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## The Patronage of al-Nāṣir Muḥammad ibn Qalāwūn, 1310-1341\*

The explanation for the nature of Mamluk architectural patronage that is now widely accepted by scholars is that the Mamluks, who were slave soldiers who had illegally seized the throne from their masters, the Ayyubids, sponsored monuments, mostly madrasahs, that would redound to their economic as well as political advantage. Under the law, the Mamluks had no right of inheritance; therefore, they sought to build religious institutions whose endowment would enable them to transfer their wealth, give employment to their children, establish local ties, and win the favor of the religious elite, the ulama, all at the same time. This patronage was also interpreted as a means of political legitimation: their sponsorship of madrasahs displayed a commitment and devotion to the Ayyubid Sunni revival and thus made them legitimate heirs of the Ayyubids.<sup>1</sup>

This thesis, though valid as far as it goes, does not account for the change in the social structure of the ruling elite over time. It cannot be applied to individuals who ceased to fit the profile constructed for Mamluk rulers by choosing not to perpetuate the system, but to change its course. In particular this was true of the house of Qalāwūn, who did inherit the throne of the Mamluk sultanate and whose most distinguished figure was al-Nāṣir Muḥammad ibn Qalāwūn. Al-Nāṣir was not a slave soldier and did not rise to power through the army. His reign stands in sharp contrast to those of his predecessors. Unlike the short unstable regimes of Mamluk military generals, al-Nāṣir's third reign placed on the throne a free-born ruler who succeeded his father and brother and ruled for over thirty years in peace and prosperity. His patronage of architecture also stands in contrast to that of his predecessors; it shifts from the founding of madrasahs to the building of congregational mosques. This shift was not only due to practical reasons but has symbolic significance, as this article will make clear.

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<sup>1</sup>See R. Stephen Humphreys, "The Expressive Intent of the Mamluk Architecture of Cairo: A Preliminary Essay," *Studia Islamica* 35 (1972): 69-119, and I. M. Lapidus, "Mamluk Patronage and the Arts in Egypt: Concluding Remarks," *Muqarnas* 2 (1984): 173-81.



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Muḥammad ibn Qalāwūn was raised to the sultanate for the first time in 693/1293, with the title al-Malik al-Nāṣir (victorious king).<sup>2</sup> He was only nine years of age at the time, and power was in the hands of his viceroy, Kitbughā al-Manṣūrī, and his vizier, ‘Alam al-Dīn al-Shujā’ī.<sup>3</sup> The next year Kitbughā deposed the boy king, removed him from the palace, and confined him and his mother to an apartment in the Citadel;<sup>4</sup> he then claimed the throne for himself as al-‘Ādil Kitbughā, and appointed as viceroy Ḥusām al-Dīn Lājīn, the former governor of Damascus who had emerged from hiding after his involvement in the assassination of al-Ashraf Khalīl ibn Qalāwūn.<sup>5</sup>

Kitbughā’s two-year reign ended when al-Manṣūr Lājīn deposed him in turn and exiled al-Nāṣir Muḥammad to al-Karak.<sup>6</sup> In 698/1299, the mamluks of al-Ashraf Khalīl, aided by Burjī mamluks, revolted against Sultan Lājīn, murdered him while he was at prayer in the Citadel, and brought al-Nāṣir Muḥammad back from exile at al-Karak to his rightful throne.<sup>7</sup> A new government was formed. Amir Sayf al-Dīn Salār was appointed to the office of viceroy and Amir Baybars al-Jāshankīr to the office of *ustādār*.<sup>8</sup> But this only began yet another struggle between Amir Salār, the leader of the Ṣāliḥī and Manṣūrī mamluks, and Amir Baybars, the leader of the Burjī mamluks. The increasing rivalry between them, and their interference with the authority of al-Nāṣir Muḥammad, resulted in al-Nāṣir’s losing his throne once again. He fled back to al-Karak in 708/1308.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>2</sup>Badr al-Dīn al-Ḥasan ibn ‘Umar Ibn Ḥabīb al-Ḥalabī, *Tadhkirat al-Nabīh fī Ayyām al-Manṣūr wa-Banīh* (Cairo, 1976-82), 1: 169; Baybars al-Manṣūrī, *Al-Tuḥfah al-Mulūkīyah fī al-Dawlah al-Turkīyah* (Cairo, 1987), 138; Aḥmad ibn ‘Alī al-Maqrīzī, *Kitāb al-Sulūk li-Ma’rifat Duwal al-Mulūk* (Cairo, 1934-71), 1:3:794.

<sup>3</sup>Ibn Iyās, *Badā’i’ al-Zuhūr fī Waqā’i’ al-Duhūr* (Cairo, 1982-84), 1:1:378-79; al-Manṣūrī, *Al-Tuḥfah al-Mulūkīyah*, 138.

<sup>4</sup>Ibn Ḥabīb, *Tadhkirat al-Nabīh*, 1:175; al-Maqrīzī, *Al-Sulūk*, 1:3:806-7.

<sup>5</sup>Aḥmad ibn ‘Abd al-Wahhāb al-Nuwayrī, “Nihāyat al-Arab fī Funūn al-Adab,” MS 549 Ma‘ārif ‘Āmmah, Dār al-Kutub, Cairo, fol. 30; al-Maqrīzī, *Al-Mawā’iz wa-al-I’tibār fī Dhīkr al-Khiṭaṭ wa-al-Āthār* (Bulaq, 1953-54), 2:239; Ibn Ḥabīb, *Tadhkirat al-Nabīh*, 1:178.

<sup>6</sup>Al-Maqrīzī, *Al-Sulūk*, 1:3:832-33; Ibn Ḥabīb, *Tadhkirat al-Nabīh*, 1:204; al-Manṣūrī, *Al-Tuḥfah al-Mulūkīyah*, 149.

<sup>7</sup>Al-Maqrīzī, *Al-Sulūk*, 1:3:868-69; Ibn Iyās, *Badā’i’ al-Zuhūr*, 1:1:398-99; Ibn Ḥabīb, *Tadhkirat al-Nabīh*, 1:212-13; al-Manṣūrī, *Al-Tuḥfah al-Mulūkīyah*, 154-55.

<sup>8</sup>Ibn Ḥabīb, *Tadhkirat al-Nabīh*, 1:213; al-Manṣūrī, *Al-Tuḥfah al-Mulūkīyah*, 155.

<sup>9</sup>Abū al-Maḥāsīn Yūsuf Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Al-Nujūm al-Zāhirah fī Mulūk Miṣr wa-al-Qāhirah* (Cairo, 1929-56), 8:179; al-Maqrīzī, *Al-Sulūk*, 2:1:44; Ibn Iyās, *Badā’i’ al-Zuhūr*, 1:1:421; Ibn Ḥabīb, *Tadhkirat al-Nabīh*, 1:281-86; al-Manṣūrī, *Al-Tuḥfah al-Mulūkīyah*, 181, 187.



Baybars al-Jāshankīr was declared sultan in 708/1309,<sup>10</sup> and Salār was appointed to the office of viceroy.

This time al-Nāṣir Muḥammad prepared his return to the throne of Egypt. He gained the support of the bedouin Arabs in al-Karak and of the governors of Aleppo, Ḥamāh, Jerusalem, and Ṣafad. Although Baybars had seized all his wealth, al-Nāṣir was still able to recruit some of the mamluks of his brother Khalīl in addition to defectors from Baybars's rule.<sup>11</sup> In a triumphal procession al-Nāṣir Muḥammad entered the city of Damascus.<sup>12</sup> On Friday, the twelfth of Sha'bān of the year 709/1310, the *khuṭbah* was delivered in the name of al-Malik al-Nāṣir Muḥammad instead of Baybars in Damascus, and the amirs gave their oath of allegiance to the sultan. On the nineteenth of Ramaḍān, the name of al-Nāṣir replaced that of Baybars in the *khuṭbah* in Cairo. From Damascus, al-Nāṣir proceeded to Cairo, where he arrived on the first of Shawwāl of the year 709/1310.<sup>13</sup> Baybars had fled with his mamluks, and the city had prepared to receive the sultan. Al-Nāṣir mounted the throne for the third time at the age of twenty-four, this time to stay.

Al-Nāṣir's third accession to the throne ushered in a new era in Mamluk history. He began by eliminating the amirs who had betrayed him; both Baybars al-Jāshankīr and his viceroy Salār were executed.<sup>14</sup> They were replaced by the mamluks who supported him, most of whom were former mamluks of his brother al-Ashraf Khalīl. They were promoted to the rank of amir and assigned official posts.

