
**ALEXANDRIA IN THE WRITINGS OF RABBI MESHULLAM BEN MENAHEM
(1481) AND ARNOLD VON HARFF (1496 AD): AN ANALYTICAL STUDY**

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Abstract

Travel books or travel literature are considered one of the most important scientific sources in the process of historical recording for historians and researchers in this field, due to the valuable and rare information they contain between their pages that we rarely find in other history books. They depict for us places and times that we would not have obtained without the adventures of those people, travelers across the universe. However, its users must take caution in the process of transferring it, and it must also be subjected to historical criticism, given that the writings of its authors are completely inaccurate, interspersed with some imagination, and dominated by the nature of subjectivity, in addition to the lack of mastery of most of its authors in the Arabic language and other shortcomings that taint it. Accordingly, the travel books It has its advantages and disadvantages in the process of historical documentation and historical writings.

The European journey left important notes about the cities, the population, and historical events. The European traveler visited the cities and recorded valuable sightings that were not mentioned in contemporary sources. We must not forget that those travelers expressed the attempt of medieval Europe to discover the outside world, especially the Arab region, which has a very diverse population and economy. Ideologically and religiously rich, especially through the presence of the sacred places of the three monotheistic religions on its western side, knowing that the writings of European travelers in the Middle Ages are considered the true beginnings of the phenomenon of Orientalism and Europe's connection with the East, and traced its news, wealth, and peoples, so that this knowledge was transformed in favor of the phenomenon of European colonialism in the Middle Ages. And modern ones, all of which point to the importance of studying the writings of the European journey at that time.

The research deals with the modern city of Alexandria through the writings of two

travelers who visited the city, namely the travelers Meshullam ben Menahem and Arnold von Harff, who wrote a lot about this city, and what concerns us in this area is related to third: the effects of Alexandria according to Meshullam ben Menahem and Arnold von Harff. It includes: the walls of Alexandria, the tower (Qaitbay Citadel), the houses of Alexandria, the Christian shrines, and those who mentioned its architectural layout and architectural elements.

Keywords: the city of Alexandria, Meshullam ben Menahem, Arnold von Harff, the walls of Alexandria, Qaitbay Citadel, Alexandria houses, the Venetian Khan, Christian shrines.

First: Rabbi Meshullam ben Menahem (1481)

Meshullam ben Menahem¹ was among those Jews who set out on their journey to reach Jerusalem, that ancient city which they consider to be the center of the world, and to which they make pilgrimages three times a year. He is one of the Italian rabbis, and he is called Meshullam ben Menahem of Volterra. He headed towards the east in the last quarter of the ninth century AH/fifth century. Ten AD (886 AH/1481 AD).

In fact, our knowledge of Meshullam ben Menahem is limited, and in that he is similar to other European travelers who flocked to the East in the Middle Ages, and most of what we know about him is taken from his journey. He says about himself that he is an Italian Jew, from a wealthy family that lived in Florence in the ninth century AH (fifteenth century AD). This was mentioned when he talked about the Jews of Cairo on his trip, and he mentioned that one of the major Jewish gemstone merchants in Cairo is called Rabbi Musa de Villa. (R. Moses di Villa) got to know him and introduced him to Cairo. He says: "... I remember that twenty-two years ago he - that is, Moses di Villa - was in our house in Florence, and our father of blessed memory honored him, especially in our circle known as Belfroso (Polvereso) and he did not forget the generosity and honor he had enjoyed on the part of our father... He spoke of me personally, testified that we were rich, and that we had

¹Adler, Alkin Nathan (2019). *The Jewish Travelers: The Journey of Rabbi Meshulam bin Menachem Al-Voltiri 1481 AD (in Egypt, Palestine, Damascus, and Beirut)*, translation, edited by: Mustafa Wajih Mustafa, Nour Houran for Studies, Publishing, and Heritage, pp. 143 et seq. Mustafa, Mustafa Wajih. *Alexandria in the eyes of Rabbi Meshulam bin Menachem of Volterra, 886 AH / 1481 AD, a comparative study with the writings of contemporary European travelers*. Source: Algeria: *Al-Andalus Magazine*, Hassiba Ben Bouali University of Chlef, Volume 2, Issue 6, September 2017, pp. 41 et seq.

more than a thousand ducats in our possession, and praised us at length...”¹.

We have a text by the Jewish traveler Obadiah Jariah, in which he confirms that Meshulam went to the East another time other than the one in which he wrote his diary in the year 1481 AD. Obadiah mentions in his narration of the incidents of his trip to Jerusalem that “on the evening of the Feast of Tabernacles² (1487 AD) a French sailing ship arrived, heading to Alexandria. Rabbi Meshulam of Volterra was on board, and he took his servant with him, and it gave me great pleasure to travel with him³.”

Ibn Menachem went to the East twice on the one hand, which makes it clear that many of the social and economic images he dealt with in his diaries were based on an accumulation of knowledge on the other hand. He enjoyed great influence, and this is confirmed by a narration by Obadiah as well, but this time in Rhodes, when he mentioned that the leader of the Jews of Rhodes personally went out to receive them and welcomed the Jews with a great welcome. He explained this warm welcome by saying: “...that is because the merchant Rabbi Meshulam, who was with us in The ship is Shashak, Rabbi Nathan, the most famous Jewish man in Rhodes...⁴”.

In light of this, we can assume that Meshullam ben Menahem is a wealthy Italian Jewish merchant. He is not a man of religion, although the signs gathered about him indicate his

¹ Adler, (ed), (1930). Meshullam Ben Manahem, Itinerary of Rabbi meshullam ben menahem of 1481 in J T, London, p. 271.

² This holiday begins on the fifteenth of the seventh month, Tishri, five days after Yom Kippur, and continues day after night. The Feast of Tabernacles, translated into the Hebrew word “Sukkot,” is the plural adjective for the word “umbrella.” The Feast of Tabernacles is the third pilgrimage holiday for the Jews, along with Passover and the Feast of Weeks. Throughout history, this holiday has been called several names, including the “Feast of Peace” and the “Feast of Joy,” which is It begins on the fifteenth of October, and lasts seven days, after the Feast of Yom Kippur. The historical occasion of this holiday is the commemoration of the Palm Tent that sheltered the Hebrews in the open during the exodus from Egypt. This was explained in the Book of Leviticus, “So that your generations may know that I made the children of Israel dwell in booths when I brought them out of the land of Egypt.” Leviticus: 23:23. This holiday was originally an agricultural harvest festival, and it was celebrated in the storage of agricultural food crops for the whole year, and therefore it is called in Hebrew. “Hag Ha-Aseph,” meaning “the Feast of the Harvest,” because it defines the transitional period from one agricultural year to another (Exodus: 23: 14-17). Mustafa, Mustafa Wajih. Alexandria in the eyes of Rabbi Meshulam ben Menachem, p. 144.

³ Adler (ed) (1930). Obadiah Jara Da Bertinoro, Itinerary of Obadiah 1487-1490 AD in J.T . London, p. 218.

⁴ Adler (ed) (1930). Obadiah Jara Da Bertinoro, Itinerary of Obadiah, p. 216.

religious tendency, which is dominated by the general Jewish dream of establishing the Kingdom of Israel again¹, and from what he wrote it is clear to us that he did not travel to “Jerusalem” alone; Rather, he also had a Jewish friend called Raphael, and he spoke about him in a few places². This means to us that Meshullam ben Menahem did not visit these sites alone, but wanted to be accompanied by one of the Jewish clerics. In this, he is similar to other Jewish travelers who preceded him on trips to the Holy Lands in Palestine, including Ptahia of Ratsippon, who found someone to accompany him on his journey³, as well as Samuel. Ben Samson, who was accompanied on his journey by a man named Jonathan Hacoen⁴.

The diary begins with what was narrated by the traveler on May 4, 1481 AD, the day he arrived in Rhodes after completing the sea journey on board one of the ships belonging to the Italian/merchant Republic of Venice, which was then extremely wealthy. This maritime republic owned three thousand three hundred ships and employed thirty-six thousand sailors⁵. When Rhodes arrived, he described it as having a port and being inhabited by valleys and hills. He admired the beauty of the city and saw its knights wearing beautiful brocade covers. He also mentioned that the circumference of the island of Rhodes is three hundred miles from Chios to the city of Rhodes, and there are many villages on the island, and the Jews live there in complete calm⁶.

On the second day of June 1481 AD, Rabbi Ibn Menachem traveled from Rhodes, and after several dangers at sea, the ship on which the traveler was able to approach the shores of Alexandria, in whose port⁷ the ship docked on Wednesday the sixth of June 1481 AD.

¹ Adler, (ed), (1930). Meshullam Ben Manahem, Itinerary of Rabbi Meshullam Ben Manahem, p. 208.

² He talked about it in his following the news of Alexandria, p. 163, as well as in his following the news of Cairo, p. 167, and when he talked about his departure from Sinai to Palestine and after his arrival in Jerusalem, pp. 187-195.

³ Adler, N. (ed). (1930). Petachia of Retisbon, The Itinerary of Rabbi Petachia, 1174-1187 A.D., in :J. t., London, pp. 61- 90.

⁴ Adler, ed. (1930). Samuel Ben Samson, Itinerary of Rabbi Samuel Ben Samson, 1210 A. D., in: J.T N., London, pp. 103-110

⁵ Wolfe, Anne (2006). How far is Cairo?, translated by Qasim Abdo Qasim, Cairo: The National Translation Project, p. 37.

⁶ Adler, (ed), (1930). Meshullam Ben Manahem, Itinerary of Rabbi Meshullam Ben Manahem, p. 156.

