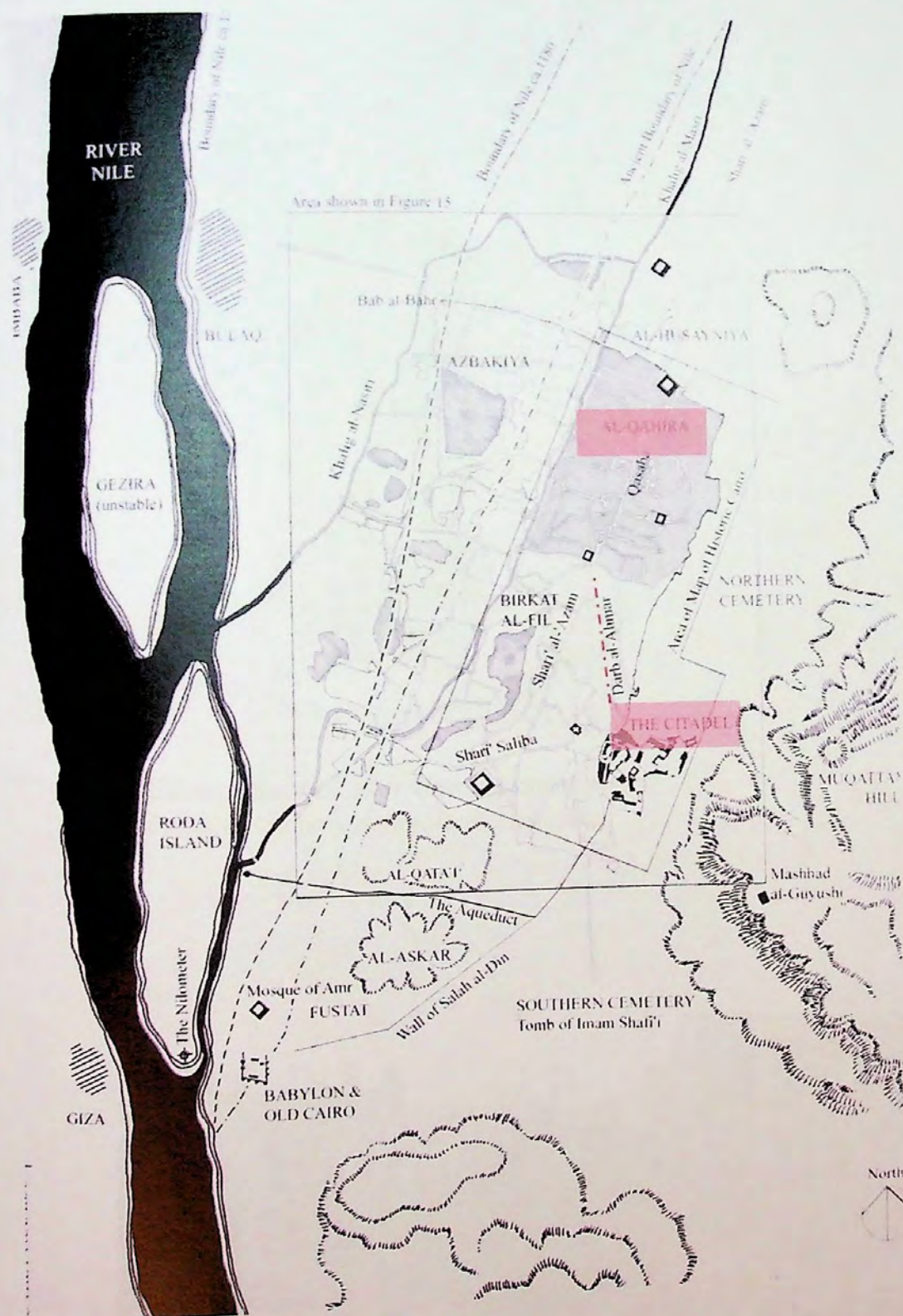
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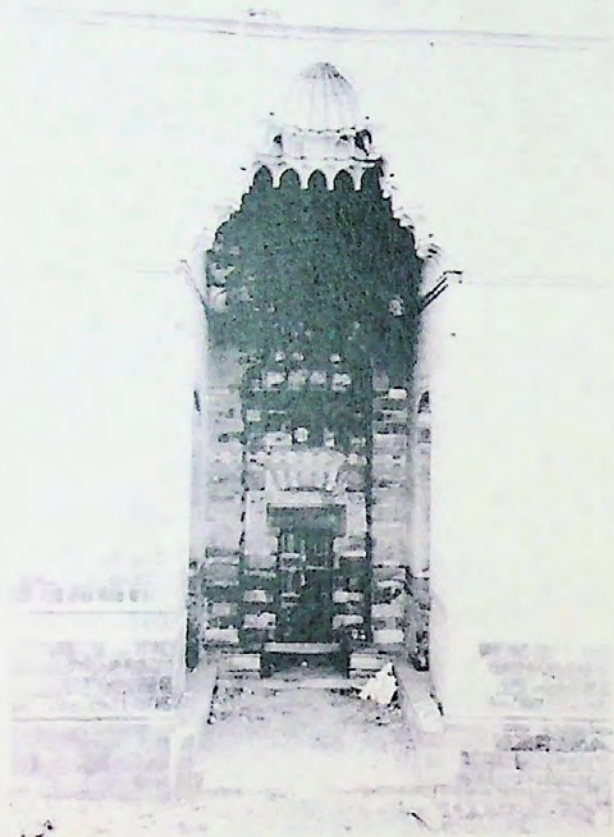
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FIGURE 1

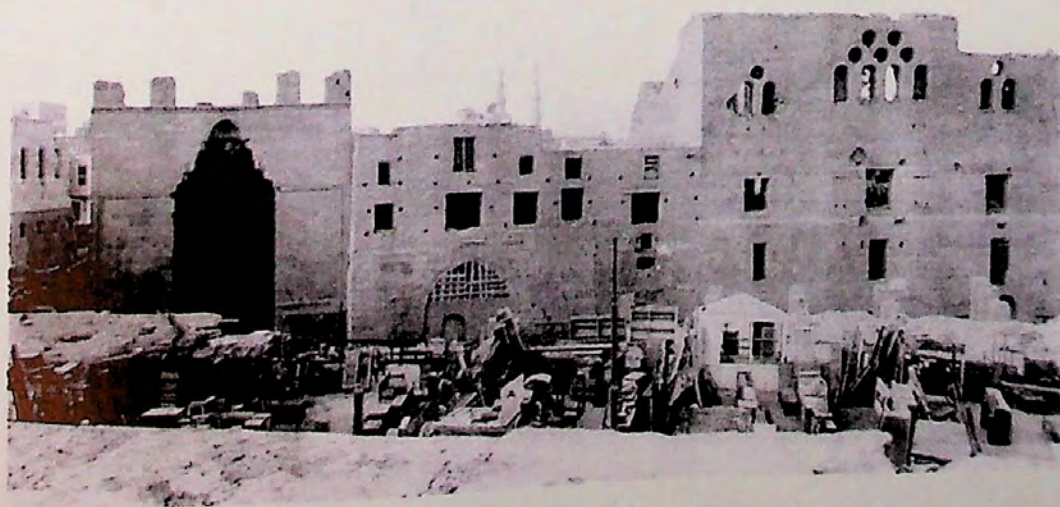


1. Map showing the significance of al-Darb al-Ahmar
(based on map by Nicholas Warner).

FIGURE 2

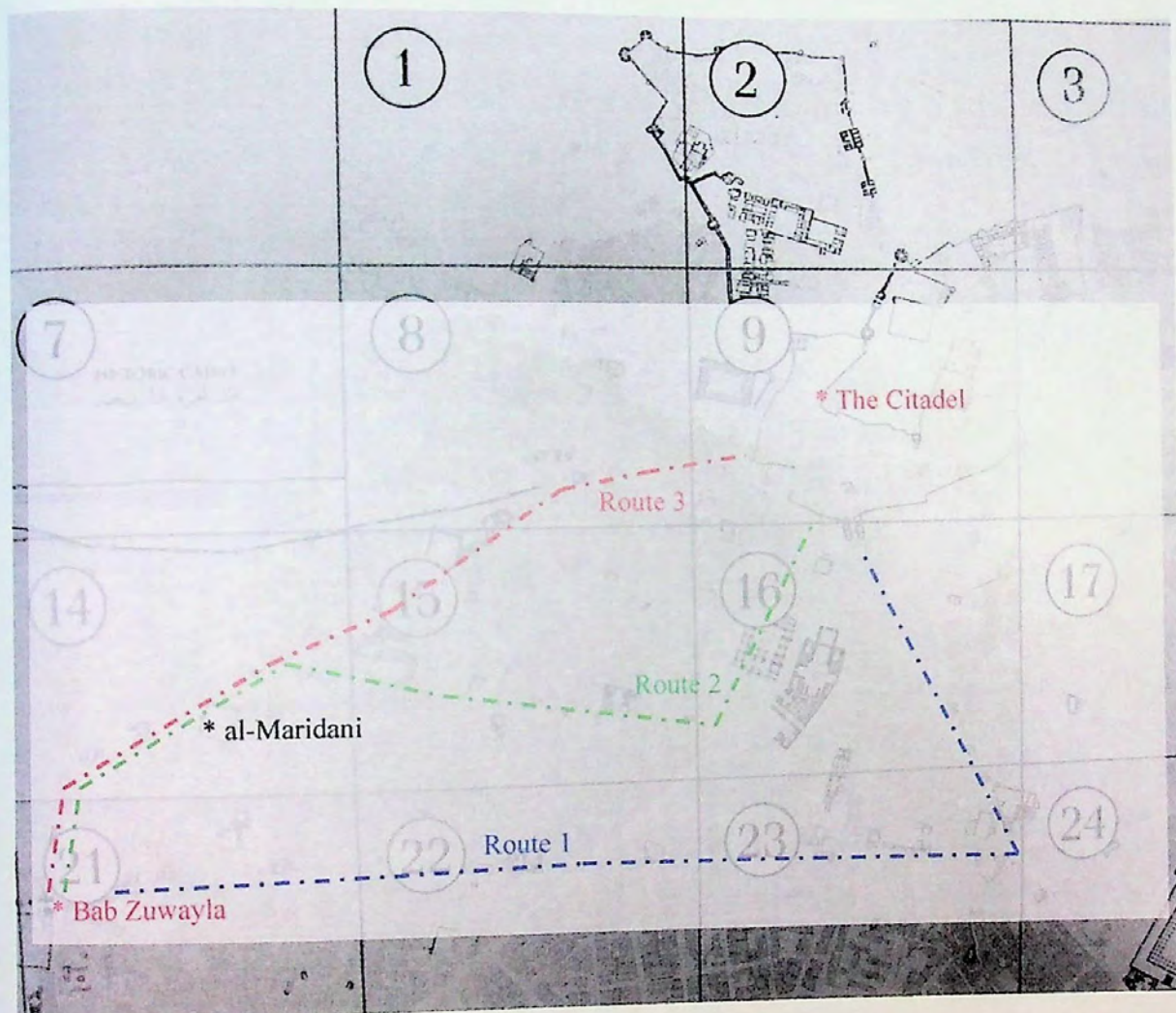


1. Cairo, Palace of emir Qawsun, main portal
(Creswell Archive, Ashmolean Museum).



2. Cairo, Palace of emir Qawsun, general view of façade
(Creswell Archive, Ashmolean Museum).

FIGURE 3



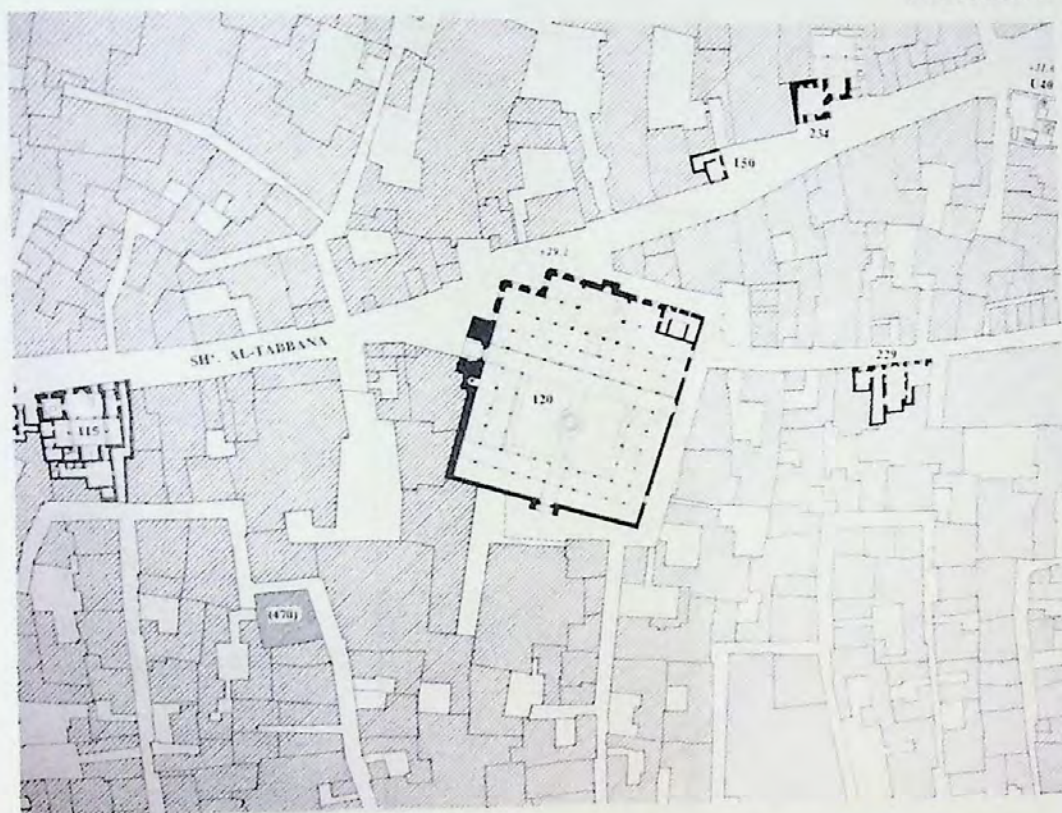
1. Map showing possible routes from Bab Zuwayla to the Citadel
(based on map by Nicholas Warner).