Al-Nāṣir governed with a limited number of trusted men of high caliber, whose long terms are reflective of the stability of al-Nāṣir's court. Among them were Tankiz al-Ḥusāmī, the governor of Damascus (1312-40),<sup>15</sup> 'Alā' al-Dīn Aḷṭunbughā, governor of Aleppo (1314-17, 1331-41),<sup>16</sup> and Arghūn al-Dawādār al-Nāṣirī, viceroy of Egypt (1310-26),<sup>17</sup> who earlier had been chancellor and was something of an intellectual: he collected books and studied hadith and Hanafi

<sup>10</sup>Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Al-Nujūm al-Zāhirah*, 8:181; al-Maqrīzī, *Al-Sulūk*, 2:1:45-46; al-Maqrīzī, *Khiṭaṭ*, 2:417.

<sup>11</sup>Al-Manṣūrī, *Al-Tuḥfah al-Mulūkīyah*, 193-98; Abū Bakr ibn 'Abd Allāh Ibn al-Dawādārī, *Kanz al-Durar wa-Jāmi' al-Ghurar* (Cairo, 1971), 9:167; al-Maqrīzī, *Al-Sulūk*, 2:1:62-67.

<sup>12</sup>Ibn Ḥabīb, *Tadhkirat al-Nabīh*, 2:19; Ibn al-Dawādārī, *Kanz al-Durar*, 9:172-73; al-Maqrīzī, *Al-Sulūk*, 2:1:66-67.

<sup>13</sup>Al-Maqrīzī, *Al-Sulūk*, 2:1:72-73; al-Manṣūrī, *Al-Tuḥfah al-Mulūkīyah*, 201; Ibn al-Dawādārī, *Kanz al-Durar*, 9:187-89.

<sup>14</sup>Al-Maqrīzī, *Al-Sulūk*, 2:1:81, 88; Ibn al-Dawādārī, *Kanz al-Durar*, 9:197-98.

<sup>15</sup>Khalīl ibn Aybak al-Ṣafadī, *Al-Wāfi bi-al-Wafayāt*, 10:420-35; al-Maqrīzī, *Al-Sulūk*, 2:2:499-501; Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Al-Nujūm al-Zāhirah*, 9:145-59.

<sup>16</sup>Al-Maqrīzī, *Al-Sulūk*, 2:1:137, 2:2:330.

<sup>17</sup>For more biographical information, see Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Al-Manhal al-Ṣāfi wa-al-Mustawfā*



law, and was permitted to issue *fatwās*.<sup>18</sup> Tankiz al-Ḥusāmī was an effective governor in Damascus for most of al-Nāṣir's reign; imitating al-Nāṣir's efforts at urban reform in Egypt, he both restored and built a large number of institutions, reformed the management of *waqfs*, and built an aqueduct to supply the city with water.<sup>19</sup>

Al-Nāṣir was a strong, autocratic ruler; his third reign lasted thirty-one years, until his death in 741/1341. Those years have been described as the "climax of Egyptian culture and civilization,"<sup>20</sup> a time when "the empire reached the highest pinnacle of its power."<sup>21</sup> He was popular with the people, and established strong ties with the bedouin tribes who had supported him while he was in exile. He was the first of the Mamluk sultans to speak fluent Arabic. Twice a week, he administered justice before the people in the Dār al-'Adl of the Citadel.

At the frontiers of the Mamluk empire, al-Nāṣir's third reign was better known for peace than war. The reign of al-Ashraf Khalīl had seen the fall of Acre and an end to the Crusades in Syria. In al-Nāṣir's second reign the Mongol invasion under the Ilkhan Ghazan Maḥmūd in 699/1299<sup>22</sup> was defeated by the Mamluk army in 702/1303 at Shaghab.<sup>23</sup> The threat from Mongol Iran was completely eliminated during al-Nāṣir's third reign. In their last attempt to invade Syria in 712/1312, led by the Ilkhan Öljeitü, Ghazan's successor, the Mongols were forced by the Mamluks to retreat beyond the Euphrates.<sup>24</sup> A peace treaty, the treaty of Aleppo, was later negotiated and signed with the Ilkhanid Abū Sa'īd, Öljeitü's successor, in 720/1320.<sup>25</sup> Freed from these problems, al-Nāṣir Muḥammad could direct his efforts at establishing diplomatic relations and encouraging trade.<sup>26</sup> His court was said to have received eight embassies in a single year (716/1316),

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*ba'd al-Wāfi* (Cairo, 1984-90), 2:306-8.

<sup>18</sup> Aḥmad ibn 'Alī Ibn Ḥajar al-'Asqalānī, *Al-Durar al-Kāminah fī A'yān al-Mī'ah al-Thāminah* (Beirut, 1970), 1:351-52; Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Al-Nujūm al-Zāhirah*, 9:288-89.

<sup>19</sup> Robert Irwin, *The Middle East in the Middle Ages: The Early Mamluk Sultanate 1250-1382* (London, 1986), 107.

<sup>20</sup> Stanley Lane-Poole, *The Story of Cairo* (London, 1902), 215.

<sup>21</sup> J. B. Glubb, *Soldiers of Fortune: The Story of the Mamluks* (London, 1973), 226.

<sup>22</sup> Al-Maqrīzī, *Al-Sulūk*, 1:3:882-901.

<sup>23</sup> Ibn al-Dawādārī, *Kanz al-Durar*, 9:85-88; al-Maqrīzī, *Al-Sulūk*, 1:3:930-38; Ibrāhīm ibn Muḥammad Ibn Duqmāq, *Al-Jawhar al-Thamīn fī Sīrat al-Khulafā' wa-al-Mulūk wa-al-Salāṭīn* (Mecca, 1982), 132-35.

<sup>24</sup> Ibn al-Dawādārī, *Kanz al-Durar*, 9:245-251; Ibn Iyās, *Badā' i' al-Zuhūr*, 1:1:442; Ibn Ḥabīb, *Tadhkirat al-Nabīh*, 2:45.

<sup>25</sup> Al-Maqrīzī, *Al-Sulūk*, 2:1:209-10; Ibn Ḥabīb, *Tadhkirat al-Nabīh*, 2:115.

<sup>26</sup> Ibn Iyās, *Badā' i' al-Zuhūr*, 1:173; al-Maqrīzī, *Al-Sulūk*, 2:2:537; Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Al-Nujūm al-Zāhirah*, 9:173-75.



among them representatives from the Byzantine Emperor, the Khan of the Golden Horde, and the Ilkhan Abū Sa‘īd.<sup>27</sup> To further strengthen his relations with the khan, al-Nāṣir proposed to marry Abū Sa‘īd’s daughter, but no agreement could be reached about her dowry. Eventually a descendant of Chingiz Khan was sent as wife to al-Nāṣir Muḥammad to establish ties between them.<sup>28</sup> Other fronts were also secured. Expeditions between 720/1320 and 738/1337 resulted in an agreement with Cilician Armenia to double the annual tribute to which it had consented during the reign of Lājīn.<sup>29</sup> To secure trade with the East, al-Nāṣir strengthened diplomatic relations with both the sultan of Delhi and the Rasulids of Yemen.<sup>30</sup>

Having stabilized and secured his empire the sultan turned his attention to public works. Roads, irrigation systems, bridges, mosques, and religious institutions were built. Al-Nāṣir’s enthusiastic patronage of architecture set the tone for his followers and initiated a building boom. The sultan was beyond doubt the most lavish patron of architecture in the Mamluk period. Mamluk historians acknowledge this when they compare him to his predecessors. Writes al-Maqrīzī:

Al-Nāṣir 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 eighty thousand *dirhams* per day. When he saw something he disliked, he demolished it entirely and rebuilt it to his satisfaction. No king before him equaled his expenditure on architecture. When al-Manṣūr Qalāwūn desired to build a covered *maṣṭabah* to sit on, protected from the heat of the sun, and al-Shujā’ī wrote for him an estimate of its cost (four thousand *dirhams*), he took the paper from the hands of al-Shujā’ī 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-Zāhir Baybars and those who preceded him; they did not spend money but saved it conservatively and fearfully.<sup>31</sup>

Al-Nāṣir instituted an official *dīwān* for the administration of building projects: “He built extensively, assigned Aqsunqur to manage construction, and brought

<sup>27</sup> Al-Maqrīzī, *Al-Sulūk*, 2:2:163-64.

<sup>28</sup> Glubb, *Soldiers of Fortune*, 210.

<sup>29</sup> Ibn Ḥabīb, *Tadhkirat al-Nabīh*, 2:124.

<sup>30</sup> Aḥmad ibn ‘Alī al-Qalqashandī, *Ṣubḥ al-A‘shā fī Ṣinā‘at al-Inshā’* (Cairo, 1913-18), 5:52; al-Maqrīzī, *Al-Sulūk*, 2:1:254-60.