⁷ It is noteworthy that Alexandria had two ports: the old western port, which is known as the port of (Al-Silsilah). It was open to the west and designated for Muslim ships, and it was forbidden for Christians to

His attention was attracted by its lighthouses, castles, and mosques¹.

He talked about some of the measures taken by the state of the Mamluk Sultans to receive foreign ships in Alexandria. He said: “I saw the Admiral² who had a dove³, and when he wanted to send a message to the Sultan, he would place it in her mouth, or attach the letter to it, and she would take it to Egypt and bring it.” She went to the Sultan’s window, and there was a man waiting for her. This is the truth and there is no doubt about it⁴.”

Other European travelers spoke about these procedures in more detail than what was reported by the owner of our trip, and the meaning of these procedures is that when the ship reached the shores of Alexandria, it had to stop at a long distance in the sea, and sometimes European ships would spend the whole night on it until the early morning, as was the case. With the ship on which the Jewish traveler (Obadiah Jariah) was on board, when he said: “We became off Alexandria... so we dropped our anchor approximately four miles from the shore⁵,” and he mentioned that he and those with him stayed for a day and an entire night off the coast of Alexandria⁶. Following this, the observer of the tower (Qaitbay Citadel) informed the governor of the city; He sends a small boat with twenty

enter it, even from the dry land. As for the second port, it was designated to receive Christian ships, and opened to the north, and was known as (Marsa Al-Burj). Look at that: Larrvaz. (ed). (1904) Breyden Bach, les saintes peregrinations, Bernard de Breyden Bech 1483, le Caire, pp. 65- 66. Lettes, M. (ed). (1946). Harff, The Pilgrimage of Arnold Von Harff, 1496-1499, Ledon, 93. Bruxelles, Bauwens (ed). (1992). Joos van Ghistele, voyage en Egypte (1842- 1483), Oxford, p.123. Thenoud only referred to the Christian port: Thenoud, J. (1888). The journey out of the city, Paris, p. 28. In this regard, Felix Fabry mentioned that two of those who accompanied him on his Hajj trip were severely beaten by Mamluk soldiers for trying to infiltrate the Muslim port and see its ships. Masson, J. (ed). (1975). Voyage en Egypte de Felix Fabri, Paris, II, p.787.

¹ Adler, (ed), (1930). Meshullam Ben Manahem, Itinerary of Rabbi Meshullam Ben Manahem, p. 158.

² Admiral, meaning the Viceroy of Alexandria, and the Viceroy at that time was Jakam Qara Al-Ala’i Al-Dhahiri, Amir Akhur Al-Jamal. See: Ibn Iyas, Abu Al-Barakat Muhammad bin Ahmad, d. 930 AH (2008). Bada’i’ al-Zuhur fi Waqi’a’ al-Duhour, edited by Muhammad Mustafa, 3rd edition, Cairo: Dar al-Kutub and National Documents, p. 182.

³ He means the carrier pigeon that was used to transmit messages in the Middle Ages, and see in detail about it: Abdel Aziz, Nabil Muhammad. Carrier pigeons and their importance in the era of the Mamluk sultans, Egyptian Journal of Historical Studies, Volume 22, 1975, pp. 41-80.

⁴ Adler, (ed), (1930). Meshullam Ben Manahem, Itinerary of Rabbi Meshullam Ben Manahem, p. 162

⁵ Adler (ed) (1930). Obadiah Jara Da Bertinoro, Itinerary of Obadiah 1487-1490 AD in J.T . London, p. 218.

⁶ Adler (ed) (1930). Obadiah Jara Da Bertinoro, p. 219 .

employees to board the ship and write records regarding the nationality of the ship¹, the number of passengers and their nationality, and the type and size of the cargo. Then one of them sends that information to the governor, who in turn sends it to the Sultan in Cairo via the carrier pigeon that Mechoulam talked about².

Second: Ritters Arnold von Harff

Ritters Arnold von Harff³, a German traveler from the fifteenth century, from Cologne, was destined to undertake a trip in which he visited many countries of Eastern Europe and the Arab East. Where he went on a trip to many countries, Harv left Europe on his journey to the East, crossing Germany and Italy, with the aim of reaching Venice in order to prepare for the trip by obtaining some permits for exchanging currencies in the East⁴, and shortly after that he climbed onto the deck of one of the boats heading to Alexandria and from there to Cairo via Rosetta⁵.

He collected some linguistic and cultural information about the countries he visited, or was believed to have visited, and recorded their diaries in a manuscript. He recorded the information in a manuscript that was kept by his family, who lived in a palace known as Schloss Harff Palace in Bedburg, Cologne, Germany. The palace was demolished in 1972, where it became the site of a coal mine.

The manuscript was edited and printed by the German Eberhard von Groote in 1860, and

¹ Frescobaldi, Leonardo & others (1948). Visit to the Holy Places of Egypt, Sinai, Palestine, and Syria in 1384, translated from the Italian by Theophilus Bellorini and Eugene Hoade; with a preface and notes by Bellarmino Bagatt, Franciscan Press, Jerusalem. p. 38.

² Adler, (ed), (1930). Meshullam Ben Manahem, Itinerary of Rabbi Meshullam Ben Manahem, p. 163.

³ Arnold von Harff, The Pilgrimage of Arnold von Harff. Knight, from Cologne, through Italy, Syria, Egypt, Arabia, Ethiopia, Nubia, Palestine, Turkey, France and Spain, which he accomplished in the Years 1496 to 1499, translated from the German and edited with notes and an introduction by. Malcolm Lettes, F. S. A., London. 1946, pp. XIII–XIV, XXXIII–XXXV.

⁴ Elsie, Robert (1984). The Albanian Lexicon of Arnold von Harff, 1497, *Zeitschrift für vergleichende Sprachforschung*, Published By: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, GmbH & Co. KG, 97. Bd., 1. H., pp. 113-122.

⁵ Abu Dahesh, Abdulaziz Abdullah Muhammad. The Journey Through Egypt in the Diaries of the Belgian Traveler Anselm Adorno (1470 AD) and the German Arnold von Harff (1497 AD): A Comparative Study in Light of European Travels During the Last Half Century of the Mamluk Era, Saudi Arabia: King Khalid University Journal for the Humanities, 2/7, December 2020, pp. 113-150. *The Journey through Egypt in the Diaries Two Voyagers the Belgian Anselm Adorno (1470), and the German Arnold Von Harff (1497)*.

translated into English and commented on by Malcolm Letts in 1946. The investigator and translator believe that the furthest place Arnold reached was the Sinai, which he reached from Cairo, and they considered his writings about the Hijaz, Mecca, Aden, Madagascar, and India. From books and maps that were available at that time, i.e. the late Middle Ages¹. The journey took place between the years (1496-1499) and began from Colon, through Italy, Syria, Egypt, Hijaz, and Yemen, and from there to Socotra, India, then Ethiopia, Nubia, Palestine, Turkey, France, and Spain.

In Cairo, he described the Mountain Castle with its walls, towers, and doors. He gave a description of the numbers of Christians and Jews living in Cairo. He was keen to describe the markets in general and the food shops in Mamluk Cairo in particular.

His journey to the East came to perform the Hajj to Jerusalem² via Germany and Italy. He arrived in Venice, where he met one of the major merchants to buy from him permission to exchange currencies in the East. He then departed from Venice on a commercial ship to Alexandria, and passed on his way through the island of Rhodes. On his journey, he described the methods and traditions followed. At that time, to receive passengers landing at the port of Alexandria, as the Mamluk authorities did not allow foreign ships to enter the port directly for fear of European piracy at that time, and that messenger would ask all the passengers about the reason for their coming to Egypt, the purpose of the trip, their names

¹ Malcolm, Letts (2010). The Pilgrimage of Arnold Von Harff, Knight, from Cologne: Through Italy, Syria, Egypt, Arabia, Ethiopia, Nubia, Palestine, Turkey, France and Spain, Which He Accomplished in the Years 1496-1499, Text Series: [Hakluyt Society, Second Ser](#), Publisher: Farnham: [Hakluyt Society](#).

² Cologne & Letts, M. (1860). The Pilgrimage of Arnold von Harff, Translated from the German and edited with notes and an introduction by Malcolm Letts, London 1946, reprint 1947. Honemann, V. Zur Lieferung der Reisebeschreibung Arnold von Harff's. in: *Zeitschrift für deutsches Altertum und deutsche Literatur*, 107, 1978, pp. 165-178. Wie, A. Hetzer (1981). ist Arnold von Harff's Wörterverzeichnis (1496) zu lesen? in: *Balkan-Archiv, Neue Folge, Hamburg*, 6, pp. 227-262. Elsie, R. (1984). The Albanian lexicon of Arnold von Harff, 1497. in: *Zeitschrift für Vergleichende Sprachforschung, Göttingen*, 97, 1, pp. 113-122. Beckers, H. (1985). Zu den Fremdalphabeten und Fremdsprachproben im Reisebericht Arnold von Harff (1496-1498). in: *Collectanea Philologica. Festschrift für Helmut Gipper*, vol. 1, Baden-Baden, pp. 73-86; Von Groote, E. (ed.). (2003). *Die Pilgerfahrt des Ritters Arnold von Harff von Cöln durch Italien, Syrien, Aegypten, Arabien, Aethiopien, Nubien, Palästina, die Türkei, Frankreich und Spanien, wie er sie in den Jahren 1496 bis 1499 vollendet, beschrieben und durch Zeichnungen erläutert hat*, Cologne 1860, pp. 64-66. Translated from the German by Robert Elsie. Published in R. Elsie: *Early Albania, a Reader of Historical Texts, 11th - 17th Centuries*, Wiesbaden, pp. 31-33.

and numbers, and then send this information to The ruler is in the city via carrier pigeons, then the ruler of the border sends this information to the Mamluk Sultan in Cairo in the same way, and when the Sultan allows it to enter the port, the Alexandria Citadel fires to welcome the arriving ship, and the ship responds to it with the same greeting. After entering, the travelers are allowed to disembark after verifying their personalities and their enemies. Their nationalities and the purpose of the trip are determined. The tax paid by each traveler is determined. It was 2 Byzantine ducats for merchants and 5 for pilgrims.

