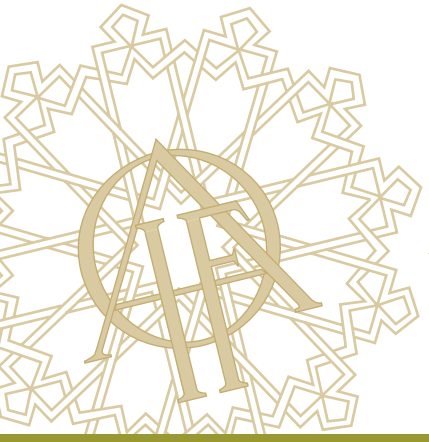
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May Al-Ibrashy

The Life and Times of the Mamluk Turba. Processual Subversion of Inceptual Intent

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MAY AL-IBRASHY

The Life and Times of the Mamluk *Turba*

Processual Subversion of Inceptual Intent

The study of the history of architecture is rooted in a valorisation of the past. Its concern with the history of a building follows a curve that starts at a peak—the moment of inception of a building—and wanes from then on. For scholars of the history of architecture, and those studying the architecture of Islam are no different, the original intent of the founder/designer is the foundational question, the springboard for further interpretation and research. The debate over the intended meaning behind the decorative features adorning the façade of the Fatimid mosque of al-Aqmar in Cairo is a case in point,[1] and more pertinent to the purpose of this study, Humphrey's article on the expressive intent of Mamluk architecture.[2]

This is hardly surprising, in fact it is necessary. Yet, it is also necessary to recognize that the moment of inception of a building is as much the beginning of a life rather than the end of a process. "Works of architecture do not stand motionless on the shore of the stream of history, but are born along by it."[3] Consequently, while understanding the process through which a building comes to being is vital, it is equally vital to understand its subsequent transformations and to view the post-inception process as enriching and additive rather than detractive. Lindsay Jones's seminal work, *The Hermeneutics of Sacred Architecture*,[4] has exhaustively and—I believe successfully—argued this point, and it is this precept that is the point of departure for this study.

1. Williams, "The Cult of ʿAlid Saints," p. 37-52; Behrens-Abouseif, "The Façade of the Aqmar Mosque," p. 29-38.
2. Humphreys, "The Expressive Intent of the Mamluk Architecture," p. 67-119.
3. Hans Georg Gadamer quoted in Jones, *The Hermeneutics of Sacred Architecture* I, p. 134.
4. Jones, *The Hermeneutics of Sacred Architecture*.

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The *turba*-s or funerary complexes of Mamluk Cairo, and particularly those in its cemeteries, had functions and purposes that were very clearly stated, whether in their *waqfiyya*-s or in the configuration of the building forms and spaces, decorative schemes and epigraphy. Yet, built within this seemingly well-laid schema were grains for mutations in modes of use that would lead to transformations both physically and cognitively; in their very form, image and identity. This study will investigate the reasons behind the construction of the *turba*-s of the cemeteries of Cairo, for the choice of the particular formula they followed, and also of the choice of site and location. It will then follow their post-inception history and discuss the reasons for the mutations and subversions they underwent. In doing so, it will argue for a re-assessment of this later history and for its validation as an integral part of the identity of the *turba* and in some cases, a decisive factor in its survival.

The *Turba* as Public Icon and Personal Choice

The Mamluk funerary complexes of Islamic Cairo—by virtue of sheer number, scale, urban proximity and formal, decorative and calligraphic pizzazz—are the true icons of the city. Their minarets and domes dominate Cairo's skyline and their imposing portals and facades rule over its cityscape. These funerary complexes—or *turba*-s[5]—were established to house the founder after his death, along with his family, members of his household and beneficiaries and employees of the rest of the complex. They tended to follow a certain formula in combining one or more religious functions [mosque, religious college *(madrasa)*, sufi hospice *(ḫānqāh)*], with other charitable spaces [*sabīl-kuttāb* (quranic school for orphans with a space for the charitable dispensation of water), *ḥawḍ* (animal drinking trough)], service or residential spaces for the users [a residential wing (*rabʿ*), bakery *(furn)*, mill *(ṭāḥūn)*, bath (*ḥammām*)], and possibly some commercial spaces to generate funds for upkeep [shops, caravanserai (*wikāla*)]. The establishment was supported through a *waqf* or charitable endowment system that perpetuated assets for its upkeep. It was a formula that was not invented by the Mamluks, but was developed by them and adopted as their most significant building type.

The adoption of this type of building by the Mamluks and its effect in changing the face of Cairo is a much-visited subject among historians of Islamic Cairo. The *turba*-s were first and foremost signifiers of power and perpetuators of political glory; after death, but also during the lifetime of the founder. This political message was, according to al-Harithy, "woven into a grand scheme of public service, in which ceremonial space was combined with social space, memorial elements were placed in socio-religious complexes, and the message of the individual

5. Hani Hamza, based on his study of contemporary Mamluk sources, has rightly argued that the *turba* is an architectural genre meaning funerary complex. For example, in Mamluk *waqfiyya*-s the funerary complex as a whole is called a *turba*, then the burial spaces within are called *qubba* (for domed mausoleum) and *ḥawš* (for burial yard), and *fasqiyya* (for underground burial vault). See for example *Waqf Abū-l-Maḥāsin Yūsuf b. Taġrī Bardī*, 14 šaʿbān 870 H, Dār al-Waṯāʾiq al-Qawmiyya, 34/147; partially published in Hamza *The Northern Cemetery*, p. 490-500.

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was turned into an elaborate social dialogue."[6] They have also been seen as attempts to woo the people of Egypt through appeasing its leaders, the *ʿulamāʾ*, or religious scholars and providing them with a livelihood as well as appeasing the populace through the charitable and religious activities sponsored in the *turba*-s. Finally, within a system that does not allow the sons of Mamluks to inherit their fathers' positions or wealth, the *waqf* system established for upkeep was seen as a means of guaranteeing a livelihood to *awlād al-nās* (the progeny of the Mamluks) who were appointed overseers of their parents' *waqf*-s.[7]

Ibn Ḫaldūn, in explaining why the Mamluks were enamoured with this particular building type very concisely categories them into two main types, worldly and after-wordly—either—related to personal glory during their own lifetime and after their death or *thawāb* or recompense in the afterlife:

> "Thus they sought to build many *madrasas*, *zawiyas* (popular religious space centred around a living *shaykh*), and *ribats* (charitable religious hospice), and endowed them with *waqfs* which yielded income, giving a share of this to their descendants either as supervisors of the endowment or as beneficiaries, as well as from a general wish to do good and receive recompense for their good intentions and good deeds."[8]

It is noteworthy, but hardly surprising, that the concerns of later scholars with the intentions of the Mamluks in establishing these *turba*-s tended to concentrate on worldly reasons. Primary sources abound with stories of the religiosity of the Mamluks, and in particular their reverence of certain saints.[9] Yet this aspect of Mamluk cultural and social life tends to be overshadowed by their political achievements and struggles. Furthermore, it is notoriously difficult to distinguish genuine religious sentiment or spirituality from cynical measures to pay lip-service to religion to manipulate religious sentiment and gain support. If the *ḥadīṯ* informs us that religious acts are to be judged by intentions alone (*innamā al-aʿmāl bi-l-niyyāt*),[10] it does not provide us with the tools to see through the humbug into true intentions. Humphreys may be correct in making the following assumption that even the religious intent behind these structures was tainted with vainglory:

> "As to the *turbas* which they built for themselves in such vast numbers and with such grandeur, these structures point to their desire to be considered members of that class of 'defenders of the faith' whose memories (along with those of prophets and saints) it was proper to venerate."[11]

6. Al-Harithy, "The Concept of Space," p. 73-93.
7. Williams, "Urbanization and Monument Construction," p. 33-45; Arjomand, "The Law, Agency, and Policy," p. 263-293; Humphreys, "The Expressive Intent of the Mamluk Architecture."
8. Quoted in Williams, "Urbanization and Monument Construction," p. 40.
9. See for example, Schimmel, "Some glimpses of the religious life," p. 353-392.
10. Al-Buḫārī, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Buḫārī* 1/1, no. 1.
11. Humphreys, "The Expressive Intent of the Mamluk Architecture," p. 94.