<sup>31</sup> Al-Maqrīzī, *Al-Sulūk*, 2:2:537.



construction workers from all over Syria. For construction, he designated a *dīwān* whose expenditures amounted to eight to twelve thousand *dirhams* per day.<sup>32</sup> These projects were paid for by the new wealth brought in by the reform achieved by al-Nāṣir's *rawk* (land survey) in 715/1315.<sup>33</sup> Under the old system, used by al-Zāhir Baybars and al-Manṣūr Qalāwūn, the cultivatable land was divided into twenty-four shares, and was distributed so that the sultan and his mamluks had four, the *ḥalqah*<sup>34</sup> had ten, and the amirs had ten. This was slightly modified by Lājīn to a four, nine, and eleven distribution. Al-Nāṣir's *rawk* awarded himself ten shares, with the remainder going to the *ḥalqah* and the amirs.<sup>35</sup>

Among al-Nāṣir's extensive projects was the canal at Alexandria, around which grew the town of al-Nāṣirīyah,<sup>36</sup> a *maydān* at the foot of the Citadel,<sup>37</sup> the Khānqāh of Siryāqūs,<sup>38</sup> and al-Jāmi' al-Nāṣirī.<sup>39</sup> In the Citadel he built the Qaṣr al-Ablaq,<sup>40</sup>

<sup>32</sup>Ibid., 2:1:130.

<sup>33</sup>Ibn Iyās, *Badā' i' al-Zuhūr*, 1:1:446.

<sup>34</sup>*Ḥalqah* literally means "ring." During the Ayyubid period the term referred to a small group of bodyguards around the sultan. During the Mamluk period the term came to refer to the free-born members of the Mamluk army. See D. Ayalon, "Studies on the Structure of the Mamluk Army-II," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 15 (1953): 448-49.

<sup>35</sup>Al-Maqrīzī, *Khiṭaṭ*, 1:87-89.

<sup>36</sup>This project was carried out in 710/1310, employing one hundred thousand men according to Ibn Taghrībirdī, and forty thousand according to al-Maqrīzī. See Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Al-Nujūm al-Zāhirah*, 9:178; al-Maqrīzī, *Al-Sulūk*, 2:1:111; idem, *Khiṭaṭ*, 2:171.

<sup>37</sup>It is called Maydān Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn today. The history of this *maydān* goes back to the time of Aḥmad Ibn Ṭūlūn. It was rebuilt by the Ayyubid sultan al-Kāmil in 611/1214. During the reign of al-Nāṣir the *maydān* was revived, planted with trees, supplied with water, and enclosed by a stone wall. It became an important urban feature that provided pleasant scenery as viewed from the Citadel, especially from al-Qaṣr al-Ablaq. Al-Maqrīzī, *Khiṭaṭ*, 2:228; Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Al-Nujūm al-Zāhirah*, 9:179.

<sup>38</sup>The area of Siryāqūs, outside of al-Qāhirah to the north, received a great deal of attention from al-Nāṣir Muḥammad, who developed it and built in it a number of palaces, houses, and gardens. The *khānqāh* incorporated a Friday mosque and was completed in 725/1324. Al-Maqrīzī, *Khiṭaṭ*, 2:422; Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Al-Nujūm al-Zāhirah*, 9:79; Ibn Ḥabīb, *Tadhkirat al-Nabīh*, 2:149.

<sup>39</sup>It was built by al-Nāṣir Muḥammad in 711-12/1311-12 on the shore of the Nile at the southern tip of the Grand Canal outside of Fuṣṭāṭ. This mosque also incorporated a *khānqāh*. Ibn Duqmāq, *Al-Intiṣār li-Wāsiṭat 'Iqd al-Amṣār* (Cairo, 1893), 4:77, 101; al-Maqrīzī, *Khiṭaṭ*, 2:304; Ibn al-Dawādārī, *Kanz al-Durar*, 9:211.

<sup>40</sup>Built by al-Nāṣir in 713-14/1313-14. It was described by Ibn Iyās as three interlinked palaces with five *qā'ahs*. See al-Maqrīzī, *Khiṭaṭ*, 2:209-10; idem, *Al-Sulūk*, 2:1:129; and Ibn Iyās, *Badā' i' al-Zuhūr*, 1:1:445. Remains of this palace were standing at the time of the French expedition, and are thus documented in drawings. See J. Jomard, "Description de la Ville et de la Cité de la Kaïre," *Description de l'Égypte par les Savants de l'Expédition Française. Etat Moderne* (Paris, 1812).



the Great Īwān,<sup>41</sup> the mosque,<sup>42</sup> and the seven *qā'ahs*.<sup>43</sup> He built a number of residences for his amirs, including palaces for Ṭaqtimur al-Dimashqī in Ḥadrat al-Baqar, Baktimur al-Sāqī on the lake of al-Fīl,<sup>44</sup> and the two palaces of Alṭunbughā al-Māridānī and Yalbughā al-Yaḥyāwī in Rumaylah.<sup>45</sup> His restoration efforts included the Jāmi' al-Nāṣirī around the mausoleum of al-Sayyidah Nafīṣah in 714/1314<sup>46</sup> and the rebuilding of the mosque of Rashīdah<sup>47</sup> in 741/1340.<sup>48</sup> Among his public works were a number of bridges (*qanāṭir*, sing. *qanṭarah*): the al-Jadīdah bridge and the al-Āwiz bridge were constructed over the Grand Canal in 725/1324.<sup>49</sup> When the new canal named al-Khalīj al-Nāṣirī was finished,<sup>50</sup> the bridge of Bāb al-Baḥr was built across it in 725/1324.<sup>51</sup>

<sup>41</sup>This *īwān* has not survived; it was known as Dār al-Ādl. It was built by al-Manṣūr Qalāwūn and was renovated by his son al-Ashraf Khalīl. Al-Nāṣir Muḥammad renovated the *īwān* twice before ordering its demolition. He rebuilt the *īwān*, to which he added monumental granite columns and a great dome, in 734/1333. For a description of the *īwān* see al-Maqrīzī, *Khiṭaṭ*, 2:206; idem, *Al-Sulūk*, 2:1:148-49.

<sup>42</sup>The existing mosque was built by al-Nāṣir Muḥammad in 735/1334. On its site there was a much smaller mosque which was demolished by Sultan al-Nāṣir and rebuilt in 718/1318. That mosque was in turn demolished to be replaced by the existing mosque. Al-Maqrīzī, *Khiṭaṭ*, 2:212.

<sup>43</sup>Overlooking the *maydān*, the *qā'ahs* were built by al-Nāṣir to house his one thousand two hundred concubines. See al-Maqrīzī, *Khiṭaṭ*, 2:212.

<sup>44</sup>This palace was built by al-Nāṣir Muḥammad for a favored amir, al-Sāqī, whose daughter later married al-Nāṣir's son Ānūk. It was built in the year 717-18/1317-18. It is described as one of Cairo's greatest palaces to which a large and well-equipped stable was attached. 'Alī Basha Mubārak, *Al-Khiṭaṭ al-Tawfiqīyah al-Jadīdah li-Miṣr al-Qāhirah* (Cairo, 1888), 2:328-29; al-Maqrīzī, *Khiṭaṭ*, 2:68.

<sup>45</sup>The two palaces were built in 738/1337 by al-Nāṣir Muḥammad opposite each other at the foot of the Citadel, on the *maydān* of al-Rumaylah. They were demolished by al-Nāṣir Ḥasan ibn Muḥammad ibn Qalāwūn, who built on the site his *jāmi'*-madrasah complex in 757-63/1356-62. See al-Maqrīzī, *Al-Sulūk*, 2:2:537-41; idem, *Khiṭaṭ*, 2:71; Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Al-Nujūm al-Zāhirah*, 9:121.

<sup>46</sup>Al-Maqrīzī, *Khiṭaṭ*, 2:306; Ibn Iyās, *Badā' i' al-Zuhūr*, 1:1:485.

<sup>47</sup>This mosque was built in 393/1002 by the Fatimid caliph al-Ḥākīm. When it fell into ruin around the year 738/1337, it was looted. According to al-Maqrīzī, Amir al-Māridānī transferred a number of columns from it to his mosque on al-Tabbānah Street in al-Qāhirah.

<sup>48</sup>Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Al-Nujūm al-Zāhirah*, 4:177; al-Maqrīzī, *Al-Sulūk*, 2:1:517.

<sup>49</sup>Al-Maqrīzī, *Khiṭaṭ*, 2:148.

<sup>50</sup>This canal was dug by al-Nāṣir Muḥammad in 725/1324. It was to supply the area of Siryāqūs in which al-Nāṣir built his *khānqāh*, palaces, and pleasure gardens. See al-Suyūfī, *Ḥusn al-Muḥādarah fī Akhbār Miṣr wa-al-Qāhirah* (Cairo, 1882), 2:389; al-Maqrīzī, *Khiṭaṭ*, 2:145-46.

<sup>51</sup>Al-Maqrīzī, *Khiṭaṭ*, 2:151; Ibn Ḥabīb, *Tadhkirat al-Nabīh*, 2:145.