Harf elaborated on the description of the reception ceremony for arrivals to the port of Alexandria, which was represented by its ruler sending a messenger to the boat that Harf boarded when it was anchored at sea, in order to determine the identity of the boat's passengers, the purpose of their journey, and their numbers, in light of the Mamluks' keenness to avoid penetration by European pirates in the Mediterranean at that time. Their city.

Harf explained this behavior by saying that he and the rest of the foreigners frequenting Egypt via Alexandria and elsewhere were not allowed, except after the officials obtained approval for their entry into the port from the Sultan at his headquarters in Cairo, by communicating with him via carrier pigeons, and when the Sultan's approval arrived, the defenders of the castle Qaitbay fires fire to welcome the arriving boat, which returns the same greeting as it passes by the citadel, "...and we should have lowered the huge sail as a symbol or proof of respect for the citadel...", a sign of appreciation and mutual respect between the two parties, then he allows the passengers to disembark into the city, As soon as he landed at the port, he described it as very large.

In the city, he visited the holy Christian places, such as the Church of Saint Saba, where Saint Catherine lived, then the Church of Saint Mark, in which he was martyred and buried, as well as the Church of Saint Michael, where merchants and foreign pilgrims are buried. He also saw the place where Saint Catherine was tortured, and described the city, its streets, and markets. Then he traveled to Rosetta and from there to Cairo. He also described the mountain fortress, its gates, and the Sultan's office. He did not forget to mention the numbers of Christians and Jews in Cairo and the food market. Then he obtained permission to travel to Jerusalem, crossed the Sinai desert and visited St. Catherine's Monastery, then headed to Antioch and Constantinople and returned to Europe.



After that, he obtained permission to visit Jerusalem, and on the way he stopped by the Monastery of St. Catherine, then reached the rest of the Christian shrines in the East - the main goal of his trip - and gave a wonderful description of them. Then he headed to Antioch and from there to Constantinople and Europe, where he returned to his home in 1499 and died six years later in 1505.

Through studying his journey and his description of Alexandria, I noticed that he visited Egypt in the Mamluk era in the year 1496 on a trip in which he visited the Monastery of St. Catherine, located in Sinai, after which he continued the journey towards Damascus, Aleppo, and Antioch, then crossing Anatolia, passing through Bursa, walking to the tomb of St. James Ibn Zebedee, located in Santiago de Compostela, and his journey continued until the year 1499, when he began to return to his home on October 10, 1499.

Von Harff's trip to Alexandria is considered one of the best trips of that era because it included accurate geographical and economic information of important scientific value, in addition to social information that was not explained by other sources. He also mentioned a census of the population, neighborhoods, gates, and markets, and a description of the customs and traditions of the residents, their work, and their craft.

Arnold von Harff lied about mentioning his true nationality when his data was inquired about to escape paying the fees imposed on pilgrims, but he confirmed that he lost the sultan's respect, favor, and gifts because of his lies and deception in this regard, which also means that the sultans appreciated foreign travelers like him and lavished on them.

He described the Egyptians, as was the custom of European travelers and historians, as pagans, and he liked to describe the Mamluks responsible for inspection at the port as apostates from Christianity, perhaps in reference to the fact that some of the Mamluks were white European slaves who were sold as children in slave markets and were brought to Egypt and raised on Islamic teachings, learning Arabic and the arts of war, to become future princes and sultans.

He contradicted the historical reality when he indicated that the walls of Alexandria might be similar to the walls of European castles and cities, perhaps out of ignorance of the historical reality that confirms that Western Europe did not possess the kind of strong castles that the majority of the cities of the East, including Alexandria, possessed until after the arrival of the Crusaders to the East. It influenced the style of simple European feudal castles, replacing them with the eastern models that the Crusaders imitated when they

returned to the West.

He did not differ from many Europeans who frequented the East and described Muslims as pagans, influenced by the Western concept that dominated European thought in the Middle Ages, influenced by papal hegemony over the course of religious and political life, which instilled a concept that was devoid of the reality of Muslims. From a methodological standpoint, Harf confirmed the things that he saw with his own eyes, while he was careful to point out the things that he heard and did not see, such as his talk about the Sultan's council in the mountain castle, but without seeing it, which is credited to him and his honesty and accuracy in transmission. Despite this, his trip remains one of the richest trips that presented a vivid and wonderful picture of the city of Alexandria to foreign eyes at a time when Egypt suffered from weakness that would soon translate into its fall into the hands of the Ottomans in 1517.

Third: Antiquities of Alexandria according to Meshullam ben Menahem and Arnold von Harff

1. The walls of Alexandria

From what Mechoulam¹ mentioned, Alexandria, like Florence, was well built and its walls were high and good. But the whole city is dry, and there are more ruins than buildings. This is the same thing that Obadiah said when he recorded on his journey that “The city of Alexandria is a very large city, with a wall around it and surrounded by the sea, but two-thirds of its buildings are currently destroyed, and many of its houses are deserted, and its inhabited palaces are paved with mosaics, and in the middle are peach and date trees, and all of these houses are large and beautiful.” However, its residents are few in number².”

¹ Mustafa, Mustafa Wajih. Alexandria in the eyes of Rabbi Meshulam bin Menachem of Volterra, 886 AH / 1481 AD, a comparative study with the writings of contemporary European travelers. Source: Algeria: Al-Andalus Magazine, Hasiba Ben Bouali University of Chlef, Volume 2, Issue 6, September 2017, pp. 152-153.

² Adler, (ed), (1930). Meshullam Ben Manahem, Itinerary of Rabbi Meshullam Ben Manahem, p.159-160. See what other travelers say about that: Bruxelles, Bauwens (ed). (1992). Joos van Ghistele, voyage en Egypte (1842- 1483), p. 114; Lettes, M. (ed). (1946). Harff, The Pilgrimage of Arnold Von Harff, 1496-1499, p.93; Thenoud, J. (1888). Le voyage de outre mer de Jeun Thenoud, p. 23; Schefer (ed). (1864). Domeinco trevsani le voyage, D' Outre mere D' Egypte 1512, Paris, p. 173. Adler (ed) (1930). Obadiah Jara Da Bertinoro, p. 222.

As for Ludolf von Suchem, he said that Alexandria was “surrounded by high walls, and there was a small military garrison residing inside the citadel. The city appeared to its onlookers to be fortified, but the reality proves that it was easy to seize it... Due to the seriousness of the matter, I will not say much about it¹.” Belotti points out that it is possible to call Alexandria after the abandoned city², even though it has very beautiful buildings decorated from the inside with marble in addition to various decorations and adornments. However, some people buy these decorated and ornate buildings, extract the adornments in them, and send them to Cairo to decorate their buildings in Cairo with them³.

Von Harff summarized the mention of Alexandria by saying: “Alexandria is surrounded by four high towers, upon which a group of men are appointed daily. When they see European ships arriving at sea; they give a specific signal agreed upon in advance, whereby flags are raised according to the number of ships, and thus a statistic of the number of the fleet is made immediately, and the Emir of the city submits a report to the Sultan and sends it with the carrier pigeons⁴.” Then the Sultan responds to the governor’s (deputy’s) letter and sends a permit for the ships to enter the port. Here comes the role of the port employee, who removes their sails and rudders until the taxes on them are paid. Here, an experienced researcher points out that the law of the Mamluk state required that every individual pay a foreign ship was given one or two dukas⁵ as a capital tax¹. As for the merchants², they had

¹ Stewart, Aubrey (ed), (1895). *Description of the Holy Land and the Way Thither* by Ludolph Von Suchem 1350, London, p. 47. It is worth noting that Ludolf’s speech must be placed within the framework of the development of the strategy of the Crusades after the fall of Acre in 1291 AD and the emergence of many Crusader propaganda projects studying how to eliminate the Mamluk state. In order for this to enable them to control the Levantine coast and Palestine again, some of them were interested in traveling and spying to provide information, and some of them were responsible for preparing plans based on the reports of travelers/spies.

² Piloti, Emmanuel & Dopp, Herman (Editor) (1950). *L’Égypte au commencement du quinzième siècle*, d’après le traité d’Emmanuel Piloti de Crète, p. 36.

³ Piloti, Emmanuel & Dopp, Herman (Editor) (1950). *L’Égypte au commencement du quinzième siècle*, p. 36.

⁴ Lettes, M. (ed). (1946). *Harff, The Pilgrimage of Arnold Von Harff*, p. 93.

⁵ The duke: It is the gold coin of Venice, which we can call the dollar of the Middle Ages. This name was given to it after the duke, the ruler of Venice, and this coin had a fixed weight. Al-Qalqashandi mentioned

to pay a tenth on the value of the goods and goods coming to the customs office³. After the ship's goods were emptied, the goods entered the customs door through porters who were carried on their shoulders or on the backs of donkeys and mules. As for the ship's passengers themselves, they were searched. Accurately, the customs worker records their numbers and names⁴.

