



Conservation of Amir Taz Palace

Cairo, Egypt



Architect: Committee of Historic Cairo Conservation / Abd Al Moneim

Client: Supreme Council of Antiquities, Egypt

Built Area: 5'432 m²

Cost: US\$ 3'232'760

Cairo's most intact Mamluk palace was built more than 650 years ago by Taz, 'a good-looking, tall and courageous knight ... well known for his good deeds as well as his extreme reverence for scholars'. The aim of this project was to restore the palace in a manner worthy of its founder, by creating a centre for culture and learning embracing both traditional arts and information technology. To achieve this it was necessary to stabilise the structure and strip away the damage caused by inappropriate additions and long-term misuse. More than 400 people were involved in the project.

Conservation of Amir Taz Palace

Elsyoufya Street, Elsaleeba Avenue
Cairo, Egypt

<i>Architects</i>	Committee of Historic Cairo Conservation / Abd Al Moneim Cairo, Egypt
<i>Clients</i>	Supreme Council of Antiquities, Egypt Cairo, Egypt
<i>Commission</i>	2002
<i>Design</i>	2002 - 2005
<i>Construction</i>	2002 - 2005
<i>Occupancy</i>	2005
<i>Site</i>	4'650 m ²
<i>Ground Floor</i>	3'463 m ²
<i>Total Floor</i>	5'432 m ²
<i>Costs</i>	US\$ 3'232'760
<i>Programme</i>	Cairo's most intact Mamluk

Cairo's most intact Mamluk palace was built more than 650 years ago by Taz, 'a good-looking, tall and courageous knight ... well known for his good deeds as well as his extreme reverence for scholars'. The aim of this project was to restore the palace in a manner worthy of its founder, by creating a centre for culture and learning embracing both traditional arts and information technology. To achieve this it was necessary to stabilise the structure and strip away the damage caused by inappropriate additions and long-term misuse. More than 400 people were involved in the project.

Building Type
2007 Award Cycle

3192. EGY

THE CONSERVATION OF AMIR TAZ PALACE 3192 EGY



Different Views Show the Damage Happened in 2002



This Palace was established in 753 A.H. / 1352 A.D. by Prince Sayf ad-Din 'Abdullah Taz Ibn Qatghag an-Nasiri who was an eminent prince during the Bahri Mamluk era. He died in Damascus, in 763 A.H. / 1361 A.D.

The misuse of the palace as a storage for ministry of education has had adverse effects on the building, because of the additional loads of accumulated books and the huge amount of stored desks. The detrimental repercussions of this misuse became obvious after the 1992 earthquake. On the 10th of March 2002, however, one of the palace walls collapsed over a house lying in al-Sheikh Khalil Alley, behind the palace. An emergency team, belonging to the Historic Cairo Project, was brought together to take all the procedures necessary to halt such collapses. This team presented a tentative plan that fell into two parts: the first tackled the methods to prevent further damage and reinforce the building; and the second was concerned with dismantling the parts that were about to collapse, studying the building and monitoring its movement.

After the building was reinforced and stabilized, the working team started to study the causes of damage and deterioration. Foremost among these causes were the new constructions added to the building.

Fortunately, the fact that the space containing the old Mamluk wells and the saqiya

After the team had managed to circumvent the hazards that were threatening the Palace, it started to examine the building and to search for the historic fragments and fabric. During this stage, the old drainage system, the ornamental fish-pool, the cistern, the drinking troughs for animals, the lower and the upper waterwheels, the fountain of the ground maqàd, the haramlik fountain, the lower and the upper baths were excavated.



