

Palace of Pasha Abd al-Latif al-Mandil in Basra

(Analytical archaeological study)

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ملخص

أيقونة المباني التراثية العراقية هو ما تراه أعين ملايين من مشاهدي شاشات التلفزيون والكتب ولوحات الفنانين ومصوغات الصابئة المندائية وصفحات الجرائد والمجلات وبطاقات البريد وطوابعه وملصقات الاعلان والاعلام, يشاهده الجميع معجبين بتصميمه الرائع الجاذب للنظر ولا يختلف اثنان لاختياره من بين المباني التراثية التي تزخر بها البصرة القديمة وهي تتدمر وتضمحل نتيجة الحروب والكوارث والاهمال, لذا وأمام هذا كله يبقى المشاهد مغيبا عن معرفة سر ذلك المبنى، فاصبح كغيره في ذمة تاريخ لا يعي من أمره شيئا.

ان المنهجية العلمية لهذا البحث يكمن في دراسة الاثرية والتحليلية لهذا القصر , وتضمن المنهجية العديد من الخطوات الرئيسة والتي تحاول الاجابة عن مشكلة البحث الميداني للقصر , ومشكلتنا الرئيسة للبحث هو التساؤل الاتي (هل يمكن توثيق والحفاظ على هذه التحفة المعمارية ؟) , اما عن اهمية الدراسة فهي تتجسد في توعية الاثرية للمجتمع المحلي الذي يعيش قرب القصر للحفاظ عليه , كما تهدف الدراسة الى دراسة وتحليل القصر وعناصره العمارية وسماته التراثية للحفاظ عليها للخاط عليها للأجيال القصر .

لذا تناول البحث عدد من المحاور منها موقع القصر في مدينة البصرة القديمة , والتسمية وتاريخ القصر وبنائه ووصف مرافقة البنائية بالإضافة الى عناصره العمارية ومواد البناء , وخاتمة تعطي اهمية هذا القصر بالنسبة الى العمار العراقية الحديثة .

summary

The icon of Iraqi heritage buildings is what the eyes of millions of viewers see on television screens, books, artists' paintings, pages of newspapers and magazines, postcards, stamps, advertising posters and media. Everyone watches it, admiring it's wonderful, eye-catching design, and no two disagree in choosing it among the heritage buildings that old Basra abounds with.

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The scientific methodology for this research lies in the archaeological and analytical study of this palace. The methodology includes many main steps that attempt to answer the problem of field research of the palace. Our main problem for the research is the following question (Is it possible to document and preserve this architectural masterpiece), As for the importance of the study It is embodied in raising archaeological awareness of the local community that lives near the palace to preserve it.

Therefore, the research dealt with a number of topics, including the location of the palace in the ancient city of Basra, the name, the history of the palace and its construction, components, in addition to its architectural elements and building materials, and a conclusion that gives the importance of this palace in relation to modern Iraqi architecture .

Keywords : heritage , palace , relationship, remains, restoration , construction , central courtyard , dimensions .

History of the palace

This house is located in the Al-Basha district on the Al-Ashar River, opposite the Cultural Museum in Basra, in this area (figure1), which is characterized by the presence of a large number of beautiful heritage houses, because it is an important area overlooking the Al-Ashar River, which small boats used to pass through, which attracted many important figures in the city of Basra to reside.

This palace was named after its owner, Al-Pasha Abdul Latif bin Ibrahim bin Mandil, from the Al-Fawzan family, who trace their lineage back to the Badarin Al-Dawasir from the city of Jalajil, Sudair region in Najd, north of Riyadh. His father was displaced from Sudair to Al-Zubayr in 1837 AD.¹

He practiced trade between Basra, Baghdad, and India, built a guest house for the displaced from his tribe, and established a prominent social status for his family in southern Iraq and success in arranging talks between Abdul Aziz Al Saud and the Turks after Al-Ahsa joined the rule of the Al Saud in 1913 AD^2

Abdul Latif' had a close relationship with King Abdul Aziz as his most prominent representative in the Basra Province, and his most important representatives with the Turks and the English during the period of unification of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for the period (1902 - 1932 AD). He also had a

political role in the Basra Province through the contacts he had with the Turks. Then the British were the agent of Sultan Abdul Aziz.³

He had a major role in the politics of Iraq and the state of Basra, as during the Ottoman era he became a member of the Council of the State of Basra and its annexes, then a member of the Council of Supervision during the period of the British occupation of Iraq 1914 - 1919 AD. Among his most important achievements was his endeavor to provide the city of Basra with electricity and pure drinking water, as he established the first city in Basra. A project to liquefy water in Iraq, repair agricultural means, stimulate trade in it, and reconstruct the city of Basra.⁴

Abdul Latif Pasha Al-Mandil served as Minister of Trade in the first Iraqi ministry headed by Sayyid Abdul Rahman Al-Naqib in 1920 AD, and the second ministry on September 12, 1921 AD, but he resigned in order to take care of his own affairs and then was appointed Minister of Endowments in the second ministry of Abdul Mohsen Al-Saadoun in November 1922 AD. He was elected to the Council Founding member in 1924 AD for Basra, then he became a member of the Senate in 1929 AD, and resigned in 1934 AD, to devote himself to managing his own affairs⁵.

