



## Mamlūk Ranks: Motives of usage and their visual impact

### الرنوك المملوكية: دوافع الاستخدام والتأثير البصري

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### Abstract:

Ranks are one of the most characteristic patterns of art, architecture, and history of the Mamlūks. Their use was overall the Mamlūk State in Egypt and Syria (1250–1517), on almost all kinds of coins, art and architecture. Mamlūk ranks mirrored the core of the Mamlūk culture; their origin and life contextual. Furthermore ranks came as a new advertising approach, colorful, and symbolized visual tool, with a relatively high advantage compared to the traditional method at that time i.e. the inscriptions. The subject of this paper is based on a new view of the reasons beyond inventing and using the ranks by the Mamlūks. It examines in details its historical context and its extraordinary functional use considering the primary sources and literature. This paper also suggests the visual impact as a new factor in studying the Mamlūk ranks. It also discusses the cross-cultural context between the Islamic ranks and Byzantine and European heraldry.

Keywords: Mamlūk; Rank; Islamic Art; Visual; heraldry; Imagery

### المخلص:

تعد الرنوك أحد أكثر السمات المميزة لفن وعمارة وتاريخ المماليك، استخدمت الرنوك طوال العصر المملوكي في مصر والشام –تقريبًا– على كافة المنتجات الفنية والعمائر التي تخص أمراء وسلاطين المماليك، وقد عكست الرنوك المملوكية جوهر ثقافة المماليك؛ بما في ذلك أصولهم، وسياقاتهم المعيشية. فضلًا عن ذلك، تمثل الرنوك منحى دعائيا جديدا، كونها أداة أو وسيلة بصرية ملونة ذات طبيعة رمزية دعائية، وتعتبر الرنوك –في هذا السياق– أكثر

تأثيراً مقارنة بالأدوات الدعائية التقليدية التي كانت شائعة الاستخدام في تلك الفترة، والمتمثلة بشكل رئيسي في النقوش الكتابية، يتمحور موضوع هذا المقال في طرح تصور جديد للأسباب والدوافع وراء ابتكار الرنوك واستخدامها من قبل المماليك. وتناقش الدراسة بشكل مفصل السياق التاريخي لنشأة الرنوك وتوظيفها غير المسبوق في ضوء ما أورده المصادر التاريخية والأعمال الأدبية ذات الصلة، وتناقش الورقة البحثية التأثير البصري كعامل مؤثر جديد فيما يخص دراسة الرنوك المملوكية، وتنتهي ببحث وتحليل التأثير الثقافي المتبادل بين الرنوك المملوكية "الإسلامية" وبين الشعارات والرموز المقابلة لها البيزنطية والأوربية. الكلمات الدالة: رنك؛ الدولة المملوكية؛ التأثير البصري؛ التأثير اللوني؛ الفن الإسلامي، شعارات النبالة.

## Introduction:

Rank, a Persian word (رنگ) means literally color, was used in Islamic art and architecture to label the insignia, emblems, blazons and heraldry of the Emirs and Sultans, particularly, of the Mamlūk State since the 12th century. The term and the practice appeared in late Ayyūbid State, and then both had spread characterizing the Mamlūk State<sup>1</sup>.

Over more than one century (1882-2016), considerable studies discussed the origin of the ranks, and their major task was doing a survey of the ranks' forms, their types, and identifying the function of each one.<sup>2</sup> These studies investigated the ranks, their contextual history, and their evolution on architecture, glass,<sup>3</sup> pottery,<sup>4</sup> metalwork, coins,<sup>5</sup> textiles,<sup>6</sup> wood which are applied in different techniques.

Mamlūk ranks are classified into symbolic, or representative (Fig.1), and functional ones (Figs. 2-10); the latter comprise two categories of ranks: simple have only one sign (Figs. 2, 4-5, 7, 12) and composite comprise more than one sign (Figs. 3, 8-10). There another type of the ranks that belong only to the sultans; the inscriptive ranks (Fig.11)<sup>7</sup>.

<sup>1</sup>- Rabbat 1995, 431-433.

<sup>2</sup>- Rogers 1882; Artin 1902; Mayer 1933; Mihriz 1941; Muştafá 1941; Meinecke 1972; Abdelrazeq 2001; 'adra 2013.

<sup>3</sup>- Dawūd 1971; 1982.

<sup>4</sup>- Al'ish 1960.