Second Floor Plan



First Floor Plan

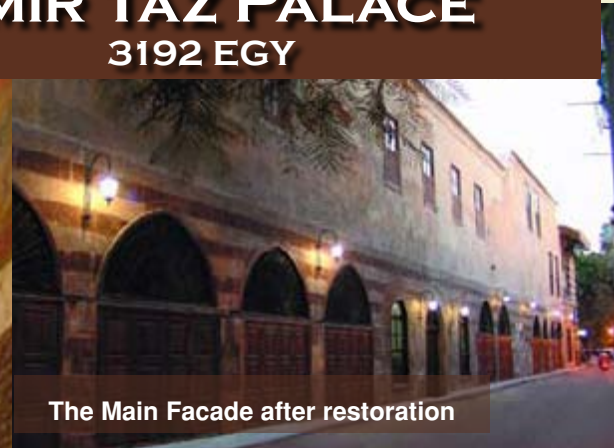


Ground Floor Plan

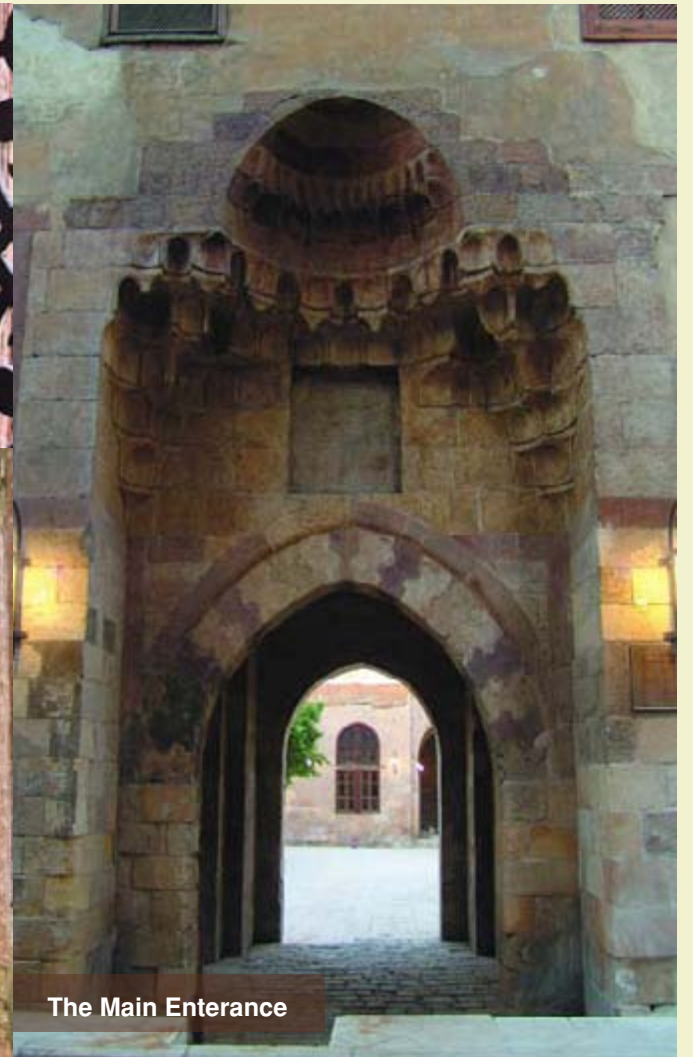
THE CONSERVATION OF AMIR TAZ PALACE 3192 EGY



The Haramlik after Reconstruction



The Main Facade after restoration



The Main Entrance



The Miq'ad Ceiling after restoration



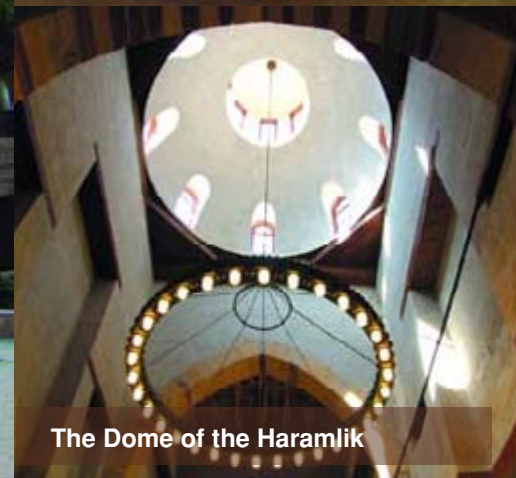
View from the Main Courtyard



The Main Courtyard by Night



The Miq'ad from the Main Courtyard



The Dome of the Haramlik



Aga Khan Award for Architecture

ARCHITECT'S RECORD

2007 AWARD CYCLE

I. IDENTIFICATION

Project Title The Conservation of Amir TAZ Palace
 Street Address As Syyufiyya str, the Citadel
 City Cairo Country Egypt

II. PERSONS RESPONSIBLE

A. Architect/Planner

Name Consultant Committee of Historic Cairo Conservation Project
 Mailing Address 2 Shagar Ad Dur street
 City Cairo Postal Code 11511
 Country Egypt Telephone +20 10 3133138, +20 2 7366531
 Facsimile +20 2 7366531 E-mail _____
 Principal Designer Ayman Abd Al Mongim, Supervisor

B. Client

Name The Supreme Council of Antiquities
 Mailing Address 3, Al Adil Abu Bakr
 City Cairo Postal Code 11511
 Country Egypt Telephone +20 2 7358761
 Facsimile +20 2 7357239 E-mail info@sca.org.eg

C. Project Affiliates / Consultants

Please list those involved in the project and indicate their roles and areas of responsibility (e.g. engineers, contractors, economists, master craftsmen, other architects, clients, etc.). Please cite addresses and telephone numbers separately.

Name	Role
<u>Consultant Committee of Historic Cairo Project</u>	<u>Site Supervision</u>
<u>Hassan Allam Sons (Misr Development) Co.</u>	<u>Main Contractor</u>
<u>Center for Archaeology Engineering and Environment, Cairo University.</u>	<u>Consultant, Documentation</u>
<u>Garnal Mustafa</u>	<u>Site Inspector</u>
<u>Yasmine Sabry</u>	<u>Site Engineer</u>
<u>Asmaa Sayed</u>	<u>Site Conservator</u>
_____	_____
_____	_____

III. TIMETABLE

(please specify year and month)

A Commission	March 2002		
B Design	Commencement	March 2002	Completion October 2005
C Construction	Commencement	March 2002	Completion October 2005
D Occupancy	December 2005		

Remarks, if any:

IV. AREAS AND SURFACES

(please indicate in square metres)

A Total Site Area	4650 m2		
B Ground Floor Area	3463 m2		
C Total Combined Floor Area	5432 m2		

including basement(s), ground floor(s) and all upper floors)

Remarks, if any:

V. ECONOMICS

(please specify the amounts in local currencies and provide the equivalents in US dollars. Specify the dates and the rates of exchange in US dollars at the time.)

		Amount in Local Currency	Amount in US dollars	Exchange Rate	Date
A Total Initial Budget		31 000 000	5344827	5.8	2005
B Cost of Land		N/A	N/A		
C Analysis of Actual Costs					
1	Infrastructure	1 850 000	318 965	5.8	2005
2	Labour	4 800 000	827 586	5.8	2005
3	Materials	6 750 000	1 163 793	5.8	2005
4	Landscaping	1 800 000	310 344	5.8	2005
5	Professional Fees	1 400 000	241 380	5.8	2005
6	Other	2 150 000	370 690	5.8	2005
D Total Actual Costs (without land)		18 750 000	3232760	5.8	2005
E Actual Cost (per sq. meter)		3524	607	5.8	2005

Remarks, if any, on costs:

Due to the emergency of the start of the project and the unexpected damage assessment, the initial budget was too high to cover any future unforeseen parts of the project.