The amirs followed in al-Nāṣir's footsteps: fourteen bridges were constructed across the Grand Canal and five across al-Khalīj al-Nāṣirī.<sup>52</sup> Al-Nāṣir encouraged this patronage by offering both moral and financial support. Ibn Taghrībirdī related that al-Nāṣir, upon being informed of a new project, offered his thanks publicly and his financial support privately.<sup>53</sup> In this building frenzy whole new neighborhoods developed: "The Island of al-Fīl and the site of Būlāq were built up. After having been empty sand on which mamluks shot arrows and amirs played ball, they were covered with houses, palaces, mosques, markets, and gardens."<sup>54</sup> The most significant impact of al-Nāṣir's patronage on the city itself was the expansion of al-Qāhirah beyond its walls. The extension of the city at its southern edge is of particular significance because that part of the city had acquired a ceremonial function. It linked the walled city of al-Qāhirah to the Citadel, thus extending its processional routes along which prestigious monuments were erected.

At the architectural level, al-Nāṣir's patronage resulted in the revival of the hypostyle mosque, which had fallen into disuse. In fact, in Cairo, for a period of a century and a half (555-711/1160-1311)<sup>55</sup> only one congregational mosque had been built, and that was the Great Mosque of al-Zāhir Baybars north of the walled city of al-Qāhirah in 665-67/1266-69.<sup>56</sup> In contrast, during the time of al-Nāṣir MuḤammad, over thirty of them were built.<sup>57</sup> Three by al-Nāṣir MuḤammad himself used the traditional hypostyle plan and were outside the walled city. The first built by al-Nāṣir was the Jāmi' al-Nāṣirī on the shore of the Nile north of Fuṣṭāṭ; the second was constructed around the mausoleum of al-Sayyidah Nafīṣah; and the third was al-Nāṣir's royal mosque in the Citadel.

The Jāmi' al-Nāṣirī was built in 711-12/1311-12.<sup>58</sup> It no longer exists, but Ibn Duqmāq left a detailed description:

It has four doors: one is in the qiblah wall, which is the door to the chamber of the *khaṭīb*; the second is in the *baḥrī* wall opening onto

<sup>52</sup> 'Alī al-Mīlayjī, "Amā'ir al-Nāṣir MuḤammad al-Dīnīyah" (master's thesis, Cairo University, 1975), 93, 99.

<sup>53</sup> Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Al-Nujūm al-Zāhirah*, 9:185.

<sup>54</sup> Al-Maqrīzī, *Al-Sulūk*, 2:2:539.

<sup>55</sup> In 555/1160, the last of the Fatimid congregational mosques was built by al-Malik al-Šāliḥ Ṭalā'i' ibn Ruzzīk.

<sup>56</sup> During that period a very small number of *jāmi'*s were built outside the city, in the Qarāfah and on private farmland in the outskirts of the city, for example the *jāmi'* near the mausoleum al-Shāfi'i, built in 607/1210, and the *jāmi'* of al-Ṭaybarsī, built in 707/1307. See al-Maqrīzī, *Khiṭaṭ*, 2:296-304.

<sup>57</sup> They are listed by al-Maqrīzī in *Al-Sulūk*, 2:2:544.

<sup>58</sup> Al-Manṣūrī, *Al-Tuḥfah al-Mulūkīyah*, 226; al-Maqrīzī, *Khiṭaṭ*, 2:304; Ibn Duqmāq, *Al-Intiṣār*, 1:76.



the blessed Baḥr al-Nīl; the third is in the eastern wall that is reached from between the two gardens of ‘Alā’ al-Dīn Ṭaybarsī al-Wazīr; and the fourth is reached from the small street which separates it from the well and leads to the door of the Qā‘at al-Khaṭabah and all else. It also has three doors, each leading to the roof. . . . It has three mihrabs on the wall of the qiblah: the large one is in the dome, the second to the east of it, and the third is to the west of it. It also has its enclosed *maqṣūrah*, which has three doors, and its *maqṣūrah* which is in its *baḥrī* side, adjacent to its eastern side, which is dedicated to the *fuqarā’* who are installed below and above. . . . [There are] one hundred thirty-seven columns, of which the columns of the dome, and they are ten, are large and solid. Between the dome and the roof of the *jāmi’* are again eight solid columns; they are shorter and thinner than the first ones. On the eastern front area, between the domed area and the eastern wall, are twenty-six columns. On the western front is an equal number, that is, twenty-six columns. On the eastern side of the *ṣaḥn*, between the *ṣaḥn* and the eastern wall, are sixteen columns. In the western side of the *ṣaḥn* is the same number. On the flank of its eastern end are thirteen columns, and on the flank of its western end the same number. Flanking the mihrab are two columns. In the *maqṣūrah* of the Sufis there are seven columns.<sup>59</sup>

It is clear from this description that this was a domed hypostyle mosque with a *ṣaḥn* and four *riwāqs*, the largest of which was the *riwāq* of the qiblah, three mihrabs on the qiblah wall (reminiscent of the treatment of the qiblah wall in late Fatimid mosques), and an axial symmetrical arrangement. According to the measurements given by Ibn Duqmāq, the *Jāmi’ al-Nāṣirī* was one hundred *dhirā’* [65.5 m] on its *qiblī* and *baḥrī* sides, one hundred twenty on its eastern side, and one hundred ten on its western side, and thus was not a perfect rectangle.

The second *jāmi’* founded by al-Nāṣir Muḥammad was begun in 714/1314 around the mausoleum of al-Sayyidah Nafīṣah. It too has not survived, but, according to the brief description of Ibn Duqmāq, it was also of the hypostyle type.<sup>60</sup>

<sup>59</sup>Ibn Duqmāq, *Al-Intiṣār*, 1:76.

<sup>60</sup>Ibid., 124.



The third *jāmi'* of al-Nāṣir was built in the Citadel in 718/1318 on a site originally occupied by a small mosque believed to have been built by the Ayyubid Sultan al-Kāmil,<sup>61</sup> which was demolished along with the royal kitchens.<sup>62</sup> By 735/1334, the mosque was again judged not fit for royalty and it was rebuilt once more. The extent of that reconstruction is unclear in Casanova's study, since none of the Mamluk historians consulted by him clearly identified the parts which were rebuilt at that time.<sup>63</sup> But Ibn al-Dawādārī, who lived during the reign of al-Nāṣir, provides detailed information. "In it [the year 735/1334] royal decrees were issued to demolish the *jāmi'* erected by our master the sultan, may his victory be exalted, in the Citadel, and to renovate its structure. The interior was demolished: the *riwāqs*, the *maqṣūrah*, and the mihrab. It was rebuilt to a structure the likes of which no eye has seen. He raised the arches of the *riwāqs* to an enormous height, also the dome was raised until it became very high. He brought to this mosque huge columns which were left in the city of Ashmūnayn."<sup>64</sup> These antique granite columns were brought to Cairo on boats and carried up to the Citadel by thousands of workers. The reconstruction of the interior involved increasing the height of the walls, which produced the reaction by Briggs that "its walls are higher in proportion to their length than those of Ibn Ṭūlūn or Ḥākīm."<sup>65</sup>

The *Jāmi'* of al-Nāṣir is almost square in plan, measuring 63 by 57 meters (Fig. 1). The *ṣaḥn* is a large rectangle measuring 35.50 by 23.50 meters; it originally had a fountain in the center, but that no longer exists.<sup>66</sup> The qiblah *riwāq* is four bays wide and each of the side *riwāqs* are two bays wide. As in the *Jāmi'* of al-Zāhir Baybars (Fig. 2), the area in front of the mihrab, covering nine square bays, is covered by a dome carried by wooden stalactite pendentives resting on ten cylindrical granite columns.<sup>67</sup> Neither the original mihrab nor the marble paneling

<sup>61</sup>Paul Casanova, *Tārīkh wa-Waṣf Qal'at al-Qāhirah*, trans. Aḥmad Darrāj (Cairo, 1974), 93-95.

<sup>62</sup>Al-Maqrīzī, *Khiṭaṭ*, 2:325.

<sup>63</sup>Including the accounts of al-Maqrīzī, Ibn Taghrībirdī, and al-'Umarī, who discussed the rebuilding but failed to indicate the changes made to the first structure.

<sup>64</sup>Al-Mīlayjī in "'Amā'ir al-Nāṣir Muḥammad al-Dīnīyah," 205-6, discloses the important account of Ibn al-Dawādārī, *Kanz al-Durar*, 9:382.

<sup>65</sup>M. Briggs, *Muhammadan Architecture in Egypt and Palestine* (New York, 1924), 101.

<sup>66</sup>This fountain was documented by Watson in 1886. The *ṣaḥn* of the mosque remains bare today. His survey and description of the mosque were published in *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* 18 (1886): 477-82.

