

Atil, Essin. **Renaissance of Islam: Art of the Mamluks**. Washington 1981.

Chapter 6: Woodwork, Ivory and Stone.

The problem with the Mamluk woodwork is that the artifacts we have are mostly taken out of context, i.e. they have been removed from their original setting. Only a few examples remain... **Exception to this are the movable objects in monuments such as the minbars and doors.**

Mamluk rulers used their tombs and their adjoining buildings as an opportunity to commemorate their founder. Hence they lavishly decorated these structures in Cairo, Jerusalem, Damascus and Aleppo. A tradition which continued during the Ottoman period **as the Mamluks continued to play a major role as a socio-political elite. Also because Cairo was reduced to a satellite city with minimal grandiose Ottoman architecture.**

During the Mamuk period craftsmen produced doors, minbars, mashrabiyyas, domes with stalactite transitional zone window shutters, screens and mihrabs, cenotaphs and cupboards, coffered ceilings. The also did *kursis* and boxes for Qur'ans and elaborate tables for different functions.

Ayyubid woodwork:

Types: Cenotaphs, doors, mihrabs, minbars, screens and shutters.

Decoration: stars and polygons inlaid in panels with different types of wood. Examples are the door and cenotaph of the imam al-Shaf'i mausoleum (1211).

Mamluk woodwork: Continued the tradition but added ivory inlays to the wood (**is particular to certain types of wood?**).

Ivory, ebony, rose wood and other rare woods were individually carved to construct panels inserted in doors, minbars and