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We can however, safely assume based on the sources, that most of the Mamluks were religious enough to include a mechanism for recompense in the afterlife within an establishment that was already of worldly benefit. From the purely cynical perspective, even if no good came out of it, no harm would either.

In the case of the *turba*, it may be useful to consider one *ḥadīṯ* which concerns itself with methods of continued attainment of recompense or *ṯawāb*, even after death:

> "When a man dies, his acts come to an end, but three, recurring charity, or knowledge (by which people) benefit, or a pious son, who prays for him (for the deceased)."[12]

The teachings of this *ḥadīṯ* are certainly fulfilled by the *turba*. Recurring charity or *ṣadaqa ǧāriya* is maintained through the *waqf* system that maintains the charitable and religious establishments of the *turba*. Although the Mamluk himself does not contribute directly to the corpus of religious knowledge, he enables its passing on through the founding of *madrasa* and *ḫanqāh*-s, thus propagating knowledge. And in giving his progeny the position of overseers, he places them within a religious environment. He thus lays the groundwork for them to become good sons, who, if only in gratitude for to him for his foresight and consideration and finding themselves in daily proximity to his grave will pray regularly for his salvation.

It would therefore be safe to agree with Ibn Ḫaldūn's analysis of the intentions behind establishing a *turba* as a combination of worldly and after-wordly concerns even if the balance between the two varied dramatically from one Mamluk to the other.

Turba and Site

The Mamluks built their *turba*-s everywhere in the city. One popular location was along the Qaṣaba of al-Qāhira particularly in the area of Bayn al-Qaṣrayn. It has been correctly argued that the Mamluks followed their Ayyubid masters, particularly al-Ṣāliḥ Nağm al-Dīn Ayyūb, in their policy of appropriating the former political centre of Shiite Fatimid rule and converting it into a showcase for the political might of the new Sunni rulers of the city. The concern of this study, however, is the *turba*-s built in the cemetery because it is there that the impact was most felt, at least in terms of physical architectural and urban fabric. *Turba*-s transformed the cemetery's skyline and landscape introducing an urban experience never felt before, as unlike the admittedly magnificent *turba*-s of the city, they must have seemed to miraculously sprout in the middle of nowhere, in what had been practically desert. Furthermore, while earlier monarchs and rulers had built in the cemetery, this was the first time that urbanisation of that scale had been seen by the cemetery in terms of both the density and mass of the buildings and the number of new occupants.

12. Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, *Kitāb al-waṣiyya*, Chap. 4.

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According to al-Maqrīzī:

> "With the start of al-Nāṣir Muḥammad b. Qalāwūn's third reign and after the year 711 (1311-2), many new buildings, palaces and otherwise were built in the Citadel, and several tombs appeared in the area between the Citadel and Qubbat al-Naṣr. Al-Qarāfa was also urbanised (ʿamar); north to south, from Bāb al-Qarāfa to Birkat al-Ḥabaš, and west to east, from al-Qarāfa al-Kubrā to al-Ǧabal … the buildings of Miṣr and al-Qāhira merged into one city."[13]

Furthermore, in the cemetery, the association with an existing sacred geography both sets into place a dynamic that served their purpose as accumulators of *ṭawāb*, and provides us with a reference for judging their success as sacred buildings—the reference being the city's foremost sacred space; the celebrated cemeteries of Cairo.

The cemeteries of Cairo had acquired regional status as sites of veneration and visitation at least five hundred years prior to the coming of the Mamluks.[14] Al-Qarāfa, or the southern cemetery, came into existence with al-Fusṭāṭ.[15] It was established to the east of al-Fusṭāṭ, between the new Islamic Capital and al-Muqaṭṭam Hill, a hill that soon came to acquire status as a sacred mountain, a garden of "the seedlings of heaven."[16] As the city sprawl extended northwards, with a series of centres of rule so did the cemetery. Pockets of burial also appeared elsewhere, north and south of Fatimid al-Qāhira, for example, and on and around the mount that would, under the Ayyubids, house the Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn Citadel. The centre of al-Qarāfa under the Fatimids was Ǧāmiʿ al-Awliyā', which lay within a cluster of Fatimid buildings, a palace, and a graveyard in which some of their Maghribi ancestors had been re-interred.[17] Al-Qarāfa was a place of blessing and visitors thronged to its many *maqbara*-s (burial enclosures) to visit holy figures as varied as scholars such as al-Imam al-Šāfiʿī, judges such as al-Qāḍī Bakkār ibn Qutayba,[18] *ahl al-bayt* (descendants of the prophet) such as al-Sayyida Nafīsa[19] and eccentrics such as Saint Ġattī Yadak whose only claim to fame was his insistence that people cover

13. Al-Maqrīzī, *Al-Ḫiṭaṭ* I, p. 365.

14. For the history of the cemeteries of Cairo, see Rāġib, *Le cimetière de Miṣr*; Hamza, *The Northern Cemetery of Cairo*; al-Ḥaddād, *Qarāfat al-Qāhira*; al-Ibrashy, *The History of the Southern Cemetery*.

15. The first source to name the cemetery of Cairo al-Qarafa was Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam, *Futūḥ Miṣr wa aḫbāruhā*. This interpretation of the origin of the name al-Qarāfa has been disputed even among medieval historians. See Kubiak, *Al-Fustat*, p. 108 for a detailed discussion.

16. Ibn ʿUṯmān, *Muršid al-zuwwār*, p. 8-9. See also al-Maqrīzī, *Ḫiṭaṭ* I, p. 124; Ibn al-Ẓayyāt, *Al-kawākib*, p. 12-13. For a discussion of this myth see al-Ibrashy, "Death, Life and the Barzakh."

17. Bloom, "The Mosque of the Qarafa," p. 7-21; al-Maqrīzī, *Ḫiṭaṭ* I, p. 486; II, p. 318, 453, 460; Ibn al-Ẓayyāt, *Kawākib*, p. 194-195; al-Saḫāwī, *Tuḥfat al-aḥbāb*, p. 289-290; Rāġib, "Sur deux monuments funéraires," p. 67-72; Bloom, "The Mosque of the Qarafa," p. 7-8; Taylor, "Re-evaluating the Shiʿi Role," p. 1-10.

18. The Baṣrī Qāḍī Bakkār b. Qutayba (d. 270/883-884) was known for his integrity and piety. He immigrated to and was buried in, Cairo and his grave was one of the major landmarks of al-Qarāfa. The site of this shrine, removed to make way for the highway, can be seen in maps of the first half of the 20th century. Ibn al-Nāṣiḫ, *Miṣbāḥ al-dayāǧī*, f. 32v; Ibn al-Ẓayyāt, *Kawākib*, p. 48-54.