VI. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

This Palace was established in 753 A.H. / 1352 A.D. during the Bahri Mamluk era. Throughout the later ages, it underwent many modifications and additions which reached their peak during the Ottoman age.

The founder of this palace is Prince Sayf al-Din 'Abdullah Taz Ibn Qatqagh al-Nasiri who was an eminent prince during the Bahri Mamluk era. Taz was a good-looking, tall and courageous knight, who was well known for his absolute decency, his countless good deeds, as well as his extreme reverence for scholars. The prominence of Taz reigned supreme during the two ruling periods of an-Nasir Hasan ibn an-Nasir Muhammad who appointed him governor of Aleppo. Yet some Princes sowed the seeds of discord between Taz and the sultan and the latter had Taz imprisoned in Alexandria. He died in Damascus, where he was buried, in 763 A.H. / 1361 A.D.

The misuse of the palace as a school and a warehouse has had adverse effects on the building, because of the additional loads of accumulated books and the huge amount of stored desks. The detrimental repercussions of this misuse became obvious after the 1992 earthquake. Following this natural disaster, the Supreme Council of Antiquities shared the building so as to reinforce it and save it from collapse. On the 10th of March 2002, however, one of the palace walls collapsed over a house lying in al-Sheikh Khalil Alley, behind the palace. An emergency team, belonging to the Historic Cairo Project, was brought together to take all the procedures necessary to halt such collapses. This team presented a tentative plan that fell into two parts: the first tackled the methods to prevent further damage and reinforce the building; and the second was concerned with dismantling the parts that were about to collapse, studying the building and monitoring its movement.

After the building was reinforced and stabilized, the working team started to study the causes of damage and deterioration. Foremost among these causes were the new constructions added to the building. Such additions included newly established walls and concrete ceilings which were conducive to the high level of moisture. The waste water seeping from the sewerage of al-Sheikh Khalil Alley, which is about one meter and a half higher than the ground of the building, added to the problem. Fortunately, the fact that the space containing the old Mamluk wells and the saqiya was blocked when the building was converted into a school preserved them.

After the team had managed to circumvent the hazards that were threatening the Palace, it started to examine the building and to search for the historic fragments and fabric. During this stage, the old drainage system, the ornamental fish-pool, the cistern, the drinking troughs for animals, the lower and the upper waterwheels, the fountain of the ground ma'ad, the Haramlik fountain, the lower and the upper baths were discovered. This was in addition to many fragments of the historic fabric found in the debris and a large number of excavated finds.

Afterwards, the walls were thoroughly studied, and necessary reconstructions were added and attached to the old masonry. Similarly, the missing walls of haramlik were reconstructed; its foundations were consolidated and injected with chemical damp guard. Most of the cracks in the building were injected. Furthermore, the domes of the upper baths, and the ceilings of the lower ones were completed. Relieving ceilings were constructed above the old decorated ones to relieve them of their loads. The ma'ad was also reinforced using galvanized stainless steel rods. The aim was to transform this ma'ad into a single structural unit that can resist earthquakes. It is noteworthy that this stage was completed with the aid of foreign expertise. Furthermore, the walls were replastered using a mix compatible with the old plaster. The aim was to restore to this monument its artistic and historic value in a manner worthy of Cairo's most intact Mamluk palace.

VII. MATERIALS, STRUCTURE, AND CONSTRUCTION

The building is built in wall bating system. Bricks are used mainly, unless of the ground floor which was built with stones. The ground floor is mostly vaulted. Upper floors are roofed with timber beams and boards. While it is covered with ornaments it is also the main structural element. The scale of the building is huge, why not it is a Mamluk Palace, lime mortars are broadly used with an addition of gypsum and brick dust. This system is very compatible and lived for 1000's of years. The main philosophy of the work is to conserve all the original materials and techniques. This came out in the end with a huge number of trained persons, they can handle many types of building like Taz Palace.

The main materials used in the restoration:

- Lime
- Brick
- Lime stone
- Brick dust
- Natural ash
- Gypsum
- Clay
- Stainless steel stitching
- Timber
- Silicon base injection

VIII. PROJECT SIGNIFICANCE AND IMPACT

The Prince Taz Palace became one enlighten monument in Egypt. After many years of ignorance, the building is having the attraction of the inhabitant. Now the building is considered to be one of the main cultural centers in the city. It became a pole of magnet that attract many intellectuals to visit it and to enjoy its cultural events. On the other hand the building is being prepared to be more active to the life of the attached urban fabric. Together with the main cultural events like folk arts and expos, the building will have many other activities. A library for Kinder, general library, music center for learning, audio-visual library, computer training centre, internet, languages, and art creation centre for kids. These function will integrate it more with the society and will improve its role to a higher level of acting with the community. The magnificent social value of the palace is its location and volume. The location is within a very lively part of the city. Centric and dominated, near the famous Citadel of Salah ad-Din and the complex of Sultan Hassan. This aspect together with its current use, it is putting it in a high level of Cultural Heritage. It is a Heritage that links to the people. It is not only a monument or a museum. It helps the people to improve themselves and to develop. Mainly the cultural event attracts all the people living around and others from different areas and countries. This integration creates a healthy dialogue between different categories of people with different interest. This dialogue helps in the development of the society.

On Other hand the restoration operation had a direct impact to the practice of more than 400 person worked on this huge project. Many traditional skills were developed and many schools of thought too. The criteria of the project was to save the building and to improve its properties against age and deterioration. One main benefit of the project is the well understanding of group work. The insistent to solve the severe problems by sacrificing with life, effort and time to prevent one main element in our Heritage to vanish and to stop its decay regarding any other consideration.