<sup>67</sup>The original dome was covered with green tiles; it collapsed and was rebuilt during the reign of Sultan Qāyṭbāy in 893/1487, but this dome has also perished. The present dome is a modern addition made by the Comité in 1935. Ibn Iyās, *Badā' i' al-Zuhūr*, 3:253; Ḥasan 'Abd al-Wahhāb, "Dawlat al-Mamālīk al-Baḥrīyah: 'Aṣr al-Nāṣir Muḥammad ibn Qalāwūn," *Majallat al-'Imārah* 7-8 (1941): 295.



of the interior walls has survived.<sup>68</sup> Three projecting portals provide access to the mosque. The main portal is of the stalactite type; it is in the center of the northwestern facade on an axis with the mihrab (Fig. 3). The second portal is placed in the center of the northeastern facade and leads to the *ṣaḥn*; it has a trilobed arched recess. The third is located at the end of the southwestern wall; its pointed-arched recess features an *ablaq* medallion. This portal opens onto the qiblah *riwāq* and gives access to the royal *maqṣūrah* to the right of the mihrab.<sup>69</sup> It was the entrance used by the sultan on Fridays; the amirs entered through the portal on the northwestern wall.<sup>70</sup>

The two minarets built of stone and adorned with faience mosaics that rise above the structure contrast with the otherwise austere exterior. One minaret is located above the main portal; the other occupied the eastern corner of the mosque. The minaret above the portal has a conical shape of three stories; two balconies with stone-paneled parapets separate the shafts. The lower two shafts are carved with zigzag motifs; the upper shaft is ribbed and carries a bulbous ribbed top below which is an inscription band of white faience mosaic. The whole of the upper shaft is covered with white, blue, and green faience mosaic. The eastern minaret has a rectangular base and a cylindrical second shaft, both undecorated. The third story is similar to that of the first minaret only in that the upper structure is raised on an open arcade. Both the bulbous shapes and the use of faience mosaics testify to the participation of Persian craftsmen.<sup>71</sup> The interior facade of the *ṣaḥn* is articulated by a row of arched windows running across the facade above the arcade (Fig. 4). Painted *ablaq* masonry highlights the frame of the windows and the voussoirs of the arcade below. The wall is capped by stepped crenellation. At each of four corners is a sculptural element featuring the *mabkharah* minaret top.

Al-Nāṣir's example was followed by many amirs who built Friday mosques within the city. The privilege of building congregational mosques was no longer reserved for the sultan. Five examples of the hypostyle *jāmi'* dating to this period

<sup>68</sup>The marble paneling was dismantled and transferred to Istanbul by Sultan Selim. Both the mihrab and the marble dado were reconstructed by the Comité on the basis of photographs in 1947. See Doris Behrens-Abouseif, *Islamic Architecture in Cairo: An Introduction* (Leiden, 1989), 109; Al-Milāḡī, "Amā'ir al-Nāṣir Muḥammad al-Dīnīyah," 216-17.

<sup>69</sup>Achille Prisse D'Avennes, *L'Art Arabe* (Paris, 1877), 1:106.

<sup>70</sup>Aḥmad ibn Yaḥyá Ibn Faḍl Allāh al-'Umarī, *Masālik al-Abṣār fī Mamālik al-Amṣār: Dawlat al-Mamālik al-Ūlá*, ed. Dorothea Krawulsky (Beirut, 1986), 6:105.

<sup>71</sup>For further discussion, see Michael Meinecke, "Die mamlukischen faience Dekorationen: Eine Werkstätte aus Tabriz in Kairo (1330-1355)," *Kunst des Orients* 11 (1976-77): 85ff.



are extant. The Jāmi‘ of Qūṣūn al-Nāṣirī, the son-in-law of al-Nāṣir MuḤammad,<sup>72</sup> was constructed in 730/1329<sup>73</sup> outside of Bāb Zuwaylah, on the street of al-Qal‘ah. Today only the *riwāq* of the qiblah remains; the rest was demolished when the street of MuḤammad Alī was constructed. ‘Alī Pasha Mubārak proposed a design for its reconstruction that was implemented in 1893. The only remaining part of the original structure is the northwestern portal containing the foundation inscription: “Qūṣūn al-Sāqī al-Malākī al-Nāṣirī ordered the construction of this blessed *jāmi‘* during the reign of our master al-Malik al-Nāṣir . . . in the year seven hundred thirty [1329].”<sup>74</sup>

The Jāmi‘ of Ulmās al-Ḥāḥib, the chamberlain of the imperial court,<sup>75</sup> located at the intersection of Ḥilmīyah Street and the Boulevard MuḤammad Alī, was begun in 729/1328-29 and completed in 730/1329 (Fig. 5). Attached to the *jāmi‘* is the mausoleum of the founder. It occupies the northern corner of the *jāmi‘* in the sharp angle formed by the adjustment between the edge of the street and the orientation of the qiblah wall. The site is very irregular so the *riwāqs* differ in size; their organization is maintained by a shift in the main axis of the building.

Amir Bashtāk al-Nāṣirī<sup>76</sup> constructed his *jāmi‘* opposite a *khānqāh*<sup>77</sup> he had built (it no longer survives) and linked the two with a bridge.<sup>78</sup> According to

<sup>72</sup>Qūṣūn al-Nāṣirī was a mamluk of al-Nāṣir MuḤammad, who came to Cairo in the company of Khawand Ibnat Uzbek, the wife of al-Nāṣir MuḤammad, in 720/1320. He was drafted, trained in the Citadel, and appointed to many posts until he was promoted to a commander of a thousand mamluks. The sultan was married to his sister but also became his father-in-law in 727/1326-27. Al-Nāṣir appointed him guardian to his son Abū Bakr, whom he executed and replaced with another son of al-Nāṣir, the five-year-old al-Ashraf Kuchuk. Qūṣūn ruled the country as *nā’ib al-salṭanah* in Cairo. He was murdered by the amirs who allied with Aḥmad ibn al-Nāṣir MuḤammad in his quest for the throne in 742/1341. Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāminah*, 3:257; al-Maqrīzī, *Khiṭaṭ*, 2:307.

<sup>73</sup>Al-Maqrīzī, *Khiṭaṭ*, 2:307.

<sup>74</sup>Cited by Su‘ād Māhir MuḤammad, *Masājid Miṣr wa-Awliyā’ uhā al-Ṣāliḥūn* (Cairo, 1971-83), 3:191.

<sup>75</sup>Ulmās al-Ḥāḥib also held, though not officially, the office of viceroy when Amir Arghūn left the post and was appointed governor of Aleppo. Al-Nāṣir left him in charge of the Citadel when he traveled to the Ḥijāz in 732/1331. He lost the trust of al-Nāṣir MuḤammad in 734/1333 and was killed under mysterious circumstances in that year. See Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Al-Manhal al-Ṣāfi*, 3:89-91.

<sup>76</sup>Amir Bashtāk al-Nāṣirī was a mamluk of al-Nāṣir MuḤammad. It is said that al-Nāṣir wanted to purchase a mamluk who looked like the Ilkhan Abū Sa‘īd; Bashtāk was sold to him for six thousand *dirhams*, and for that he was favored by the sultan. He grew rich by confiscating the wealth of Baktimur al-Sāqī after his death. Conflict between him and Amir Qūṣūn ended his life in 742/1341. See Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāminah*, 1:477; Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Al-Nujūm al-Zāhirah*, 9:18-19.

<sup>77</sup>The *sabīl* built by Ulfat Hānim in 1280/1863 stands on the site of the *khānqāh* today.

<sup>78</sup>Al-Maqrīzī, *Khiṭaṭ*, 2:262.



al-Maqrīzī, the *jāmi'* was completed in 736/1335,<sup>79</sup> but the inscription carved on the door of the minaret leading to the roof of the *jāmi'* indicates a completion date of 727/1326-27. It is located outside the walled city on the street of Qabū al-Karamālī on Birkat al-Fīl (Port Sa'īd Street today). This *jāmi'* was rebuilt by Princess Ulfat Hānim, the mother of Muṣṭafá Pasha Fāḍil, in 1278/1861 and is now called the *Jāmi'* of Muṣṭafá Pasha Fāḍil. Only the main portal and the minaret remain of the original structure (Fig. 6).

The *Jāmi'* of Sitt Miskah (Fig. 7), located in Sūwayqat al-Sibā'iyīn was founded by Sitt Miskah al-Qahramānīyah (also known as Sitt Ḥadaq), the majordomo of the harem of al-Nāṣir,<sup>80</sup> in 741/1340.<sup>81</sup> The inscription on a wooden panel above the door of the minbar provides the date of its completion, 746/1345.<sup>82</sup> In its northwestern corner, the *jāmi'* contains Sitt Miskah's tomb; there is a band of Quranic inscription (from Sūrat Yāsīn) carved in stone on the exterior of the building, and a religious poem carved in wood in the interior.<sup>83</sup> The qiblah wall is lavishly decorated in marble. Marble columns also support the elaborate roof structure of the qiblah *riwāq*. The courtyard has a well—the ablution fountains are outside the *jāmi'*—and its walls are decorated in stucco.<sup>84</sup>

<sup>79</sup>Ibid., 309.

<sup>80</sup>Sitt Miskah al-Qahramānīyah al-Nāṣirīyah was a concubine who was brought up under the sultan's roof. Admiring her competence, the sultan appointed her to administer the royal harem. She was in charge of all affairs of the harem, from raising the sultan's children to organizing celebrations and weddings. The responsibilities she assumed and the control she demonstrated granted her the respected title "Sitt." She had an influential role in the sultan's decision to relieve merchants of unjust taxation. See Ibn Ḥajar, *al-Durar al-Kāminah*, 2:7; al-Maqrīzī, *Khīṭaṭ*, 2:116.