<sup>5</sup>- Allan 1970; Balog 1977.

<sup>6</sup>- Abdelrazeq 2016.

<sup>7</sup>- Mayer 1933, 26-34.

Ranks executed initially as a freestanding single-element sign, then designed within round (Figs. 2-8, 10, 12), pointed or polygonal shields (Fig. 9).<sup>1</sup> Then these shields are divided into horizontal strips (2, 3, 4 and 5), the one among which called *shatfa* (شطفة) in Arabic primary sources<sup>2</sup>. A circle with three stripes is the most common form of Mamlūk ranks (Figs. 3 - 5, 7 - 8, 10, 12). Though ranks come in monochromatic (Fig. 2) or multi-colored (Figs. 5, 7, 8, 10, 12), there is no classification according to its color. According to al-Qalqashandī<sup>3</sup>, the color was a choice of the holder of the rank.

This paper aims, unlike previous studies, to investigate the reasons of linking the ranks with the Mamlūks. Moreover, it will highlight the visual impact of the ranks and its role in society during the Mamlūk era and its effect on the western world as well.

## Methodology

The questions I would like to ask in this article, why the Mamlūks used ranks on a large scale? To what extent would the Mamlūks' origin and their individual identity influenced in using and forming their ranks? How the ranks present a powerful visual language? And what is the echo of using this imagery language? Is there a relation between the Islamic ranks and the European heraldry? This paper draws the answers of these questions through analysis of the related primary sources, literature and the contemporary western engravings as well.

## Mamlūks and ranks

Mamlūks' Turkish origin is the source of using signs “*ālāma*, pl. *ālāmāt*”

Each Turkish tribe had its own sign; which represented its emblem or flag. These emblems reappeared and reused by Mamlūks and known as *tamghas*<sup>4</sup>.

Signs or emblems of Turkish tribes had great value and meaning. Furthermore, their using in their tribal life on their belongings such as clothes, tents, products, arrows, etc. magnified their value and meaning, and their visual indication as well. Holder of such sign had the honor and the dignity of the tribe<sup>5</sup>.

Abū al-Fidā', the last Ayyubid ruler of Ḥamāh, was the first historian who mentioned the ranks, as “*ālāmāt*”, meaning signs, which designate the emblems of

<sup>1</sup> Rabbat 1995, 431-432.

<sup>2</sup> al-Qalqashandī, 4: 62.

<sup>3</sup> al-Qalqashandī, 4: 62.

<sup>4</sup> Mayer 1933, 18-19.

<sup>5</sup> Paksoy 2004.

Mamlūks of Khwārizm-Shāh Muḥamed b. Tekish (1200-1220)<sup>1</sup>. This early reference refers to the ranks in the same context discussed here and attributed this practice to Mamlūks of Khwārizm-Shāh, of Turkish origin.

Ibn Taghrībirdī certifies the use of ranks by the Ayyubids' Mamlūks; he mentions that the rank of Amīr Aybak al-Turkmānī was a picture of “Khunjah” (Persian: table)<sup>2</sup>.

The bulk of the Ayyubids' Mamlūks were Turks. Of them the greater part came from the Kıpçak steppe, under the Mongol attacks, which filled the slave markets with them.<sup>3</sup> Turkish origin may be played a vital role in adopting the ranks ‘signs’ by Mamlūks as their own emblems; affecting with the Mongolian and old Turkish cultures including the tamghas or the wesm.<sup>4</sup> Tamgha meant originally in Turkish: “a brand or sign placed on livestock or personal property;”<sup>5</sup> thus, it is almost the replica of the rank within the Mamlūk context. Al-Qalqashandī mentioned roughly the same meaning talking about Mamlūk ranks, he wrote: “It is the custom that each Amīr whatever his grade to have his own rank either hīnāb (Cup), or dwāt (pen-box), or buqjah (lozenge or napkin), and so on, with one shatfa (horizontal strip) or two, in different colors, as each Amīr chooses and prefers.” Al-Qalqashandī continues that “Amīrs put their ranks on their residences’ doors and their own buildings as sugar manufactories, stores, properties, boats and so on ...”, and almost on everything attributed to them<sup>6</sup>.