After a life full of movement and holding political and diplomatic positions and tasks, and after a long journey with social prestige and commercial trips, the pains and illnesses multiplied for Abdul Latif Al-Mandil, and his health conditions worsened in the mid-thirties AD, and he was struck with paralysis that prevented him from moving and performing many of his daily works and tasks. He continued in this state, receiving treatment amidst health care provided by his children and family, until he died in 1940 AD. , He was buried in the "Al-Hassan Al-Basri" cemetery in his birthplace in the town of Al-Zubair.⁶

Work on the palace began at the beginning of the year (1925 AD) after Abdul Latif Pasha returned from a long tour that lasted several months throughout Europe. He brought with him materials that were not available in Basra. The work was under his direct supervision as usual, and the period of low river levels was chosen so that he could lay particularly strong foundations. The building stands directly in the water. Cement was used to secure the building's base, and work was completed in 1927 AD.⁷

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Planning and architecture of the palace

Al-Mandil Palace area is 200 square meter and consists of two floors and has a beautiful and unique facade that is characterized by the abundant use of (fershi) bricks⁸ and teak wood.

The building is located directly on the Ashar River, on a platform about 3 meters high, due to the small area of the building land. It is a square whose sides do not exceed twenty meters, so its total area is approximately four hundred square meters. The percentage of construction on it is (100%) and it is attached to buildings adjacent to the eastern and western facades. As for the northern facade, it overlooks the back alley, and the southern facade is located directly on the riverbed and its mouths, and have the main entrance to enter the palace via a wooden bridge carried over iron joists (Shilman) (Figure 2) that leads to an entrance whose opening is closed by a double-leaf wooden door with dimensions (2 cm x 110 cm) on top of it. A rectangular window⁹ with iron bars in front of it, and then a necklace sits on it The door, as the height of the door is about (3.5 metres). The door is in the middle of the facade of the ground floor of the house, and on each side of It has two windows of the same dimensions as the main door, preceded by iron bars. The interface was implemented with a paid salary.

The first floor has a balcony¹⁰ overlooking the Ashar River. Its dimensions are $(1.20 \text{ cm On it}, \text{ the second part consists of two nets made of two pieces of wood, made in the form of curtains (manjura)., The third part is topped with seven pointed arches similar to the entrance arch and windows on the ground floor. Above the arches is a protrusion in the façade on which was placed a decoration with beautiful wooden inlays in the shape of a five-pointed grape leaf. The entire façade is made of teak wood, As for the balcony ceiling, it is a secondary ceiling of wood decorated with floral and geometric motifs. The floor is tiled of Kashi with floral decorations, measuring (15 x 15 cm). It represents an artistic painting of great precision and beauty, On the northern wall of the balcony, there are six windows overlooking it, and one entrance leads to the southern wing of the first floor.$

On both sides of the balcony, there are two facades similar to the balcony facade, followed by a window on each side. As for the roof fence (the curtain), it

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was made in a mixture of wood, interspersed with iron bars, and behind it were boards. Wooden with pointed ends.

The ground floor consists of four wings revolving around the central courtyard of the building, (figure3)

- The southern wing

The main entrance to the house leads to this wing, which is a large transverse hall with dimensions ($12 \times 6 \text{ m}$). Its southern wall contains the main entrance and four windows on either side of the entrance(Figure 4)

. The western wall contains a window with the same dimensions as the windows of the facade, overlooking from the outside a corridor before the house next to it. There is a decorative brick panel, most of which consists of an eight-pointed star¹¹, in the northern part of this wall (Figure \circ)

The eastern wall contains a brick panel similar to the western wall, and the northern wall has an entrance leading to the central courtyard of the house, and on its western side is a window with dimensions (1.10 cm x 2.5 cm) similar to the windows of the facade, and it also opens into the courtyard. On the eastern side of the entrance, there are three windows whose openings resemble the previous ones. The western window opens onto the courtyard, and the two windows overlook the adjacent room in the eastern wing. The ceiling of this base is covered with bricks and iron beams (Shilman). The aqada was made with matting decoration, while the floor was paved with brush brick, measuring (27 x 27 x 6 cm).