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Name (please print) Ayman Abd Al-Moneim

Signature

Ayman Abd Al-Moneim

Date 30-8-2006

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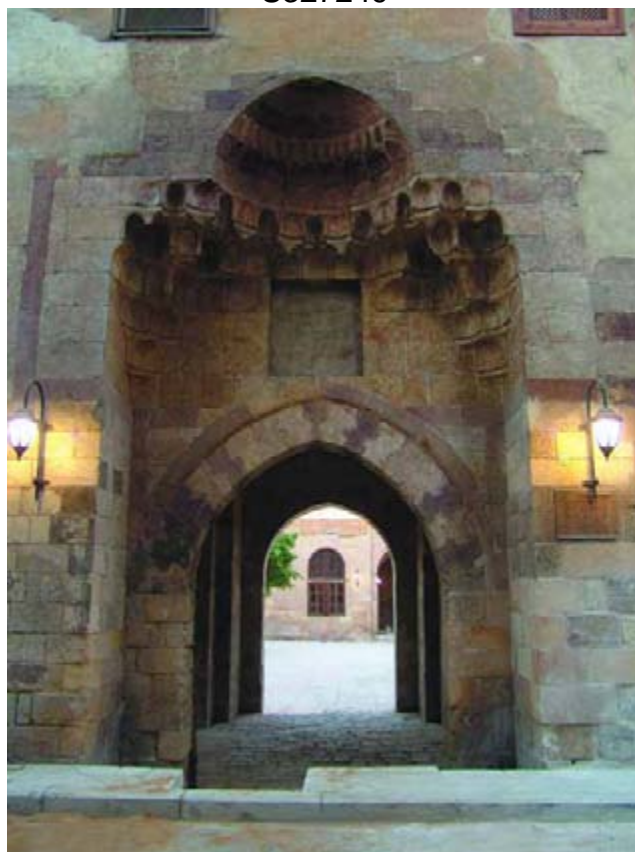
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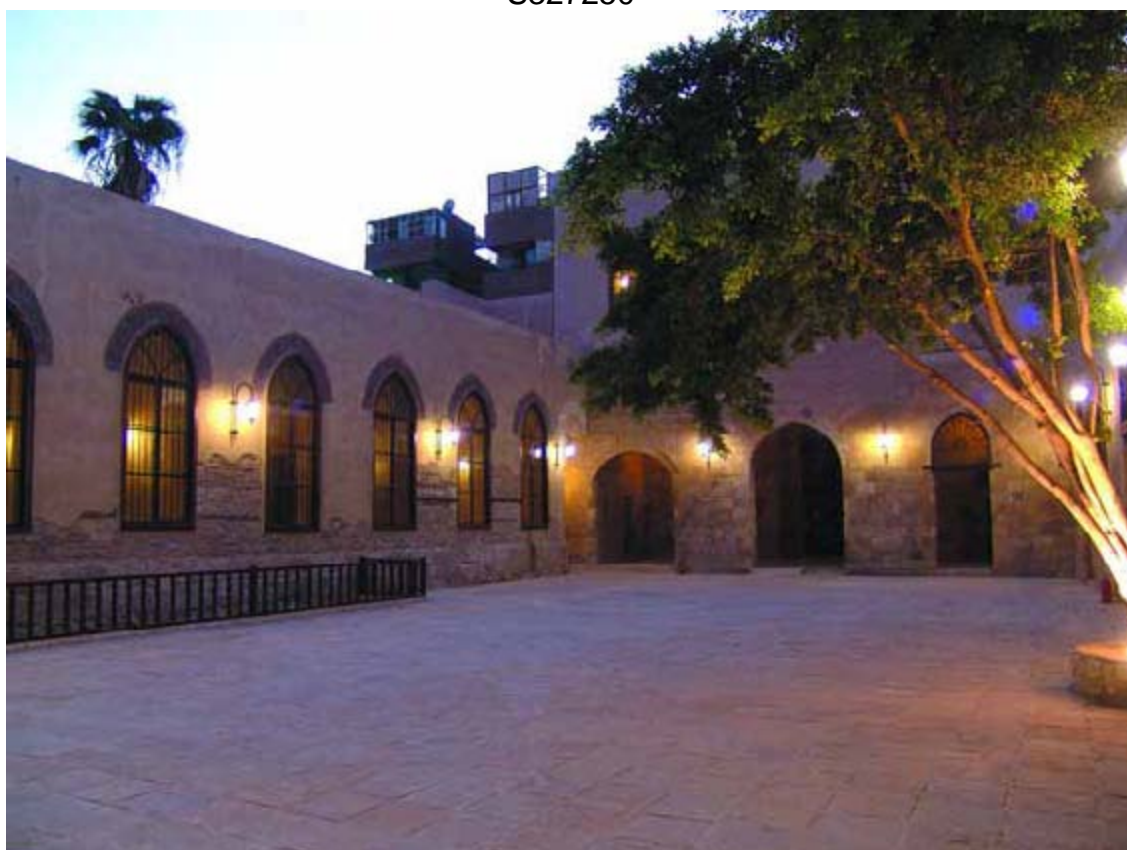