19. The granddaughter of the grandson of the prophet was buried 210/825 in the grave she dug for herself in her house in the residential quarter of Darb al-Sibāʿ. For the history of the legend of al-Sayyida Nafīsa and a discussion of the sources, see Rāġib, "Al-Sayyida Nafisa," p. 61-86.

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their hands.[20] Sites were known for their power to fulfill prayers and grant wishes, to heal, to marry and to send people to *ḥaǧǧ*. The visitor, if he (or she) were to believe the rhetoric of the *ziyārat šayḫ*-s and the visitation guides they wrote,[21] could expect the appearance of miraculous lights, aromatic smells, the uncanny gatherings of birds or beasts at specific graves, or even the occasional conversation with one of the cemetery's illustrious dead.[22]

> "Know that the graves of the virtuous (*ṣāliḥ*-s) are never void of *baraka* (blessing) and that he who visits them, greets their inhabitants, recites (the Quran) and prays for them will only get good (*ḫayr*) and reward (*aǧr*). This may manifest itself in an auspicious sign to him."[23]

All this took place within a mix of architectural spaces and forms, whether the open graveyard with cenotaphs, *maṣṭaba*-s and tombstones, the walled burial enclosure or *ḥawš* that could contain rooms for overnight stay, the mosque, the *ḫānqāh*, the *zāwiya*, the *ribāṭ*, the *madrasa*. These spaces ranged from the popular makeshift structures established by the common people to the ostentatious creations of the rich and powerful.

The Ayyubids shifted the spiritual centre of the cemetery eastwards. Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn built a *madrasa* next to the shrine of al-Imam al-Šāfiʿī, the founder of the Šāfiʿī *maḏhab*, then his nephew Sultan al-Kāmil constructed a magnificent shrine that doubled as a family tomb for the Ayyubids over the grave.[24] Al-Qarāfa then came to be known as the two Qarāfa-s, al-Kubra with Ǧamiʿ al-Awliyāʾ at its centre, and al-Ṣuġrā with al-Imam al-Šāfiʿī as its spiritual heart.[25]

The Mamluks constructed some scattered *turba*-s within the graves of the populace and the shrines of the righteous, but they were more inclined to create their own clusters of *turba*-s in pockets of un-used land on the city-cemetery fringe, mostly outside the city gates.

The first of these clusters was called *ḫāriǧ* (outside) Bāb al-Qarāfa and it lay south-east of Bāb al-Qarāfa on a site previously occupied by a hippodrome used by the Mamluks for sports and military training. In the course of around 20 years from c. 1320 to 1340, not less than eight *turba*-s were constructed by the Mamluk *amīr*-s, most of them Nāṣirī Mamluks.[26] According to al-Maqrīzī, "They built *turba*-s, *ḫānqāh*-s, *sūq*-s (markets), *ṭāḥūn*-s (mills) and *ḥammām*-s till all the area from Birkat al-Ḥabaš to Bāb al-Qarāfa and from the houses of Miṣr to al-Ǧabal became

20. Ibn al-Zayyāt, *Kawākib,* p. 74.

21. These books contained a description of the cemetery's sites of visitation. One Ayyubid book, three Mamluk books and two Ottoman books on Cairo's cemetery are known to us today. Ibn ʿUṯmān, *Muršid*; Ibn al-Nāsiḥ, *Miṣbāh*; Ibn al-Zayyāt, *Kawākib*; al-Saḫāwī, *Tuḥfat*; Muḥammad al-Šuʿaybī, *Ḥaḍā kitāb yaštamil ʿalā ḏikr*; Al-Sukkarī, *Al-Kawkab al-Sayyār*. For a discussion of this genre of literature see Rāġib, "Essai d'inventaire chronologique"; Taylor, *In the Vicinity of the Righteous*; Ohtoshi, "The manners, customs and mentality of pilgrims," p. 19-24.; al-Ibrashy, "The Mamluk cemeteries of Cairo."

22. See for example Ibn al-Zayyāt, *Kawākib*, p. 55,109, 119, 143, 156, 184, 201, 219, 257-259, 305.

23. Al-Saḫāwī, *Tuḥfat*, p. 5.

24. Al-Maqrīzī, *Ḫiṭaṭ* II, p. 296; MacKenzie, *Ayyubid Cairo*, p. 92; Creswell, *The Muslim Architecture of Egypt*, p. 64 ff.

25. For the Ayyubid cemetery, see Mackenzie, *Ayyubid Cairo*, p. 144-150.

26. Abū-l-ʿAmāyim, "Al-miʾḍana al-qibliyya," p. 45-89; al-Ibrashy, "The Mamluk cemeteries of Cairo."

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built-up."[27] The *turba* with the most powerful founder and the most impressive architecture was that of Sayf al-Dīn Qūṣūn (1335-1337; mn. 290-291)[28] and all that remains today of the *qubba, ḫānqāh, ǧāmiʿ* and *ḥammām,*[29] is the domed mausoleum. At least six more *turba*-s were to be constructed there during the period between the death of al-Nāṣir and the fall of the Mamluks.

The name of the second cluster, ḫāriǧ Bāb al-Naṣr, is somewhat of a misnomer, because it lay east, rather than north of the city, along the Haǧǧ road which travelers took to Syria and the Hijaz. It too overtook the site of a Mamluk sports field, Maydān al-Qabaq.[30] It was soon to blend into one with a cluster of *turba*-s that grew outside Bāb al-Barqiyya around the *turba* of Taštamūr al-Sāqī (Ḥummus Aḫḍar) (mn. 93) built in 1334.[31] Six Mamluk sultans from the Burǧī period were to establish their *turba*-s there. The first of them, al-Nāṣir Faraǧ following the wish of his father Barqūq to bury him there, added plans of his own to combine it with a commercial and administrative functions such as a camel and donkey market and a tax station. These plans were not long-lived, but the cemetery was. The two nuclei outside Bāb al-Naṣr and Bāb al-Barqiyya came to be called al-Ṣaḥarā' and they would gradually merge with the third cluster, Bāb al-Wazīr into one cemetery. The centre of al-Ṣaḥarā'would house the building representing the architectural climax of the *turba*—the *madrasa/ǧāmiʿ*, mausoleum, two *sabīl kuttāb*-s, gate, *rabʿ, ḥawḍ, maqʿad* (loggia) and service buildings (1470-1474; mn. 99, 412, 93, 104, 183, 101)[32] built by Sultan al-Ašraf Qaytbāy.

Both these clusters came into being during the reign of al-Nāṣir Muḥammad. The third cluster was to develop after his death outside Bāb al-Wazīr, also along the road to Syria and to the Hijaz. At least ten funerary complexes, two *sabīl*-s, two *zāwiya*-s and a mosque are recorded to have been built between 1340 and 1420. The fact that the Mamluks were conscious of the significance of the location at the junction between the city and the Haǧǧ road can be deduced from the care they took to attach facilities for the dispensation of water to the Bāb al-Wazīr *turba*-s. In fact, one of the most impressive of the *turba*-s, that of Manǧak al-Yūsufī (1350; mn.

27. Al-Maqrīzī, *Ḫiṭaṭ* II, p. 444-445.

28. One of the most powerful mamluks under al-Nāṣir and de facto ruler after his death until he, in turn, was killed by the Nāṣiri mamluks in 1342.