This statement of Al-Qalqashandī proves the extensive use of ranks in the daily life of the Mamlūks. It expresses to what extend Mamlūk Amīrs considered the ranks the tool that shows their identity and position. So they used the ranks everywhere and on everything belong to them. The large number of ranks on the architectural works, handicrafts of various materials including metal, glass, wooden objects as well as textiles refer to their heavy use at all levels. The textiles specifically clarify the various contexts of the usage of ranks by the Mamlūks. Many surviving fragments of textile have ranks of various materials including hard linen, colored wool, and cotton, and executed in different techniques and several kinds of stitches, in various sizes and colors. Thus, these fragments suggest the various uses including

<sup>1</sup> Abū al-Fidā', 3:149.

<sup>2</sup> ibn Taghrībirdī, *Al-Manhal al-Şāfi*, 1: 20.

<sup>3</sup> Ayalon, 1991, 314.

<sup>4</sup> Artin 1902, 182-220; Mayer 1933, 18-19; Leiser 2000, 170.

<sup>5</sup> Leiser 2000, 170.

<sup>6</sup> al-Qalqashandī, 4: 62.

curtains, flags, seats back for the high officials “baštamiḥ” in addition to the saddle covers of the sultanic livestock such as horses, mules, and camels, as well as robes ‘ibby, and hard and thick saddle covers balāsāt.<sup>1</sup> Moreover, such these textiles were hung in the receptions in specific occasions (Fig. 13).

The same text of Al-Qalqashandī and the surviving textiles examples as well shed the light on the mechanism of selecting the colors of the ranks. While Al-Qalqashandī states that was absolute choice of each Amīr; but he has said nothing regarding the criteria of this selection. Most probably the only criterion, if was, to select new colors not used previously for the same rank by another Amīr. In terms of color, still the new discovered textile fragments comprising new styles<sup>2</sup>.

Representative ranks of animal symbols also refer to the Turkish origin. Though using this kind of animal symbols had very old examples from the antiquity, their use by the Mamlūks is linked to the Turkish culture through the explanation of their names themselves. Among this ranks, the feline is the most distinguished one (Fig. 1). It is the rank of Baybars; the name bay bars means in Kıpçak Turkish “chief panther.”<sup>3</sup> The same can be said regarding the rank of al-Amīr Jamāl al-Dīn Āqūsh, governor of al-Karak, a white falcon-like bird on undivided round shield as came on a brass plate and a copper stand for a tray, on which stated the name and the titles of Jamāl al-Dīn Āqūsh, both preserved in the collection R. A. Harari, Esq., London.<sup>4</sup> Āqūsh means white bird, as illustrated in his rank<sup>5</sup>.

### **Individual affiliation instead of the tribal one**

Mamlūks realized that the only way to terminate their slavery and transferred into military slavery, based on are their own characteristics and fighting skills. Later, their chances of rising in the military hierarchy were determined upon affiliation to their patron ‘ustādh’. Not only the military ability of the Mamlūks that led the Ayyūbid Sultans and their followers to constitute their military forces from them; but mainly for their faithfulness and loyalty. Mamlūks were affiliated to their patrons. So, in most cases, the affiliation of individual Mamlūks replaced their racial origin affiliation. Sources cite the groups of Mamlūks based on slave and patron relation; as the Zāhiriyyah of Baybars, Manšūriyyah of Qalāwūn, Ashrafiyya of Qāyitbāy, etc.

<sup>1</sup> Abdelrazeq 2016, 23, 34-36.

<sup>2</sup> Abdelrazeq 2016, 34.

<sup>3</sup> Rabbat, 1995, 432.

<sup>4</sup> Mayer 1933, 71-72.

<sup>5</sup> Mayer 1933, 9.

Mamlūks gratitude to their patron(s), specifically the Sultan, was the most important factor for way to wealth, fame and high position<sup>1</sup>.

The echo of this composite affiliation was obvious in Mamlūk ranks and their evolution. During the first period, Mamlūks were very proud for their ranks; the affiliation to themselves, these ranks mirrored their positions in the Mamlūk society, and considering which their privileges were determined. Later, the composite ranks appeared, with two signs (Fig. 9) or more (Figs. 8-10), showing the affiliation of each Mamlūk to his patron(s), side by side with his appreciation of his own position. As Mayer noticed, the arrangement of these composite ranks, belonging to a group of Amīrs who were Mamlūks of a given Sultan, came in the same way except of each Amīr won functional sign.<sup>2</sup> Thus, these composite ranks presented a new concept in the Mamlūks' affiliation, to a royal household (Fig. 10) which replaced the racial origin or the land affiliation.<sup>3</sup> We may say that the Mamlūks recognized that their affiliation to a larger entity is most important than the affiliation to themselves. Hence it gives them greater power and makes them feel that they have, somewhat, roots.