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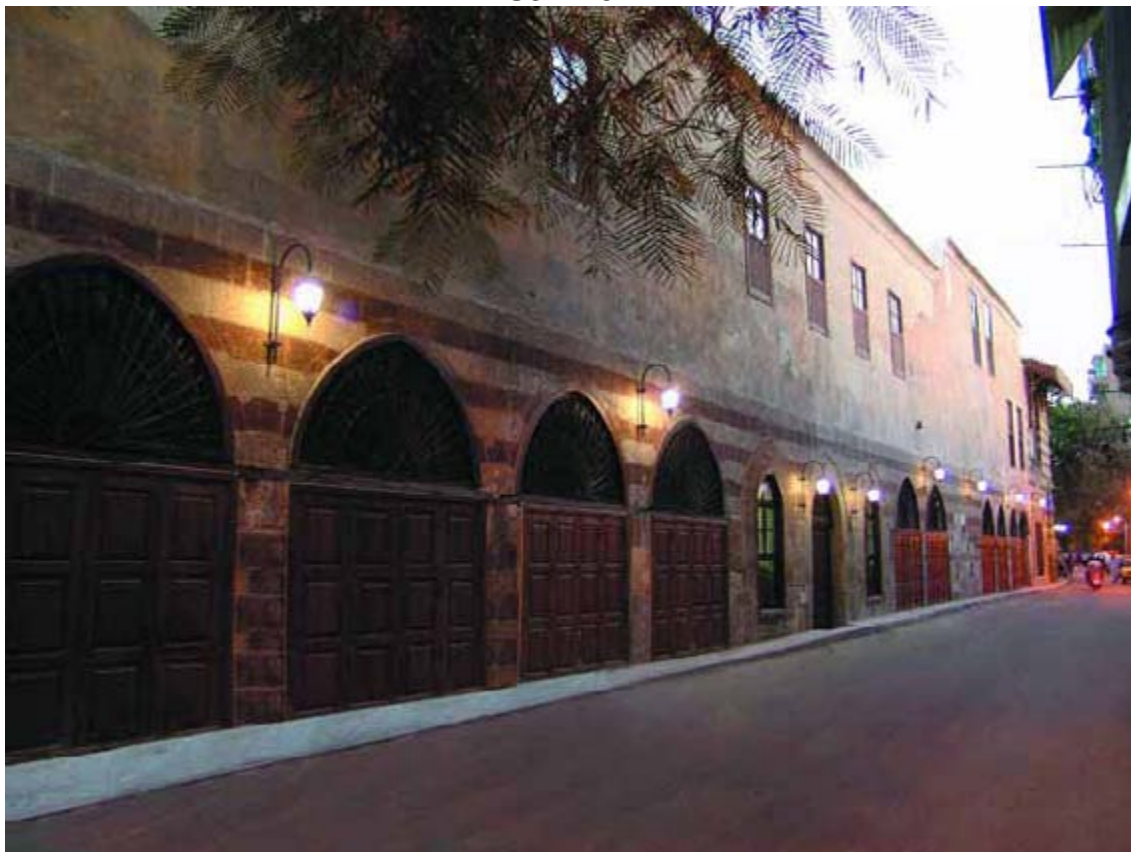
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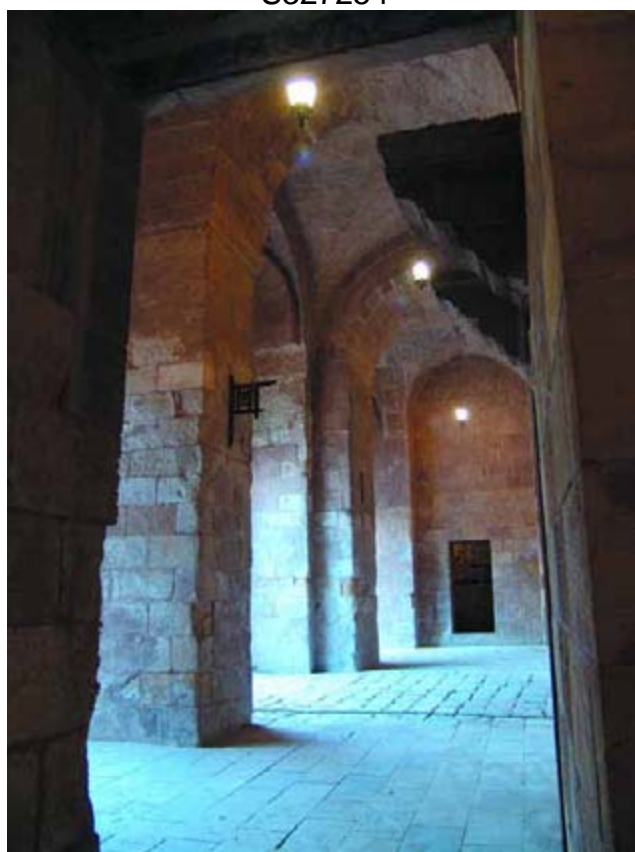
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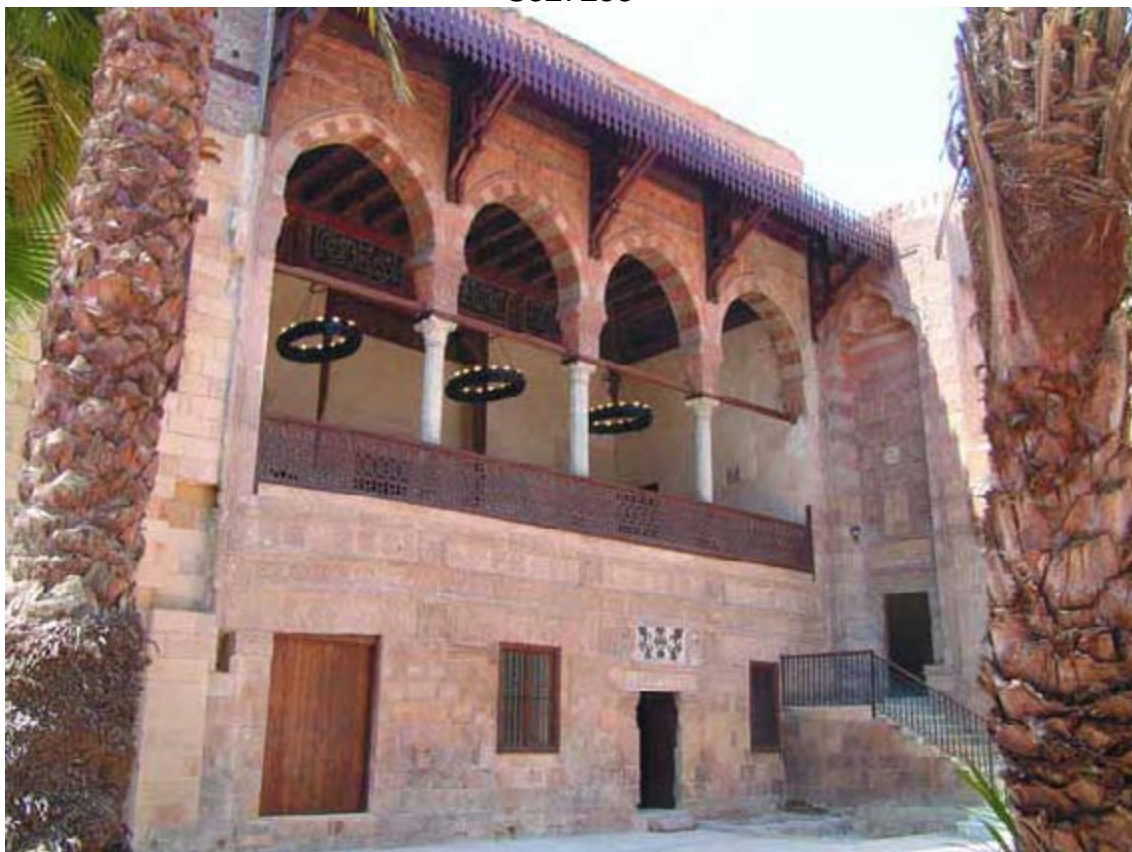