Harf believes that Alexandria is not much smaller than the German city of Cologne, and he described it as adjacent to Egyptian lands, influenced by the vision of Muslim travelers and geographers in the Middle Ages, describing Alexandria as a region that has its own distinctness from the rest of mainland Egypt, and he pointed to the construction of it by Alexander the Great, from which it took its name, which means His acquaintance with some historical and geographical literature, or his access to this information through his contact with the Alexandrians in the presence of his translator.

When talking about the gates and walls of Alexandria⁵, we must point out that the city of Alexandria was wider in area before the Islamic conquest than it was after this conquest,

that on one side of it was drawn a picture of the ruler during whose reign it was minted, and on the other side. Pictures of Saints Paul and Peter, Al-Qalqashandi: Subh Al-A'sha, vol. 3, p. 437.

¹ Atiya, Aziz Surial (1990). *The Crusades and their impact on relations between East and West*, translated by Philip Saber, 2nd edition, Cairo: House of Culture, p. 183.

² The first to impose tithes on merchants was Caliph Omar ibn al-Khattab, but he did not tithe a Muslim or a pact. Rather, tithes were imposed on merchants of countries at war with Muslims from Persia and Romans, as they used to do to Muslims. "It was reported on the authority of Abd al-Rahman ibn Maqil that he said: I asked Ziyad ibn Iron, who were you tithing from? He said: We did not give tithe to a Muslim or a covenanter. I said: Who were you tithing from? He said: "The merchants of war, just as they used to pay tithes to us when we came to them." Those who pay the tithes would receive specific deeds for that so that the tax would not be imposed on them again. Ibn Salam, Abu Ubaid Al-Qasim d. 224 AH / 838 AD (1976). *The Book of Money*, edited by: Muhammad Khalil Harras, 1st edition, Beirut, pp. 635-647; Al-Tabari (1939). *History of the Messengers and Kings*, Cairo, 2, Beirut: Dar Al-Fikr, p. 515. And about the ten in detail: See: Al-Qalqashandi, Abu Al-Abbas Ahmad, d. 821 AH / 1418 AD (1914). *Subh Al-Asha fi Construction Industry*, 2, Cairo, p. 463.

³ Frescobaldi, Leonardo & others (1948). *Visit to the Holy Places of Egypt, Sinai, Palestine, and Syria in 1384*, p. 138. Lettes, M. (ed). (1946). *Harff, The Pilgrimage of Arnold Von Harff*, p. 93. Also: Ziada; M. M. (1967). *The Foreign relation of Egypt in 15 century*, London, p. 212.

⁴ Al-Abdari, Muhammad bin Muhammad Ibn Al-Hajj Al-Abdari (1968). *Al-Abdari's Journey, called the Moroccan Journey*, Rabat: Ministry of State in charge of Cultural Affairs, p. 216.

⁵ Toson, Omar (1934). July 11, 1882, Cairo: Library of Arts.

and the circle of its ancient walls surrounding it was larger than the circle of its wall during Arab rule. This is because it was the capital of the Egyptian Kingdom from the time it was founded by Alexander the Great until it was conquered by the Arabs. Roman soldiers, their families, their rulers, and many of those staying there from different sects of nations fled from it, especially after the second conquest was opened during the era of the caliphate of Uthman ibn Affan, may God be pleased with him, and after the city was taken. Fustat is the capital of Egypt and is densely populated. In its ancient era, it was an extremely impregnable and fortified city, famous for its many walls, deep moats, fortified gates, many sumptuous towers, and many lofty fortresses. During the rule of Ahmed Ibn Tulun over Egypt when he gained independence in about the year 265 AH (878 AD), he surrounded Alexandria with a new wall, For fear of a raid by the Caliph's military.

Alexandria was three cities, one side by side - Menna, which is the site of the lighthouse and its surroundings, Alexandria, which is the site of the Kasbah of Alexandria today, and Nuqita. Each of them had a wall and a wall behind that on the three cities surrounding them all. Alexandria had seven fortresses and seven moats¹.

Alexandria was built in layers, and beneath them were arched arches with the city's floors under them. The knight walked under them with a spear in his hand, which he did not tighten until he circled all those arches and arches that were under the city. For those arches and panels, holes and outlets for light and air outlets were made - until he said - and there were seven walls on them of different types of stones of different colors, with ditches between them, and between each ditch and wall there were chapters. When the country became straight for the Muslims, Amr ibn al-Aas demolished all of its walls².

In the ninth century AD, during the caliphate of Al-Mutawakkil, who was the tenth of the Abbasids and the thirty-second of the caliphs after the Messenger of God, peace and blessings of God be upon him, Ahmad ibn Tulun demolished the old walls and built others, so what was towards the sea and the west remained as it was, with some changes. As for what was on the eastern side and the tribal side, it greatly destroyed these two sides, and some of them mentioned that Ibn Tulun only rebuilt the old walls, and then in the year 1212 AD, the city and the walls were completely destroyed, so one of those who took over the gate of the Egyptian lands after Saladin built other walls, which are Which remained

¹ Ibn Abd al-Hakam, d. 257 AH / 871 AD (1914-1920). *Egypt's Conquests and Works*, Cairo - Leiden, p. 42.

² Ibn Abd al-Hakam (1914-1920). *Conquests of Egypt and its deeds*, pp. 175-176.

until the French entry.

The port of Alexandria was the oldest and greatest port of Islam. It included two secure walls with several towers surrounded by a moat into which water was released from the surrounding sea in times of need. The port had several secure doors to the point that on each door there were three iron gates, and on the top of the towers were catapults and anchors. Necessity hangs a lamp on every lantern,

Khalil Al-Dhaheri also mentioned that the port of Alexandria includes two secure walls with several square-shaped towers surrounded by a moat into which water is released from the sea in times of need. The port has several secure doors to the point that each entrance has three iron doors, and at the top of the towers are catapults and anklets, and the city wall was It was doubled in the Mamluk era, as it consisted of two walls, a main wall and a front wall, as was common in Byzantine and Islamic architecture in Andalusia.

In the year 600 AH (1241 AD), Saladin ordered the construction of huge walls for the city. It had four gates: Bab Al-Sidrah, Bab of Rosetta, Bab Al-Bahr, and Bab Al-Green. The wall was double and topped with high towers. Huge stones were used to build the walls, towers, and gates, and marble and granite columns were also used horizontally. To strengthen the foundations and increase their durability, which is what we found before in Fatimid military architecture represented by the walls and gates of Cairo.

Through the published pictures of two of the wall towers in Alexandria, we were able to determine the features of these towers. As for the tower located north of Bab of Rosetta in the northeastern corner of the city, this tower consists of two floors and includes four sections. The northern section represents a circular tower equipped with sinks, while the second section includes two rooms. It is located to the south of the first section. The third section also includes two rooms, preceded by a corridor and another room. The fourth section includes a square tower with rooms for guards to reside. The tower is connected to a wall made of irregular stones, which includes two walls with a corridor between them that is 1.40 meter wide, the outer wall is 0.70 meters wide and the inner wall is 1.0 meter wide¹.

The tower was built with regular carved stones and the ceilings of the rooms were made of wood. As for the ceiling of the corridor, it was kept with a pointed vault. The tower also

¹ Darwish, Mahmoud Ahmed (2019). *The Fatimid and Ayyubid Architectural Heritage*, Cairo: Arab Nation Foundation for Printing and Publishing, pp. 262-263.

includes nine prayer rooms, four of which are in the circular tower located inside the entrances and one in the room attached to it without an entrance, and two prayer rooms with two entrances in the first room in each of the second and third sections, and there are two prayer rooms with a common entrance. On the southern wall of the square tower, as for the other tower, which is located in the south-eastern corner of the city wall, south of Bab of Rosetta, and consists of two floors, it was equipped with sinks. It is noted that both towers are not connected to the wall, but there is a separation between them due to the difference in building materials, as the two towers were built with regular stone, while the wall was built with rough stone¹.

The fortresses of the city of Alexandria at the advent of the French campaign consisted of a surrounding wall with towers, pits, and fire pits, and around it was a moat to which salt sea water reached. This wall was called the Arab Wall. Because it was built during the time of their rule, and this is an undoubted fact because the circle of this wall was much narrower than the circle of the city of Ptolemies - that is, ancient Alexandria - when the Arabs took control of it. It is said that this wall is the one that remained until the French entered it. It is also said that it was destroyed and that it was built again during the days of the rule of the Bahri Mamluks, and that this is the one that remained when the French campaign came.

2. The Tower (Qaitbay Citadel)

Qaitbay Citadel represented the lookout located at the port opening to monitor ships arriving at sea. Mechoulam mentioned that the watchdog of Qaitbay Citadel informed the governor of the city. He sends a small boat with twenty employees to board the ship and write records regarding the nationality of the ship, the number of passengers and their nationality, and the type and size of the cargo. Then one of them sends that information to the governor, who in turn sends it to the Sultan in Cairo via carrier pigeon².

Meshullam ben Menahem began to learn about more of the city's landmarks and described it in a wonderful way, in which he followed the path of the Europeans who preceded him³,

¹ Darwish, Mahmoud Ahmed (2017). Encyclopedia of Rosetta, 1, History and Military Fortifications, Cairo: Arab Nation Foundation for Printing and Publishing, p. 350.

² Adler, (ed), (1930). Meshullam Ben Manahem, Itinerary of Rabbi Meshullam Ben Manahem, p. 163.