FIGURE 4

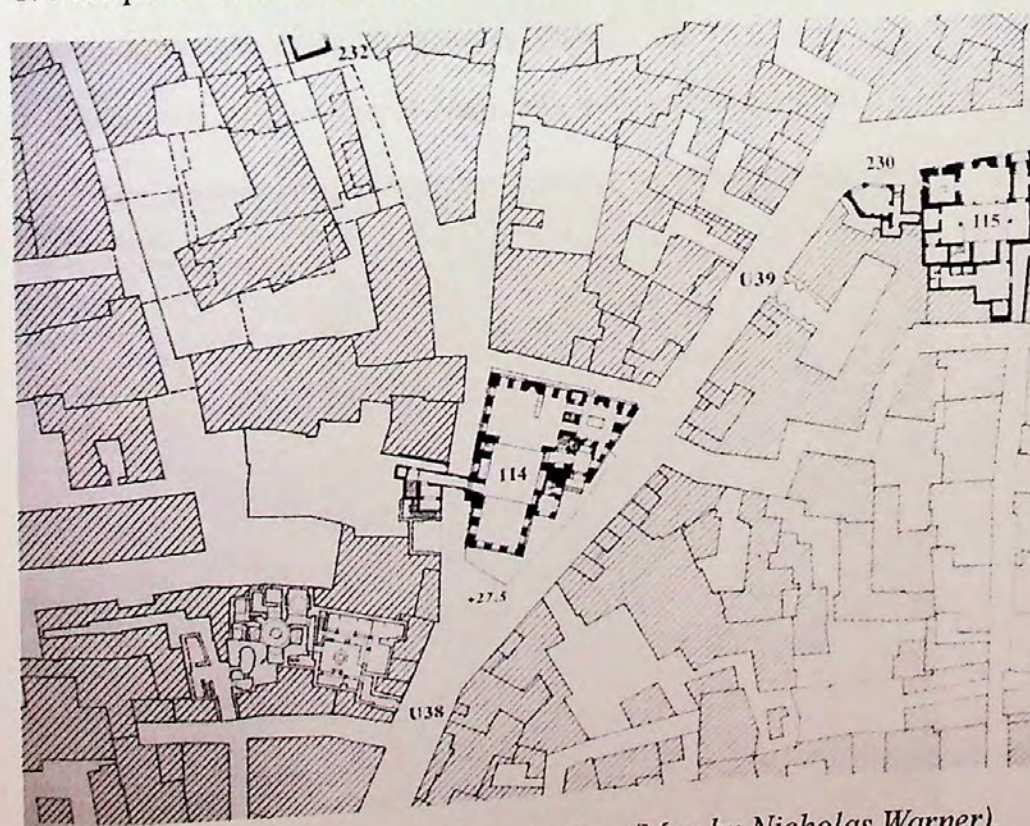


1. Cairo, Palace of Alin Aq, general view
(Creswell Archive, Ashmolean Museum).

FIGURE 5



1. Mosque of emir Altunbugha al-Maridani, plan (Map by Nicholas Warner).

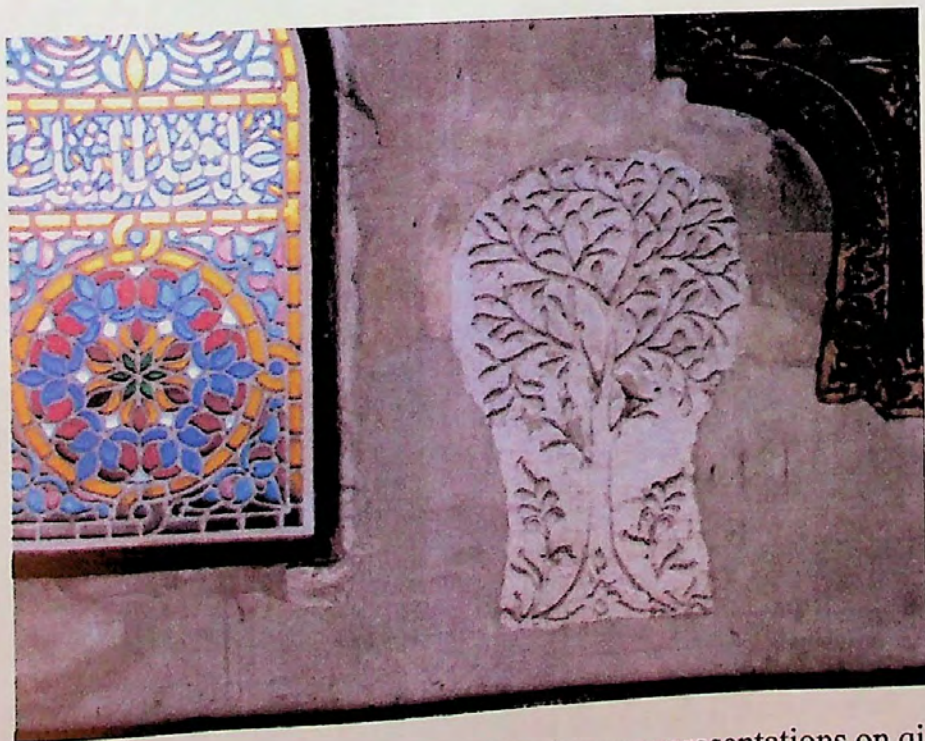


2. Mosque of emir Qijmas al-Ishaqi, plan (Map by Nicholas Warner).

FIGURE 6

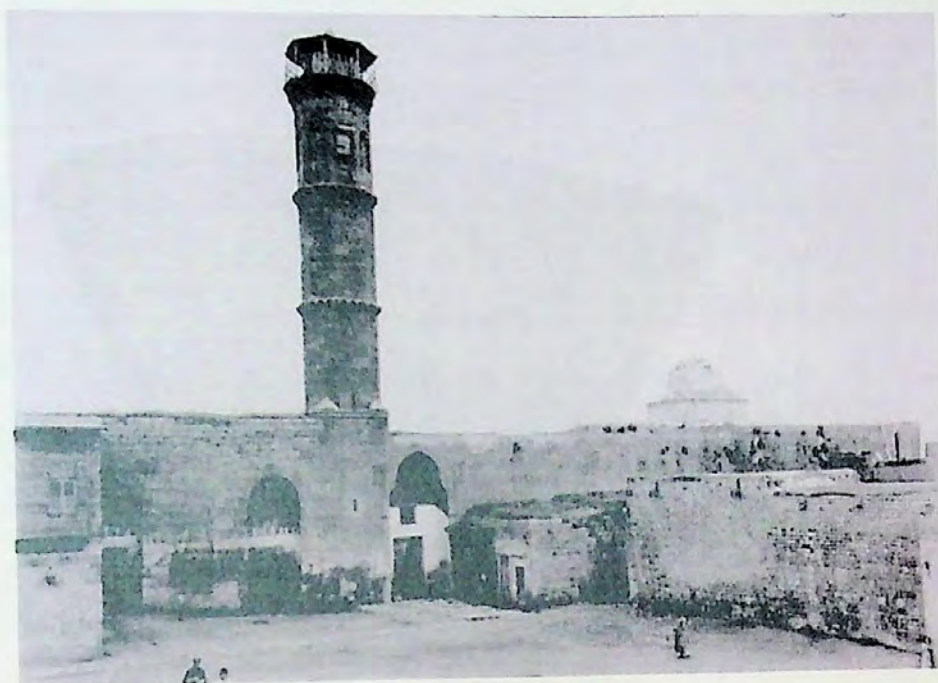


1. Mosque of Altunbugha al-Maridani, north-western portal .



2. Mosque of Altunbugha al-Maridani, tree representations on qibla wall .

FIGURE 7



1. Aleppo, Mosque of Altunbugha, general view
(Creswell Archive, Ashmolean Museum).



2. Aleppo, Mosque of Altunbugha,
main portal (Creswell Archive,
Ashmolean Museum).



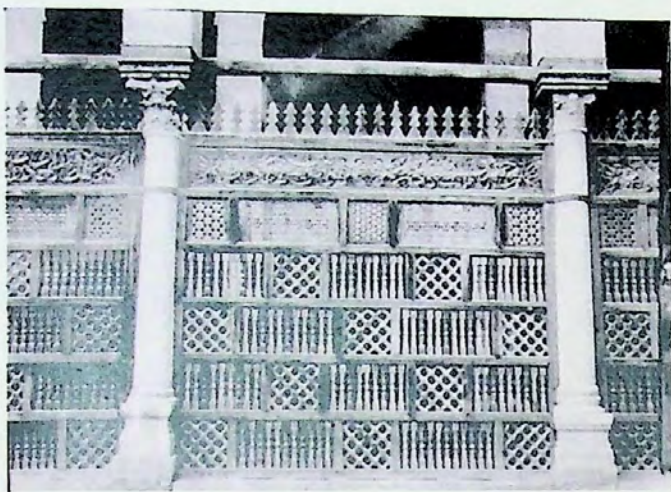
3. Cairo, Mosque of al-Nasir Muhammad
at the Citadel, main portal
(Creswell Archive, Ashmolean Museum).

FIGURE 8



1. Mosque lamp of emir 'Ali al-Mardini, probably from the mosque of Altunbugha al-Maridani in Cairo, *MIA* 294 (Mayer, *Saracenic Heraldry*).

