The former agency of Dawood Basha in Rosetta – Egypt, As an example of Islamic agencies

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Abstract

The importance of this research is attributed to the restoration of the architectural heritage of Rosetta in the Ottoman era, through transforming information into architectural designs of the buildings that existed at those times and were destroyed by various reasons, highlighting the importance of urban and architectural style.

In this work, we examined these documents and information about the'Wekala' of Dawood Pashaand transformed information into architectural designs to provide the reader and researcher with a picture of these monuments as they were before.

Since these documents are numbered in hundreds and are kept in volumes, we have dealt with them as little as we need in this work, and we referred to other sources to complete the information that we did not find in the documents mentioned.

Keywords: Rosetta, Ottoman era, Dawood Pasha, formerWekalat, Commercial establishments, architectural designs, architectural heritage.

1.A brief History of Rosetta

Rosetta, one of the cities of Al-Buhayra Governorate, is located to the west of the Nile at the mouth of the branch of Rosetta in the Mediterranean, and is located sixty kilometers from the city of Alexandria, and twelve kilometers above the mouth of the Nile [1], [2], [3], [4], [5].

Rosetta is one of the corners of the triangle occupied by the Delta between Cairo and Damietta [6], [7], [8], located west of the branch named after its outlinename, and is one of the important Egyptian ports.

The name Rosetta derives from the pharaonic name of Rekhyt [9], [10], [11] (ancient inhabitants of the Delta before the political unity between the South and the North in the First Dynasty), the name of the Delta population. It became the Coptic name "Rachit - Rht" [12], and later Rosetta.

In the Abbasid period, the Caliph Al-Mutawakil [13], Issued an order to the governor of Egypt, called 'UnbesaibnIshaq in 239 AH (853 AD) to build a group of castles (military installations on the seashore or inside the country) to confront the Byzantine threat against the Egyptian ports [14].

It was also the reason that Al-Mutawakil led to the establishment of the Ribat of Rosetta and many of the ligaments on the Mediterranean coast. The invasion of Damietta by the Byzantines on the day of Arafah in AH 238 AH (AD 852), and took it, they killed a large number of Muslims and insulted women and children and the people of Dhimma (Christians) [15], [16]. Al-Mutawakil ordered the construction of the barrages on the estuary of the Nile from Tannis to Alexandria and established the fleet in Egypt [17].

The Islamic city was established close to the Ribat of Rosetta during the reign of Ahmed IbnTulun in 256 AH (870 AD) [18], after the Kanobi branch dried up and Alexandria was disbanded and the navigation returned to Rosetta, where it began to flourish in this period [17]. The plan of Ahmad ibnTulun was clear, and a truce with the Byzantine Emperor with his keen interest in the reform of the fortresses and renewal so as not to be a truce trick followed by a surprise attack [19].

As a result, Rosetta was established as a war zone. Rabat was the nucleus of this emerging city in conditions of conflict. The war began to appear clearly in its planning, which was used as a food supplier.

The Nile River was used as a means of transportation between Rosetta and the cities of the country, and its location near the Mediterranean helped to provide access to the outside world [1]. The city reflected the importance of immunization to protect its existence and develop its urbanization, whatever the causes of its inception, trade played a key role in it.

In the Fatimid and Ayyubid era: Rosetta became a civilized city in the Fatimid period and its trade and farms flourished [20], especially when the Fatimids built the city of Cairo (358 AH / 969 AD), Alexandria completely deteriorated, and Rosetta with Damietta became important ports and trade centers.

In the Ayyubid era, Rosetta became the seventh century AH (13 AD)[21], [22], and in second place after Alexandria, the sand blocked the inlet, reaching the roads and houses, and this led to the deterioration of commercial and economic activity in the Ayyubid era.

It is worth mentioning that the difficulties encountered by ships in entering Rosetta across the inlet, which was filled with sand, had a significant impact on the lack of campaigns that were intended against Rosetta than the likes of Damietta and Alexandria [23], [24].

The external threat to Rosetta continued throughout the Mamluk era. The pirates used to loot and loot their ships on the city. The pirates were often killed by their own people. Although piracy was prevented by the Cypriots, the Venetians and the Air Force in 771 AH (1370 AD)[25], they returned again to attack the ports. These dangers prompted Sultan Juqmaq (845-857) to provide the city with soldiers to protect it from the attacks of the Franks [26], [27]. Rosetta was the focus of the pirates from the Mediterranean islands, who took Rhodes as their base[26], [28], [29], [30], [31], [32].