29. Ibrahim, Meinecke and Abū-l-ʿAmāyim have attempted to piece together this complex from the remains still extant today in the cemetery of Ǧalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī. Abū-l-ʿAmāyim's study was the most recent and the most comprehensive as it dealt with the area as a whole. Ibrahim, "The Great Hanqah of the Emir Qawsun," p. 37-52.; Meinecke, *Die mamlukische Architektur*, I, fig. 29; Abū-l-ʿAmāyim, "Al-miʾḍana al-qibliyya." See also al-Maqrīzī, *Kitāb al-sulūk*, II/2, p. 544; al-Maqrīzī, *Ḫiṭaṭ* II, p. 425; Meinecke, *Die mamlukische Architektur,* II, p. 135.

30. Al-Ẓāhir Baybars al-Bunduqdāri built this sports field in 666/1267. Hamza, *The Northern Cemetery of Cairo*, p. 2; al-Maqrīzī, *Ḫiṭaṭ* II, p. 111; al-Maqrīzī, *Kitāb al-sulūk* I/2, p. 573; I/3, p. 785; Ibn Taġrī Bardī, *al-Nuǧūm*, VIII, p. 16.

31. It is described by Ibn Taġrī Bardī as a*"ǧāmiʿ fī-l-ṣāḥāra"*; Ibn Taġrī Bardī, *al-Nuǧūm* X, p. 102; al-Maqrīzī, *Ḫiṭaṭ* II, p. 464; Ibn Ḥaǧar, *Durar* II, p. 320.

32. Ministry of al-Awqāf, Daftarḫāna, Awqāf 886, *Waqf al-Ašraf Qaytbay*, 879-884 H; al-Saḫāwī, *al-Ḍawʾ* VI, p. 206-15; Ibn Iyās , *Badāʾiʿ*, III, p. 45, 100, 329, 334; Ibn Taġrī Bardī, *Manhal* VII, p. 90-91; Meinecke, *Die mamlukische Architektur,* II, p. 399, 406, 407.

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138),[33] which consisted of a congregational mosque, a *ḫānqāh*, a mausoleum and a cistern came to be known as Ṣahrīğ Manğak after its gigantic cistern.[34] It is one of five structures built in that era with provisions for the dispensation of water.[35]

Visitors to the cemetery in the Mamluk era were awed by its blend of spaces of cultic significance and structures of architectural value, and were struck by how urbanised it was for a cemetery, a phenomenon of course that the Mamluks contributed to with their patronage of educational practices in their cemetery *turba*-s. The traveller Ibn Baṭṭūṭa, who toured the world from 1325 to 1354, comments on the built up nature of the cemetery likening its walled domed mausolea to residential houses (*dār*-s).[36]

> "At Old Cairo is al-Qarāfa, a place of vast repute for blessed power … people build there beautiful domed chapels and surround them by walls, and they construct chambers in them … Some build a religious house or a *madrasa* by the side of the mausoleum."[37]

But it is al-Maqrīzī who noted the truly urbanising effect of these new Mamluk *turba* clusters and how they re-formulated certain sections of the city, particularly those on the city-cemetery fringe.

> "Many wished to live in it (the cemetery) due to the loftiness of the *qaṣr*-s built in it which they called *turba*-s."[38]

Why did the Mamluks choose to build and be buried in clusters on the city cemetery fringe and not within the cemetery proper? Neither the Fatimids nor the Ayyubids followed a policy of urban expansion in the cemetery. The Fatimids had a royal graveyard within the Eastern Palace (around the current site of al-Ḥusayn Mosque), but when they established a family graveyard in the cemetery it was in the midst of existing graves. The Ayyubid al-Malik al-Kāmil aggressively removed graves to clear the site of his family mausoleum cum Šāfiʿī shrine, but he was revitalizing an existing spiritual centre not creating a new one.

Leisten has put forth a theory that their choice of location may have been a legal maneuver around the proscription against building over graves. He cites al-Šāfiʿī's ruling that the injunction against building over graves could be circumvented if the land was private property not *waqf*.

33. *Atabak al-ʿasākir* and *nā'ib al-salṭana* (d. 776/1374). Al-Maqrīzī, *Ḫiṭaṭ* II, p. 320; *id.*, *Kitāb al-sulūk* III/1, p. 247, 357; Ibn Taġrī Bardī, *al-Nuğūm* XI, p. 134; Ibn Iyās, *Badā'iʿ* I/2, p. 149; Meinecke, *Die mamlukische Architektur,* II, p. 213.
34. Al-Maqrīzī, *Ḫiṭaṭ* II, p. 320; al-Maqrīzī, *Kitāb al-sulūk* III/1, p. 247, 357; Ibn Taġrī Bardī, *al-Nuğūm* XI, p. 134; Ibn Iyās, al-*Badā'iʿ* I/2, p. 149; Meinecke, *Die mamlukische Architektur* II, p. 213.
35. The others were the *sabīl/ḫawḍ* of Šayḫū (1354, mn. 144), the *ḫawḍ* of the complex of Aytamīš al-Baǧāsī (1383-1384; mn. 250-251), the *ḫawḍ* of the complex of Yūnus al-Dawadār (pre. 1382; mn. 139), and Sabīl Barqūq.
36. Ibn Baṭṭūṭa, *Riḥlat*, p. 57.
37. Quoted in Williams, "Urbanization and Monument Construction," p. 37.
38. Al-Maqrīzī, *Ḫiṭaṭ* II, p. 445.

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Therefore the reason al-Ṣaḥarā' was so popular was that, unlike al-Qarāfa proper, which was made *waqf* for the burial of the Muslims by ʿAmr b. al-ʿĀṣ, it was not illegal to build on it as it was privately owned.[39] The same could be said, with reservations, about ḫāriğ Bāb al-Qarāfa. On the one hand, it was surrounded by older burial from all sides, even from the north, where the Ayyubid wall and gate of al-Qarāfa had cut through pre-existing burial. However, the fact that al-Nāṣir had established a sports field there indicates that older graves had been scarce or possibly non-existent in that zone, which may have been occupied by mounds.

Another reason may be related to visibility. It can hardly be a coincidence that all three burial clusters were visible from the Citadel. One can almost imagine the Mamluks vying with each other over who had built the largest dome or the tallest minaret, as viewed from the Sultan's seat of rule.

A third reason could simply be one of pure practicality. It has been shown how al-Kāmil had to remove graves in order to build the Šāfiʿī dome. It was simply not possible to build in the interstices between the graves and the *ḫawš*-s and to include the accoutrements that were de rigueur for a *turba* fit for a Mamluk. Baktamur al-Sāqī chose to build as far away as possible from the Citadel at the extension of the main street of the Ğabal section of al-Qarāfa al-Ṣuġrā, a zone known for a string of ṣūfī burials that ranged from ʿUmar ibn al-Fāriḍ to the Wafā'iyya to al-Šāḏilī to Ibn ʿAṭa'-Allāh al-Sakandarī. In order to fit his sprawling establishment of a *ḫānqāh*, mausoleum, *ḥammām*, *sūq*, *furn*, *ṭāḥūn* and *sāqiya* (waterwheel),[40] he was reduced to choosing a location at the very outskirts of the cemetery, almost in the desert.

Whatever the reasons for this trend of introducing new concentrations of monumental funerary *turba*-s at the cemetery city fringe, grouped together rather than spread out, they were certainly a more eloquent testament to the power, and possibly piety, of the Mamluk elite. Al-Ṣaḥarā', by far the most successful of the three clusters in terms of sprawl, density and longevity, was to develop into an uncanny[41] alter-ego of Cairo with domes and minarets that rivaled and surpassed it in magnificence. Yet if we were to look at them from an otherworldly perspective, from the point of view of how well they serve their owner in the afterworld—*al-aḫīra*—not the present, base world—*al-dunyā*, we might find them to be lacking in one important point.