### **Illustrations 'drawing symbols' replace the script in the Arabic-Islamic culture regions**

Arabic-Islamic culture regions have been characterized with the domination of Arabic inscriptions as the single way to refer to the patrons in Islamic art and architecture including founder, architect, owner, fabricator, etc.

In architecture, and sometimes on objects, name and titles of the patron(s) were usually recorded in one, or more, inscription accompanied with the foundation date. To know the founder's name, or the owner, you should to know reading Arabic and to find his name as well.

The text as the single tool of media and propaganda or advertising continues along with Islamic civilization everywhere. Sometimes, even early since the Umayyad, signs and drawings, specifically on coins and wall paintings, were used, side by side with inscriptions, for political propaganda<sup>4</sup>.

Mamlūks added a new approach to recognize the patron of buildings and objects through his rank(s). This approach is more practical, easy and effective; specifically, in its time. But on the runway still inscriptions are the best and safe.

<sup>1</sup> Ayalon, 1991, 318-319; Al'aranī, 129-144.

<sup>2</sup> Mayer 1933, 29-33.

<sup>3</sup> Rabbat, 1995, 433; Meinecke 1972, 258-78.

<sup>4</sup> 'Uthmān 1989, 49, 59-62, 81-85.

Because ranks were removed or replaced effortlessly rather than the inscriptions, the same rank could be attributed to many persons, and some ranks till now are not recognized.

The context of using ranks by Turkish Mamlūks, the newcomers to the Arabic-Islamic culture regions, Egypt and Syria, was different from the early Islamic use of illustrations in the Umayyad buildings, as mentioned above. Mamlūks were non-Arab, came, though their slavery, with new ideas considering their own culture, background and personal characteristics which influenced by their circumstances. The belief that the Mamlūks came with no culture of their own is not correct. Most were of Kıpçak Turkish origin, as mentioned above, came as young adults, and coexisted with different cultures; concluding their own cultural background, echo of which could be traced in their art and architecture<sup>1</sup>.

So, using ranks by Mamlūks on that large scale, may be reflection of their Turkish origin, self-identity, self-appreciation and boasting to compensate their early miserable life of slavery. Most were not good Arabic readers, Kıpçak language being used by Turkish and perhaps some Circassian Mamlūks as a common tongue. A written Mamlūks Kıpçak was used for some military training manuals and for literature as well. Where Arabic literature is concerned, the Mamlūk era was not a golden age.<sup>2</sup> To them, ranks were the best approach to express their identity.

Using ranks for announcing the patron was very characteristic in the Mamlūk period. A distinguished example clarifies the contextual use as a representative message via the visual impact ‘language of power’, is the rank of al-Zāhir Baybars, the feline (Fig. 1). Of which around eighty are attested on buildings in Egypt and Syria, furthermore it is found profusely on coins and objects.<sup>3</sup> Result of the power of the visual impact of the rank; it gave the entire building its name; the barrages of the lions ‘qanāṭir al-sibā’<sup>4</sup>. The same visual language of these ranks made some successors Sultans so angry; to extent, according to resources, they ordered to be broken and thrown into the sea, or to circumvent to remove them as al-Nāṣir Mohamed did.<sup>5</sup> He ordered to rebuild a new one wider and less high than the older barrage which bears the ranks of al-Zāhir Baybars, qanāṭir al-sibā’. Al-Maqrīzī commented that he hates to see the monuments of the former sultans; hence the

<sup>1</sup> Nicolle and Dennis. 2014, 26.

<sup>2</sup> Nicolle and Dennis. 2014, 33.

<sup>3</sup> Mayer 1933, 106-110.

<sup>4</sup> It is known also as qanāṭir Abi el-Minaggā, see: Nawār 1999, 116-118.

<sup>5</sup> al-Maqrīzī, 3: 488-490.

carved stone lion-like ranks did not replace on the new built barrage.<sup>1</sup> Therefore, replacing the ranks of the new Sultan, viceroy of Syria, or Amīr, instead of those of the former, announcing a new epoch was one of the first tasks.

### **Mamlūk ranks and visual impact**

Ranks played, as mentioned above, an essential role in the Turkish tribal life. Using these signs characterized the tribal affiliation and distinguished the belongings of the tribe commander. Its symbolism and indication shortened many inscriptions. It was a pictorial language.