FIGURE 9



1. Mosque of Altunbugha al-Maridani, mashrabiyya screen
(Creswell Archive, Ashmolean Museum) .



2. Mosque of Altunbugha al-Maridani, carved stone railing.



3. Mosque of Altunbugha al-Maridani, column capitals.

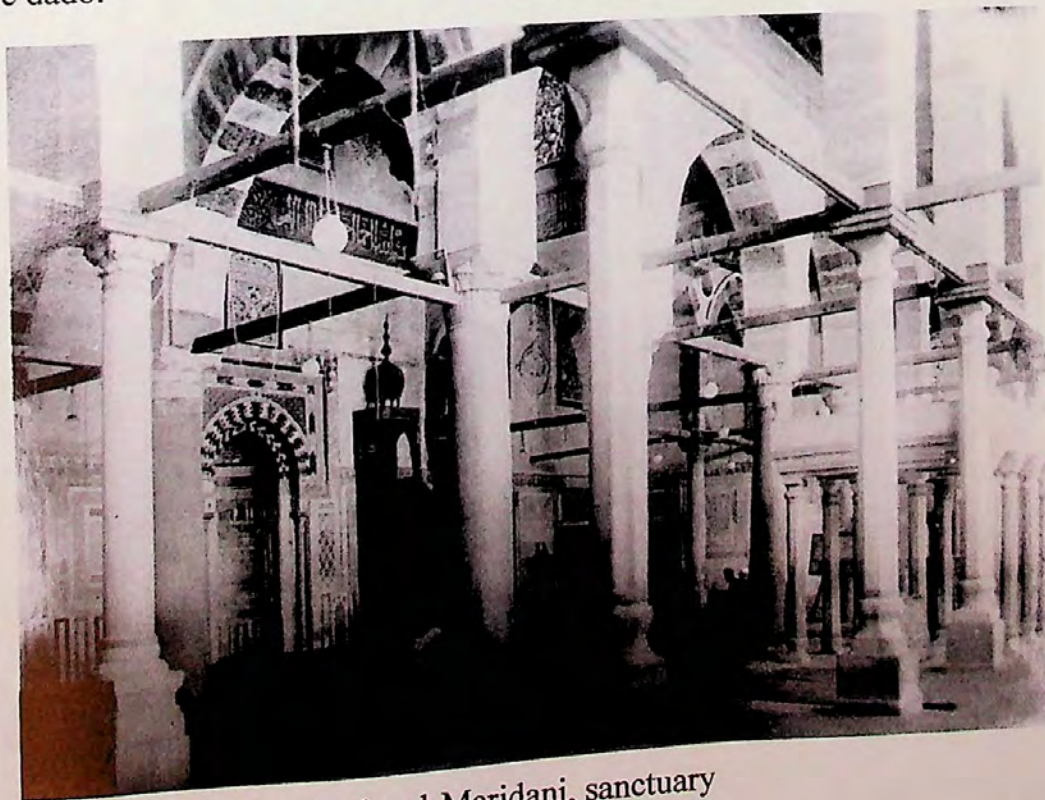
FIGURE 10



1. Mosque of Altunbugha al-Maridani, marble dado.



2. Mosque of Altunbugha al-Maridani, fragment of marble dado.

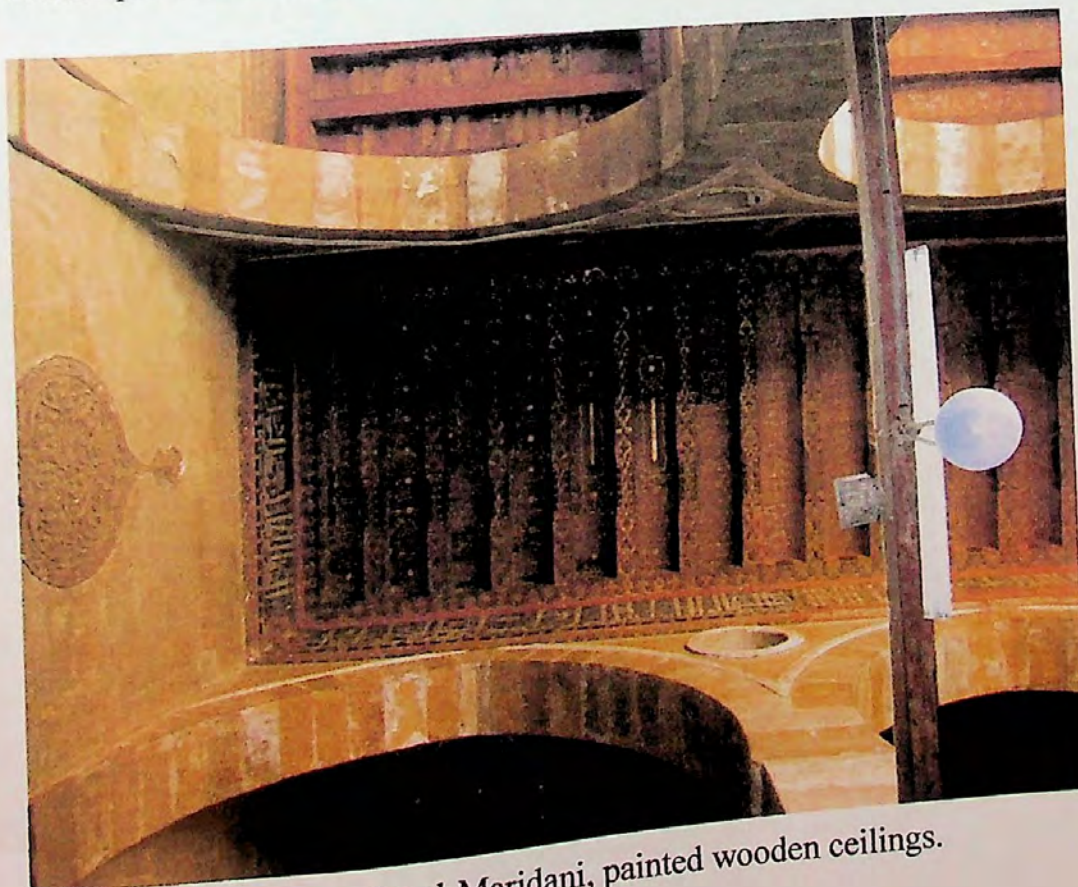


3. Mosque of Altunbugha al-Maridani, sanctuary
(Creswell Archive, AUC).

FIGURE 11



1. Mosque of Altunbugha al-Maridani, muqarnas pendentive.



2. Mosque of Altunbugha al-Maridani, painted wooden ceilings.

FIGURE 12



1. Mosque of Altunbugha al-Maridani,
stucco bukhariyya.



2. Mosque of Altunbugha al-Maridani,
stucco roundel.



3. Mosque of Altunbugha al-Maridani, tree representations in stucco.

FIGURE 13



1. Mosque of Altunbugha al-Maridani, courtyard facade.



2. Mosque of Altunbugha al-Maridani, courtyard facade.



3. Mosque of Altunbugha al-Maridani, domical structure at corner of courtyard.

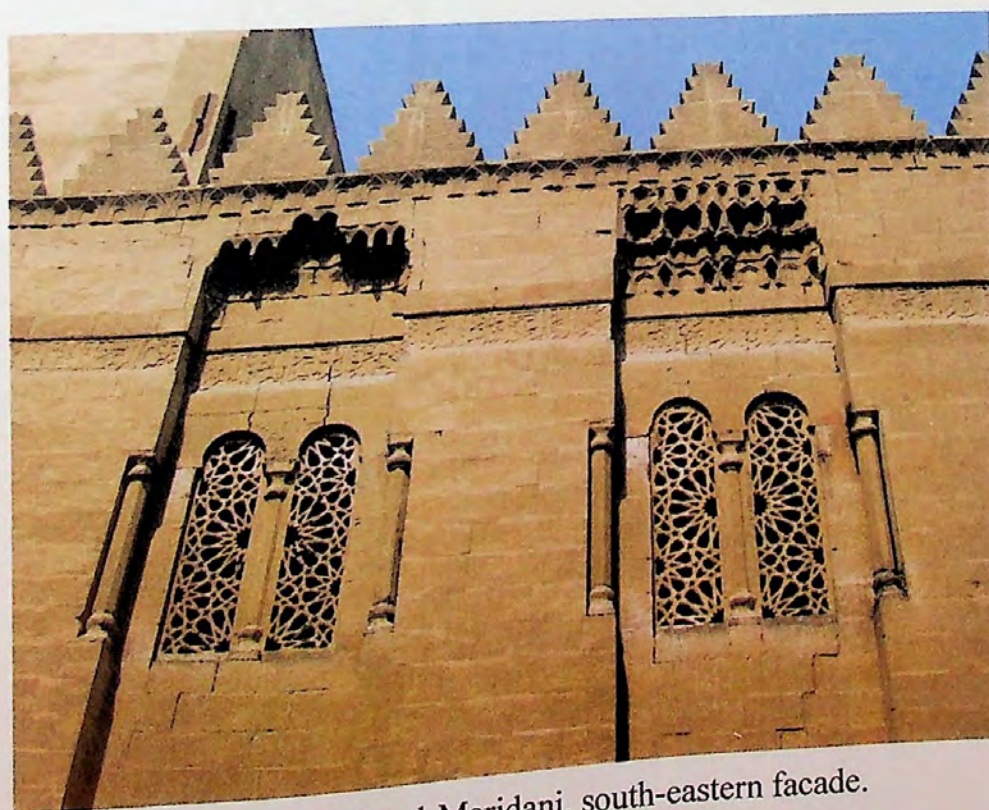
FIGURE 14



1. Mosque of Altunbugha al-Maridani, exterior.



2. Mosque of Altunbugha al-Maridani, detail of south-eastern facade.



3. Mosque of Altunbugha al-Maridani, south-eastern facade.

FIGURE 15



1. Mosque of Altunbugha al-Maridani, north-eastern entryway.



2. Mosque of Altunbugha al-Maridani, north-western entryway.

FIGURE 16



1. Mosque of Altunbugha al-Maridani, tile panel over north-eastern entryway.



2. Mosque of Altunbugha al-Maridani, tile panel over south-western entryway.



3. Mosque of Altunbugha al-Maridani, tile roundel facing courtyard over north-western entryway.



1. Mosque of Altunbugha al-Maridani, tile roundel facing the street over north-western entryway.

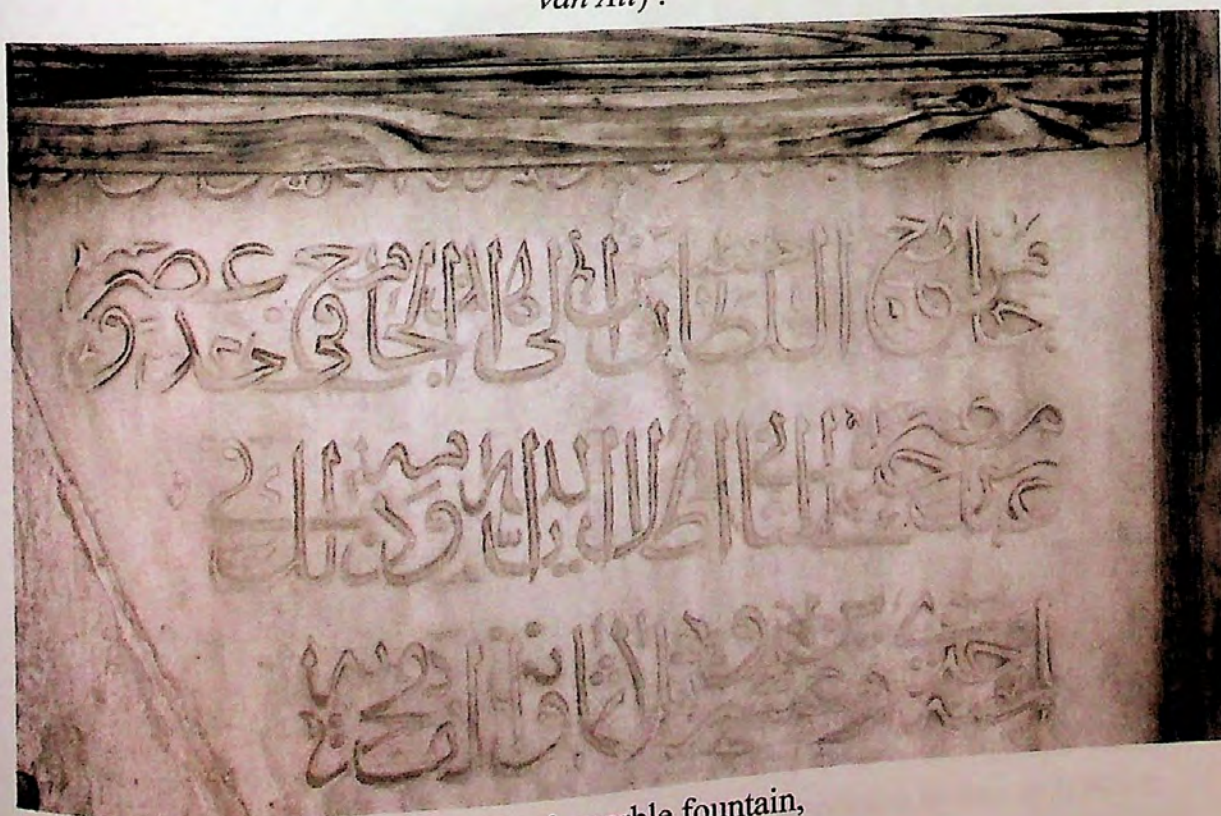
FIGURE 17



1. Mosque of Altunbugha al-Maridani, fountain.

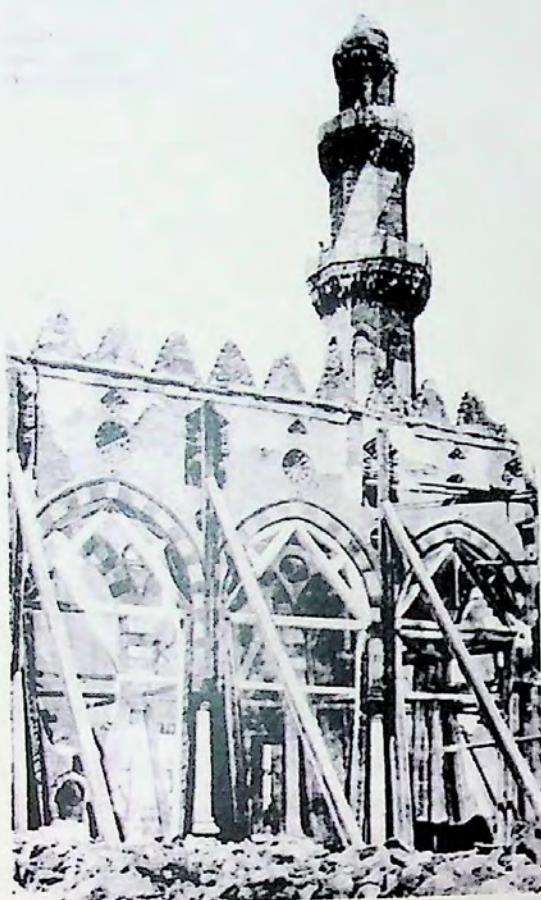


2. The sahn of the Sultan Hasan Mosque, 1850s
(drawing by Lajos Libay; lithograph by Rudolf
van Alt).

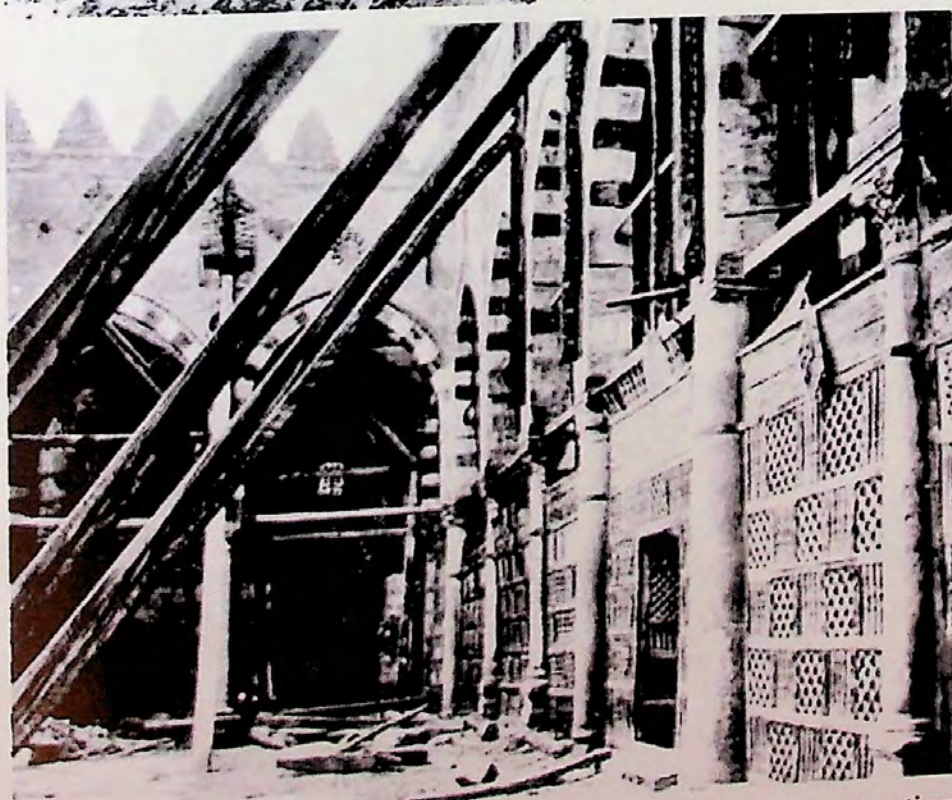


3. Mosque of Altunbugha al-Maridani, marble fountain,
inscription added by the Comité.

FIGURE 18

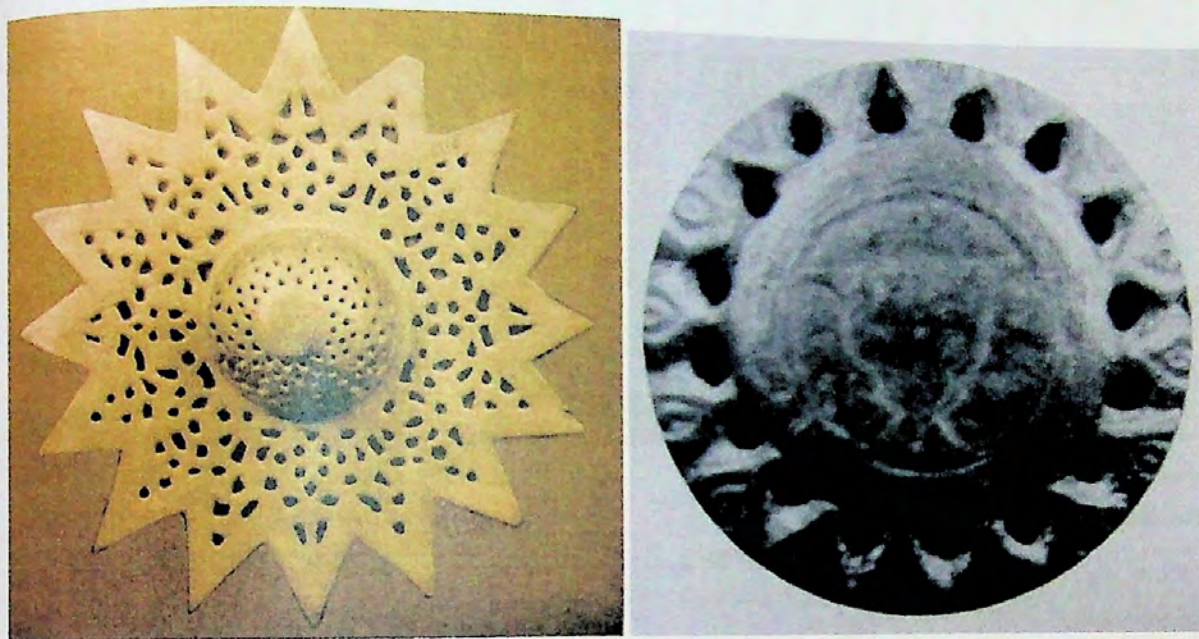


1. Mosque of Altunbugha al-Maridani,
condition before restoration
(Comité Bulletins).



2. Mosque of Altunbugha al-Maridani, condition before restoration
(Comité Bulletins).

FIGURE 19

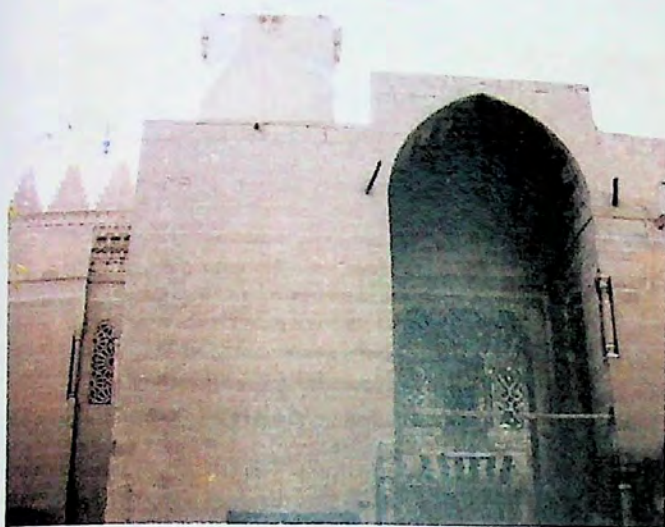


1. Fragments of bronze revetment of doorway from the mosque of al-Maridani, MIA 3105, 3106 (Mayer, *Saracenic Heraldry*).