Turba and *Ğiwār*

Christopher Taylor entitled the book he wrote on concepts of piety as expressed in the *ziyāra* literature of the cemetery guidebooks, *In the Vicinity of the Righteous*. In doing so, he acknowledged one of the foremost guidelines of cemetery organization, *ğiwār,* the care to be buried in the nearest possible proximity to the men and women of piety.

39. Leisten, "Between orthodoxy and exegesis," p. 12-22.

40. Behrens-Abouseif, "Waqf as Remuneration," p. 55-67; al-Maqrīzī, *Ḫiṭaṭ* II, p. 423; al-Maqrīzī, *Kitāb al-sulūk* II/1, p. 273; II/3, p. 748; Ibn Iyās, *Badā'iʿ* I/1, p. 467; Ibn al-Zayyāt, *Kawākib*, p. 319; Meinecke , *Die mamlukische Architektur* II, p. 144.

41. See Vidler, *The Architectural Uncanny* for a discussion of this term.

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Al-Saḫāwī, the author of the third and final Mamluk visitation guide remaining to us today attributes the following saying to the prophet:

> "Harm is brought upon a dead person from a bad neighbor exactly as it is on a live person."[42]

The longer version as quoted by al-Albānī (who rejects its *isnād* (chain of narration)) is preceded by the directive: "Bury your dead in the midst of the righteous."[43] While *ḥadīṯ* scholars have cast doubt on the veracity of this *ḥadīṯ* and labeled it as *mawḍūʿ* (fabricated), they did not disagree with its general sentiment. More importantly, it entered the popular culture of Islamic societies almost with the inception of Islam, was quoted in the *ziyāra* books, and was widely acted upon as is obvious from burial trends in almost all Islamic cemeteries.

In choosing to establish new burial clusters on the city-cemetery fringe and not to build in the vicinity of the righteous, the Mamluks forwent the added benefit of *ǧiwār*. They did, however, embed in the *turba* the necessary ingredients for creating it. In other words, although they lacked the moral, ethical, religious and scholastic credentials that would allow them to be buried in the vicinity of the established religious centres of the cemetery, they had the means and the clout to create new centres of virtuous *ǧiwār* within their own establishment. The scholars they paid to teach in their institutions of learning were themselves potential saints and some could, and did, acquire cultic standing in both life and death. And in death, many of them were buried in the funerary enclosures of the *turba*-s in which they taught. The righteous were lured to the vicinity of the sultan or the *amīr,* studying and working there in life and buried there after death. For example Ibn Iyās tells us that when Sayyidī Muḥammad al-Maǧḏūb died in 1455, Sultan Ināl had him buried in the *ǧiwār* of his *turba* for *baraka*.[44]

One cyclical case of relevance is the events leading up to Sultan al-Ẓāhir Barqūq setting aside funds in his will for the establishment of a *turba* in al-Ṣaḥarāʾ and requesting that he be buried there rather than in the *turba* he had built in the coveted location of Bayn al-Qaṣrayn. His cousin Qiǧmās al-Ṣāliḥi (d. c. 1388) had established a *turba* there. Three venerated *šayḫ*-s, ʿAlāʾ al-Dīn al-Sīrāmī, *šayḫ* of *ḫānqāt* Barqūq, and the sufis Ṭalḥā and Abū Bakr al-Baǧāʾī were buried in its burial enclosure. Al-Ẓāhir Barqūq was a follower of all three, particularly al-Sīrāmī, and he wished to be buried at his feet. The fact that his father Anas was also buried in close proximity in the *turba* of Yūnus al-Dawādār (1382; mn. 157) must have provided further incentive. He was buried there and a tent was erected in commemoration. The *turba* mentioned *supra* was then constructed above his grave by his son Faraǧ.[45]

If we add to that the fringe benefit of *baraka*, the ideal set-up for land with transient merit (*faḍl ʿāriḍ*) is complete. *Baraka*, or the "beneficient emanations that flow from sacred things

42. Al-Saḫāwī, *Tuḥfat*, p. 5; See also al-Šuʿaybī, *Kitāb*, fol. 228r°-v°.
43. Nāṣir al-Dīn al-Albānī, *Silsilat*.
44. Ibn Iyās, *Badāʾiʿ* II, p. 50.
45. Al-Maqrīzī, *Ḫiṭaṭ* II, p. 113, 426, 464; *id.*, *Kitāb al-sulūk* II/2, p. 515, 689, II/3, p. 689; Ibn Taġrī Bardī, *al-Nuǧūm* XI, p. 218; Meinecke, *Die mamlukische Architektur* II, p. 264, Hamza, *The Northern Cemetery of Cairo*, p. 11-12, 25.

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and entities,"[46] flows into the *turba* as its occupants partake in acts of virtue specified in his *waqfiyya* such as Quran recital, *ḏikr*, lessons in *fiqh* and *ḥadīṯ*, authoring of religious tomes, distribution of alms, and of course the obligatory *duʿā'* and Quran recital in the founder's mausoleum. As long as acts of virtue are performed in it or a source of *baraka* is buried in it, land becomes a repository of grace, a blessed spot.[47]

> "The fact that these places are avoided by the evil spirits and animals, the immunity from fire to these places and their visitors, the intercession of some saints for those buried near them, the commendability of being buried near such saints, attainment of grace in their neighbourhood and visitation of chastisement upon those who make light of them—these things are all true."[48]

"A Metaphorical Kick in the Behind"[49]

> "The graves of the virtuous are like the tents of the sultans to them one complains of ones troubles and of the injustices that befall one. You thus see the needy—those with a quest—wandering among the graves and visiting those of the glorious and those in whose vicinity one seeks mercy."[50]

This statement by Ibn al-Zayyāt features in his *ziyāra* book al-*Kawākib al-Sayyāra* just before he embarks on his account of the final *ǧiha* or division of al-Qarāfa, that of al-Ǧabal.[51] At the risk of reading too much into it, one wonders if it is a coincidence that the first *šiqqa* or sub-division of al-Ǧabal is ḫāriǧ Bāb al-Qarāfa, the first Mamluk cluster of *turba*-s referred to above and that this is the statement that directly precedes it. Ibn al-Zayyāt, in likening the graves of the virtuous to the tents of the sultans is providing his readers with an alternative power structure to the political powers of the Mamluk establishment—a different resort in times of need, a liminal framework that may even supersede the ruler in importance and efficacy. One's quest need not be taken to the political powers that be. It can also be taken to these transcendental figures with otherworldly powers to fulfill wishes, or at least intercede with God to do so.

46. Bousquet, "La baraka," p. 166-170.

47. *Faḍl ʿāriḍ* is merit related to the performance of an act of piety or the presence of a source of *baraka* on the spot. It passes with the passing of the source of merit as opposed to the three sites on earth with inherent (*lāzim*) sanctity; al-Ḥaram al-Šarīf in Mecca, The Mosque of the Prophet in Medina and al-Aqṣā Mosque in al-Quds. Ibn Taymiyya, *Maǧmūʿ fatāwā šayḫ al-Islām* XXVII, p. 53. For a detailed discussion, see al-Ibrashy, "Death, Life and the Barzakh."

48. Ibn Taymiyya quoted in Taylor, *In the Vicinity of the Righteous*, p. 51-52.

49. A loose and admittedly decontextualised derivation of Charles Jencks' now infamous statement, originally written in critique of the supposedly metaphor-free architecture of modernism; "Their inadvertent metaphors take metaphorical revenge and kick them in the behind"; Charles Jencks, *The Language of Post-Modern Architecture*, p. 58.