³ Adler, (ed), (1930). Meshullam Ben Manahem, Itinerary of Rabbi Meshullam Ben Manahem, p.158. It is noted that most European trips - if not all - dealt with the city of Alexandria and its political and economic importance to the Mamluk Sultanate, and some of them recommended that it be the first target of the Crusaders' attack "if they wanted the Holy Lands again." Lull, Reymond (1986). Liber de fine Mallorca, pp.

and focused a lot on the city's towers. Perhaps it is useful to cite Meshullam's text and then extract from it some evidence of importance in studying the history of Alexandria. He says "When you enter Alexandria, you find a beautiful fortress¹ with twenty-two towers, and a wall ten cubits thick between tower and tower, surrounded by a wall on one side of the city. They were able to build the castle on the island... I have not seen anything more beautiful than this castle, which was three years old, and the Mamluks used to sleep there every night, that is the law²."

This text, which we quoted from Rabbi Meshullam ben Menahem, refers - despite its brevity - to important historical facts. In his saying: "You will find a beautiful fort," and also "I have not seen anything more beautiful than this fortress, which was three years old," a reference to the castle of Sultan Qaytbay, which had been built in the place of the old Lighthouse of Alexandria³ after many of its landmarks had been destroyed, and when

93-97, The description given by Felix Fabry of Alexandria is the best description given by a European traveler, as he talked about its location, the history of its construction, its lighthouse, its houses, its doors... and so on. Masson, J. (ed). (1975). *Voyage en Egypte de Felix Fabri*, II, pp. 665-677. And look into that too: Piloti, Emmanuel & Dopp, Herman (Editor) (1950). *L'Égypte au commencement du quinzième siècle, d'après le traité d'Emmanuel Piloti de Crète*, pp. 35-39. Lettes, M. (ed). (1946). Harff, *The Pilgrimage of Arnold Von Harff, 1496-1499*, p. 93. "In light of what I saw; The city of Alexandria is not small like the city of Colony... It has fixed towers and walls, and a moat around it, as is the practice in fortifying our country..."

¹ Mustafa, Mustafa Wajih. Alexandria in the eyes of Rabbi Meshulam bin Menachem of Volterra, 886 AH / 1481 AD, a comparative study with the writings of contemporary European travelers. Source: Algeria: Al-Andalus Magazine, Hasiba Ben Bouali University of Chlef, Volume 2, Issue 6, September 2017, pp. 153-154.

² Adler, (ed), (1930). Meshullam Ben Manahem, *Itinerary of Rabbi Meshullam Ben Manahem*, p.158.

³ It is known that the famous Lighthouse of Alexandria - one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World - stood on the eastern corner of the island of Pharos at the entrance to the port of Alexandria. It was built by the Greek architect in the year 290, and was completed in 280 BC by order of King Ptolemy II. The height of the lighthouse was about 450 feet. It has a square base, an octagonal middle, and a round top. This is inferred from the accounts of the ancients who saw it, and from a recently discovered copper coin that was minted in Alexandria during the reign of Emperor Trajan 98-117 AD. It has a clear image of the lighthouse. At the top of the lighthouse was a stove from which smoke was emitted during the day, and tongues. The flames at night are reflected by large mirrors to guide ships (see what Benjamin of Tudila mentioned about the reflective mirrors of the lighthouse and what happened to it: Benjamin of Tudila, Benjamin (2002). *The Journey of Benjamin of Tudila*, translated by Ezra Haddad, 1st edition, Abu Dhabi Cultural Foundation, p. 356), and in the year 702 AH, some parts of Al-Manar were destroyed as a result of an earthquake that occurred during the reign of Al-Nasir Muhammad bin Qalawun. So he ordered its restoration (Al-Maqrizi,

Sultan Qaytbay visited the city of Alexandria in the year 882 AH. / 1477 AD - that is, a few years before Mechoulam's trip - he went to the site of the old lighthouse and saw what happened to the lighthouse, as it suffered the same neglect that befell the entire city, so its pillars were destroyed, and its structure was completely disintegrated. He decided that a tower would be built on its old foundation, and a great tower was built with it, which is what exists now¹."

This text, which we quoted from Rabbi Meshullam ben Menahem, refers - despite its brevity - to important historical facts. In his saying: "You will find a beautiful fort," and also "I have not seen anything more beautiful than this fortress, which was three years old," a reference to the castle of Sultan Qaytbay, which had been built in the place of the old Lighthouse of Alexandria after many of its landmarks had been destroyed, and when Sultan Qaytbay visited the city of Alexandria in the year 882 AH. / 1477 AD - that is, a few years before Mechoulam's trip - he went to the site of the old lighthouse and saw what happened to the lighthouse, as it suffered the same neglect that befell the entire city, so its pillars were destroyed, and its structure was completely disintegrated. He decided that a tower would be built on its old foundation, and a great tower was built with it, which is what exists now."

It is worth noting that Meshullam ben Menahem's description of the tower as good and beautiful is consistent with what was stated in the diary of Ibn Iyas², who recorded that the Sultan, after ordering the construction of the tower, traveled to Alexandria two years later, "Then he revealed the tower that he had built in the mouths of Alexandria, in the place of the old lighthouse; It was one of the beauties of the time and one of the greatest buildings

Taqi al-Din Ahmad Ibn Ali (d. 845 AH/1441 AD (2009). *Al-Sulauk to Know the Countries of Kings*), edited by Muhammad Mustafa Ziyada and Saeed Ashour, 3rd edition, Cairo House of Books and Documents, vol. 1, p. 943. In the year 750 AH, the Muslim traveler Ibn Battuta visited it. He found it so destroyed that it was not possible to enter or climb to it. Ibn Battuta, Abu Abdullah Muhammad bin Abdullah, d. 779 AH / 1377 AD, his journey, known as "The Masterpiece of the Observers of the Curiosities of the Lands and the Wonders of Travels," edited by Muhammad Al-Saeed Al-Zaini, Cairo: Al-Tawfiqiyah Library, p. 17. Then Sultan Qaytbay built a castle in the same place and used the foundation of the old minar.

¹ Ibn Iyas, Muhammad ibn Ayas al-Hanafi al-Masri, d. 930 AH/1542 AD (1311 AH/1894 Bada'i' al-Zuhur fi Waqi'a' al-Duhour, 3, Cairo, p. 132.

² Masson, J. (ed). (1975). *Voyage en Egypte de Felix Fabri*, II, pp.718-722; Bruxelles, Bauwens (ed). (1992). Joos van Ghistele, *voyage en Egypte (1842- 1483)*, p. 128- 129; Thenoud, J. (1888). *Le voyage de outre mer de Jeun Thenoud*, p. 24. Masson, J. (ed). (1975). *Voyage en Egypte de Felix Fabri*, II, pp. 718 -720.

and most beautiful monuments¹.”

In the same regard, Meshullam ben Menahem mentioned that the castle built by Sultan Qaytbay and called the tower “was built on the island.” What is meant by the island is Pharos Island, which was in front of the city of Alexandria, and the castle - the tower - was built at its end in the far west of Alexandria, and at the eastern end of Pharos Island.

The castle takes the shape of a square surrounded by the sea on three sides², the castle contains walls and the main tower³ on the northwestern side. The walls are divided into an

¹ Mustafa, Mustafa Wajih. Alexandria in the eyes of Rabbi Meshulam bin Menachem of Volterra, 886 AH / 1481 AD, a comparative study with the writings of contemporary European travelers. Source: Algeria: Al-Andalus Magazine, Hasiba Ben Bouali University of Chlef, Volume 2, Issue 6, September 2017, pp. 154-155.

² Ibn Iyas said about that: “It was said that the characteristic of the building of this tower is that its vestibule was held on arches in the salt sea from the coast until it ended at the tower. He created in this tower a seat overlooking the sea from which he could look at the boats as they entered, and he made in this tower a mosque with a khutba and a mill. He provided a furnace and its cargo containers with weapons, and around this tower he made bases manned with cannons day and night so that the Franks would not knock on the breach unannounced, and he made a group of Mujahideen permanent residents there. Ibn Iyas (1311 AH/1894). Bada’i’ al-Zuhur fi Waqi’a’ al-Duhour, 3, pp. 155-156.

³ The main tower in the inner courtyard takes the form of a large, square-shaped village with a side length of 30 meters and a height of 17 metres. The castle consists of three square-shaped floors, and in the four corners of the tower there are semi-circular towers that end at the top with prominent balconies. These towers are higher than the main tower and include openings for throwing. The arrows are on two levels, and the first floor is occupied by defensive corridors that allow soldiers to pass easily during operations to defend the castle, and the castle mosque, which consists of a courtyard and four iwans (perhaps that is what Mechoulam meant when he said: “Near the fortress there are twenty mosques.”

Adler, (ed), (1930). Meshullam Ben Manahem, Itinerary of Rabbi Meshullam Ben Manahem, p. 158. Perhaps he confused the buildings belonging to the mosque and considered them to be successive mosques. Because he could not enter the castle to describe its contents; Accordingly, his talk about the mosque mostly relied on viewing from the outside and guessing. As for the second floor, it contains corridors, halls, and interior rooms. The third floor includes a large room with a seat for people to sit on to see the ships a day’s walk from Alexandria. There is also an oven on this floor for preparing bread, as well as a mill for grinding grains for the soldiers residing in the citadel, whom Ibn Iyas defined as “the mujahideen who always reside there.” Ibn Iyas (1311 AH/1894). Bada’i’ al-Zuhur fi Waqi’a’ al-Duhour, 3, pp. 155-156, and Mechoulam said about them: “They sleep there every night.” Adler, (ed), (1930). Meshullam Ben Manahem, Itinerary of Rabbi Meshullam Ben Manahem, p. 158.