2. Glass lamp from the mosque al-Maridani, MIA 4065, 5880-2 (Mayer, *Saracenic Heraldry*; Wiet, *Catalogue général*).

FIGURE 20



1. Mosque of Altunbugha al-Maridani, main portal and minaret base showing traces of earlier restoration.



2. Mosque of Altunbugha al-Maridani, minaret base showing traces of earlier restoration.



3. Mosque of Altunbugha al-Maridani, eastern side of main portal showing traces of earlier restoration.



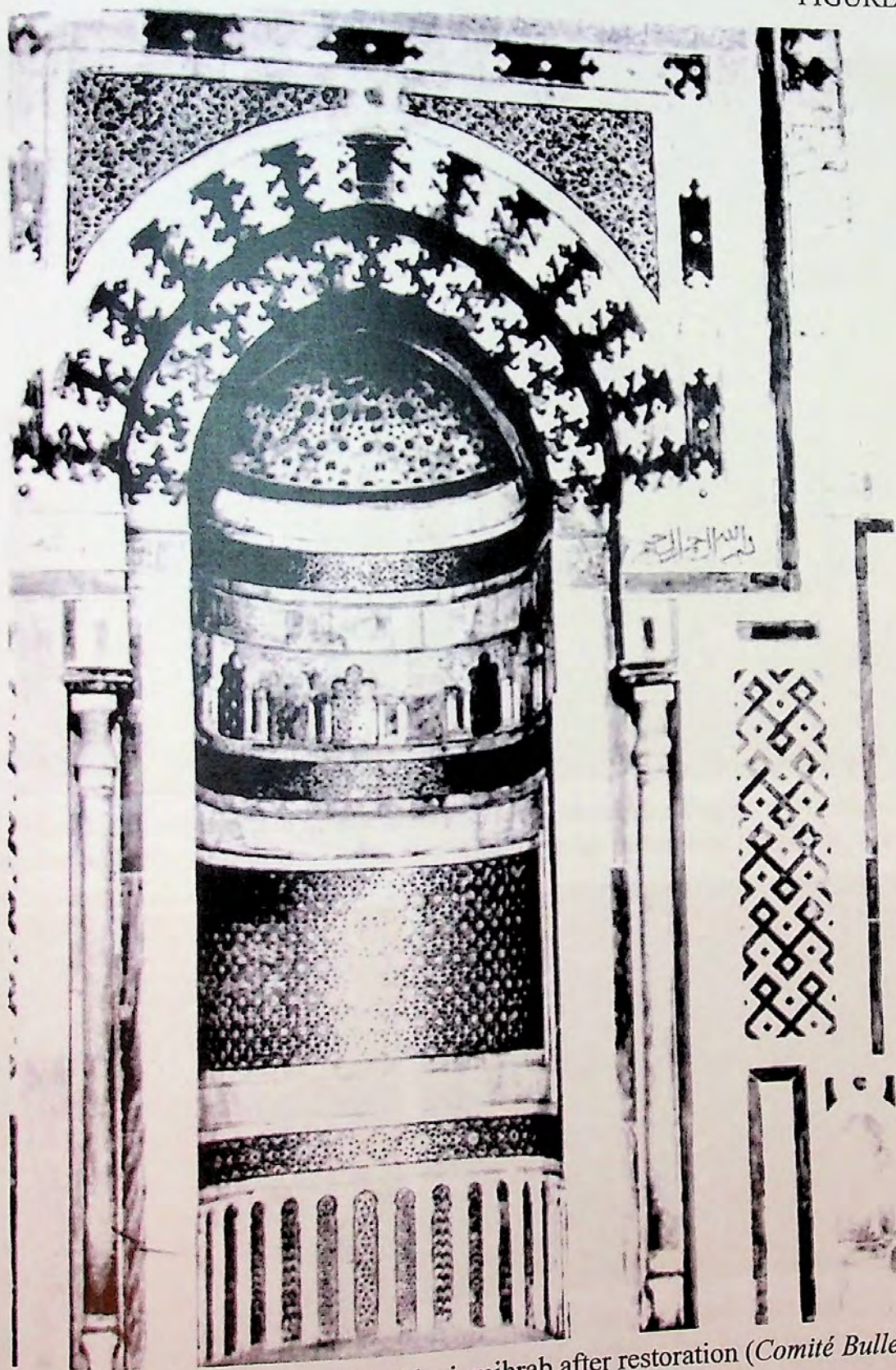
4. Mosque of Altunbugha al-Maridani, northern side of main portal showing original decoration.

FIGURE 21



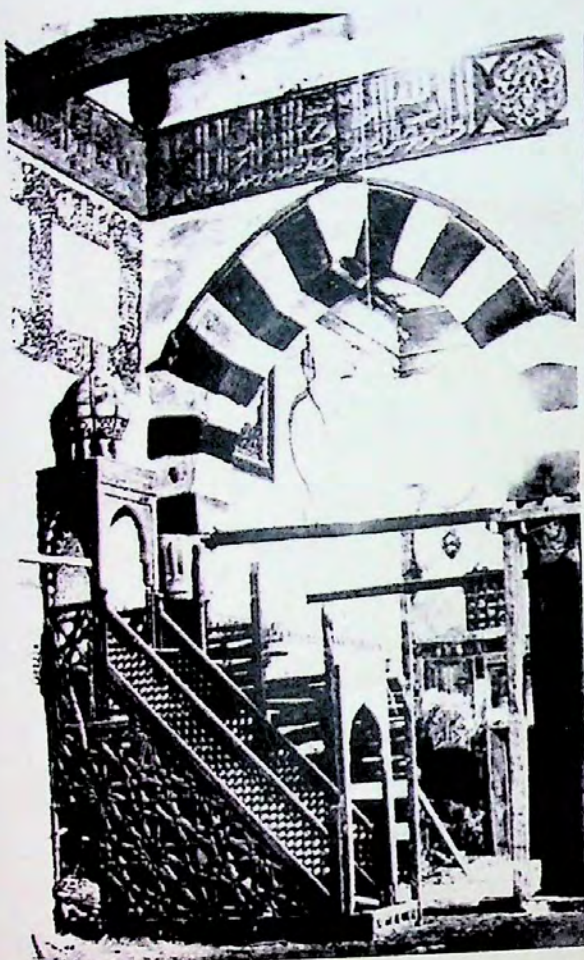
1. Mosque of Altunbugha al-Maridani, date '1317' on north-western entryway recording restorations carried out by the Comité.