Though, using signs, in this context, reflects clearly the illiteracy and the absence of the verbal system i.e. means of written-language contact, it expressed perfectly the so-called visual impact in art and architecture.

No doubt that the power of visual content is stronger than the text one. Recent studies certified that, simply, illustrations (imagery or nonverbal system) reach an individual's brain in a faster and more understandable way than text (verbal system). In another words, a human's brain is hardwired to recognize and make sense of visual content more efficiently, which is useful considering that 90 percent of all information that comes to the brain is visual<sup>2</sup>.

Nonverbal content i.e. images are easier to recognize, process and to recall than words. Scientifically, words enter long-term memory with a single code, while illustrations contain two codes: one visual and the second verbal, each stored in diverse sections in the brain<sup>3</sup>.

To summarize rank is the best alternative method to declare the patron's identity. In comparison to inscriptions, ranks are visible clearly, no need any rate of literacy, and are recognized easily even from quite far distances, and well memorized. Thus, Mamlūk rank managed effectively to translate many words and meanings into one sign.

Visual impact of ranks is certainly more effective and understandable than inscriptions. Recognizing the rank's meaning is at ease compared to reading the inscription's content. The first exceeds the language's barrier. Ranks are more memorized and easier to recall rather inscriptions, the traditional alternative method. The process of memorization the imagery content is affected, of course, by many factors such as design, colors, dimensions, place, number of repetitions, quality, etc.

<sup>1</sup> **al-Maqrīzī**, 3: 490.

<sup>2</sup> **Dewan 2015**, 2.

<sup>3</sup> **Paivio 1990**, 264-266; **Reed 2010**, 47-51.



Thus, rank, in this context, resembles the brand. Furthermore, it is a representative language announcing through its visual message the cultural, economic, political, and militarily power.

The astonishing effectiveness of the visual impact of ranks was mirrored in the Arabic literature and in the European drawings of the Mamlūk period as well. There are three selected examples that elucidate this aspect.

The first is poetic verses, cited by Badr al-Dīn al-‘Aynī, which memorizing the victory of Mamlūks on the Mongols, with a special clue to al-Zāhir Baybars and his illustrious lion-symbol rank.

”فأتاهم جيش النبي يؤمهم  
بعضائب سود عليها رنكه  
ملك زمانه الظاهر الالي  
أسد يصيب فوارس الهيجا“

Al-‘Aynī goes on to say that poets and women have sung with these verses; in a reference to the dominance of the representative rank of al-Zāhir Baybars lion-form in the minds of both elite and public<sup>1</sup>.

Al-Şafadī gives the second example voicing the society passion of Mamlūk ranks; due their beautiful and powerful visual impact. He mentioned in his translation of Prince Aqūsh bin ‘Abdullāh al-dawādārī al-Manşūrī known as al-Afram, viceroy Syria (d. 1316 or 1320), that his rank was: “very lovely, a white circle, divided in three stripes, the middle with green ground, upon which is a red sword that cuts vertically the three strips.” (Fig.12). al-Şafadī said that Damascene people loved Prince Aqūsh and engraved his rank on their embroideries, machines, and they used it in all their matters. Furthermore, Al-Şafadī continues that “the ladies of the evening and other women were emblazoned his –i.e. Āqūsh– rank on their wrists and their vulvae.” He adds that the poets wrote verses describing and praising Aqūsh’s rank such as what al-Ba‘labakī al-Shāfa‘ī has poetized<sup>2</sup>:

”سيوف سقاها من دماء عدايته  
وأقسم عن ورد الردى لا يردها  
وأبرزها في أبيض مثل كفه  
على أخضر مثل المسن يحدّها“

Here is a suggested translation of these verses:

“Swords dyed by his enemies’ bloods, and he swore that he will continue fighting the evil / He distinguished them –swords– on a white as his palm, and on a green –ground– like a whetstone that sharpens them.”

Both examples show to what extent that almost all sectors of society, specifically in the Mamlūk period, had been affected visually by ranks.

<sup>1</sup> al-‘aynī, 2:104.

<sup>2</sup> al-Şafadī, 1:571; Ibn Taghrībirdī, 3:14.