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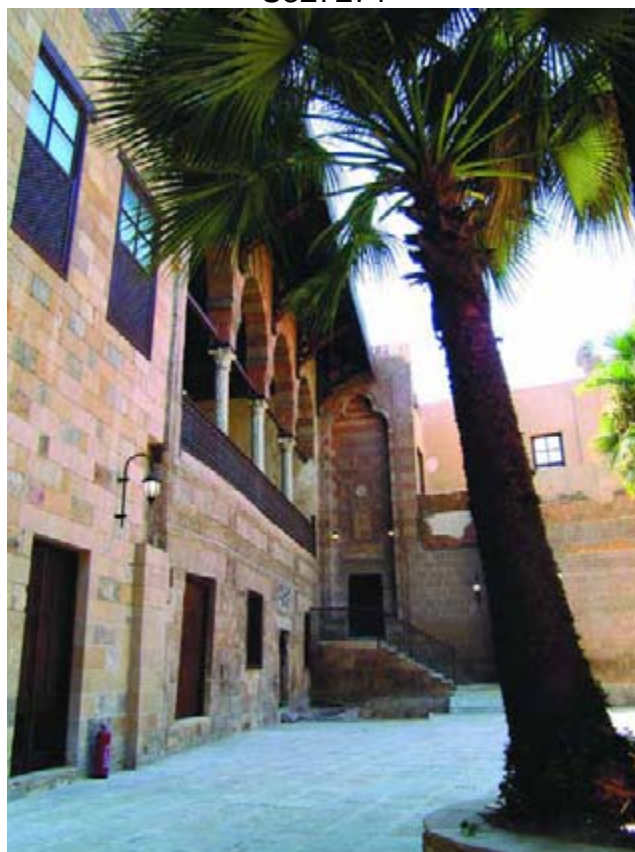
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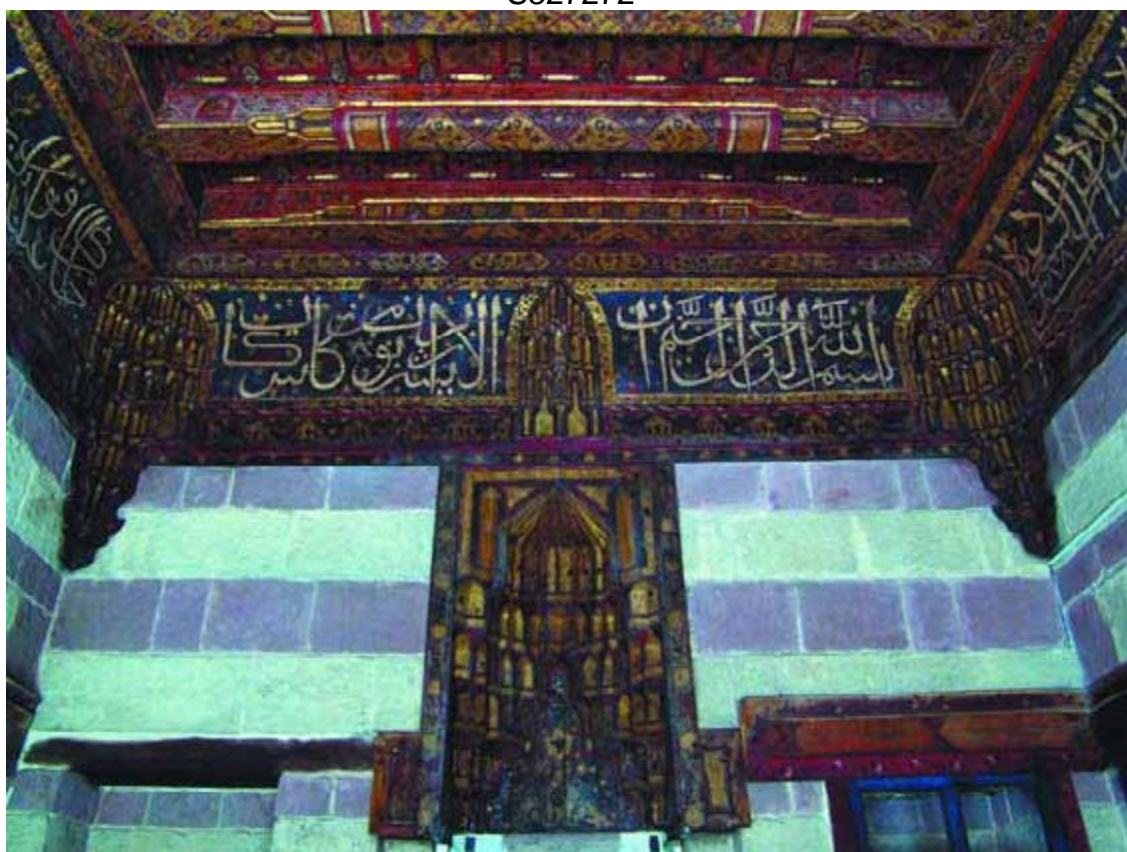
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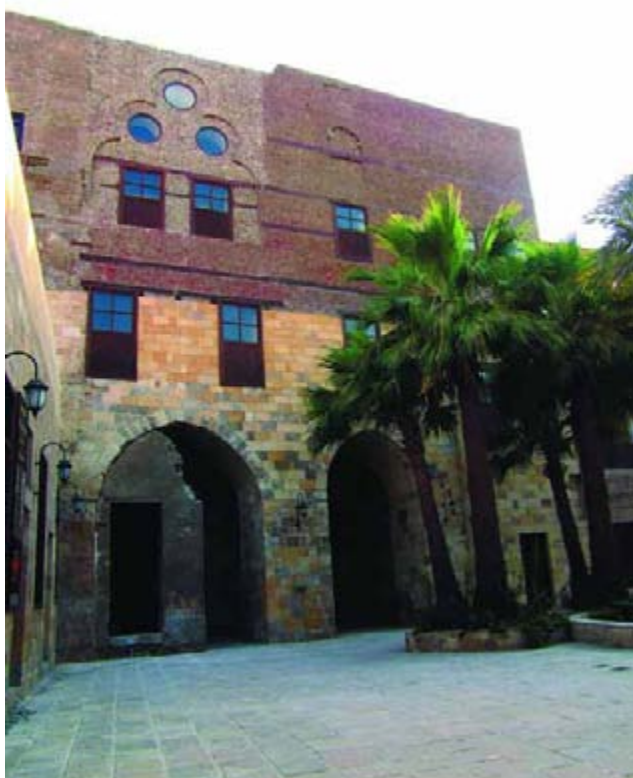