50. Ibn al-Zayyāt, *Al-Kawākib al-sayyāra*, p. 277.

51. For the topography of al-Qarafa see Guest, "Cairene topography," p. 57-61; Massignon, "La cité des morts au Caire," p. 25-79; al-Ibrashy, "The Mamluk cemeteries of Cairo."

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Then, almost as if to prove his point, he proceeds to provide a rendition of ḫāriǧ Bab al-Qarāfa that is very different from that which was sketched by his contemporary al-Maqrīzī, and on which the history of ḫāriǧ Bāb al-Qarāfa narrated above is based. Ibn al-Zayyāt does not even use the name ḫāriǧ Bāb al-Qarāfa, as mentioned above, he simply calls it the first *šiqqa* (section) of the third *ǧiha* of al-Qarāfa. He then walks us in a south-easterly direction from Bāb al-Qarāfa to the foot of al-Muqaṭṭam, but the only Mamluk *turba* he mentions is that of Qūṣūn, and he describes it in one brief sentence:[52] "The start of your visit to the Ǧabal *šiqqa* is al-Turba al-Qusīniyya. It has a group of sufis of knowledge and virtue." He does not give us any information about Qūṣūn. The other two political figures he mentions in the area are Aḥmad ibn Ṭūlūn (r. 868-884) and al-Muẓaffar Quṭuz (r. 1259-1260). The fact that he goes into Ṭūlūn's life history is no surprise. By that time, Ṭūlūn had acquired a quasi-mythical status and the stories told of him in the *ziyāra* genre were stories of virtue and religiosity intertwined with narratives of the religious figures of his time. Al-Muẓaffar Quṭuz's claim to fame was his victory over the Mongols in the battle of ʿAyn Ǧālūt. Qūṣūn, on the other hand, had done nothing to recommend him, at least from a religious perspective. The other Mamluk *turba*-s in the neighbourhood are not mentioned. There is mention of a high *turba* with a minaret close to the mountain, and it probably belonged to a Mamluk, but the grave of note described there is that of a *šayḫ* called Muḥammad al-Zubaydī. Within Ibn al-Zayyāt's cognitive map of the area, this obscure *šayḫ*, only mentioned by name, is more important than the actual founder of the *turba*. Just as the *turba* of Qūṣūn's only claim to fame is the fact that it has sufis buried in it.

Further south, Ibn al-Zayyāt mentions the grave of al-Qāḍī Murǧib, the son of Qāḍī Dumyāṭ inside a *turba* called Turbat al-Sitt. Howayda al-Harithy has plausibly identified this mausoleum as the *turba* of Ardutkīn b. Nūkāy (d. 724/1324), wife of al-Ašraf Ḫalīl, then al-Nāṣir Muḥammad, now known as Īwān ʿAbd Allāh al-Manūfī, a later *šayḫ* of obscure history (c. 1293-1317; mn. 300)[53]. The three identities of this structure; as the *turba* of a Mamluk *sulṭāna*, the burial spot of a *qāḍī*, and an oratory for a later Qarāfa *šayḫ*; are paradigmatic of the kind of inadvertent interplay that results from the *turba* set-up as conceived by the Mamluks in the cemetery. A structure is planned to bury its Mamluk founder, its *ʿulamā'* beneficiaries live there, are possibly buried there, thus furnishing the structure with the necessary *baraka* and *ǧiwār*, their names become associated with the structure, and eventually they overshadow the founder, possibly supplanting him in popular memory. The Mamluk's desire for other-wordly benefit comes with the unwanted side-effect of his glory being appropriated by his *ʿulamā'* beneficiaries. The *turba*-s of the sultans are taken over by the tents of the true sultans of the cemetery, the "graves of the virtuous."

52. Ibn al-Zayyāt, *Kawākib*, p. 279-285.

53. Al-Harithy, "Turbat al-Sitt," p. 103-121. See also Ibn al-Zayyāt, *Kawākib*, p. 284; al-Maqrīzī, *Ḫiṭaṭ* II, p. 51, 63; Ibn Ḥaǧar al-ʿAsqalānī, *Al-Durar* I, p. 370; Meinecke, *Die mamlukische Architektur* II, p. 137, 182; Dār al-Waṯā'iq al-Qawmiyya 26/5, *Waqf Ardutkin b. Nukay*, 717 H.

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> "Once built, religious structures, to an important extent like rebellious children, come into adulthood, embark on lives of their own, and engage in conversations of their own, over which creators exercise little or no control."[54]

Examples abound of this sort of appropriation. In the same area, the earliest extant monument, the mausoleum of Ayduġmiš, *amīr aḫūr* under al-Nāṣir Muḥammad, (pre 1323; mn. 292)[55] is now known as the shrine of ʿAlī Badr al-Dīn al-Qarāfī. This shift in name has to have happened before 1506 when al-Sayfī Yašbak endowed it with 300 *dirham*-s to furnish it with drinking water.[56] Sometime before the 19th century the neighbouring *turba* of Sūdūn al-ʿAǧamī, *amīr maǧlis* under al-Ġūrī (c. 1504-5; mn. 294),[57] came to be known as Abū Sibḥa probably after another local saint. Even the dome of Qūṣūn, the only section of the *turba* remaining by the early 20th century came to be known as the Qubbat Awlād Abū Sibḥa.[58] In fact, all of ḫāriǧ Bāb al-Qarāfa is now called the cemetery of Sayyidī Ǧalāl, after Ǧalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī, the prolific religious scholar whose œuvre encompasses works of *fiqh*, *ḥadīṯ*, sufism, in addition to his famous book on the merits (*faḍā'il*) of Cairo. He was buried in the *ḫawš* of Qūṣūn in 1505.[59] Moving to the Bāb al-Wazīr Cemetery, the *takiyya* (sufi hospice) of Sayyidī Ṣandal al-Mirġanī is actually a *turba* of a Mamluk called Ṣandal al-Manǧākī (1398; mn. 327), later taken over by the Mirġāniyya order.[60] In al-Ṣaḥrā', in addition to some *turba*-s acquiring identities related to later occupants, the *turba* of Azrumuk (1503-4; mn. 87)[61] becoming known as Muḥammad al-Kūrānī for example,[62] we also have earlier accounts of a more intentional appropriation. In 1405, Qāḍī Fatḥ al-Dīn Fatḥallāh, buried his wife in the *turba* of Tuġāytamūr al-Naǧmī (1347), and practically took over the structure through the endowment of funds for the restoration of the building and of religious activities in it. Had he not changed his mind and built a mausoleum nearby and moved his wife's body there, one can safely assume that the *turba*