However, the importance of Rosetta increased in the Mamluk era [33], where it became an independent tower in its own right. It was built by Al-ZaherBaybars and the tower of SalahuddinibnArram on the Nile [26], [34] by FayrouzAl-Rumi Al-Arami [27]. The castle was renovated by Sultan Qaitbay in 884 AH / 1479 AD), and it is clear that this fortress is the observer of the AlzaherBaybars and built a wall around it to protect it from raids [29], [32].

Sultan al-Ghouri also ordered the construction of a wall along the coast and towers to save the port [32], [17], [34], [35], al-Ghouri encouraged foreigners to stay in the ports, including the port of Rosetta, especially the Venetian, after it was banned for military reasons since the Ayyubid era [36].

In the Mamluk era, however, Rosetta was merely a war hole and had no administrative function as before.

When Egypt became an Ottoman state in 923 AH (1517 AD), Rosetta became an important trade center for international maritime trade with Istanbul and the Ottoman Empire on the Aegean Sea, and the starting point for the navigation from Alexandria to Cairo via the Rosetta branch or directly from the sea to Cairo. The staggered to Istanbul [37] was known for its golden age until it reached (1777) the greatest degree and breadth.

The Urbanization of Rosetta is flourished in the Ottoman era and became a first-class commercial hub throughout the Ottoman era, as evidenced by numerous commercial establishments, Khans, hotels, baths and mills, and has become a major export and import port between them and the main Ottoman ports.

Since the sixteenth century, there was a Khan [38] (hotel) of Venetian, because their business was large. It was located at the end of the ElsouqElemoumistreet, next to a church, where the Venetian consul and merchants lived. Carlier [39]visited it in 1579, Hans Jacob Ammann [40] in 1613 and Neitzchitz [41] in 1624, and the French nation of EdwerdWartly Montagu [42], [43], [44] in 1769-1776.

The development of foreign and domestic trade in Rosetta in the Ottoman era has had an effect on the prosperity of the city, its development and its urbanization [22], [45]. Various commercial buildings have been established which include the 'Wekalat'; which is a plural form of the word 'Wekala' meaning a commercial agency. The 'Wekala' [21] releases the buildings that have been prepared for housing for oriental merchants and for the preservation of their goods. The 'Wekalat' were made up of a courtyard surrounded by a window and rooms to store goods, which were topped by merchants' rooms and a mosque was attached to the Wekala.

A large number of 'Wekalat' in the Ottoman era were established in the city of Rosetta. All the 'wekalat' (commercial establishments) of this city have been eliminated, but we have been able to identify a number of them through studying the documents of Rosetta city and the various sources.

One of the most important findings of our study of the city's documents is the large number of wekalat located throughout the city, especially in its northern and north-eastern parts, many of which overlook the Nile directly, so that cargoes can be easily unloaded and reloaded. Of these agencies to their owners, while others are attributed to the types of trade allocated to them.

The names of these commercial establishments indicate that many of the Ottoman ministers in the Ottoman era had commercial establishments in Rosetta. They owned such firms perhaps for their commercial role, or monopolizing a particular trade, or the considerable profits comes of such firms at an important commercial port as Rosetta.

These commercial establishments (wekalat) include the 'Wekala' of Dawood Pasha, who took the rule of Egypt once and for 11 years (945-956 AH/ 1538-1549 AD). The 'waqf' - i.e. mortmain endowment - documents [327 dated the 15thShawal in AD 957 /AH (1550) as the day on which two commercial firms had been established in the maritime area of the city.

2.WekalatDawood Pasha 1538 AD

The word 'wekala' is an Arabic word which means commercial firm, this kind of buildings was found in several eras in Egypt especially cities beside the river Nile, like Rosetta. All theseWekalatin Rosetta are damaged, in this article we will discuss one of these wekalat [1], [2].

The 'wekala'is builtapproximately on an area of 1080 meters^{2}, bordered to the north by a neighbor street, to the south by another street, to the east by the Nile River, and to the west by the town'smain market (ElsouqElemoumi).

It consists of three floors; a ground floor, a first floor, andsecond floor,As well as two stores, Sabeel (a public source of water) and a water tank to supply the Agency with water.

1.2. Ground floor

It contains 18 stores and shops, distributed as follow (fig. 1):

The eastern side has 6 storages, 3 of which are to theleft of the gate and 3 arelocated to the right.

The northern and southern regions have5 storages.

The western side has 3 storages that are located to the left and the right of the gate.