See also: Lettes, M. (ed). (1946). Harff, The Pilgrimage of Arnold Von Harff, p. 93; Larvaz. (ed). (1904) Breyden Bach, les saintes peregrinations, p.77.

internal wall and an external wall. Meshullam ben Menahem described one of them as having “twenty-two towers, and a wall ten cubits thick between the tower and the tower surrounding them.” A wall on one side of the city¹,” here he is talking about the outer wall overlooking the sea, which includes defensive towers on the four sides that rise to the level of the wall, with the exception of the eastern wall, which includes defensive openings for soldiers.

As for the inner wall, which Meshulam did not refer to and was talked about by Ibn Iyas; It includes soldier barracks and weapons stores. Mechoulam mentioned that the Mamluk soldiers (guards) sleep there every night, and he said: “That is the law.” Mechoulam saw these soldiers guarding the breach “wearing red hats on their heads and holding sticks in their hands².”

As for von Harff, he mentioned that when the Sultan allows ships to enter the port, the Alexandria Castle fires fire to welcome the arriving ship, and the ship responds to it with the same greeting. After entering, the passengers are allowed to disembark after verifying their personalities, enemies, nationalities, and the purpose of the trip.

Harf explained this behavior by saying that he and the rest of the foreigners frequenting Egypt via Alexandria and other places were not allowed, except after the officials obtained approval for their entry into the port from the Sultan at his headquarters in Cairo, by communicating with him via carrier pigeons, and when the Sultan’s approval arrived, the cannons of the castle Qaitbay fires fire to welcome the arriving boat, which returns the same greeting as it passes by the citadel, “...and we should have lowered the huge sail as a symbol or proof of respect for the citadel...”, a sign of appreciation and mutual respect between the two parties, then he allows the passengers to disembark into the city, As soon as he landed at the port, he described it as very large.

¹ Adler, (ed), (1930). Meshullam Ben Manahem, Itinerary of Rabbi Meshullam Ben Manahem, p.158.

Ibn Iyas describes it by saying: “It was said that the characteristic of the structure of this tower is that its vestibule was held on arches in the salty sea from the coast until it ends at the tower. He created in this tower a seat overlooking the sea from which one could look at the boats as they entered, and in this tower he made a mosque with a khutba, and a mill. And a furnace, and the proceeds of loading them with weapons, and he made around this tower manned with cannons day and night so that the Franks would not knock on the breach unannounced, and he made a group of Mujahideen permanently reside in it.” Ibn Iyas (1311 AH/1894). Bada’i’ al-Zuhur fi Waqi’a’ al-Duhour, 3, p. 156.

² Adler, (ed), (1930). Meshullam Ben Manahem, Itinerary of Rabbi Meshullam Ben Manahem, p.158.

3. Alexandria Houses

Mechoulam mentioned that as for the houses of Alexandria¹, Mechoulam described them by saying: “The houses are beautiful, and in each house you find a courtyard paved with white stones and trees. In the middle there is a water tank. Each house has two tanks: one for the new water, and the other for the old water; Because the Nile floods every year in the month of August², and it overflows in all of Alexandria, and when the flood comes, the ponds and tanks are filled, so Alexandria was hollow as a result of the presence and abundance of tanks³.”

Thus, it defines the planning elements of the houses at that time, as the houses contained an open courtyard paved with stone tiles, dotted with trees, in the middle there was a fresh water tank, and another used water tank, and the tank designated for fresh water was filled at the time of the Nile flood in August.

The house consists of a courtyard with two rooms on either side of it, or an open courtyard with three units on each opposite side, the middle of which is an iwan directly open to the courtyard, or a shed in front of it that is open to the courtyard. Naturally, the entrance was broken, leading to a corridor leading to the courtyard⁴. Care was also taken to allocate places for men open to the courtyards, and allocate parts for women’s rooms and halls⁵.

¹ Mustafa, Mustafa Wajih. Alexandria in the eyes of Rabbi Meshulam bin Menachem of Volterra, 886 AH / 1481 AD, a comparative study with the writings of contemporary European travelers. Source: Algeria: Al-Andalus Magazine, Hasiba Ben Bouali University of Chlef, Volume 2, Issue 6, September 2017, p. 153.

² Harf also said: “... As for the Nile, it overflows at the beginning of the month of August, increasing by a foot every day, and this continues for two months until it covers all of Egyptian territory, and in the month of October its waters begin to decrease...”. Lettes, M. (ed). (1946). Harff, The Pilgrimage of Arnold Von Harff, 1496-1499, p. 100,

³ Adler, (ed), (1930). Meshullam Ben Manahem, Itinerary of Rabbi Meshullam Ben Manahem, p.160. See also similar narratives at: Bruxelles, Bauwens (ed). (1992). Joos van Ghiste, voyage en Egypte (1842-1483), p.114; Masson, J. (ed). (1975). Voyage en Egypte de Felix Fabri, II, p. 717; Thenoud, J. (1888). Le voyage de outre mer de Jeun Thenoud, p.24; Schefer (ed). (1864). Domeinco trevsani le voyage, D’ Outre mere D’ Egypte 1512, p. 175; Leon the African, Al-Hassan bin Muhammad Al-Wazzan (1979). Description of Africa, translated by Abdul Rahman Hamida, Imam Muhammad bin Saud University Publications, p. 570.

⁴ See: Bahjat, Ali. Fustat excavations. p. 68, Maher, Souad. Islamic Architecture, p. 754. Creswell, K. A. C. (1932-1940). *Early Muslem architectuere*, II, Oxford, p. 137. Creswell, K. A. C. *Early Muslem architectuere*, II, p. 140.

⁵ Shafi’i, Farid (1970). Arab Architecture in Islamic Egypt, The Age of the Governors, 1, Cairo, Egyptian General Book Authority, p. 258.

This is the system that has prevailed in the planning of the Islamic house since the Tulunid era. It consisted of a central iwan and two rooms surrounding it on the right and left. The three units were preceded by a transverse roof that opened onto an open courtyard through three openings¹.

Accordingly, the layout of the Islamic house, which continued after that, was composed of three main parts, the first of which was the courtyard in the middle, in which there may be a watering hole or a fountain to moisten the atmosphere². On two opposite sides of this courtyard there are two important buildings, one of which is for men, known as the men's seat. The architect was keen to keep part of it completely exposed on the courtyard, which is designated for the summer season, and the other covered, designated for the winter season.

Opposite this building is another building for the harem, known as the Haremlek. It contains a large base in which windows opened onto the courtyard, but these windows were closed with lathe wood or stained glass with plaster. Between these two buildings there is a group of rooms that serve it³. The two halls consist of a large area whose floor is divided into three. The middle part is lower than the two sides, and it is called the hall⁴.

The houses were also provided with corridors that allowed the owner of the house to reach the iwans without penetrating the courtyard⁵. Some of the houses had mosques and bathrooms⁶, in addition to the shelters that were special for delivering air to the interior⁷.

¹ This system was found in Qasr al-Ukhaydir (160 AH/777 AD) and Manzil Samarra (221-278 AH/837-891 AD). See: Kamel, Abbas Hilmi. *The development of the Egyptian dwelling from the Arab conquest to the Ottoman conquest*, pp. 43-44. Shafi'i, Farid. *Arab Architecture in Islamic Egypt*, pp. 427-428, fig. 258.

² See: Bahjat, Ali. *Fustat excavations*. pp. 39-59-63, Hassan, Zaki (1936). *Arts of Islam*, Cairo, p. 145, Maher, Souad (1985). *Islamic Architecture Throughout the Ages*, 2, Jeddah, p. 715. Creswell, K. A. C. *Early Muslim architecture*, II, p. 137. Pope (1938). *A Survey of Persian Art*, I, Oxford university press, I, p. 229.

³ Creswell, K. A. C. *Early Muslim architecture*, II, p. 140

⁴ Pauty, E. (1933). *Les Palais et les maisons de l'Epoque musulmane au Caire*, Institute Francais D'Archeologie Oriental du Caire, p. 23.

⁵ Kamel, Abbas Helmy (1968). *The development of the Egyptian dwelling from the Arab conquest until the Ottoman conquest*, manuscript of a doctoral dissertation, Faculty of Arts - Cairo University, p. 58, Fig. 18.

⁶ Ibn Abd al-Hakam, Abu al-Qasim Abd al-Rahman bin Abd Allah (1914-1920). *Conquests of Egypt and its Deeds*, Cairo - Leiden, pp. 109-135, Ibn Duqmaq, Ibrahim bin Muhammad bin Aymdar Al-Ala'i, d. 809 AH / 1406 AD (1893). *Al-Intisar* by Wasta Aqd Al-Amsar, 5, Cairo, 1, p. 5:13.

⁷ Kamel, Abbas Helmy. *The development of the Egyptian dwelling*, p. 100.

Shops and warehouses were attached to some of the houses, especially in the houses located on streets designated by markets¹. As for The Fatimid era, the houses followed the same layout², which continued until the Ottoman era.

4. Hotels

In Alexandria, Mechoulam saw four great hotels³, one of which belonged to the French, the other to the Genoese and their consul⁴, and two to the Venetians and their consul. Our traveler mentioned that these hotels were all on the right hand side of one street as you approached Alexandria, and here he points out an important piece of information, which is that the hotels of European communities they were built in adjacent neighborhoods, and most of them were located close to Bab al-Bahr. Of course, these were not only the hotels of Alexandria, in addition to the Venetian and Genoese ones he mentioned; Alexandria had

¹ Kamel, Abbas Helmy. The development of the Egyptian dwelling, p. 52, Fig. 17.