54. Jones, *The Hermeneutics of Sacred Architecture*, p. 24.
55. Meinecke, *Die mamlukische Architektur* II, p. 134; Abū-l-ʿAmāyim, "Al-mi'ḏana al-qibliyya," p. 67-68.
56. Ministry of al-Awqāf, Daftarḫāna, Awqāf 485, *Waqf of Amīr al-Ṣayfī Yašbak*, 912 H.
57. Creswell, *The Muslim Architecture of Egypt*, p. 153; Meinecke, *Die mamlukische Architektur* II, p. 453. Only the dome is listed under this name. The rest of the remains are listed as an Ottoman building, popularly called Iwān Rayḥān (mn. 297). This is because it was re-modelled in the Ottoman period by al-Amīr Nawrūz Kiḫyā al-Ǧāwišiyya, who carved an inscription with his name on the older walls.
58. Comité de conservation des monuments de l'Art arabe, *Fascicules I to XXXX (French) + Kurrasa 41 (Arabic), Exercices 1882-3 to 1946-53 (French) + 1954-6 (Arabic)*, Cairo 1892-1963, XI, 1894, p. 69 [Online: http://www.islamic-art.org/].
59. In one account, this spot was chosen because it was in the *ǧiwār* of Muḥammad al-Maġribī (d. 1505), the Šāḏlī sūfī and al-Suyūṭī's mentor. His grave too became a shrine that was known and visited well into the Ottoman period. In another, al-Suyūṭī's father was also buried there. Al-Ġāzī, *Kawākib* I, p. 78-79; al-Manāwī, *Kawākib* IV, p. 80, 105-107; al-Šuʿaybī, *Kitāb*, fol. 290r°; al-Šaʿrānī, *Ṭabaqāt*, p. 480.
60. Meinecke, *Die mamlukische Architektur* II, p. 293; al-Saḫāwī, *al-Ḍaw'*, p. 322; Mubārak, *Ḫiṭaṭ* II, p. 278; Ḥasan Qāsim' notes in al-Saḫāwī, *Tuḥfat*, p. 68, n. 1.
61. According to Meinecke, Arazmak al-Šarīfī; Meinecke, *Die mamlukische Architektur* II, p. 452.
62. Comité de conservation des monuments de l'Art arabe, *Fascicules I to XXXX (French) + Kurrāsa 41 (Arabic), Exercices* II, 1894, p. 71.

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would have come to be known after him.[63] Four centuries later, the late Ottoman historian al-Ǧabartī recounts a more successful (and more morally reprehensible) story whereby šayḫ ʿAbd Allāh al-Šarqāwī, *šayḫ* al-Azhar and the *nāẓir* of the Mamluk *ḫanqāh* of Umm Anūk[64] (d. 1348; mn. 81) usurped the *waqf* of this *ḫanqāh*, demolished its service buildings and built a *zāwiya* named after him in their place. When he died in 1812, his family, with an eye on the potential of any shrine as a lucrative business, proceeded to spin an image of piety centred around this *zāwiya* where he was buried.

> "When he died, they put a huge *ʿimma* (turban) on his grave and someone stayed at the tomb and called on people to visit him and took *dirham*-s from them. His wife and son then held a *mawlid* (saint's day) for him during the days of *mawlid* al-ʿAfīfī and obtained a *firmān* (order) from the Pasha (Governor). *Tābiʿ al-šurṭa* (Deputy of the police) called upon the people in the city's *sūq*-s (markets) to gather & attend the *mawlid*."[65]

Historically, the tug of war between the two "owners" of this building, Umm Anūk and al-Šarqāwī (both of which did not really qualify as figures of virtue) did not end there. The *Description de l'Égypte* described what they call the tomb of the Šarqāwī family as one of the most important of the family *ḫawš*-s,[66] and the description of Ḥasan Qāsim of this area in the 1940s relates all the sites to the *masǧid* (mosque) and *maqām* (shrine) of al-Šarqāwī.[67] The first mention of the building in the *Bulletins du Comité de Conservation* identifies it as the *takiyya* of al-Šarqāwī.[68] The Comité very quickly re-identified it and in its restoration of this building has mostly reclaimed the older building for Umm Anūk. The remains of the older building are now physically separate from the newer mosque and shrine of Šayḫ al-Islām as it is called whose entrance is from the end furthest away from Umm Anūk.

Not all Mamluk *turba*-s met the fate of the *turba*-s of Aqbuġā, Sūdūn, Ṣandal, or Umm Anūk. The *turba* of Qāytbāy for example, did not just retain its name, it gave it to the whole area which to this day is called Qāytbāy. It acquired other sources of merit, such as the stone said to have the imprint of the foot of the prophet which started to appear in the sources in the Ottoman period.[69] It also co-existed with the neighbouring shrine of another ʿAbd Allāh al-Manūfī, a theologian and ṣūfī (d. 1348). In fact, they benefited each other, Qāytbāy endowing al-Manūfī with *waqf* and building a dome over the shrine and al-Manūfī (c. 1474; mn. 168) providing

63. Al-Maqrīzī, *Ḫiṭaṭ* II, p. 425.
64. Ḫawand Ṭuġāy, the principal wife of al-Sulṭān al-Nāṣir Muḥammad; Hamza, *The Northern Cemetery of Cairo*, p. 8; al-Maqrīzī, *Ḫiṭaṭ* II, p. 425.
65. Al-Ǧabartī, *ʿAǧa'ib* III, p. 381.
66. Jomard, "Coup d'œil," p. 346.
67. See Qāsim's notes in al-Saḫāwī, *Tuḥfat*, p. 64-68.
68. Comité de conservation des monuments de l'Art arabe, *Fascicules I to XXXX (French) + Kurrāsa 41 (Arabic)*, *Exercices* I, 1882-1883, p. 24-25.
69. Ismāʿīl al-Nābulsī, *al-Ḫaqīqa*, p. 293.

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the needed cultic weight that would help add to al-Ṣaḥrā's reputation as site of veneration.[70] Other *turba*-s, such as those of Azdumur (lt. 15th c; mn. 90) and Yūnus al-Dawdār (pre. 1382; mn. 139) developed bastardised variations of their names (al-Zumur and Anas) that became void of historical significance.[71] Yet none of the *turba*-s managed to accomplish the intention Humphreys claimed the Mamluks had when constructing them. Except for very rare cases such as that of Quṭuz or Ṭūmān Bāy, whose stories of valour in defending Egypt against invaders acquired mythic status, the Mamluks were never venerated as defenders of the faith. And even in those of Quṭuz and Ṭūmān Bāy, their graves never became shrines or sites of visitation.

Marker, Narrative and Ritual

"Architecture too is occasional. It exists and persists in renovation and reproduction."[72]

Turba-s, in order to become sites of veneration, had to acquire an alternative narrative related to the alternative rulers of the cemetery, its religious figures, whether saints, sufis or scholars. In some cases, the two identities could co-exist, but in most cases, the cultic identity grew so strong that the name of the original founder sank into oblivion. The Mamluk acquired *ǧiwār* and *ṣaḍaqa ǧāriya*, and benefit in the afterlife, but this was to the detriment of his own stake in popular memory. This scenario had another beneficiary, the building itself, the physical marker, the receptacle of that blend of myth and ritual that kept memory alive.

Modern scholarly work on place and memory abounds with references to the role of meaning/myth/narrative on the one hand and ritual/function/intangible heritage in keeping buildings alive. The works of Jones, Casey and Tuan are but a few examples of the rich and profound corpus of literature addressing these issues.[73] What may come as a surprise is the idea that this understanding of the importance of the narrative-ritual-marker triad to fully function in order that memory may be maintained is an idea that features, at least subliminally, in the writings of scholars from the world of the Mamluks. The following anecdote is recounted by al-Saḫāwī, the 15th century *ziyārat šayḫ*:

In the mid fifteenth century, Šayḫ Abū ʿAlī al-Takrūrī, a retired baker, moved to a *kawm* (mound) in al-Qarāfa al-Kubrā, south of Ǧāmiʿ al-Qarāfa. He proceeded to clear the mounds and found that the graves there had disappeared with time. Erecting false graves in his clearing, he marked them with old tombstones collected from the neighbourhood. For example, he took a tombstone that had existed in a destroyed dome known after Fāṭima al-Ṣuġrā, a descendant of the prophet, and placed it on one of the graves he had built. He made up names for the other graves he built and with the help of a story-teller from Bāb al-Qarāfa, made up stories about

70. Hamza, *The Northern Cemetery of Cairo*, p. 17; Meinecke, *Die mamlukische Architektur* II, p. 405; al-Saḫāwī, *Ḍaw'* VI, p. 208.
71. Mubārak, *Ḫiṭaṭ* II, p. 278.
72. Gadamer quoted in Jones, *The Hermeneutics of Sacred Architecture*, p. 145.
73. Jones, *The Hermeneutics of Sacred Architecture*; Edward Casey, *The Fate of Place*; Tuan, *Topophilia*.