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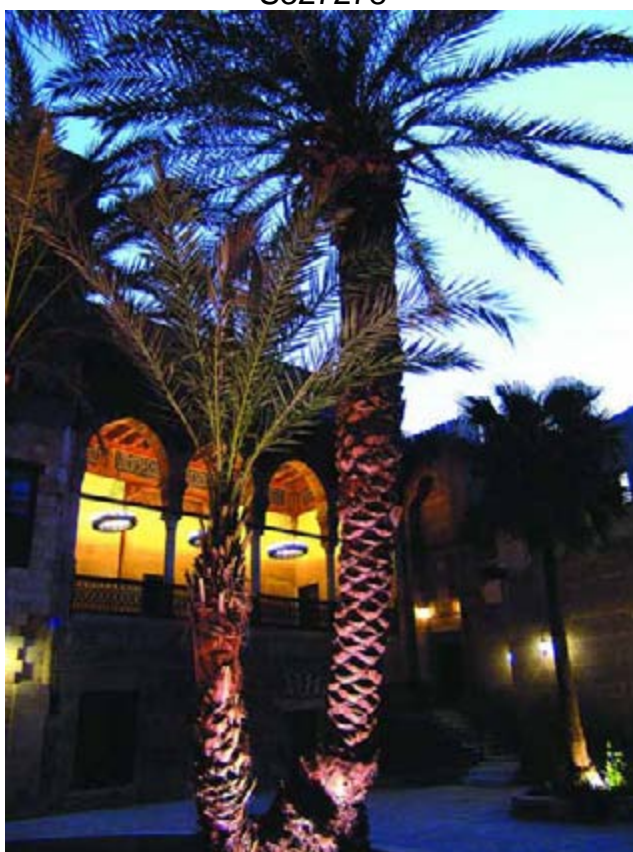
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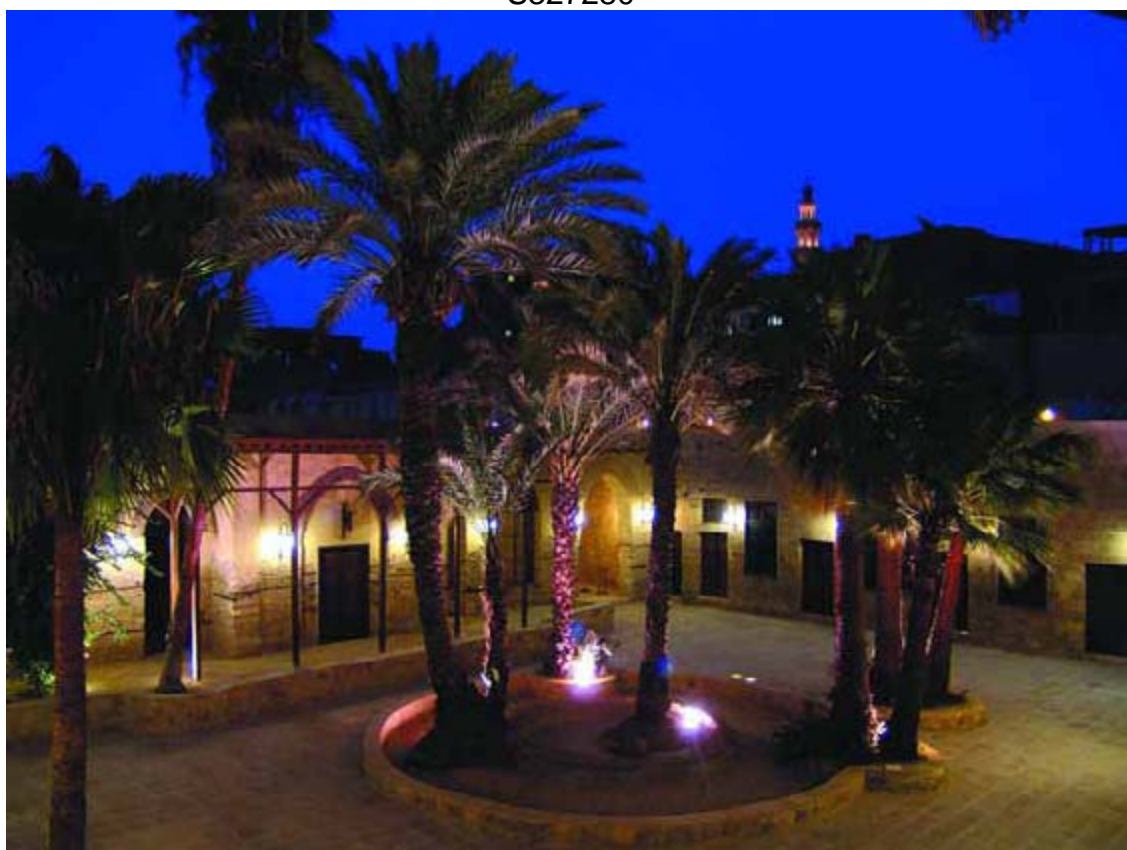
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MATERIALS IDENTIFICATION FORM