FIGURE 22

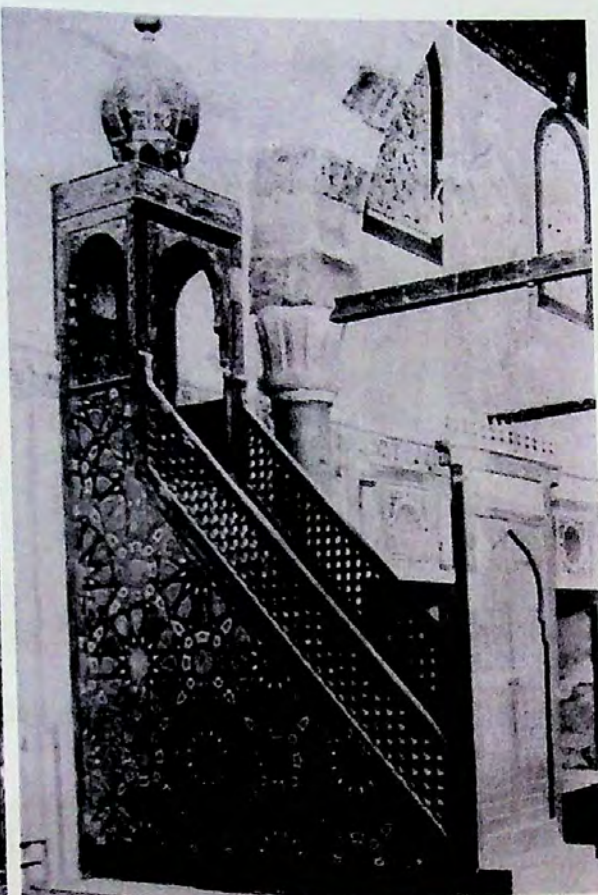


1. Mosque of Altunbugha al-Maridani, mihrab after restoration (*Comité Bulletins*).

FIGURE 23



1. Mosque of Altunbugha al-Maridani, minbar before restoration (*Comité Bulletins*).



2. Mosque of Altunbugha al-Maridani, minbar after restoration (Karnouk, *Minbar*).



3. Mosque of Altunbugha al-Maridani, inlay piece from minbar (Photo: Helen Romberg).

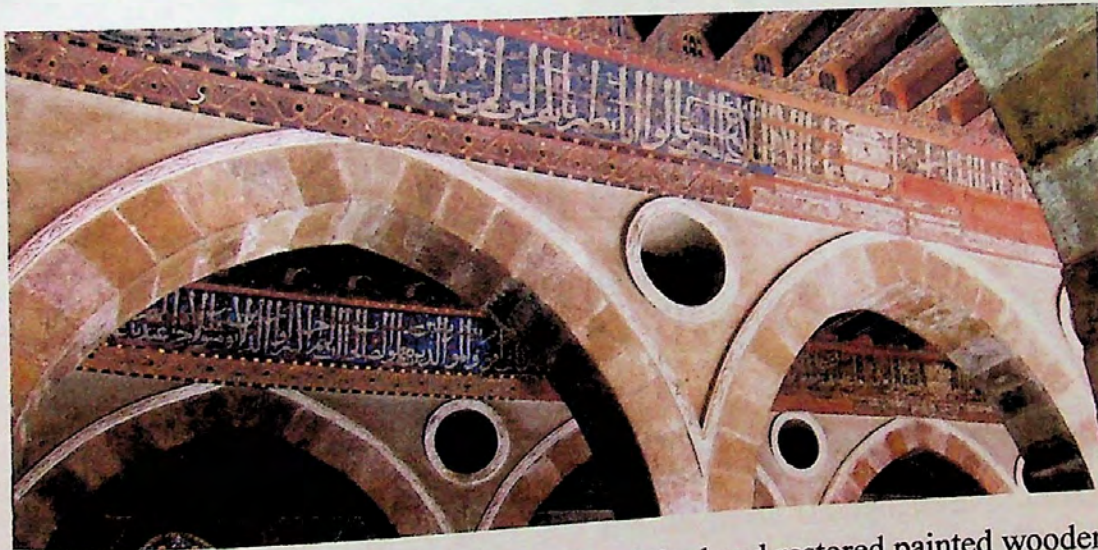


4. Mosque of Altunbugha al-Maridani, condition of minbar after its inlays were stolen in 2008.

FIGURE 24



1. Mosque of Altunbugha al-Maridani, original and restored wooden ceiling.

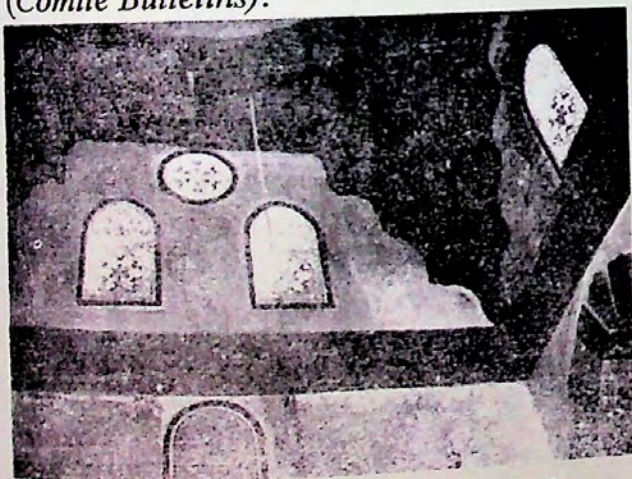


2. Mosque of Altunbugha al-Maridani, original and restored painted wooden ceilings and inscription bands.

FIGURE 25



1. Mosque of Altunbugha al-Maridani,
windows before restoration
(*Comité Bulletins*).

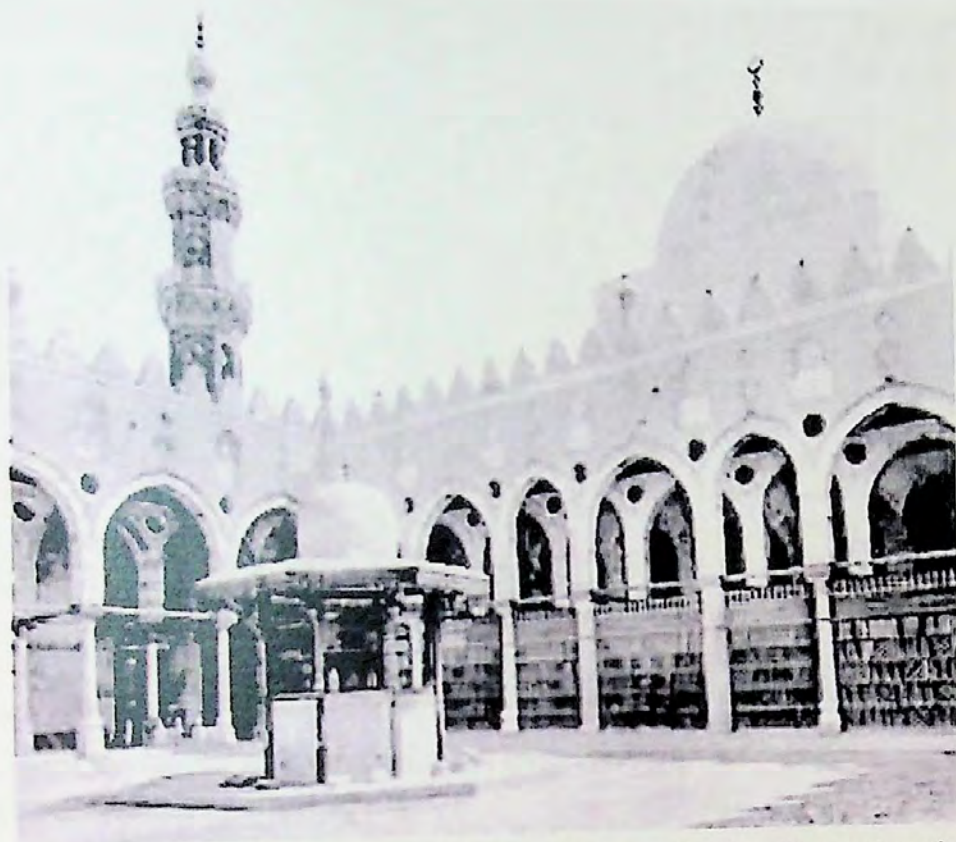


2. Mosque of Altunbugha al-Maridani,
windows after restoration
(*Comité Bulletins*).



3. Mosque of Altunbugha al-Maridani,
window with inscription recording
restoration by the Comité.

FIGURE 26

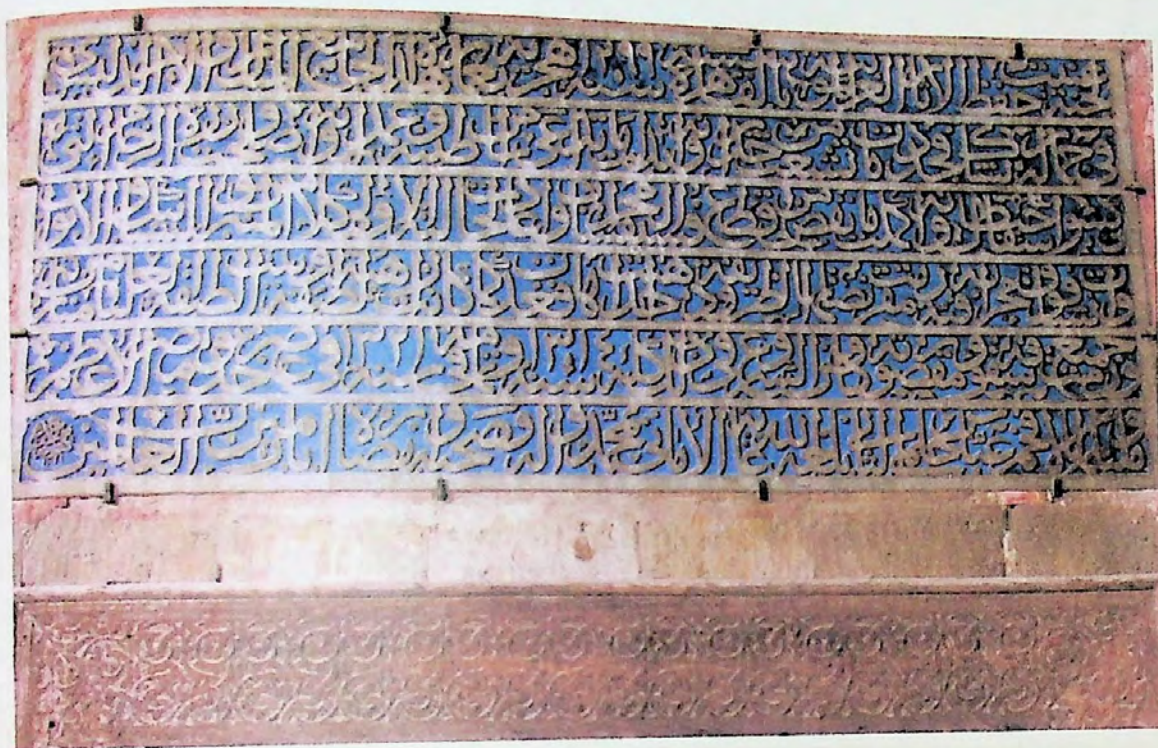


1. Mosque of Altunbugha al-Maridani, view of sahn after restoration
(*Comité Bulletins*).



2. Mosque of Altunbugha al-Maridani, view of sanctuary after restoration
(*Comité Bulletins*).

FIGURE 27

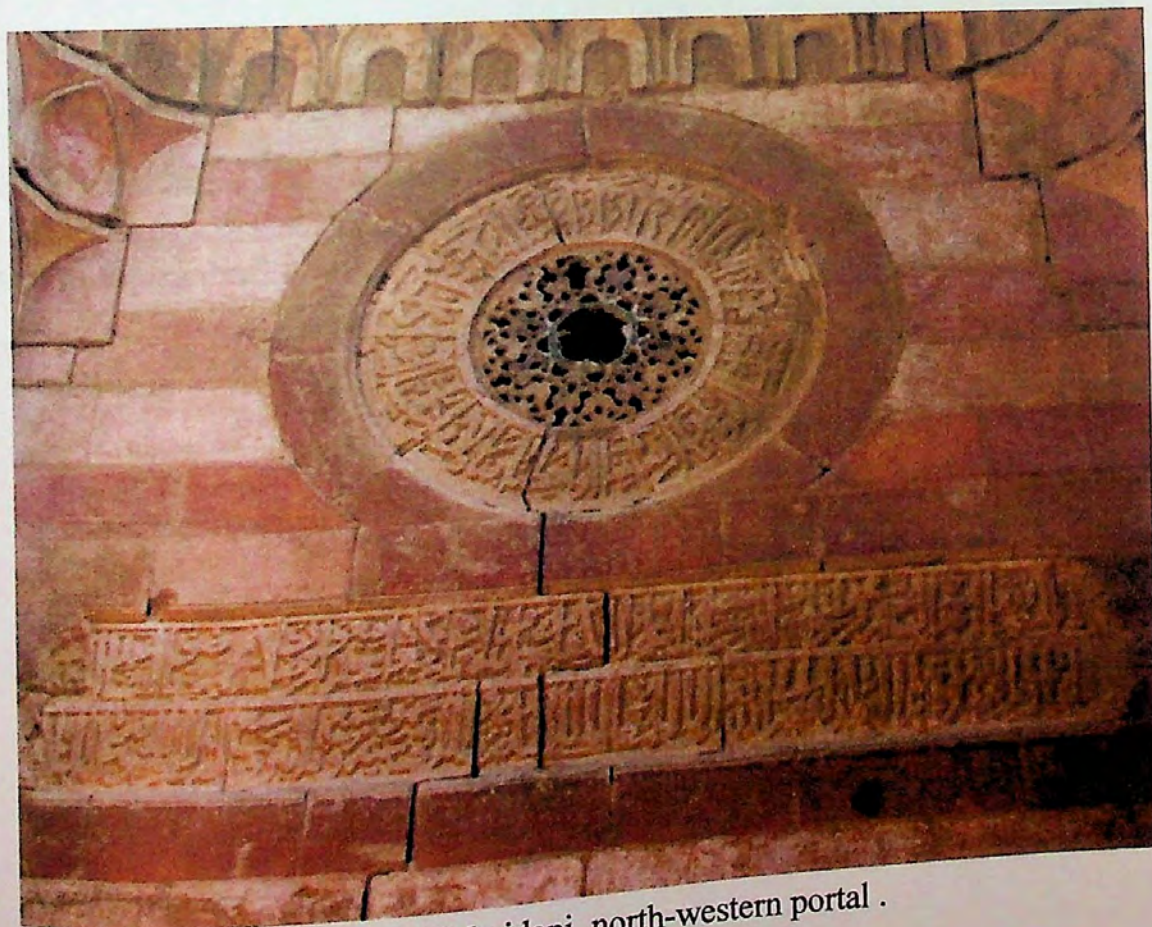


1. Mosque of Altunbugha al-Maridani, inscription panel recording restorations carried out by the Comité.

FIGURE 28



1. Mosque of Altunbugha al-Maridani, foundation inscription over north-eastern portal.



2. Mosque of Altunbugha al-Maridani, north-western portal .

FIGURE 29



1. Mosque of Altunbugha al-Maridani, inscription on qibla wall next to the minbar .

FIGURE 30

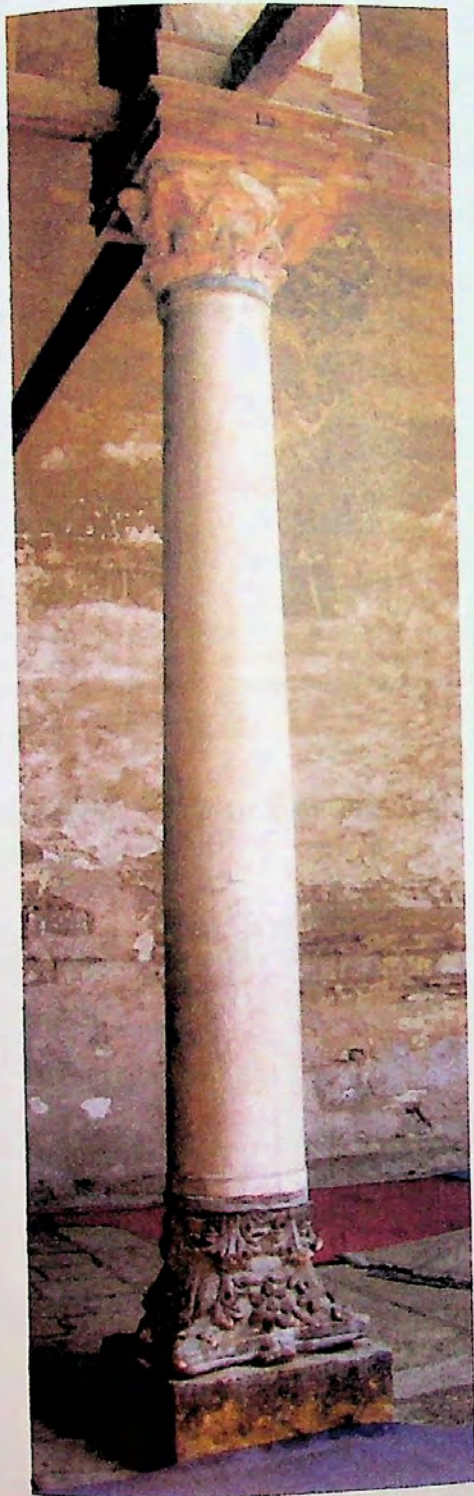


1. Mosque of Altunbugha al-Maridani, inscription on north-eastern wall of sanctuary.

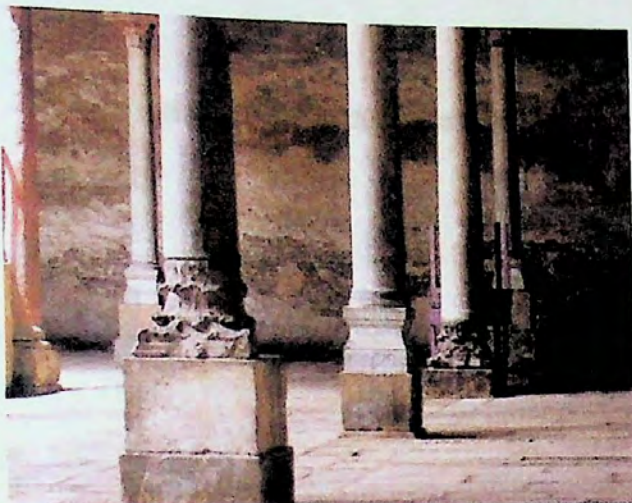


2. Mosque of Altunbugha al-Maridani, inscription on north-eastern wall of sanctuary.

FIGURE 31



1. Mosque of Altunbugha al-Maridani, reused column capitals.



2. Mosque of Altunbugha al-Maridani, reused column capitals.

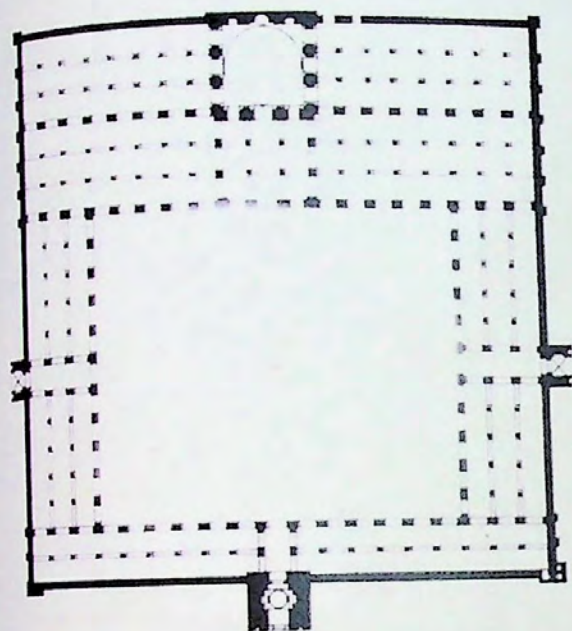


3. Mosque of Altunbugha al-Maridani, reused pharaonic block.

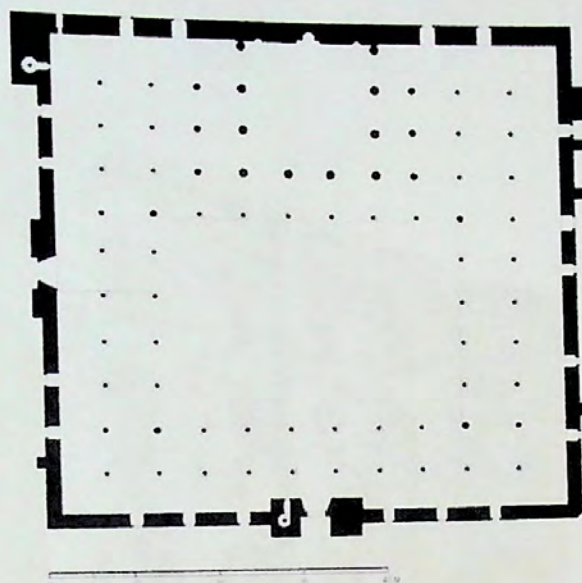


4. Mosque of Altunbugha al-Maridani, reused column capitals.

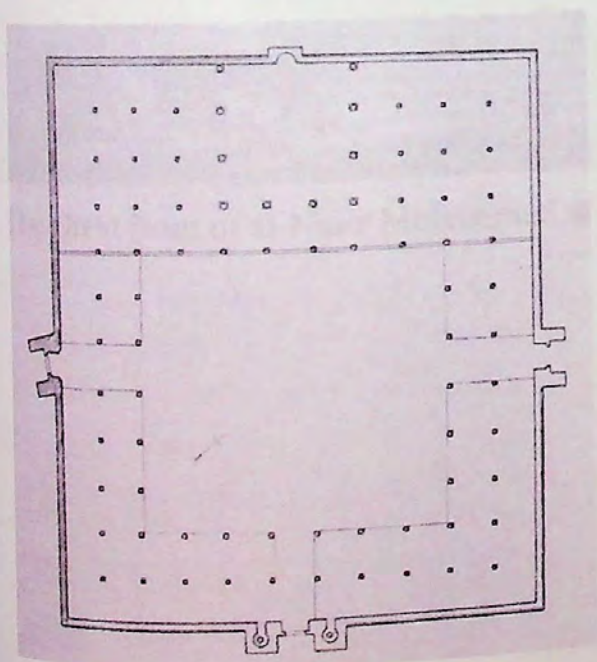
FIGURE 32



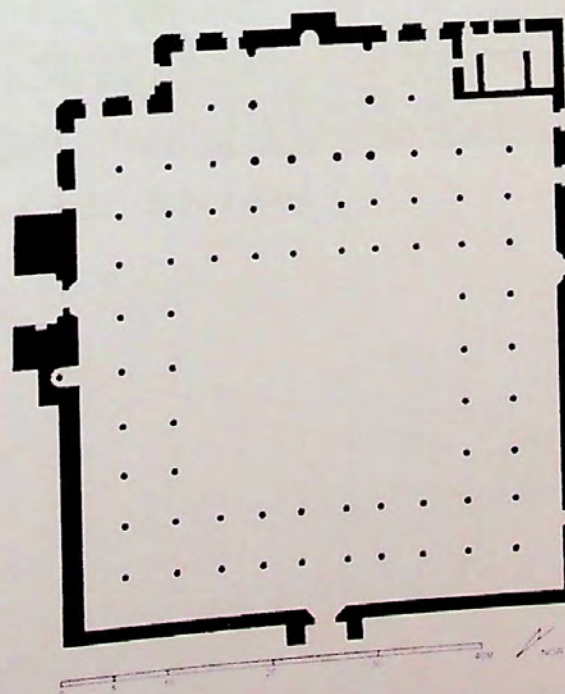
1. Mosque of al-Zahir Baybars, plan
(after Creswell).



2. Mosque of al-Nasir Muhammad, plan
(after Meinecke).



3. Mosque of emir Qawsun, plan
(after Meinecke).



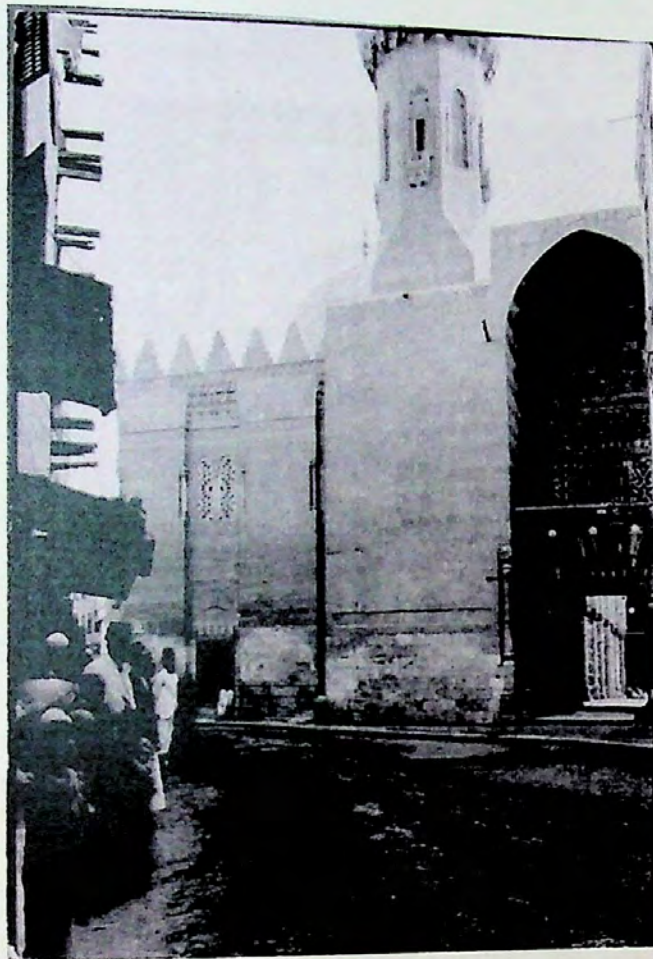
4. Mosque of Altunbugha al-Maridani, plan
(after Meinecke).