- East wing of the palace

This wing is preceded by a balcony, covered with bricks and iron beams (Shilman), supported in front by beautiful decorated wooden columns (Dalkat)¹² and this wing contains a staircase consisting of seventeen steps, each one high (25 cm), at the bottom of which it is transformed into a storeroom with a wooden door with two leaves. On the northern side there are three entrances of different dimensions, which were transformed in the recent maintenance of the Tourism Authority into three small galleries that previously had three wooden doors. It has two leaves and was used as bookcases (Figure 3)., The walls of this suite were made of brushes measuring (10 x 27 x 6 cm) and decorated with

white cement. The beautiful seams protruding from the thickness of the wall were decorated with white cement. This suite was preceded by a balcony measuring $(6 \times 1 \text{ m})$.

-West wing of the palace

This wing contains three rooms, preceded by a balcony similar to the balcony of the western wing. The first overlooks the courtyard with a wooden door with two doors, its dimensions are $(1.10 \times 2.5 \text{ cm})$ and two windows, its dimensions are $(1.10 \times 2.5 \text{ cm})$. In its southern wall there are also two windows overlooking the southern wing, as we mentioned previously, and the second room. It overlooks the courtyard with a wooden door with two leaves and one window similar to the door and window of the first room.as for the third room, it overlooks the courtyard with a single wooden door and a window next to it overlooking the secondary entrance. It has two windows in its northern wall overlooking the adjacent alley.

-North wing of the palace

This wing consists of two parts, north and south, connected by the corridor leading to the second entrance to the house, which opens to the adjacent alley. The roof of this corridor is a structure of brick and iron beams (Shilman) in the same manner as the arch of the house.

The northern part of the wing consists of a staircase, its number of steps, and the height of each step (25 cm). It ends with an entrance whose opening is closed by a wooden door leading to another corridor on the first floor. To the west of the stairs is the entrance to the house's bathroom.

The southern part of the transept consists of a transverse aisle. On its northern side, there are two bathrooms with two entrances, which makes the design very similar to the European design of bathrooms because it contains bathtubs and water heaters, the use of which may have been limited to Europeans residing in Basra for about eight decades. The walls of these bathrooms are covered with purple-green slate tiles and each bathroom has a window.

First floor of the palace

This floor is preceded by a balcony overlooking the Al-Ashar River. Its floor is paved with (kashi) tiles with floral decorations, measuring (15 x 15 cm), representing an artistic painting of the utmost precision and beauty ,On the northern wall of the balcony are six wooden windows, and an entrance closed by a two-leaf wooden door that leads to the southern wing of the first floor. Next to the balcony are two facades similar to the balcony facade.

-South wing of the palace

This suite consists of three rooms of equal dimensions. The first is in the eastern corner. In its southern wall there are two windows overlooking the balcony. These are wooden windows that slide from top to bottom. Its dimensions are $(1 \times 2.5 \text{ m})$. On the western side, there is a wooden window overlooking the western facade.

In the western wall there are two windows overlooking the middle room, and an entrance whose opening is closed by a wooden door with two leaves. Its wall contains two wooden windows, and in the middle of them is an entrance whose opening is closed by a double-leaf door. The third entrance room is made of teak and is similar to the first room ,The ceilings of this pavilion were made of beautifully decorated wood, and the floors were paved with kashi tiles decorated with floral designs. Floor decor varies for each room.

-West wing of the palace

This suite contains three rooms of different dimensions. The first overlooks the central courtyard of the house and has an entrance and two windows (1 x 2.5 m) on its southern side. It has an entrance to the southern wing, as we mentioned previously, and another entrance leads to the second room, which is the smallest room in the entire house. It can be said that it may have been used as a storeroom for the palace, and it overlooked the courtyard with a window. As for the third room, which overlooks the courtyard, it has two windows similar to the windows of the other rooms. It has an entrance whose opening is closed by a wooden door with two leaves. On its northern side, there is another entrance that leads to the first room in the northern wing.

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- East wing of the palace

This wing contains a room with a staircase rising from the ground, another entrance leading to a staircase leading to the roof, and three other entrances whose openings are closed by wooden doors used as a library for the palace. This wing is preceded by a corridor whose dimensions are $(1 \times 4.5 \text{ m})$ Beautiful wooden fence made of teak and iron bars.(Figure \vee).

- The northern wing of the palace

It contains the staircase room that rises to it from the ground floor, a bathroom in the eastern corner, and a passage whose dimensions are $1.5 \ge 2$ m. The walls of the passage and the bathroom are covered with green (purple Kashi) tiles, and the ceiling of this passage and the bathroom is the floor of the suspended room (Kafshkan)¹³., Next to the entrance to the corridor overlooking the courtyard, there is an entrance whose opening is covered by a wooden door with two leaves that leads to the staircase room that leads to the roof. In the western corner of this wing there is a room whose dimensions are (5 x 6 m) overlooking the alley with three windows whose dimensions are (1 x 2.5 m).). On its southern side there are two entrances, the first leads to the balcony overlooking the courtyard of the house, and the second leads to the third room In the western wing, the room's ceiling is decorated similar to the ceilings of the other rooms. This wing is preceded by a balcony measuring (2 x 8 m), with a wooden fence on its floor.