Thus, the total number of internal units is 18, and it includes 2 shops in the western part of ElsouqElemoumistreet, right and left of the western gate.

The ground floor also includes 4 sidewardentrances;two to the south and the others to the north, and 2 entrances on the right and the left to the western gate. All these entrances lead directly to the first floor except two of them which are leading to the second floor.
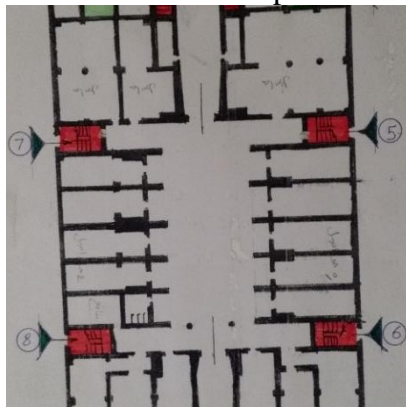
(fig.1) the ground floor consists of: Stores, the inner courtyard, the shops, the main gates, water trough, internal stairs

2.2. First floor

The same system as ground floor (figs. 2) was used, the single rooms were distributed according to the system of the storages, and four hotel suites (Rewaq) were added in the northern and southern corners.

The two western suites consist of a main hall, 3 wide rooms and a service area close to the stairs leading up to the floor underneath.

The two eastern suites each have 2 wide rooms, a hall and a service area different from the floor below.

Thus, the total number of accommodations in this wekala and in this role is 17accommodations, including 13 single rooms and four hotel suites.

Horizontal lineation of the first floor: All the previous items are identical to the document and the contemporary houses that exist to date.

(fig. 2) the upper floor consists of: Single rooms for single trader's accommodation, the inner courtyard, hotel suites are composed of several rooms, a lounge, utilities and services.

3.2. Second floor

Includes 2 suites; each of which consists of 2 large rooms, a hall ,a serving area and 3 single rooms in the middle. This floor facing the river Nile from the eastern side and. 2 chains of stairs leads to it from the sideward streets and long corridor in between the stairs.

(fig. 3) the second floor consists of 3 Single rooms for single trader's accommodation, the inner courtyard, hotel suites are composed of several rooms, a lounge, utilities and services

3. Architectural Analysis
1. 3. The ground floor:

The main façade
Architectural and technical characteristics (fig. 4):
Using the moulded bricks alternately painted in red and black in decorating the facades and the white grout as projecting mortar between the courses such bricks are called the molded grouted ones.
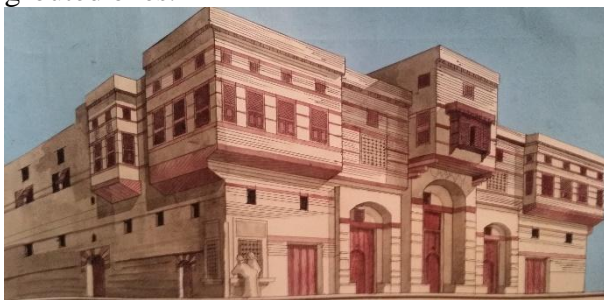

(fig. 4) the main facade

The main entrances gates (figs. 5-6-7)
The wekala has two main gates on the same center from two facades, one of them facing the main street, and the other facing the river Nile.
Finished with the style of Rosetta's old houses gates.
The gates have two wooden strong doors, and it is high enough to allow camels and Caravans to pass. It's higher more than 6m and the width 3.5 m.
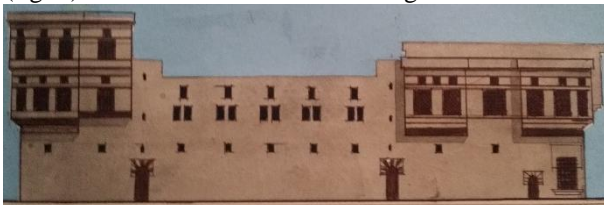
Exterior perspective
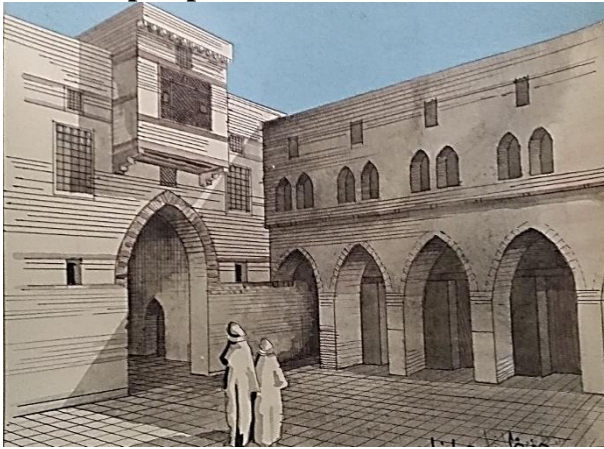
(fig. 5) the courtyard

(fig. 6) the eastern Facade overlooking the main market


(fig. 7) the sideward façade

(fig. 8) the main gate (the picture is just to illustrate the style, it's been taken for an existing old house in Rosetta).