FIGURE 33



1. The Great Iwan of al-Nasir Muhammad at the Citadel (*Robert Hay*).

FIGURE 34



1. Mosque of Altunbugha al-Maridani, north-eastern entryway with pishtaq (*Creswell Archive, Ashmolean Museum*).

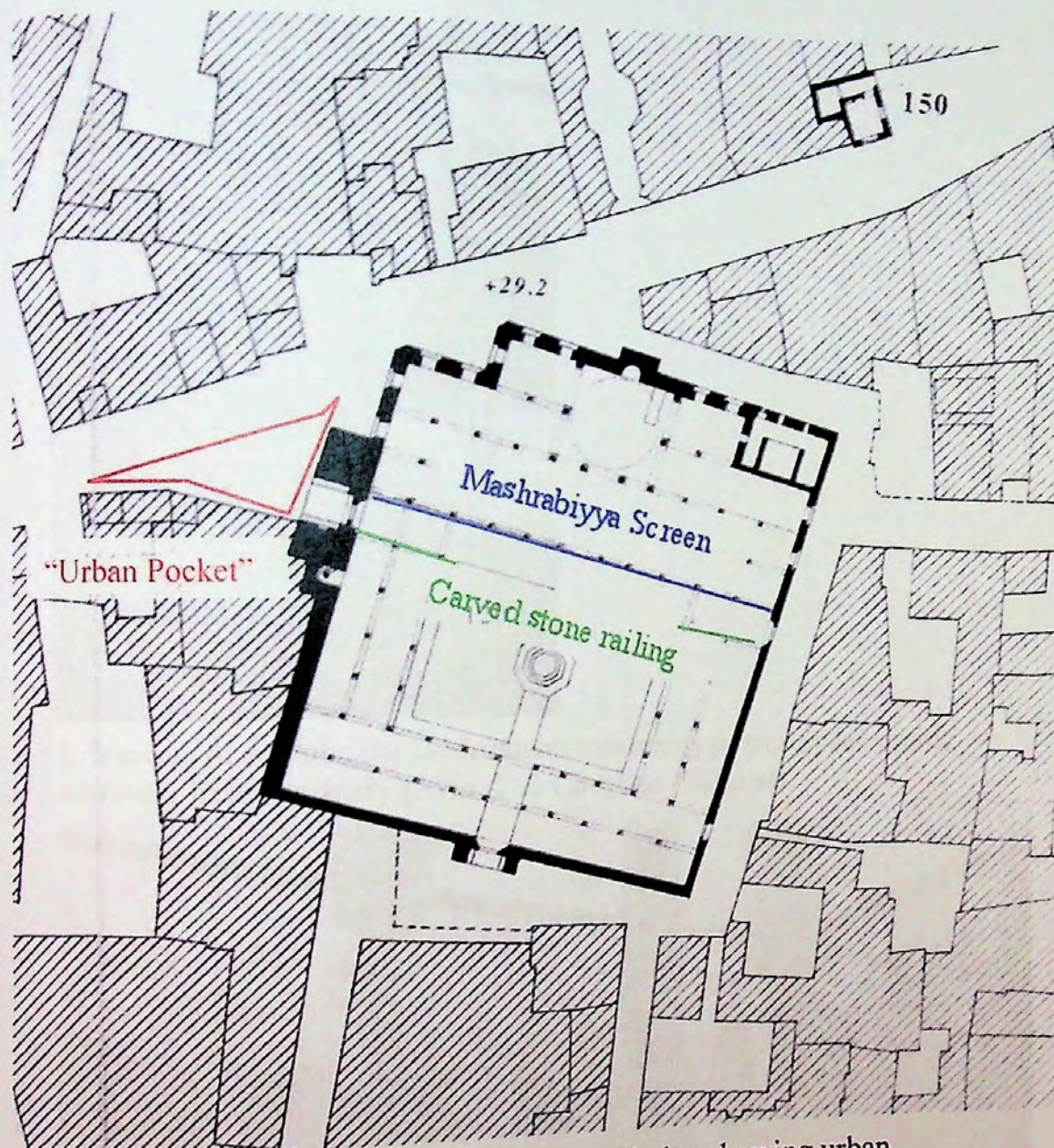


2. Mosque of Altunbugha al-Maridani, decoration over north-eastern entryway.



3. Mosque of Altunbugha al-Maridani, decoration over north-eastern entryway.

FIGURE 35

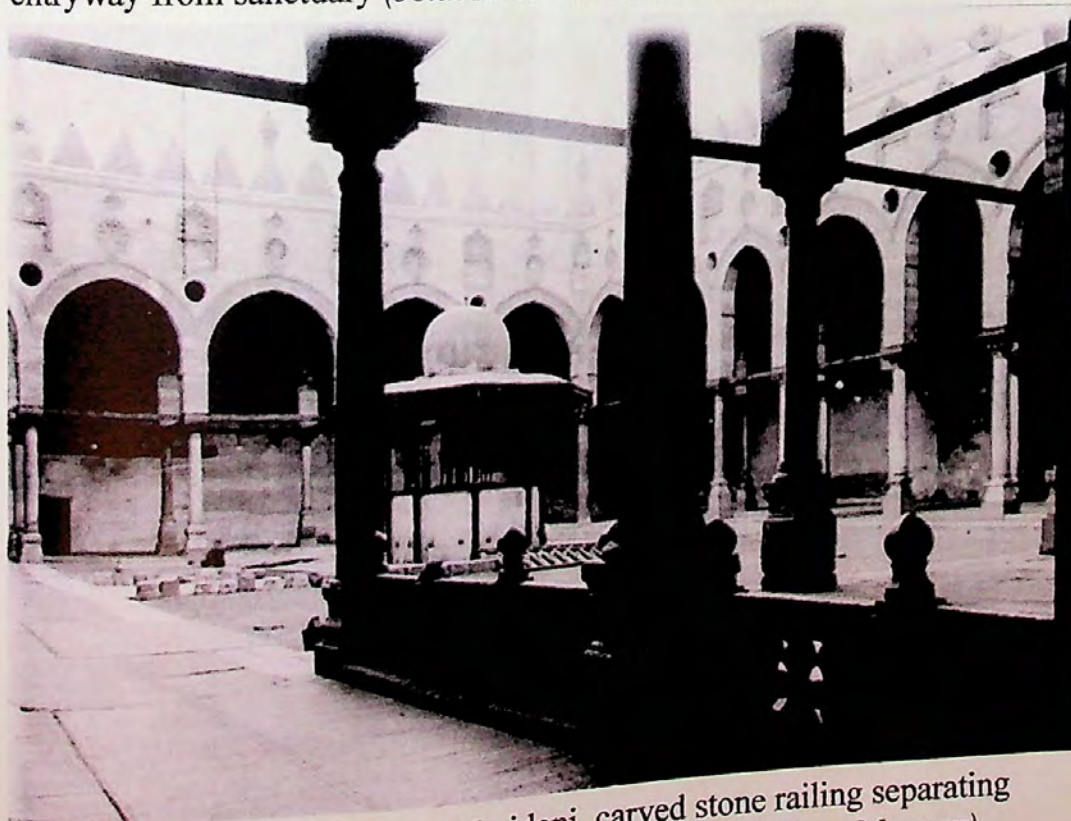


1. Mosque of Altunbugha al-Maridani, map and plan showing urban considerations (map after Nicholas Warner).

FIGURE 36



1. Mosque of Altunbugha al-Maridani, mashrabiyya screen separating entryway from sanctuary (*John A. & Caroline Williams*).



2. Mosque of Altunbugha al-Maridani, carved stone railing separating entryway from side riwaqs (*Creswell Archive, Ashmolean Museum*).

FIGURE 38

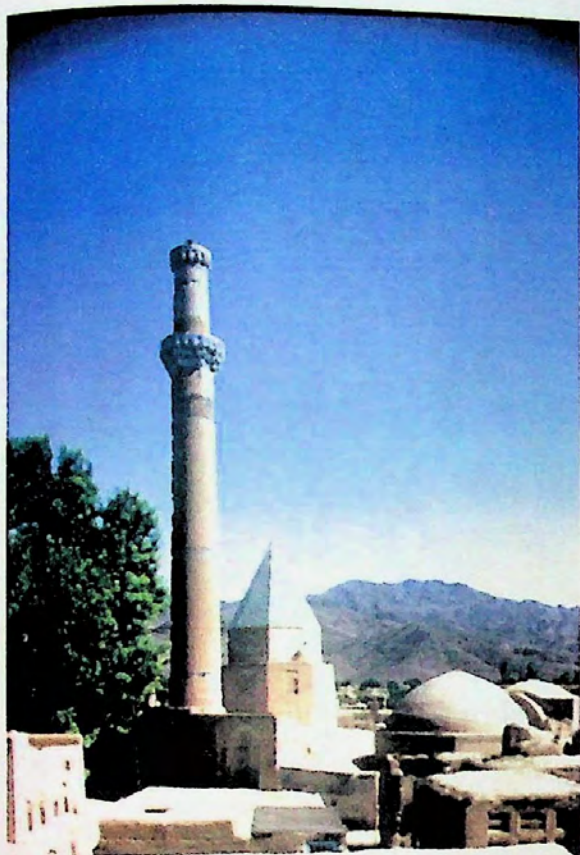


1. Cairo, Mosque of al-Nasir Muhammad at the Citadel, north-eastern minaret.

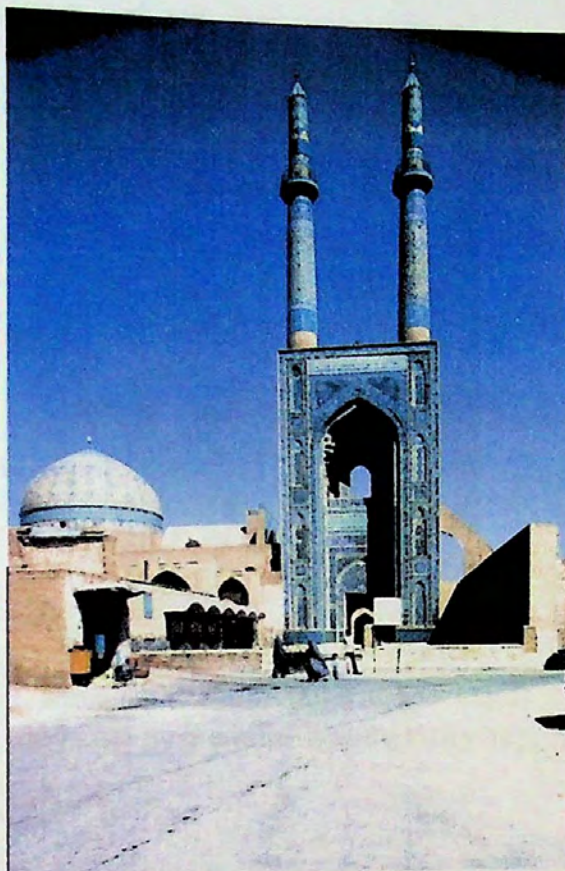


2. Cairo, Mosque of al-Nasir Muhammad at the Citadel, eastern minaret.

FIGURE 39



1. Natanz, Shrine of Abd al-Samad, minaret (*Photo: Bernard O'Kane*).



2. Yazd, Friday Mosque, minaret portal (*Photo: Bernard O'Kane*).

FIGURE 40



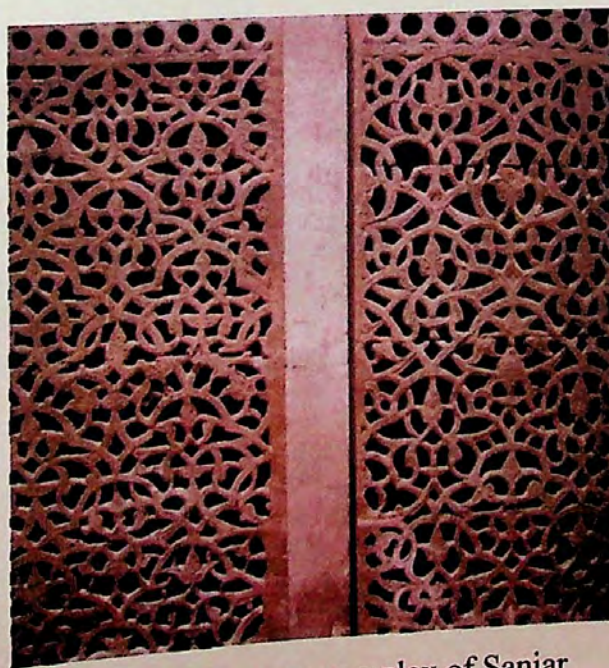
1. Mosque of Altunbugha al-Maridani, tile panel over north-eastern entryway.