The impact itself that appeared also in the drawings of the European travellers, as suggests the third example. It is an oil painting (Louvre Museum, inv. 1157 at the in Paris, dimensions: 201 cm wide by 175 cm height) of the Renaissance named ‘reception of the venetian ambassadors in Damascus’ (Fig. 13), attributed to an unknown painter, Gentile Bellini’s School, and dated in<sup>1</sup> 1511. This painting is very important from very points of view historically, architecturally, artistic and politically. As far as our concern here, there is an illustrious colorful circular rank; standard composite Mamlūk rank. Composes of a cup in green, that contains inside a white pen-box ‘dawā’, and the cup itself flanked by two gunpowder vessels ‘pair of trousers’ in brown, occupies the middle wide strip above yellow ground. While the upper field comprises a white lozenge ‘napkin’ on a red ground, and lower field has a white cup on a black ground, three fields composed a ring within a dark green thick circular margin. The same rank but colorless found on a copper plate (was in Palestine Archaeological Museum, Jerusalem, now the Rockefeller Museum) accompanied with an Arabic inscription referring to Sībāy viceroy of Syria.<sup>2</sup> Of the latter, the contrast between dark and light fields support the colors described above. Thus, the repeated rank in the louver painting above is attributed to Sībāy, contests with its suggested dates (1511-1516). Sībāy’s rank comes very clear, strong and clichéd eight times in different but visually designated places; announcing its importance and powerful impact in the painter’s mind and his perception as well.

This rank’s visual impact is obvious compared to the other two identical inscriptive ranks flanking the spandrels of the iwān’s arch (Fig. 13), and the rectangular inscriptive panel above the same arch, which come unrecognizable but as a sketch with no actual significance.

Previous three examples certify not only the influential impact of the visual language of the ranks but also that they were understandable and meaningful for the local society and for the foreigners as well.

### **Islamic/Mamlūk ranks impact on European heraldry**

European Heraldry may have appeared in the mid-12th century thanks to the Islamic “oriental” impact via the Crusades.<sup>3</sup> Even both were developed in a different way, and each one has its own terms.<sup>4</sup> Both were functioned as decipherable

<sup>1</sup> Artin 1902, 120, Fig. XIV.

<sup>2</sup> Mayer 1933, 207-208, Pl. LXII.3.

<sup>3</sup> Prinnet 1912, 53-58; Mayer 1933, 1-2; Hunke 1965, 28; Redford 2003.

<sup>4</sup> Rabbat 1995, 431.

codes and as signatures displayed on their properties, structures, objects, and documents. In 1268 CE, when al-Zāhir Baybars replied the message of Abughā, king of the Mongols, he stamped his reply-letter by tamghas which comprises his rank.<sup>1</sup> Both are means of visual content as ‘language of power’, with the communicational ability to convey messages across frontiers, language, ethnic, and national.<sup>2</sup> But, unlike European heraldry, Mamluk ranks were not inherited from fathers to sons. Even if happen, as in rare cases, they did not give them any of offices or privileges that their fathers had originally in light their ranks<sup>3</sup>.

The most famous common symbols in both are lily flower,<sup>4</sup> lion-like, and double-headed eagle.<sup>5</sup> Reappearance of the double-headed eagle in the medieval period as an emblem of the state connected basically with the Seljūk Sultanate of Rûm in Anatolia in the early 13th century. It is also adopted by the Mamlūks with a distinguished stone relief example within the Cairo citadel, attributed to al-Nāṣir Mohamed.<sup>6</sup> In the Byzantium the double-headed eagle seems to appear as an imperial rank in the 15th century,<sup>7</sup> used by the Palaeologi, the last dynasty, of Byzantine Empire, though its early use as a decorative ornament since the 11th century.<sup>8</sup> Then used by many European states, the Balkans, Russia,<sup>9</sup> and Germany.<sup>10</sup> It is still in use by the Greek Orthodox Church, and even few Greek football teams, in affiliation to Constantinople rather than to empire, family, or royal house<sup>11</sup>.

## Conclusion

Mamlūk ranks are a non-common phenomenon in the history of Islamic art and architecture. It illustrates simply the origin, and all aspects, specifically the military hierarchy, of the Mamlūk state context. Far of the direct function of the ranks, they created a new language of power; a visual language which characterizes with superior features representing the meant message. This visual language received easily with no obscures of language, ethnic, or national. This concept presents a new factor in studying Islamic art and architecture. Visual impact needs more studies to

<sup>1</sup>- al-‘aynī, 2:43.