² Schlumberger, G. (1965). *Compagnes du Roi Amaury I^{re} du Jerusalem en Egypte, au 12 siecle*, Institut Français D'Archeologie Oriental du Caire, p.118–121. Hassan, Zaki (1937). Treasures of the Fatimids, Cairo, pp. 71-75, Zaki, Abdul Rahman (1966). Cairo, its history and monuments, Cairo, p. 20.

³ The use of the hotel became widespread in the fourteenth century, and it is derived from the Greek word (pandokeion), which means a dwelling or shelter in which strangers stay. Metz, Adam (2011). Islamic civilization in the fourth century AH, translated by: Muhammad Abd al-Hadi Abu Readha, Beirut, Dar al-Kitab al-Arabi, Part 2, p. 237, and according to Meshulam, it means the buildings for Europeans that were built for them so that they could complete their work in the best possible way. The existence of this type of building dates back to the early Middle Ages, after it spread in the Mediterranean region to facilitate merchants and expatriates, and to provide them with comfort during their stay. In the country, this means that the hotel at its beginning was intended for merchants only, and then it included all travelers after that, and it became a place of residence for European strangers of all different nationalities and sects, and a comfortable residence for them in which the necessary services were available to travelers. The New Encyclopedia Bratin, Vol. 8, p.11.

In the Mamluk era, it spread in Alexandria and the coastal cities, and each hotel bears the name of the European community that resides in it, and no other community competes with it. Kammerer, A. (1935). *le mer Rouge l' Abyssine et l' Arabie depuis l' antiquite*, memoires de la societe Royale de Geographie d' Egyptye, T. 2, 15, p. 19. Hyde, F. (1994). History of Trade in the Near East in the Middle Ages, Cairo: Egyptian General Book Authority, vol. 3, p. 304.

⁴ The mission of the consul is to supervise the citizens of his country, manage their affairs, preserve the estates of the deceased, pay merchant fees at customs, and load and unload operations at the ports. He also supervises hotel affairs, in addition to communicating the complaints of members of his community to the sultan. Here the consul combined Diplomatic, political, commercial and legal representation at the same time. Dopp (1949). *les relation Egypt-catalonia*, le Caire. p. 7.

a hotel for the people of Naples, another for the Cretans, a hotel for Barcelona, another for Marseille, Aragon, and Catalonia, and a hotel for the budget¹.

As for Arnold von Harff, he provided an accurate description rich in social, economic, and urban details, especially those related to the population and their religions and sects, not to mention his interest in drawing vivid pictures of neighborhoods, cities, streets, and alleys, and the details of their architecture, especially doors and towers. He demonstrated his passion for going to markets and describing the most important goods they offer to their visitors, in addition to The crafts practiced by the residents of cities and neighborhoods, the traditions, customs, celebrations, and other images that give the history of that era more spirit and vitality that were overlooked by some historical sources that were primarily concerned with nothing more than the history of countries and peoples through palaces and castles.

Harf described the existing hotels and inns in Alexandria, and pointed out that the Venetians owned two hotels out of a total of six hotels allocated to different nationalities. He also pointed out that the authorities closed these hotels from the outside every evening and then opened them again early in the morning. After a two-day rest, Harv, like a merchant, wandered with others through the city to see its most important landmarks.

One of the results of the facilities gained by European trade in Egypt, and due to the expansion of foreign trade² in the Ottoman era was that some foreign governments worked

¹ Thenoud, J. (1888). *Le voyage de outre mer de Jeun Thenoud*, p. 22; For more details on this topic see; Atiya (1962). *Crusades commerce and culture*, Blonigton, p. 181. The hotel design in detail according to Labib, Sobhi (1986). The hotel is a political, economic, and legal phenomenon, discussed in the book *Egypt and the Mediterranean World*, presented by Raouf Abbas, Cairo: Dar Al-Fikr, p. 292. Fahmy, Naeem Zaki (1973). *International trade routes and their stations between the East and the West in the late Middle Ages*, Cairo: Egyptian General Book Authority, p. 289.

² On foreign trade see: Niebuhr, Carsten (2012). *A Journey to the Arab Countries and Its Surroundings*, 1, A Journey to Egypt, translated by Mustafa Maher, Cairo: Egyptian General Book Authority, p. 260. Othman, Hassan and Muhammad Muhammad Tawfiq (1942). *History of Egypt in the Ottoman Era*, Al-Majmal fi Al-Tarikh Al-Egypt, Cairo, p. 629. Haraz, Al-Sayyid Ragab (1970). *Introduction to the Modern History of Egypt: From the Ottoman Conquest to the British Occupation 1517-1882*, Cairo: Dar Al Nahda Al Arabiya, p. 55, Jeb and Bowen, Hamilton and Harold (2012). *Islamic Society and the West: A Study on the Influence of Western Civilization on Islamic Culture in the Near East*, Translation and Study: Ahmed Ibish, Abu Dhabi: National Book House, 1, p. 155, Abdul Rahman, Abdul Rahim (1978). *The Role of Moroccans in the History of Egypt in the Modern Era*, Tunisia: *The Moroccan Historical Journal*, 10–11, p. 51, Haridi, Salah

to have people with the status of consuls, as goods came from France, Germany, Venice, the Turkish states, Syria, and North Africa. The buildings spread, various hotels and hotels were built in the Egyptian ports¹ for the residence of European² merchants, including the Venetian Khan in Alexandria³, which was a special hotel for them due to the expansion of their commercial activity, and the Venetian consul and its merchants resided there. The inns were equipped and people took them as suitable accommodation for them⁴. What is strange is that the Europeans preferred to reside in the residents' inns, unlike the consuls⁵, who preferred to reside in their own inns. Perhaps the question that arises⁶ here is: Why were foreign communities concentrated in Alexandria, and thus there were many merchant hotels there?, and it was not stationed in Cairo, the actual capital of the state?!

The answer to this requires pointing out that Alexandria was "...the gateway to the East and the gateway to the West, bringing together all the Roman sects of the Franks, Bardgal, Vinci, Catalan, French, Genoese, Venetian, Ethiopian, Cypriot, and Sicilian, with the exception of Muslim merchants. On Friday⁷, all Romans' hotels are closed until the Friday

Ahmed (1983–1984). *Economic and Social Life in the City of Rosetta in the Ottoman Era*, Historical Journal, 30–31, Cairo, pp. 330–346.

¹ Jense (1641). *Itinéraires en terre sainte*, Carmolly, p.521.

² Maillot, Benott de (1735). *Description de l'Egypte*, Paris, p.100.

³ Combe, Et. (1928). *Alexandria musulme*, Inatitute Francais d'Archaeologie Orientales, Alex. 16, p.155.
Combe, Et. (1942) *Inscription Arabe d'un khan Ottoman a rosette*, Bullitin de société royal d'Archeologie, 11-12, p. 119.

⁴ Thevenot, *Relation d'un voyage fait dans la levant*, p.232. Bruyn, Le. (1681). *Travel of corncible le Bruyn*, p.100. Sonnini, C. S. (1800). *Travels in Upper and lower Egypt*, London, p.141.

⁵ Belon, Pierre (1588). *Les Observations de plusieurs singularitez et choses mémorables, trouvées en Grece, Asie, Judée, Égypte, Arabie, & autres pays estranges, redigées en trois livres.*

Belon, Pierre (2002). *Travels in the Levant: The Observations of Pierre Belon of Le Mans on Many Singularities and Memorable Things Found in Greece, Turkey, Judaea, Egypt, Arabia and Other Foreign Countries (1553)*, ed. Alexandra Merle, tr. James Hogarth, Kilkerran: Hardinge Simpole, p. 1588.

⁶ Combe Et. *Inscription Arabe d'un khan Ottoman a Rosette*, p. 119.

⁷ Hotels were closed to them at the time of prayer, from Friday, for a period of two hours or more until the completion of prayer. Perhaps this measure was due to the settlement of fragments of the Crusaders in the Mediterranean islands, after the Crusader movement suffered a miserable failure in eliminating their last strongholds in 1291 AD, so their remnants settled in Mediterranean islands such as Rhodes and Cyprus, and when they tried to invade Egypt from these islands, they were heading to the city of Alexandria, and for fear of their kind from those inside Alexandria helping them, the Mamluk state took the measure of closing hotels

prayers are over.” And in every hotel there is a consul. I mean by a consul, the trustworthy one who guarantees his sect in everything that happens to them, and he demands blood money. He is drawn from his group and lives with his children and his harem, and no one seeks authority except him in all the matters of the sects that he needs...”¹, and this indicates that the rise of Alexandria's status during the Mamluk era, as evidenced by the presence of multiple foreign nationalities in the city.

The reason for this is that Egypt's foreign trade with the East and West increased its activity and prosperity in this era to the point that the fees levied on foreign trade constituted a large portion of the state's income, and if Alexandria was the transit port for this eastern and western trade; It is easy to imagine the amount of prosperity, wealth, and luxury that the city and its people enjoyed, and the amount of impact that this wealth had on its construction, growth, and prosperity, which is what the author of the journey referred to in his book².

On the other hand, the Europeans did not have a hotel or a Latin church in the capital, and Hyde points out that this matter was not the product of the Mamluk state. Rather, from the era of Sultan Al-Nasir Saladin Al-Ayyubi, as the Byzantines during the rule of Saladin tried to obtain permission from the Sultan to build a hotel for them in Cairo. They were not answered by rejecting or accepting, and the same situation continued in the Mamluk era³.