2. Mosque of Altunbugha al-Maridani, tile panel over south-western entryway.

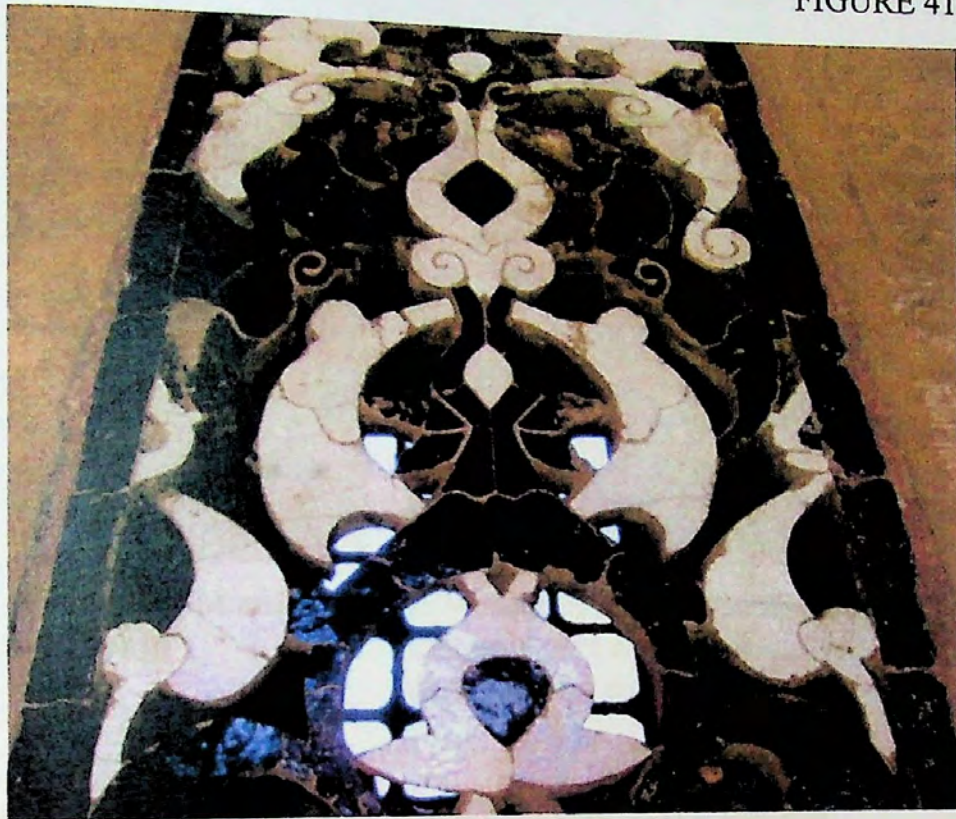


3. Cairo, Madrasa of emir Qarasunqur, stucco screen (Photo: D. Johannes).



4. Cairo, Funerary complex of Sanjar al-Jawli, stone screen (Behrens-Abouseif, *Cairo of the Mamluks*).

FIGURE 41



1. Mosque of Altunbugha al-Maridani, tile panel over north-eastern entryway.



2. Mosque of Altunbugha al-Maridani, tile panel over south-western entryway.

FIGURE 42



1. Mosque of Altunbugha al-Maridani, tile roundel over interior of north-western entryway.



2. Mosque of Altunbugha al-Maridani, tile panel over exterior of north-western entryway.



3. Cairo, Mosque of al-Aqmar, roundel over entrance.

FIGURE 43

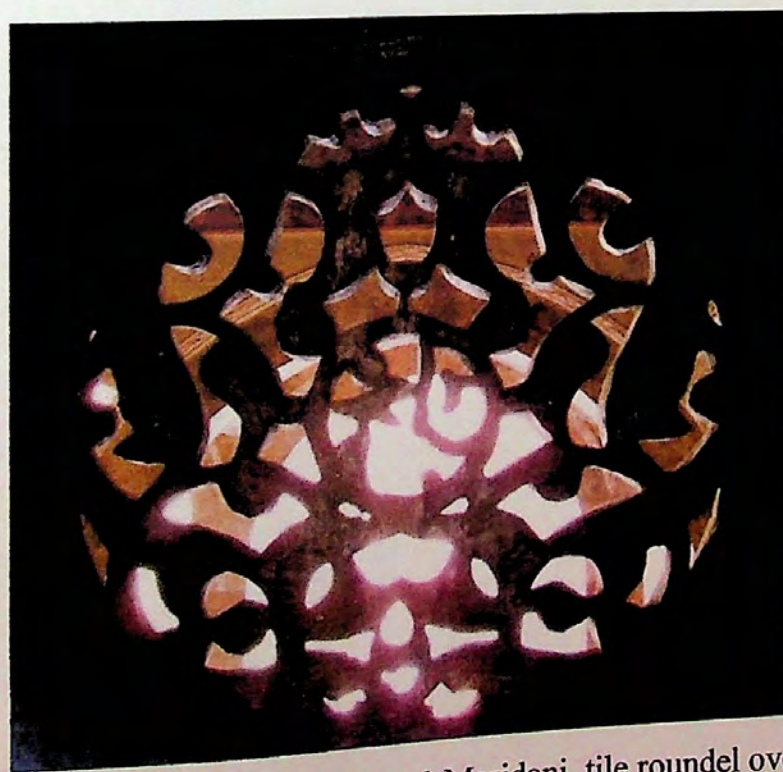


1. Konya, Sahip Ata Mausoleum, interior of tomb chamber.

FIGURE 44



1. Mosque of Altunbugha al-Maridani, detail of tile roundel over interior of north-western entryway.



2. Mosque of Altunbugha al-Maridani, tile roundel over interior of north-western entryway, view from back side of panel.

FIGURE 45



1. Mosque of Altunbugha al-Maridani, detail of *sgraffiato* technique.



2. Konya, Mosque of 'Ala' al-Din, detail of mihrab.

FIGURE 46



1. Konya, Sirçali Madrasa, tile decoration on sides of qibla iwan.

FIGURE 47

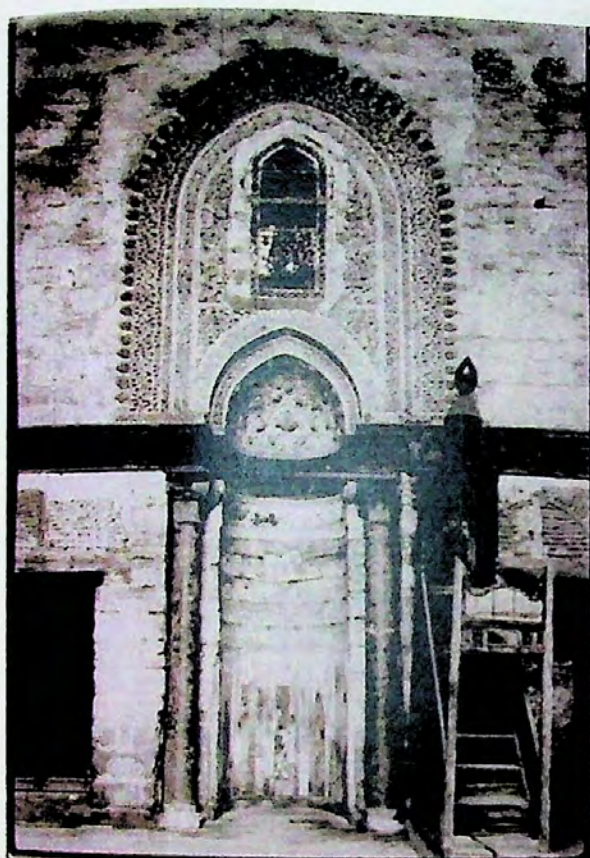


1. Mosque of Altunbugha al-Maridani,
interior of north-eastern entryway.

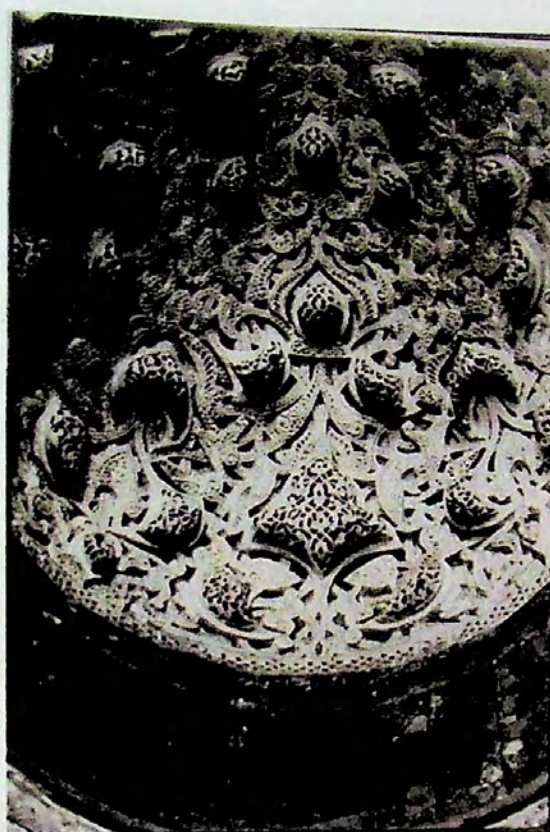


2. Mosque of Altunbugha al-Maridani,
detail of carved stone revetment over north-western entryway.

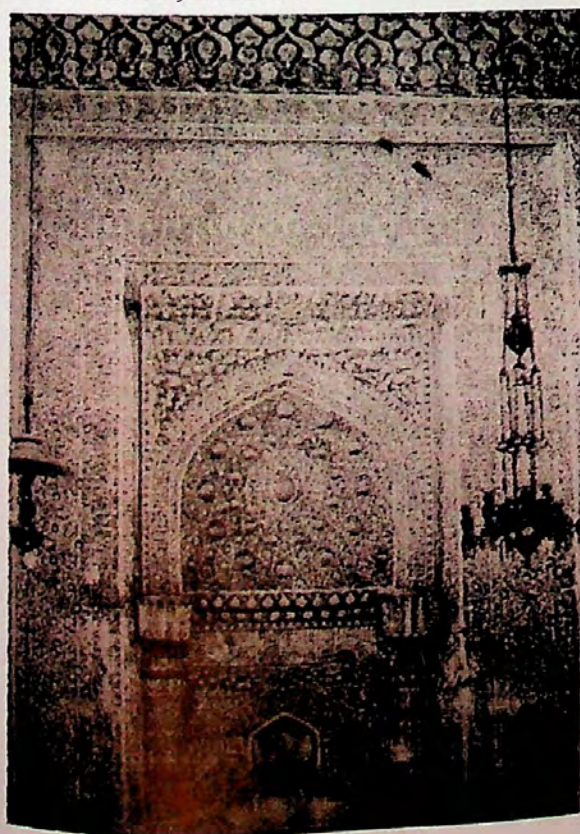
FIGURE 48



1. Cairo, Madrasa of al-Nasir Muhammad, mihrab.



2. Cairo, Madrasa of al-Nasir Muhammad, detail of conch of mihrab.

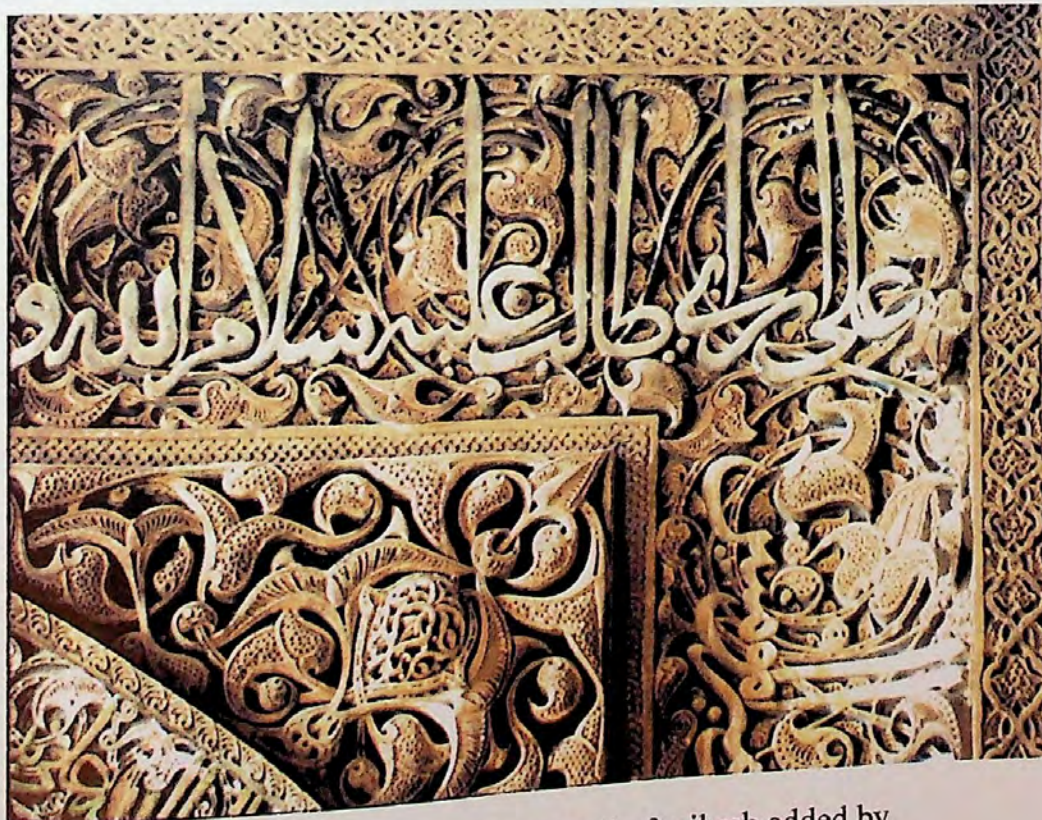


3. Riza'iye, Masjid-i Jami, mihrab (Wilber, *Ilkhanid Period*).

FIGURE 49

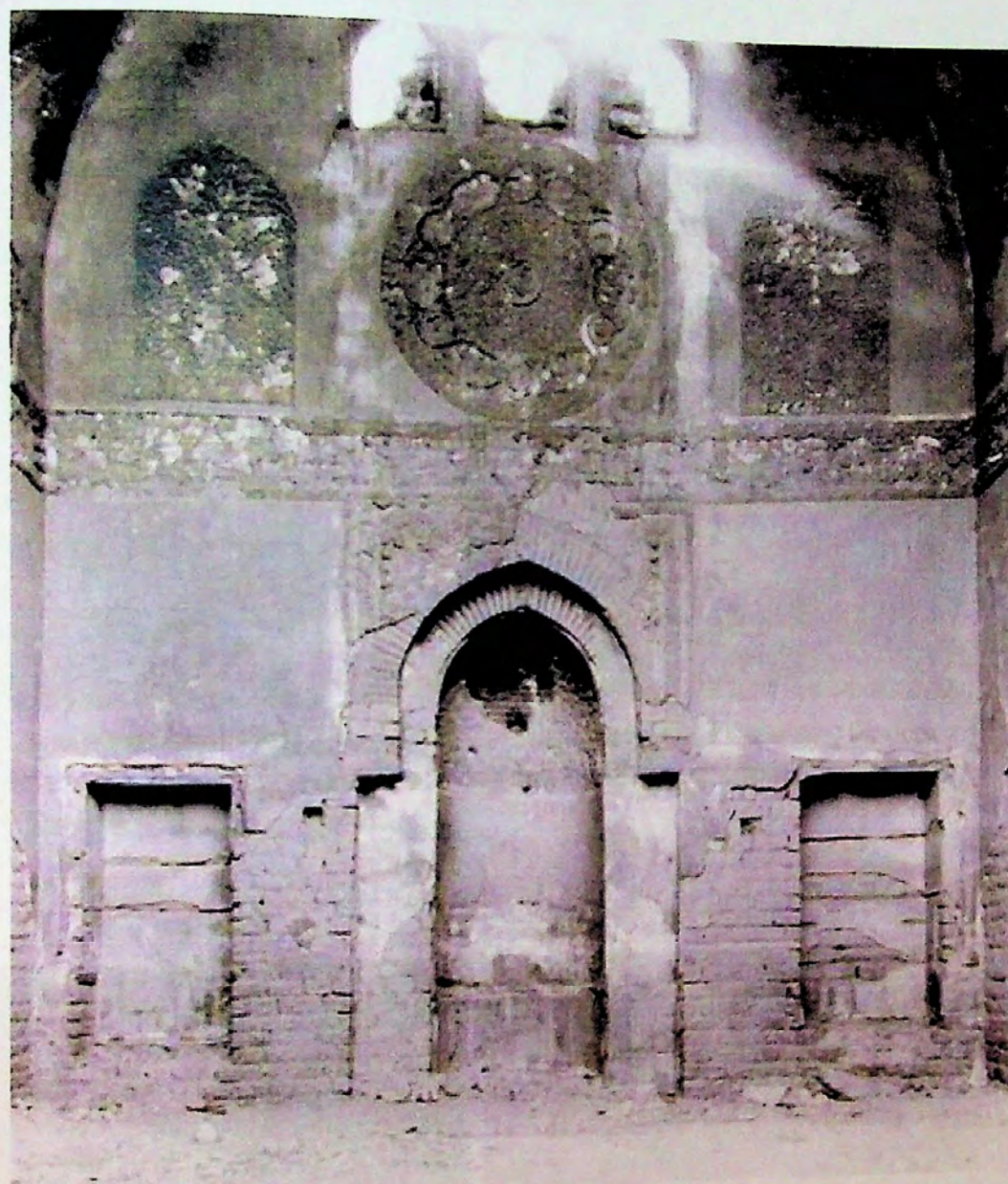