<sup>81</sup>Al-Maqrīzī, *Khīṭaṭ*, 2:326.

<sup>82</sup>K. A. C. Creswell, *A Brief Chronology of the Muhammadan Architecture of Egypt to A.D. 1517* (Cairo, 1919), 101.

<sup>83</sup>Mubārak, *Al-Khīṭaṭ al-Tawfīqīyah*, 1:3:91.

<sup>84</sup>See H. Al-Harithy, "Female Patronage of Mamluk Architecture in Cairo," *Harvard Middle Eastern and Islamic Review* 1, no. 2 (1994): 152-74, and C. Williams, "The Mosque of Sitt Hadaq," *Muqarnas* 11 (1994): 55-64.



The *Jāmi'* of Alṭunbughā al-Māridānī, the son-in-law of al-Nāṣir,<sup>85</sup> is located outside of Bāb Zuwaylah on al-Tabbānah Street (Fig. 8).<sup>86</sup> It was begun in 738/1337 and completed in 740/1339.<sup>87</sup> Al-Maqrīzī, in a rare instance, gives us the name of the architect as Ibn al-Suyūfī, al-Nāṣir's chief architect and the architect responsible for the Madrasah al-Aqbaghāwīyah (740/1340) attached to the Mosque of al-Azhar.<sup>88</sup> Like the *jāmi'*s of al-Nāṣir, al-Māridānī's has a traditional hypostyle plan (Fig. 9) but was built inside the city. The hypostyle plan was, therefore, adapted to its urban setting. Internally, it maintains a symmetrical axial arrangement around the open courtyard. The plan is rectangular, measuring 20 by 22.5 meters, with the northern corner carved out. To retain its symmetrical interior, a chamber was built in the southern corner of the qiblah *riwāq*, which comprises four bays; the remaining three *riwāqs* have two bays each. Three entrances lead to the *ṣaḥn*, with a fountain in the center. The first is on the northeastern side opening onto al-Tabbānah Street. The second entrance is across the *ṣaḥn* from the main portal and is the simplest of the three. The third is on the northwestern side on an axis with the mihrab. The side entrance on al-Tabbānah Street is transformed into the main entrance, for it links to one of the major ceremonial streets of Cairo through which the sultan's procession passed on its way to the Citadel from Bāb al-Naṣr.

In this series of mosques two significant architectural developments are worth noting. The first was the attachment of the mausoleum to the *jāmi'*, as was already customary with madrasahs. The second was the revival of the hypostyle *jāmi'* and the adaptation of its plan to the constrained sites within the urban fabric. In the case of al-Māridānī, for example, the mosque is located at a bend in the street. To accommodate the bend, the corners are cut at an angle to reflect the change in the direction of the street; the axial symmetry of the interior was maintained by building a cell to occupy the right corner of the qiblah *riwāq*. The portal is placed in the section of the building that is set back from the street, thus forming a pocket in front of the entrance which becomes part of its transitional spatial sequence. The minaret is located in the most visible section of the building. The jagged corner of the building joins the entry porch to make the portal appear to be projected, a reference to the tradition to which the mosque belongs that includes the Mosque of al-Ḥākīm and the Mosque of al-Zāhir Baybars, both of which have projected portals.

The number of *jāmi'*s built during the third reign of al-Nāṣir MuḤammad has been attributed simply to the growth of the city and its population, but it may also

<sup>85</sup> Amir Alṭunbughā al-Māridānī al-Sāqī was a favored mamluk of al-Nāṣir MuḤammad, who appointed him to the post of *sāqī* (cup-bearer) followed by many other posts until he became commander of a thousand. After the death of al-Nāṣir MuḤammad, his son al-Manṣūr Abū Bakr ascended the throne and imprisoned Alṭunbughā al-Māridānī in 742/1341. He was released after al-Manṣūr was deposed and replaced by his brother al-Ashraf Kuchuk in the same year. In



have broader significance. It can be first explained in light of the shift in authority from the Shafi'i to the Hanafi rite, whose law differed on the number of *jāmi'*s allowed in the city.<sup>89</sup> During the Ayyubid period no congregational mosques were built; the Friday *khuṭbah* was suspended from the Jāmi' of al-Azhar, and the number of *jāmi'*s in which the Friday *khuṭbah* had taken place during the Fatimid period was now reduced to two: the Jāmi' of al-Ḥākim in al-Qāhirah and the Jāmi' of 'Amr ibn al-'Āṣ in Fuṣṭāṭ.<sup>90</sup> Though the Ayyubids were Hanafis, Shafi'i law predominated during the Ayyubid period, and only Shafi'is were appointed to the position of *qāḍī al-quḍāh* (chief justice), assisted as well by other Shafi'i qadis. The Shafi'i law allows only one congregational mosque in each city. The situation continued during the early years of the Mamluk period until al-Zāhir Baybars built his *jāmi'* in 665/1266 in the new quarter of al-Ḥusaynīyah and Sultan Lājīn restored the Jāmi' of Ibn Ṭulūn and its Friday *khuṭbah* in 696/1296. When al-Zāhir Baybars ordered the restoration of the Friday *khuṭbah* in the Jāmi' of al-Azhar in 665/1266, the Shafi'i *qāḍī al-quḍāh* Tāj al-Dīn ibn Bint al-A'azz issued a *fatwā* that two Friday *khuṭbah*s should be allowed in the same city and the Hanbali *qāḍī al-quḍāh* Shams al-Dīn al-Ḥanbalī issued a *fatwā* contradicting the Shafi'i qadi.<sup>91</sup>

The Shafi'i rite gradually lost its dominance. First al-Zāhir Baybars in 663/1264 appointed four people to the office of *qāḍī al-quḍāh*, one for each of the four rites, instead of a single Shafi'i *qāḍī al-quḍāh*.<sup>92</sup> The Shafi'i rite continued to dominate for a while—the positions of imam and *khaṭīb* were reserved for the Shafi'is, and the Shafi'i qadi led the hierarchical order of seating at court. During the fourteenth century, however, the Hanafi rite gradually gained popularity, and the number of madrasahs devoted to it increased. Towards the end of the Baḥrī period, the Hanafis enjoyed the special favor of the sultan, who reserved the most prestigious positions for them.<sup>93</sup> The Friday *khuṭbah* and prayer were even held in madrasahs after Amir Jamāl al-Dīn Aqūsh obtained a *fatwā* in 730/1329 from Majlis al-Qaḍā' to conduct the Friday prayer in the madrasah of al-Ṣāliḥ Najm al-Dīn.<sup>94</sup> This shift away from Shafi'i dominance, combined with al-Nāṣir's patronage, resulted in the large number of congregational mosques in the city.

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743/1342, during the reign of al-Ṣāliḥ Ismā'īl ibn Muḥammad ibn Qalāwūn, he was appointed governor of Ḥamāh and later Aleppo. He died in Aleppo in 744/1343. Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Al-Manhal al-Ṣāfi*, 4:67-70; al-Maqrīzī, *Khiṭaṭ*, 2:308.

<sup>86</sup>The mosque was restored by the Comité in 1314/1896.

<sup>87</sup>Al-Maqrīzī, *Khiṭaṭ*, 2:308; Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Al-Nujūm al-Zāhirah*, 10:105; al-Shujā'ī, *Tārīkh al-Nāṣir Muḥammad ibn Qalāwūn al-Ṣāliḥī* (Wiesbaden, 1978), 70-71, 115-17.

<sup>88</sup>Al-Maqrīzī, *Khiṭaṭ*, 2:384.

<sup>89</sup>J. A. Williams, "Urbanization and Monument Construction in Mamlūk Cairo," *Muqarnas* 2 (1984): 35.



The shift from the building of madrasahs to the building of congregational mosques can also be explained in light of al-Nāṣir Muḥammad's competitive streak, especially where al-Zāhir Baybars, the founder of the Mamluk sultanate, was concerned. A number of incidents that took place during the reigns of al-Nāṣir reveal a certain resentment of rulers who interrupted the reigns of the house of Qalāwūn, and a very competitive attitude towards al-Zāhir Baybars al-Bunduqdārī. Kitbughā al-Manṣūrī and Baybars al-Jāshankīr were the two Mamluk sultans who had interrupted al-Nāṣir's own rule, deposed him, and sent him into exile. Al-Nāṣir acquired the madrasah built by Kitbughā and replaced Kitbughā's name in the foundation inscription with his own. He also ordered the royal title of Baybars al-Jāshankīr to be removed from his *khānqāh*. Al-Nāṣir's actions can be interpreted as a gesture of disapproval of their claim to the throne on the one hand, and a desire to establish an uninterrupted royal lineage for the house of Qalāwūn on the other.