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their lives. The first of the fictitious deceased, Šukrān, was given a funeral and a procession carried his *satr* (tomb shroud) from the Manṣūrī Bīmāristān in the heart of al-Qāhira to his tomb. The *ḫawš* as a whole became a popular site of visitation among whose patrons was Ǧaqmaq, the Mamluk Sultan himself, who ordered it to be properly built. When Abū ʿAlī al-Takrūrī died in 1466, he was buried there. In the 20th century, art historians looking for the remains of the great mosque of al-Qarāfa, the centre of al-Qarāfa al-Kubrā under the Fatimids, were directed to a small settlement called *Ḥawš* Abū ʿAlī. The memory of the *ḫawš*, sustained again through narrative, physical marker and ritual, had lived longer than that of the royal Fatimid establishment of Ǧāmiʿ al-Qarāfa and its subsidiary buildings.[74]

Narrative and ritual attract people, and people inhabit buildings, giving them life, and from a more self-serving perspective, endowing them with funds for maintenance and upkeep. With the disintegration of the *waqf*-s of the Mamluks,[75] it was through the reincarnation of narrative and rebirth of ritual that new funds could be generated. The *waqf* of ʿAlī al-Qarafī is an early example of that, but it would be safe to assume that many unrecorded votive offerings were also made by ordinary men and women who knew and loved the remnants of these Mamluk buildings as places of *baraka*, not memorials to the power of the Mamluks. For example, Mubārak, writing in the end of the 19th century mentions a mosque called Sūdūn al-Qaṣrāwī (d. 873; mn. 105) which people called Ǧāmiʿ al-Duʿā' because it was known for *iǧābat al-duʿā'* (fulfillment of supplicatory prayers).[76]

The Mamluk *turba*-s therefore survived for many reasons. Sometimes it was through their own merit as memorials to the sultans or buildings that continued to function as mosques or *madrasa*-s according to the originally intended function. In other cases, they were fortified with new narratives and rituals that developed through use and were crucial factors in their survival. In more extreme cases, the new narratives supplanted the old original narratives and the identity of the building, the marker, changed. Yet the proof of success of all these scenarios of transformation is the survival of the marker; the building.

74. Al-Saḫāwī, *Tuḥfat* , p. 182-184; Mubārak. *Ḫiṭaṭ* I, p. 48; IV, p. 129-31.
75. Amīn, *al-Awqāf al-miṣriyya*; ʿAfīfī, *al-Awqāf*; Ġānim, *al-Awqāf al-sīyāsiyya fī Miṣr*.
76. Mubārak, *Ḫiṭaṭ* II, p. 270. Ḥasan Qāsim also mentions a sufi burial there, Sayyidī Maḥmūd al-Kurdī al-Ḫalwatī (d. 1781); al-Saḫāwī, *Tuḥfat*, p. 55, n. 1. Meinecke, *Die mamlukische Architektur* II, p. 392.

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Conclusion
"The Superabundance of Architecture"

> "The programmatic intention of the designers are, more often than not, frustrated or subverted (or perhaps transcended) with the superabundance of architecture."
>
> "Even the most carefully designed buildings, particularly long-lasting religious structures, invariably transcend (or subvert) the expectations of their designers and thus engender all sorts of unanticipated meanings and sensations."[77]

At the end of the 19th century, the *Comité de conservation des monuments de l'art arabe* took it upon itself to survey, list, document, conserve and restore Egypt's monuments of Islamic Architecture. It was not content with the popular identities that had been attached to buildings that were obviously much older than the histories of the religious figures they were related to. Through both academic research and physical intervention, the Comité proceeded to revalorise inception over process and re-endow the buildings with their original identities. Physical conservation, restoration and segregation from the urban environment, appropriation of legal ownership and control, banning of burial and habitation; all of these acts led to the birth of the *turba* as a "monument" in the modern sense of the word.[78] The result was the cemetery (and city) documented in the monument list and map of 1948.[79] The *turba*-s were reclaimed for their Mamluk founders.[80]

In another parallel process, as the original identity of the historical building was revalorised, the potency of the myth and narrative related to their post-Mamluk identities was on the wane. As *mawlid*-s (saint's days) were discontinued, *ḏikr* sessions were discouraged, and saint veneration in general was deemed un-Islamic, the popular saints fell into obscurity. The building was being "monumentalized" and "deshrined", discarding its acquired identity in favour of its original identity.[81] Yet, the relevance of this new-old identity, the name of Sūdūn rather than Abū Sibḥa for example, continues to be miniscule as long as there are no new rituals of visitation—in this case, they would be expected to be cultural rather than cultic. It is up to us to fortify the new meaning-identity with new rituals and narratives. Yet one wonders how effective these new rituals of touristic visitation are as substitutes to the "ontological

77. Jones, *The Hermeneutics of Sacred Architecture*, p. 29, 94.
78. For a history of the development of this term in the context of conservation practice see Jokilehto, *A History of Architectural Conservation*. With reference to the modern meaning of a monument, see Riegl, "The Modern Cult of Monuments."
79. Survey of Egypt 1:5000 Monuments Map and list of Monuments (1948).
80. Al-Ibrashy, "The Cemeteries of Cairo and the Comité de Conservation," p. 235-256.
81. For Salafi writings at the turn of the 20th century, see Rāšid Riḍā's periodical, *al-Manār*. For a contemporary discussion of the backlash against *mawlid*-s in the beginning of the 20th century, see McPherson, *The Moulids of Egypt*; Johansen, *Sufism and Islamic Reform in Egypt*.

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plenitude"[82] of the rituals of religious visitation of which "the tourist, the passive spectator, can grasp but a pale shadow."[83]

Jones, in his adaptation of reception theory to the hermeneutic study of religious architecture, counts "five sorts of protocols of architectural apprehension":

> "1) The initial intentions of designers and ritual choreographers, 2) the manifold ritual experiences of indigenous users of the architecture, 3) revalorative uses by outsiders, 4) academic interpretations of the architecture, and finally, 5) more personal, self-critical reflections on our own hermeneutical involvements with the architecture."[84]

All, with the possible exception of the fifth protocol, are phases that *turba*-s have gone through and it is through the *turba*-s' ability to adapt to these different protocols that it has survived. It may now be time to actively pursue the fifth protocol in order to set in motion a more multi-layered protocol of perception and use than mere cultural tourism (if it exists). By aiming for a more receptive academic tradition that valorises both the original inception and subsequent process, and that encompasses, not just the shell of the building but also its lives as represented by rituals and narratives, we author an academic narrative that provides the necessary superabundance of narrative, ritual and marker. This narrative would include, not exclude the user, encouraging an interaction with the building as human space rather than admiration of it from afar as a monument. It is only through this interaction, this perpetual re-invention, that the building will survive.

82. Jones, *The Hermeneutics of Sacred Architecture*, p. 23 quoting Gadamer.
83. Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, p. 137.
84. Jones, *The Hermeneutics of Sacred Architecture*, p. 200.

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