Also, the law of the state of the Mamluk Sultans forbade Europeans from buying generous goods coming from India from the markets of Cairo, in addition to the royal circulars that were issued from time to time stipulating that Europeans were prevented from roaming within Egyptian cities, so their stay was limited to ports such as Damietta, Rosetta, and Alexandria. As a result, Cairo became an unattractive city for Europeans⁴. In addition,

on them at the time of prayer, and there is no evidence of this than that Peter Lusignan's campaign 22 Muharram 767 AH / 10 October 1365 AD was a Friday; Therefore, the closure of hotels was justified.

¹ Ibn Al-Sabah, Hajj Abdullah Al-Andalusi. *The ratio of news and the ticket of the good people (A Hijazi Journey)*, edited by Juma Sheikha, *Andalusian Studies Journal*, No. 45-46, December 2011, p. 108.

² Ibn al-Sabah. *The ratio of news and the reminder of the good people (Hijazi Journey)*, pp. 107-110.

³ Hyde, F. (1994). *History of Trade in the Near East in the Middle Ages*, 3, pp. 308-309.

⁴ For more details on this see: Hyde, F. (1994). *History of Trade in the Near East in the Middle Ages*, vol. 3, pp. 308-309, Al-Ashqar, Muhammad Abd al-Ghani (2007). *Spice Merchants in Egypt in the Mamluk Era*, Cairo: Family Library, p. 208; Al-Salawi, Samah Abdel Moneim (2003). *Foreign Communities in Egypt in the Mamluk Era*, Master's Thesis, Faculty of Arts, Zagazig University, p. 85.

going to the capital was not available for Europeans except for a short period, and the visit was due to an important matter that required standing before the Sultan himself or going to the Holy Lands in Palestine via Cairo for Christians. The house of the chief translator in Cairo was their designated place of residence for a short period¹.

As for Alexandria, it was for Westerners the appropriate shelter for their stay, as they found everything necessary to satisfy their material and religious needs. Many of them returned after a few weeks in the same ships that brought them, and others may extend their stay there. As for Cairo, it is merely a transit station through which goods from the East and West pass, while Alexandria was the market for commercial exchanges². That is why the hotels mentioned by Mechoulam were established in Alexandria to take care of the interests of their fellow merchants and pilgrims³.

5. Christian churches

Von Harff did not miss describing Christian and Islamic religious places and shrines, and he had to pay twenty-six Ashrafi dinars as a visit fee. Arnold pointed out the presence of two high columns near the cave made of red marble, twelve steps away from one another, and confirmed "...the presence of Two red marble columns are also outside the city, and one of them has now fallen..." He accurately described the place where Saint Catherine was tortured, in addition to his visit to the Church of Saint Mark, where he was martyred and buried.

As well as the Church of Saint Saba, which Saint Catherine later used as a residence. He pointed out the presence of an image of the Virgin Mary in that church, which was supervised by some Jacobite Greeks, in addition to the Church of Saint Michael, in which merchants and foreign pilgrims were buried. He spoke of many of the mosques of Alexandria that he described. With beauty, Muslims pray "...to the Lord of Heaven."

As for the history of St. Mark's Church, in the year 68 AD, St. Mark was martyred in Alexandria, and his body was placed in the church. In the year 311 AD, before the

¹ Frescobaldi, Leonardo & others (1948). Visit to the Holy Places of Egypt, Sinai, Palestine, and Syria in 1384, p. 44. Thenoud, J. (1888). *Le voyage de outre mer de Jeun Thenoud*, p. 83

² Piloti, Emmanuel & Dopp, Herman (Editor) (1950). *L'Égypte au commencement du quinzième siècle*, d'après le traité d'Emmanuel Piloti de Crète, pp. 7- 8.

³ Frescobaldi, Leonardo & others (1948). Visit to the Holy Places of Egypt, Sinai, Palestine, and Syria in 1384, pp. 44-45. Adler, (ed), (1930). Meshullam Ben Manahem, *Itinerary of Rabbi Meshullam Ben Manahem*, p.162.

martyrdom of Pope Peter, the seal of the martyrs, he prayed a final prayer over St. Mark's grave. At that time, the church was a small hall for worship on the coast of the eastern port. It contains the body of Saint Mark and some of his successors. In the year 321 AD, the church was expanded during the reign of Pope Archelaus the 18th.

In the year 680 AD, Pope John of Samnoudi, the fortieth patriarch, rebuilt the church. In the year 828 AD, Mark's body was stolen by Italian sailors, and it was transported from Alexandria to the city of Venice (Venice), Italy. While the head remained in Alexandria, rebuilding took place again, and in 1527 AD, the traveler Pierre Bellon de Manz mentioned that the church was still standing.

The church was demolished and rebuilt more than once throughout history. In 1870 AD, it was built in the Byzantine style and decorated with a large number of beautiful icons. In 1952 AD, Pope Joseph II opened the new cathedral and prayed the first Mass in it.

The church building: As soon as we enter through the outer door of the church, we find on our left a building dating back to the last century and containing the headquarters of the Pope, his representative in Alexandria, and the halls of the Clerical College (which specializes in Christian sciences).

The marble icon stand, the nobles, and the papal chair were preserved, along with the rest of the church's antique icons. The six marble columns on which the church rested were moved to the entrance, and the lighthouses were preserved after they were raised and decorated with beautiful Coptic inscriptions and topped off.

When entering the door, there are two antique icons on each side of Jesus and the Virgin Mary, covered with gold and silver, and an antique icon of Saint Mark and Saint George. Inside the church, we find two icons on the left of Anba Antonius and another of Anba Shenouda, and on the right an icon of Saint Mina, all of which are of Coptic art.

As well as the Church of Saint Saba, which Saint Catherine later used as a residence. He pointed out that there is an image of the Virgin Mary in that church, which is supervised by some Jacobite Greeks, and the Church of Saint Saba or (San Saba) in Alexandria, the patriarchal headquarters of the Greek Orthodox Church in Africa, dating back to "San Saba" dates back to the seventh century AD, and is the first papal headquarters for the Greek Orthodox community in the city before it was transformed from a monastery into a church, until the current papal headquarters moved.

As for the main church of the monastery, the Church of Saint Saba, it is located

approximately six meters below street level. It is distinguished by the eight granite columns dating back to the Pharaonic era, and is attached to it a chapel named after Saint George. Inside the church there is a valuable treasure, which is the column of Saint Catherine, which is a block of Marble is present in the nave of the monastery church.

Von Harff pointed out that the church was subjected to many renovations over the decades until the papal headquarters, which was part of it, was moved, while preserving the historic church building. Its most important contents, including the church's private library, were transferred to the new papal headquarters.

In addition to the Church of Saint Michael, in which foreign merchants and pilgrims are buried, he spoke about many of the mosques of Alexandria, which he described as beautiful and in which Muslims pray "...to the Lord of Heaven."

Conclusions

- Mechoulam and Arnold von Harff described the high walls of the city of Alexandria, which were well built and their walls were high and good. Von Harff summarized Alexandria by saying: "Alexandria is surrounded by four high towers.
- Qaitbay Citadel represented the lookout located at the port opening to monitor ships arriving at sea. Mechoulam mentioned that the presence of Qaitbay Citadel watchdog informed the governor of the city to monitor those coming to the city at sea.
- Meshullam ben Menahem focused a lot on the city's towers. He said, "When you enter Alexandria, you find a beautiful fortress with twenty-two towers, and a wall ten cubits thick between the tower and the tower. They are surrounded by a wall on one side of the city. They were able to build the castle on the island, a reference to the castle of Sultan Qaytbay, which was It was built in place of the ancient Lighthouse of Alexandria after many of its landmarks had been destroyed, and no one had seen anything more beautiful than this castle, which was three years old. What is meant by the island is Pharos Island, which was in front of the city of Alexandria. The castle - the tower - was built at its end in the far west of Alexandria, and at the end. East of Pharos Island.
- It was mentioned that the castle takes the shape of a square surrounded by the sea on three sides, and contains walls and the main tower on the northwestern side. The walls are divided into an internal wall and an external wall. Meshullam ben Menahem described one of them as having "twenty-two towers, and a wall ten cubits thick

between the tower and the tower.” They are surrounded by a wall on one side of the city.” Here he is talking about the outer wall overlooking the sea, which includes defensive towers on the four sides that rise to the level of the wall, with the exception of the eastern wall, which includes defensive openings for soldiers.

- Mechoulam mentioned the houses of Alexandria. He identified the planning elements of the houses at that time. The houses contained an open courtyard paved with stone tiles, dotted with trees, and in the middle there was a tank for fresh water and another tank for used water. The tank designated for fresh water was filled at the time of the Nile flood. In August,
- In Alexandria, Mechoulam saw four great hotels, one of which belonged to the French, the other to the Genoese and their consul, and two to the Venetians and their consul. He mentioned that all of these hotels were on the right hand side of one street as you approached Alexandria, and here he points out an important piece of information, which is that hotels for European communities were established. In adjacent neighborhoods, most of which were located close to Bab al-Bahr.
- Von Harff described the existing hotels in Alexandria, and pointed out that the Venetians owned two hotels out of a total of six hotels allocated to different nationalities. He also pointed out that the authorities closed these hotels from the outside every evening and then opened them again early in the morning. After a two-day rest, Harv, like a merchant, wandered with others through the city to see its most important landmarks.
- Von Harff mentioned the Christian religious places and shrines and accurately described the place where Saint Catherine was tortured, in addition to his visit to the Church of Saint Mark, where he was martyred and buried, as well as the Church of Saint Saba, which Saint Catherine took as a residence, as well as the Church of Saint Michael, in which foreign merchants and pilgrims are buried. He spoke He talked about many of the mosques in Alexandria, which he described as beautiful.

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