The interface consists of the openings, doors, windows, external cables, exterior and interior beams, the shoulders are down, the shape of the main gates shop doors.
All of these elements were quoted from buildings dating back to the same period of the Agency.
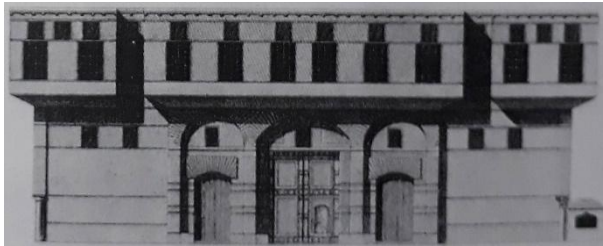
This façade is taken from the book 'Description of Egypt''

The cistern

(the picture is just to illustrate the style, it's been taken for an existing old house in Rosetta).

Located at the bottom underground and used for keepingthe water which comes from the river Nile across the brick pipes.
It was supported with column or brackets and covered with vaults and shallow domes.
The cistern had curb extending sometimes to the upper floor (fig. 9-10).
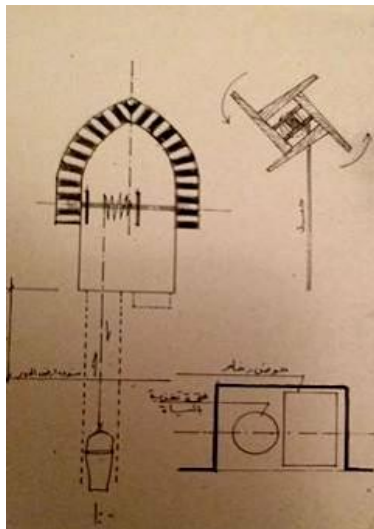
(fig. 9) keeping the water from the cistern
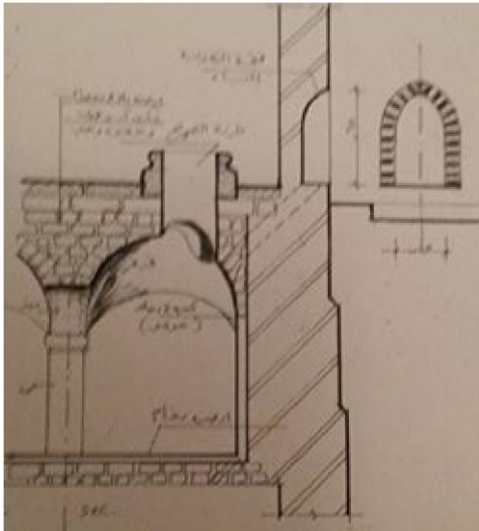
(fig. 10) Cross section in the cistern underground water

Conclusion

- The researcher examined the documents and information about the wekala of Dawood Pasha and transformed information into architectural designs to provide the reader and researcher with a picture of these monuments as they were before.
- Since these documents are numbered in hundreds and are kept in volumes, we have dealt with them as little as we need in this work.
- We resorted to other sources to complete the information that we did not find in the documents mentioned.
- We have taken the description of Egypt, which was done by the scientists of the French campaign and they have privatized a special part of the city of Rosetta, a guide to the style of building wekalat in the Ottoman era.
- And we relied on the survey maps issued by the Egyptian Survey Authority and annexed in 1913 and provided us with information on the style of construction in the Ottoman era.
- We were guided by the existing agencies in Cairo such as the Sultan Al Ghouri Agency, the Sultan Qaitbay Agency and some agencies drawn up by the foreign travelers, who visited Egypt, where they spent some time studying the architectural concept of all the elements of the Agency.
- Through transform information into architectural designs of the buildings that existed at those times and were destroyed through various reasons, highlighting the importance of urban and architectural style.
- The researcher put the foundations and rules of the restoration of the architectural heritage of Rosetta in the Ottoman era,

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