Provide a full list of all material being submitted

No	Description	Remarks
1	10 A3 Panels	
2	Project Documentary on DVD	
3	Photo Gallery on CD	
4	The Palace of Amir Taz, Book published by Historic Cairo 2005	
5		
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IMAGE IDENTIFICATION FORM

List each digital image (or photographic slide) below, and specify the name of the photographer and the date of photography. In the space designated "Description," provide a description of the image in English or in French. Also specify any copyright restrictions, if any. You may substitute this form with your own as long as the required information is included.

No	Description	Photographer	Date
1	The Haramlik Dome Integrated in the Skyline of the old city of Cairo	George Fakhry	2005
2	View from above to the main court of the palace	George Fakhry	2005
3	The main entrance of the palace	George Fakhry	2005
4	The small court (northern)	George Fakhry	2005
5	The main facade on as-Syufiyya street	George Fakhry	2005
6	The service corridor to the art galleries	George Fakhry	2005
7	Entrance leads to the staircase up to Haramlik	George Fakhry	2005
8	Vaulted area in ground floor	George Fakhry	2005
9	Detail of the Miq'ad	George Fakhry	2005
10	Detail of the Miq'ad	George Fakhry	2005
11	Detail of the Miq'ad	George Fakhry	2005
12	The Facade of the Miq'ad	George Fakhry	2005
13	The Facade of the Miq'ad	George Fakhry	2005
14	Ground floor fountain (excavated)	George Fakhry	2005
15	The Haramlik from inside (reconstructed)	George Fakhry	2005
16	The dome of the Haramlik	George Fakhry	2005
17	The water wheel of the western wing (discovered)	George Fakhry	2005
18	Water channels from the water wheel	Detail of the Miq'ad	2005

IMAGE IDENTIFICATION FORM

No	Description	Photographer	Date
19	Water wheel from above	George Fakhri	2005
20	Decorated skylight in the ground floor Bath	George Fakhri	2005
21	The ground floor Bath	George Fakhri	2005
22	Sabil Kuttāb Al Agha Dar as-Sa'ada	George Fakhri	2005
23	General View to the Palace	George Fakhri	2005
24	Detail of Moq'ad ceiling	George Fakhri	2005
25	The Miq'ad from the court	George Fakhri	2005
26	Detail of the ceiling of Al Agha Dar as-Sa'ada Sabil	George Fakhri	2005
27	Detail of a Ceiling in the first floor of the palace	George Fakhri	2005
28	Detail of a Ceiling in the first floor of the palace	George Fakhri	2005
29	Detail of a Ceiling in the first floor of the palace	George Fakhri	2005
30	Detail of a Ceiling in the first floor of the palace	George Fakhri	2005
31	The facade of Haramlik from court	George Fakhri	2005
32	The Miq'ad facade by night	George Fakhri	2005
33	The Miq'ad inside, by night	George Fakhri	2005
34	The northern court by night	George Fakhri	2005