

The Mamluks | The Sultan and his Court

'Mamluk retainers vied to emulate the sultan's activities as a patron of art and architecture.'

At court, the sultan was surrounded by an inner circle of senior retainers, each one with a specific responsibility, such as cup-bearer, treasurer or major-domo. These senior Mamluks were meant to support their sultan loyally in all his religious, political and military objectives, but often partook in factional infighting and power struggles against their ruler. On a more positive note they vied to emulate the sultan's activities as a patron of art and architecture. As the children of Mamluks were not allowed to inherit their fathers' rank and privileges, the endowment (waqf) of religious foundations was a popular means to provide security and income for their families.



Name:

Candlestick socket

Dynasty:

Hegira 694 / AD 1294 Mamluk

Details:

Museum of Islamic Art
Cairo, Egypt

Justification:

The inscription on the top part on this candlestick socket alludes to the often deadly intrigues among the Mamluk elite; animated figures are seen in a frieze around the lower part of the socket.



Name:

Amir Bashtak Palace

Dynasty:

Hegira 740 / AD 1339 Mamluk

Details:

Cairo, Egypt

Justification:

Mamluk amirs emulated the sultan's architectural patronage and supported waqfs belonging to religious institutions in order to glorify Islam and ensure a regular personal income.



Name:

Amir Bashtak Palace

Dynasty:

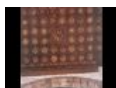
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Name:

Madrasa al-Jaqmaqiyya

Dynasty:

Hegira 762–822 / AD 1361–1421/2 Mamluk

Details:

Damascus, Syria

Justification:

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Name:

Stone blazon

Dynasty:

Hegira late 9th–early 10th century / AD late 15th–early 16th century Mamluk

Details:

National Museum of Aleppo, Islamic Department
Aleppo, Syria

Justification:

The Mamluk sultan's distinctive stone or marble blazon made identification of a building's patron much more straightforward.