<sup>2</sup>- Ousterhout 2009, 169-170.

<sup>3</sup>- Rabbat 1995, 433.

<sup>4</sup>- Mayer 1933, 24-25.

<sup>5</sup>- Hunke 1965, 28.

<sup>6</sup>- Allan 1970, 105; Abdelrazeq 2001, 81.

<sup>7</sup>- Skartsis 2017, 38.

<sup>8</sup>- Ousterhout 2009, 159-161.

<sup>9</sup>- Пастыро 2012, 228.

<sup>10</sup>- Hunke 1965, 28.

<sup>11</sup>- Ousterhout 2009, 169-170.

explore its role in making-plan in art and architecture. Ranks explore perfectly the cross-cultural context across the Kıpçak Steppes with Turkish culture, Arabic Islamic countries i.e. Egypt and Syria, Byzantium world and Europe. This cross-cultural and the accompanied competitive context have a considerable responsibility on the final appearance of each civilization's buildings and objects.

**Figures:**

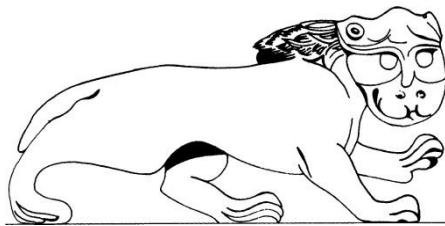


Figure 1. Line drawing of the feline rank of al-Zāhir Baybars (658-76 A.H./1260-77) as it appears on a tower at the Citadel of Cairo (Rabbat, 1995, 432, Fig. 3).



Figure 2. A colorful line drawing of the hīnāb 'Cup' rank of al-Sāqi 'cupbearer'; a monochromatic simple functional rank (Researcher 2018, after Rogers 1882, Fig. 23)

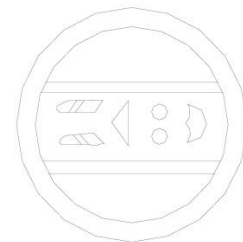


Figure 3. A line drawing of the dwāt 'pen-box', rank of al-Dāwadār (secretary); a simple functional rank (Researcher 2018)



Figure 4. A colorful line drawing of the bujah 'lozenge or napkin', rank of al-Jamdār (wardrobe master); a simple functional rank (Researcher 2018, after Rogers 1882, Fig. 39)

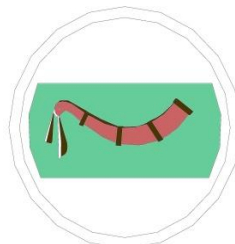


Figure 5. A colorful line drawing of the seif 'sword', rank of al-Silaḥdār (warrior); a simple functional rank (Researcher 2018, after Rogers 1882, Fig. 40)

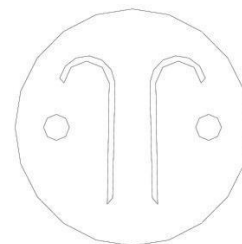


Figure 6. A line drawing of the 'aṣawā al-polo 'sticks of the ball', rank of al-Jawkandār 'Čawgān' (stick holder); a simple functional rank (Researcher 2018)



Figure 7. A colorful line drawing of the Amīr Shaikhu al-Nāseri; a functional rank (Researcher 2018, after Rogers 1882, 112, Fig. 22).



Figure 8. A colorful line drawing of a composite functional rank (Researcher 2018, after Rogers 1882, Fig. 35).



Figure 9. A colorful line drawing of a composite functional rank of the Amīr Tukuztamur (d. 746/1345) which includes an eagle over a cup (Researcher 2018, after Rogers 1882, Fig. 45)



Figure 10. A colorful line drawing of a composite functional rank of Amirs who were Mamluks of the Sultan AL-Mu'ayyad Shaykh executed on a linen textile fragment preserved in Port Said Museum (Egypt) (Researcher 2018)



Figure 11. An inscriptive rank of the Sultan al-Ashraf Qayitbay; from his Complex in the cemetery of Cairo) (Researcher 2014)



Figure 12. A colorful line drawing of the beautiful rank of Amir Aqush al-Afram as described by al-Safadi (Researcher 2018)



Figure 13. An oil painting of the Renaissance named 'Reception of the Venetian ambassadors in Damascus'; in the Louvre Museum (Paris), inv. 1157 (Researcher 2011).

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