1. Linjan, Pir-i Bakran, conch of mihrab (Photo: Bernard O'Kane).



2. Isfahan, Great Mosque, spandrel detail of mihrab added by Uljaitu in 1310 (Photo: Bernard O'Kane).

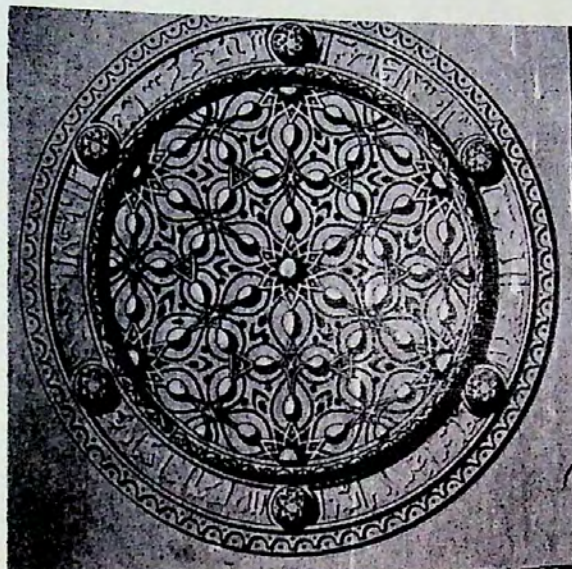
FIGURE 50



1. Cairo, Khanqah of Khawand Umm Anuk, mihrab and stucco roundels (Creswell Archive, Ashmolean Museum).



1. Cairo, Khanqah of emir Qawsun,
stucco roundel
(Ibrahim & Rogers, *Hānqāh of Qawsun*).



2. Khanqah of emir Qawsun, stucco
medallion drawing (*Bourgoin, 1873*).



3. Yazd, Madrasa-yi Samsiye,
stucco roundel in tomb chamber
(Photo: *Kendall Dudley*).



4. Yazd, Madrasa-yi Samsiye,
detail of stucco roundel
(Photo: *Mary Elliff*).

FIGURE 52



1. Mosque of Altunbugha al-Maridani, tree representation in stucco on qibla wall.



2. Mosque of Altunbugha al-Maridani, tree representations in stucco on qibla wall.

FIGURE 53

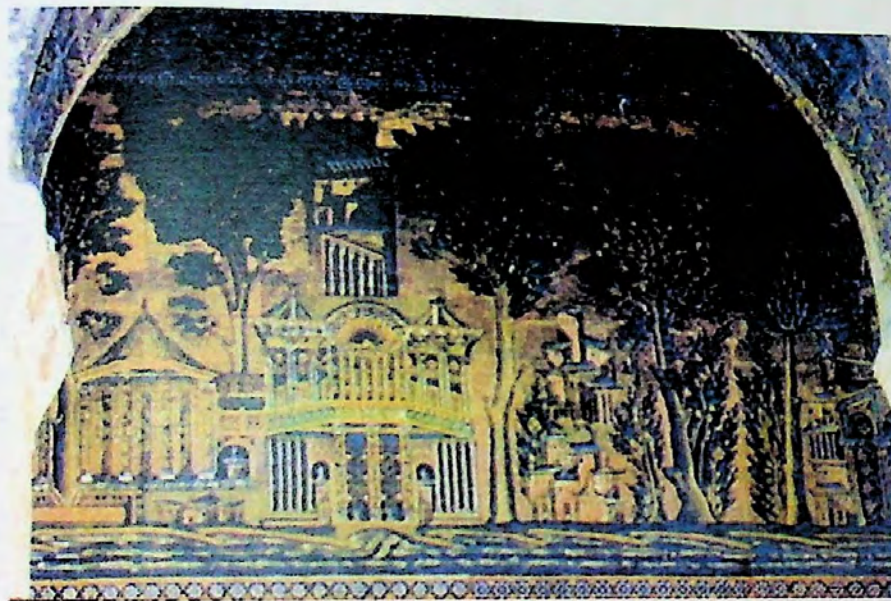


1. Cairo, Qa'a Ashrafiyya at the citadel, detail of mosaics after restoration
(Photo: Iman Abdulfattah).



2. Cairo, Qa'a Ashrafiyya at the citadel, detail of mosaics after restoration
(Photo: Iman Abdulfattah).

FIGURE 54



1. Damascus, Great Mosque, detail of mosaic decoration.



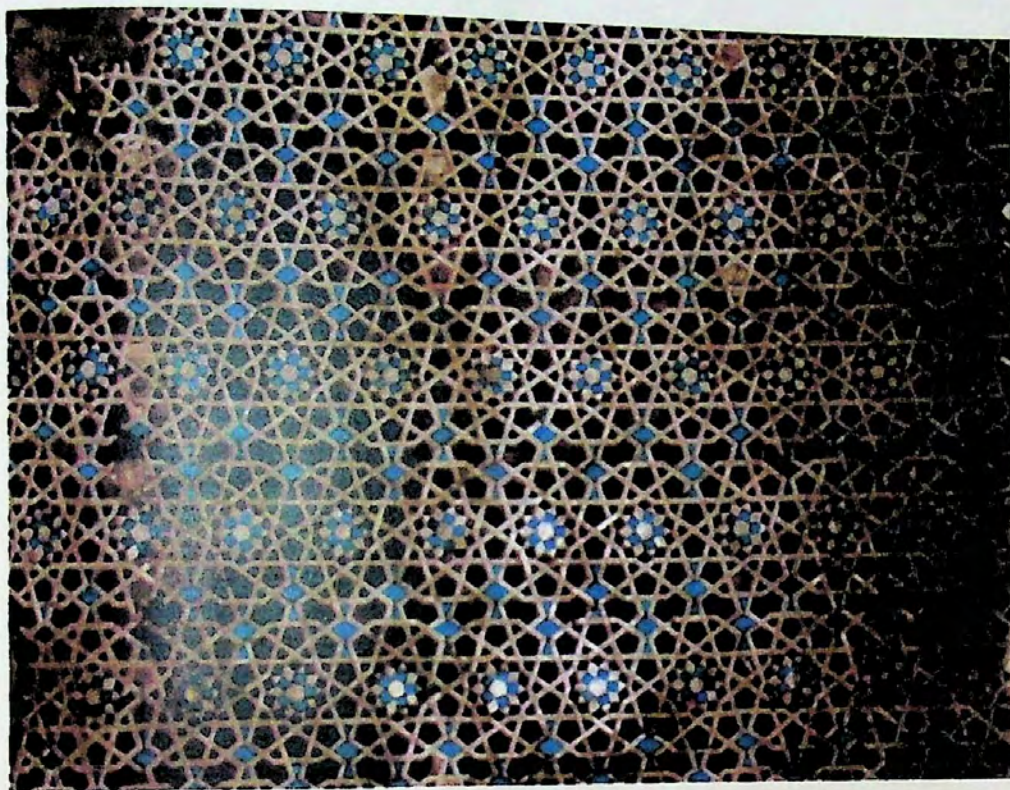
2. Damascus, Qubbat al-Zahiriyya, detail of mosaic decoration
(Photo: Nasser Rabbat).

FIGURE 55

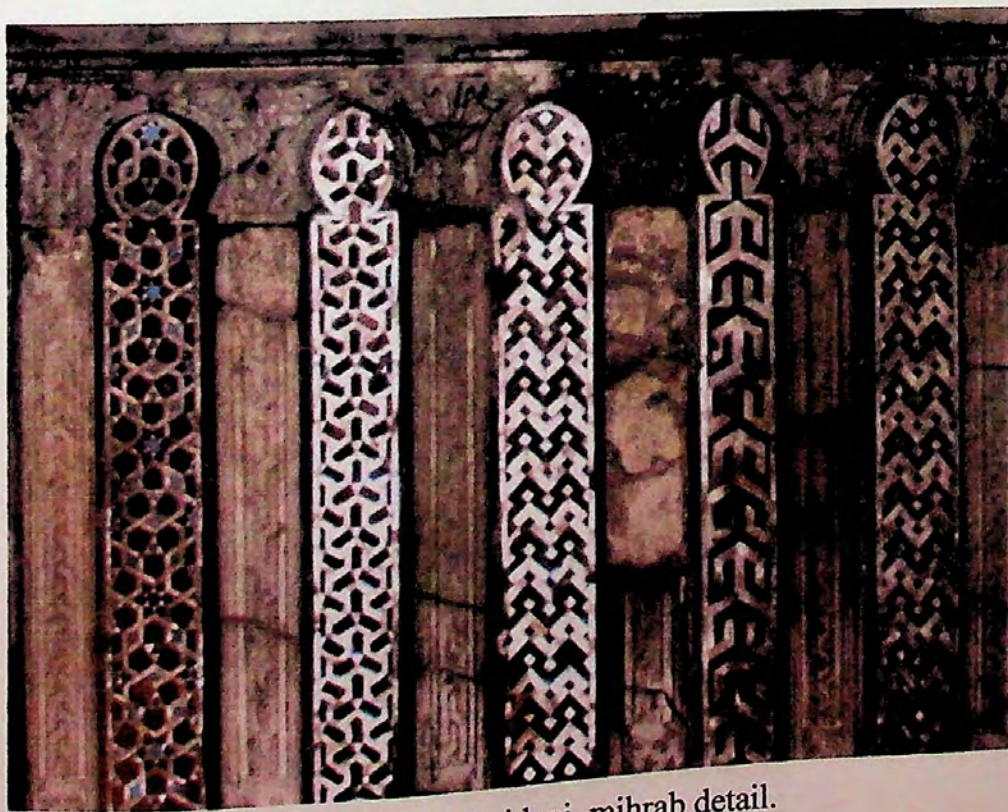


1. Ewer of Shihab al-Din Ahmad, 1342; *MIA* 15126 (Photo: Bernard O'Kane).

FIGURE 56



1. Mosque of Altunbugha al-Maridani, mihrab detail.

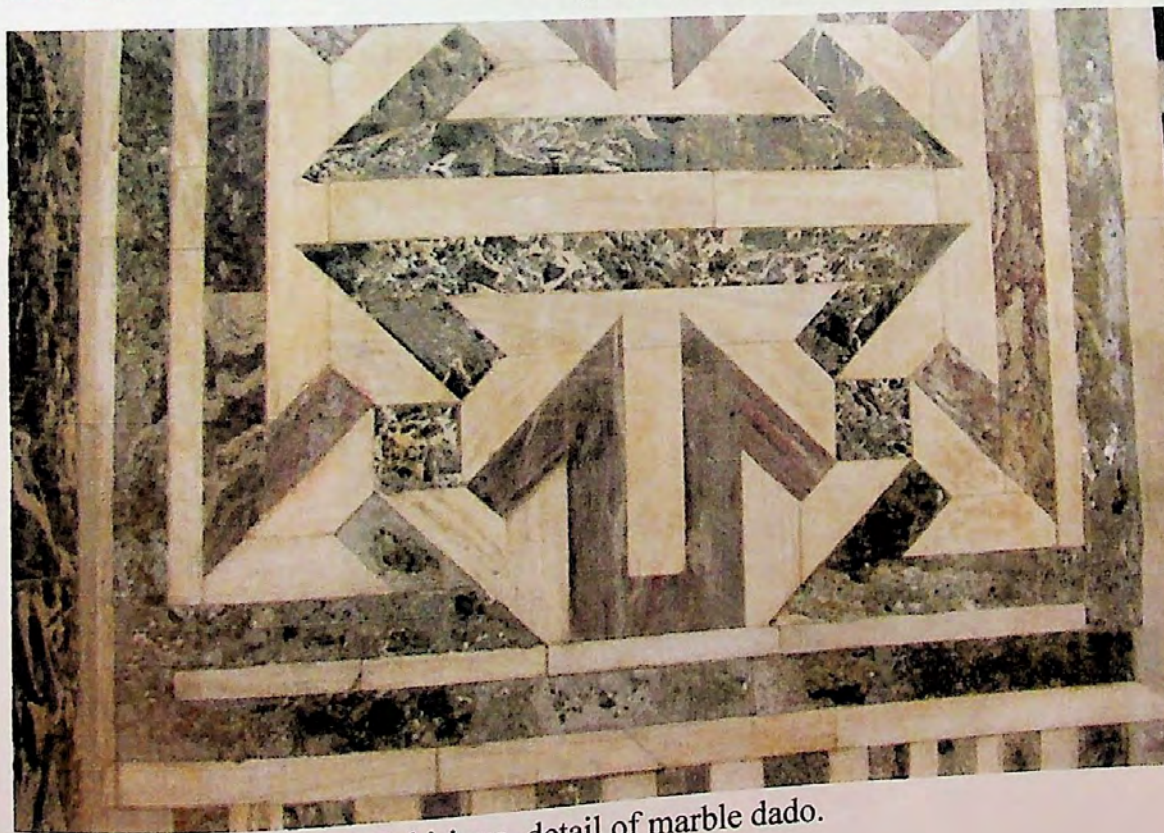


2. Mosque of Altunbugha al-Maridani, mihrab detail.

FIGURE 57

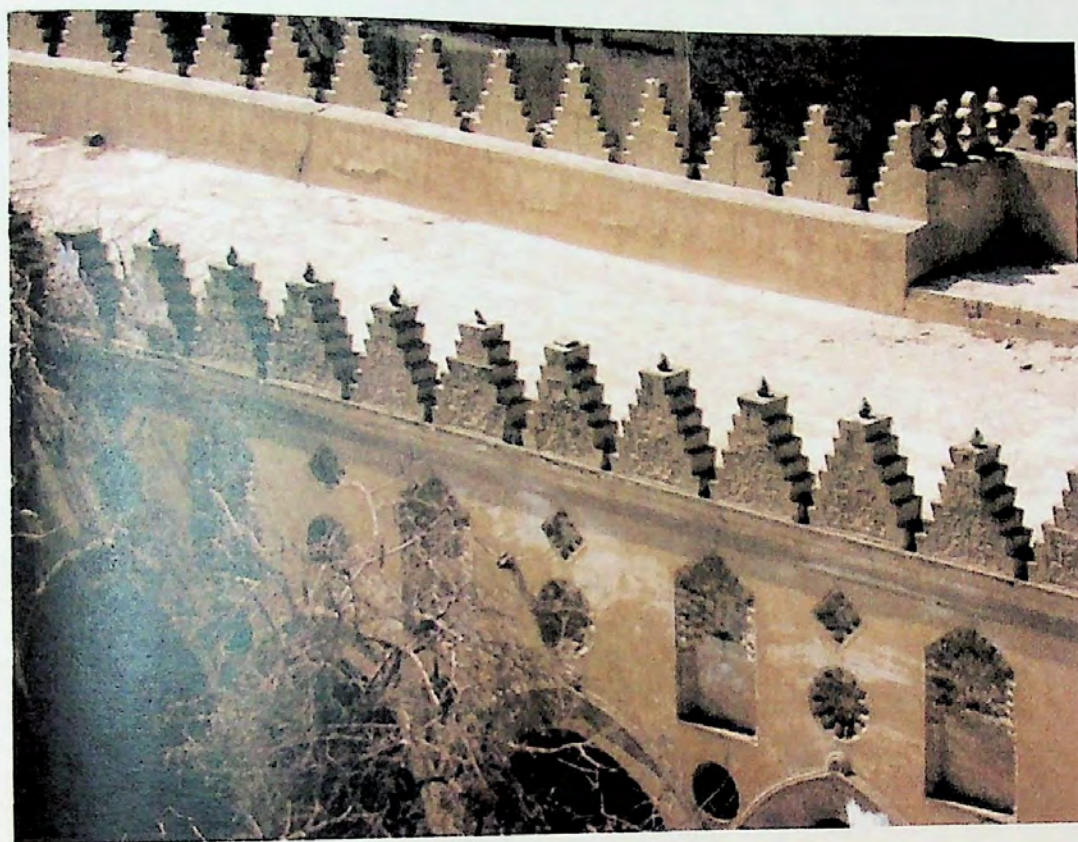


1. Mosque of Altunbugha al-Maridani,
detail of marble dado
(John A. & Caroline Williams).



2. Damascus, Qubbat al-Zahiriyya, detail of marble dado.

FIGURE 58



1. Mosque of Altunbugha al-Maridani, crenellations.



2. Mosque of Altunbugha al-Maridani,
detail of crenellations.

