

The Mamluks | Cairo, Damascus and Jerusalem: Centres of Mamluk Intellectual Life

‘The Mamluks promoted the city as the destination for pilgrims, religious scholars and scientists.’

Jerusalem is the Holy city of Judaism, Christianity and of Islam. The city thrived under the Mamluks, who promoted its status as the prime destination for pilgrims, religious scholars and scientists by initiating grandiose architectural projects. Indeed, Jerusalem became such a popular destination for intellectual exchange, mystic introspection and interfaith debate that the number of generously endowed madrasas and other study centres, staffed by some of the most learned intellectuals of the day, increased to over 100.



Name:
Madrasa al-Ashrafiyya

Dynasty:
Hegira 887 / AD 1482 Mamluk

Details:
Jerusalem

Justification:
The madrasa was the most important educational centre in Jerusalem.



Name:
Madrasa Tankaziyya

Dynasty:
Hegira 729 / AD 1328–9 Mamluk

Details:
Jerusalem

Justification:
The madrasa provided teachers and students with lodgings, food and money.



Name:
Door from the Dome of the Rock

Dynasty:
Hegira 872–901 / AD 1468–96 Mamluk

Details:
Islamic Museum, al-Aqsa Mosque / al-Haram al-Sharif
Jerusalem

Justification:
Sultan Qaytbay commissioned this elaborate door for the Dome of the Rock.



Name:
Mashaf (Qur'anic manuscript) of Barsbay

Dynasty:
Hegira 825–41 / AD 1422–37 Mamluk

Details:
Islamic Museum, al-Aqsa Mosque / al-Haram al-Sharif
Jerusalem

Justification:

A luxury Qur'an commissioned by Sultan Barsbay for the Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem.