Having erased the imprint of the sultans who unjustifiably interrupted the rule of the house of Qalāwūn, al-Nāṣir must have viewed himself in direct competition with the memory of al-Zāhir Baybars, who was not only the founder of the Mamluk dynasty but a ruler known for his architectural patronage. Al-Nāṣir saw in him a legend in Mamluk military and political history, a rival against whom he felt the need to compete. He set about outdoing his achievements. In the Citadel al-Nāṣir built the Qaṣr al-Ablaq to match the Ablaq Palace al-Zāhir Baybars had built in Damascus. Contemporary historians did not miss the point: al-Maqrīzī writes, "In this year [713/1313] [al-Nāṣir] began construction of al-Qaṣr 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-Zāhir Baybars outside of Damascus; he recruited craftsmen from Damascus and called on the craftsmen of Egypt."<sup>95</sup> Al-Nāṣir built other architectural parallels to those of al-Zāhir Baybars as well. Baybars had founded the royal suburb of al-Ḥusaynīyah, north of the walled city, around the congregational mosque and palace he built on the bank of the Grand Canal.<sup>96</sup> To match it, al-Nāṣir built the royal suburb of Siryāqūs in the northern outskirts of the city around his *jāmi'*-*khānqāh* complex after the building of the new canal, al-Khalīj al-Nāṣirī, in 725/1324.<sup>97</sup>

This competitive streak is best illustrated by the events of the year 735/1334. Al-Nāṣir proposed to rebuild Qanāṭir al-Sibā' (the Bridge of the Panthers), which had been built by al-Zāhir Baybars. Al-Maqrīzī tells the story:

<sup>90</sup> Al-Maqrīzī, *Khiṭaṭ*, 2:244-45.

<sup>91</sup> M. A. Al-Zarkashī, *A'lām al-Masājid bi-Aḥkām al-Masājid* (Cairo, 1982), 34-35.

<sup>92</sup> Al-Suyūfī, *Ḥusn al-Muḥāḍarah*, 2:165-66; al-Maqrīzī, *Khiṭaṭ*, 2:343-44.

<sup>93</sup> Leonor Fernandes, "Mamluk Politics and Education: The Evidence From Two Fourteenth Century Waqfiyyas," *Annales Islamologiques* 23 (1987): 94.



It was originally built by al-Malik al-Zāhir Rukn al-Dīn Baybars al-Bunduqdārī. He placed on it panthers of stone, for his emblem was in the shape of a panther. It was then called Qanāṭir al-Sibā‘ [the bridge of panthers] for that reason. It was lofty and high. After al-Malik al-Nāṣir Muḥammad ibn Qalāwūn built the royal *maydān*, on the site of Bustān al-Khashshāb by Mawridat al-Balāṭ, he frequently went there and had to go over Qanāṭir al-Sibā‘ in order to reach the *maydān* from the Citadel. He was discomfited by its height and told the amirs: “When I ride to the *maydān* 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-Zāhir, and wished to remove them so that the bridge would be attributed to him and known by his name.<sup>98</sup>

The sultan ordered the bridge to be rebuilt wider and at a shallower angle. At first the reconstruction did not incorporate the panthers, which did not go unnoticed by the public.

Amir Alṭunbughā al-Māridānī fell ill, went to the royal *maydān*, and stayed there. The sultan [al-Nāṣir] visited him frequently. Al-Māridānī was made aware of the public’s talk that the sultan only destroyed Qanāṭir al-Sibā‘ in order for it to become attributed to him, and that he ordered Ibn al-Marwānī to break to pieces the stone panthers and to throw them in the river. It is said that he [al-Māridānī] was healed after the completion of the construction of the *qanṭarah* 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 *qanṭarah* 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

<sup>94</sup> An important event to which a contemporary, al-Nuwayrī, devoted a section in “Nihāyat al-Arab,” fol. 31.

<sup>95</sup> Al-Maqrīzī, *Al-Sulūk*, 2:1:129; also see Ibn Iyās, *Badā’i’ al-Zuhūr*, 1:1:444.

<sup>96</sup> Williams, “Urbanization and Monument Construction,” 35.

<sup>97</sup> Al-Maqrīzī, *Khiṭaṭ*, 2:422; Ibn Taghrībirdī, *Al-Nujūm al-Zāhirah*, 9:79; Ibn Ḥabīb, *Tadhkirat*



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-humored.<sup>99</sup>

On the advice of al-Māridānī the sultan ordered the panthers to be put back in their original place.

The unprecedented number of congregational mosques built by al-Nāşir MuĤammad and members of his family and court may have encapsulated another symbolic intention beyond competing with the memory of al-Ẓāhir Baybars. Al-Nāşir built no madrasahs but many hypostyle congregational mosques. His patronage was aimed at reinforcing the royal lineage of the house of Qalāwūn and overcoming the stigma associated with their slave origin. Building madrasahs was a tradition associated with the Mamluks advertising themselves as heirs to the Ayyubids, a legitimacy based on the slave-master relationship. Al-Nāşir MuĤammad, a non-slave who was born a free Muslim and spoke fluent Arabic, had no wish to associate himself with such a tradition. He sought rather to revive and establish an association with a much older tradition of Islam, the caliphal tradition of building great congregational mosques.

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*al-Nabīh*, 2:149.

<sup>98</sup> Al-Maqrīzī, *Khitaṭ*, 2:146.

<sup>99</sup> *Ibid.*, 147.



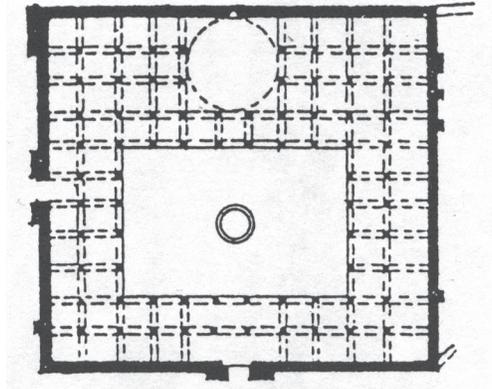


Figure 1. Mosque of al-Nāṣir Muḥammad in the Citadel, plan (Creswell)

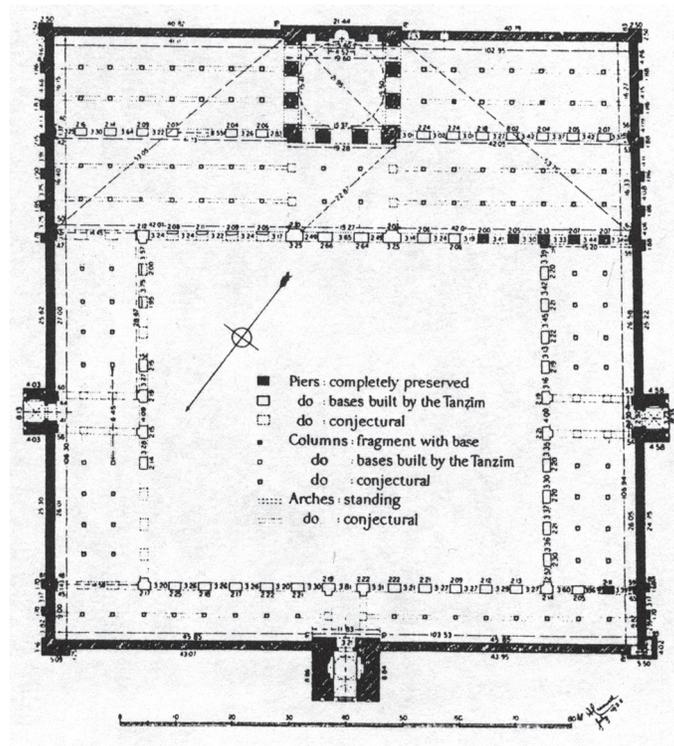


Figure 2. Mosque of al-Zāhir Baybars (Creswell)



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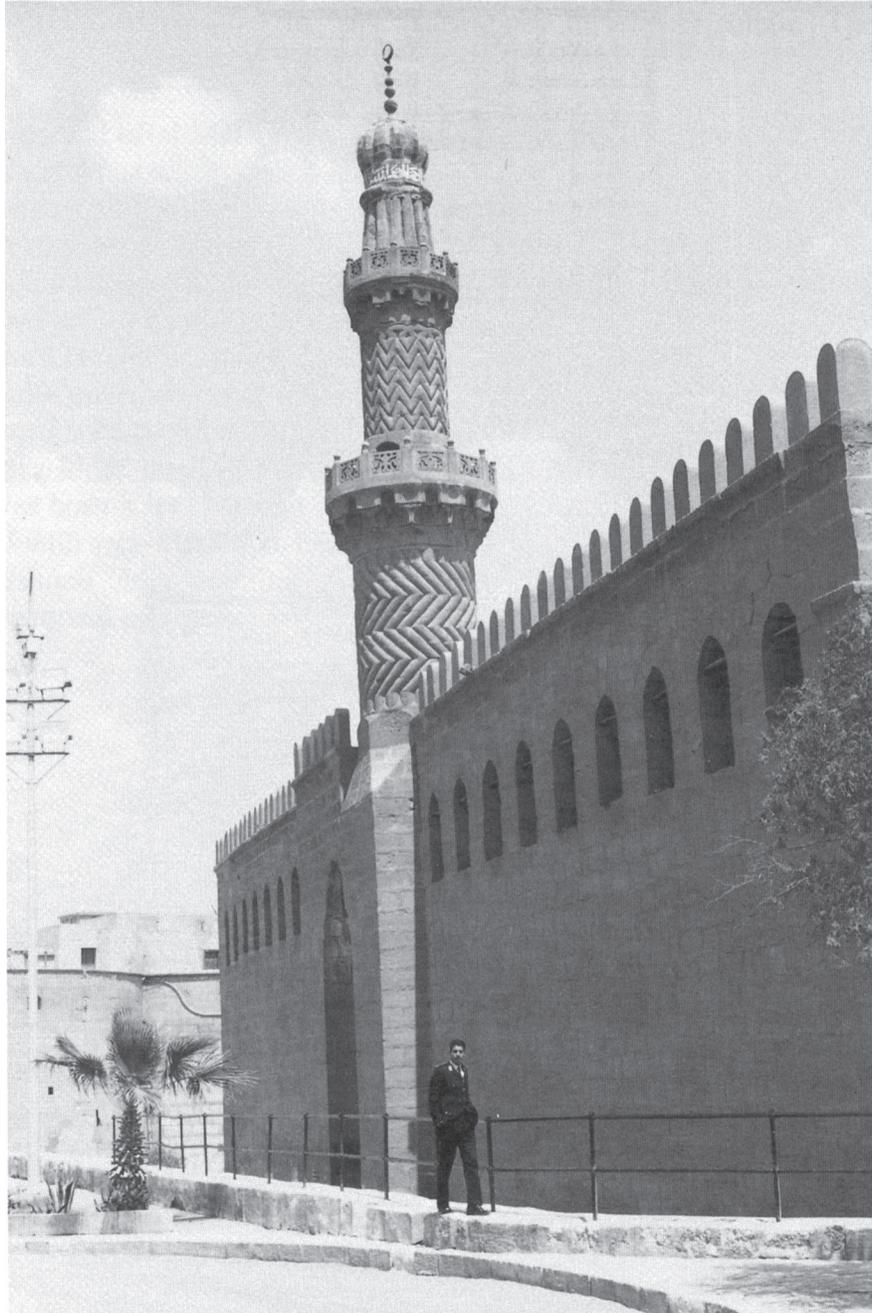


Figure 3. Mosque of al-Nāṣir MuḤammad in the Citadel, main facade



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Figure 4. Mosque of al-Nāṣir Muḥammad in the Citadel, view from the courtyard



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Figure 5. Mosque of Ulmās al-Ḥāḡib, qiblah *riwāq*



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Figure 6. Mosque of Bashtāk, portal



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Figure 7. Mosque of Sitt Miskah, exterior facade



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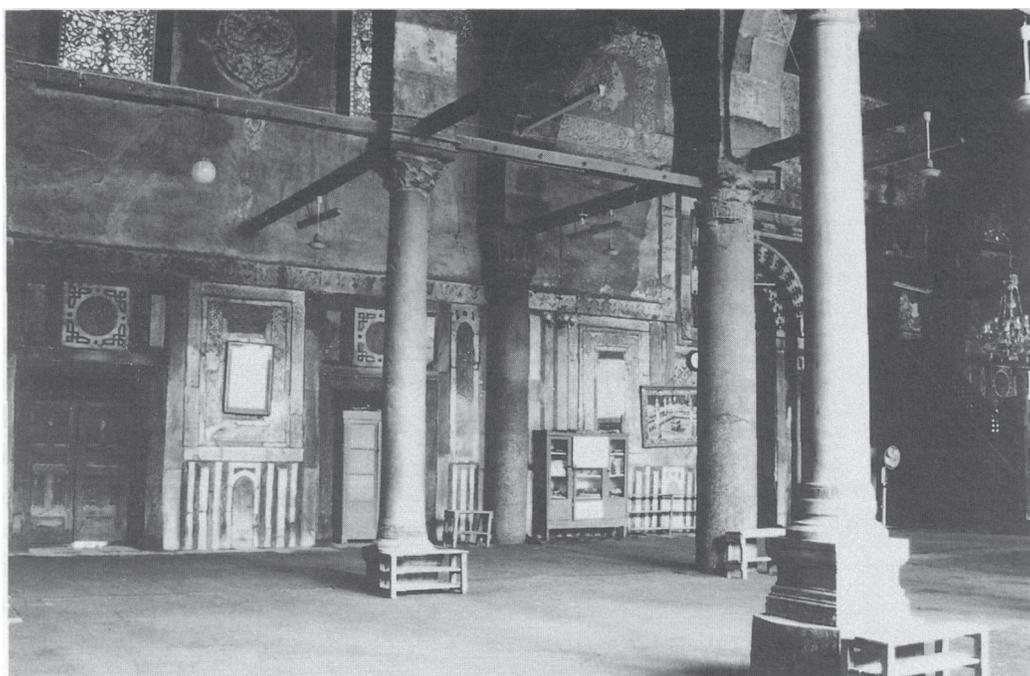


Figure 8. Mosque of Alṭunbughā al-Māridānī, qiblah *riwāq*



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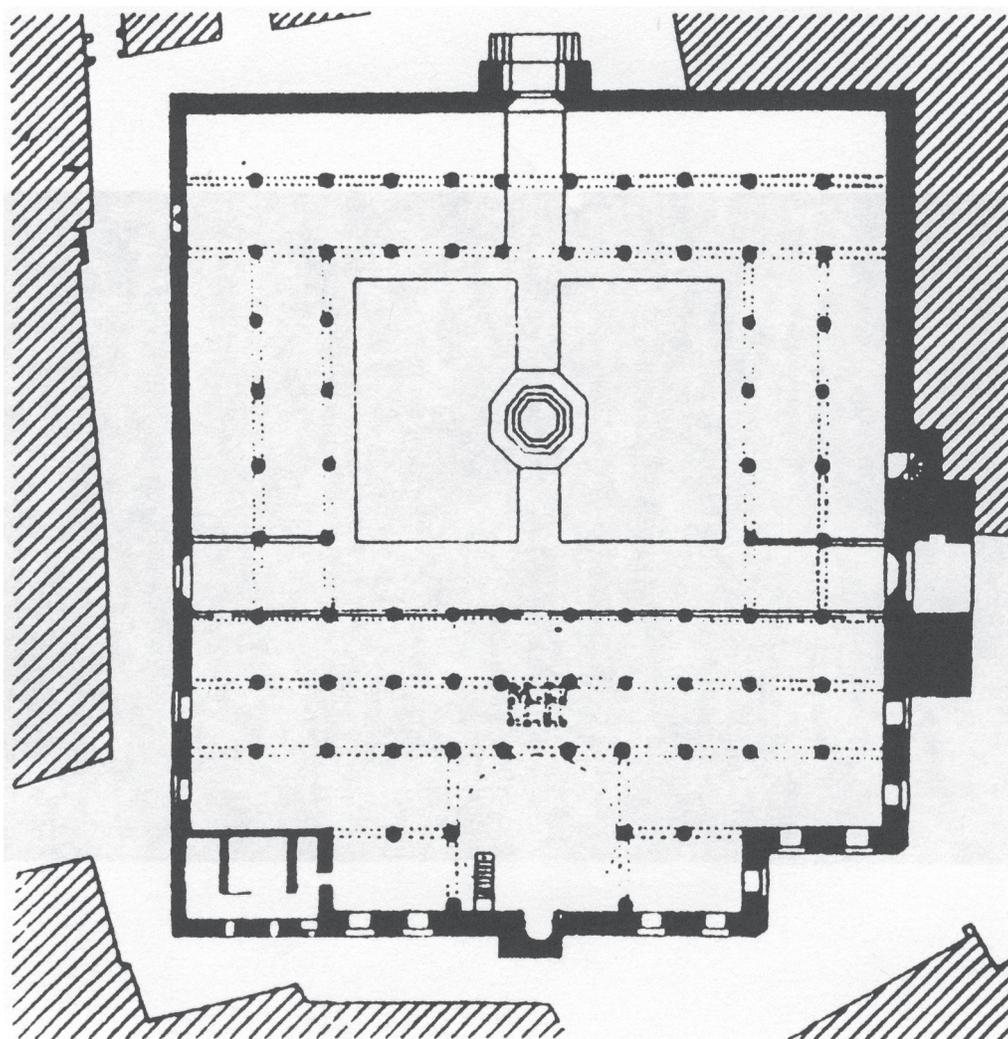


Figure 9. Mosque of Alṭunbughā al-Māridānī, plan (Comité)



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