- The middle courtyard of the first floor

What distinguishes the building from other open-air houses in Basra is the square wooden roof that covers the inner courtyard in the form of a huge wooden gable above the courtyard of this house. This gable contains fourteen wooden windows decorated with iron bars. To make the most of natural light, the ceiling is raised at a height that allows sunlight to enter. To cover the house throughout the day through holes drilled on its four sides. The roof of the courtyard is made of wood covered on the outside with iron sheets. Below is a decorative secondary roof made of thin iron sheets fastened to wood. Below them, in the gable neck, are the windows, and then below them are architectural decoration. It protrudes from the thickness of the wall about (30-35 cm) and is called an Indian decorative element in the form of grape leaves. .(Figure ^).

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Conclusion

Iraqi heritage is the spiritual and formal link between the nation's past and its present. Therefore, we see that any work done by a person in this field, no matter how small, is a tribute to an ancient past that future generations will be proud of, because in these works the builder, carpenter, decorator, and craftsman have made tremendous efforts in order to produce them in the form that they deserve. It has reached us, and in fact it represents an architectural and artistic style that prevailed in an era that had its own peculiarity.

Therefore, it is our duty to preserve this heritage and pass it on to future generations through its maintenance and rehabilitation so that it remains for the longest possible period of time for the next generation to see. This palace, with its beautiful architectural features, was the nucleus of the ideas of architects in Iraq to design buildings bearing some of its beautiful heritage features that At the time of the palace's construction, it had advanced architectural features and was copied from modern architecture at that time.

This palace bore architectural features known for the first time in Iraqi architecture for heritage buildings, as the architectural element of the balcony was designed for the first time in the palace, which is considered today the oldest balcony element found in Iraqi heritage architecture. It was also the first beginnings of the idea of the roofing the open courtyard in the heritage building found in the palace, in addition to the appearance European-style bathrooms in heritage architecture were found in the palace, so we can consider this palace a symbol of modern heritage architecture.

The distinguishes this palace is that there is nothing similar to it in Iraqi heritage architecture, so we cannot compare it with any other building. It represents the development of architecture between the period of late Ottoman architecture and English architecture in Iraq.

British architects played an important role in building heritage monuments since the last century, and the British architects who worked in the Buildings Directorate had a new and distinct contribution to contemporary architecture in Iraq. The architect (J.M. Wilson), who demonstrated his architectural prowess during his work in India through his success in integrating local building

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technology with the vocabulary of European architecture, worked in Iraq to combine Iraqi architecture with the vocabulary of European architecture.

Recommendations

.'Emphasis on spreading archaeological awareness to introduce the importance of heritage buildings and their preservation among citizens in preserving heritage buildings because citizens are in full contact with these heritage buildings and are made aware by conducting training courses by specialists for members of the local community for the purpose of preserving heritage buildings.

 \checkmark . Benefit from important international experiences and study them in order to increase awareness and understand the correct methods for dealing with heritage buildings and rehabilitating them. This includes cooperation with international organizations in the field of providing international expertise in identifying the best means of rehabilitation in a way that is compatible with the nature, quality and style of our heritage buildings in particular and our architectural heritage in general

¹ Al-Madani, Abdullah, Al-Mandeel.. Ibn Saud's agent in Basra and Baghdad, Al-Ayyam Magazine, Saudi Arabia, Issue No. 10722, Friday, August 17, 2018, p 8

² Al-Qashami, Muhammad Abd al-Razzaq, King Abdul Aziz's accredited persons abroad, Al-Dara Magazine, Saudi Arabia, 1430, p. 128.

³ Ibid , p 130

⁴ Muhammad, Talib Jassim, Political Awareness of Basra Families in the Ottoman Era, Basra Journal of Arts, No. 49, 2009, p. 59

⁵ Al-Husseini, Abdul Razzaq, History of the Iraqi Ministries, Part 1, General Cultural Affairs House, 1988, p. 45

⁶ Al-Qashami, Muhammad Abd al-Razzaq , King Abdul Aziz's accredited persons abroad , p 140

⁷ Jassim, Alaa Hussein, Report on the Conservation of Heritage Houses in Basra for the 2002 Season, General Authority for Antiquities and Heritage, Baghdad - 2002 AD, p. 5

⁸ Al-Fershi, perhaps the name goes back to the shape of the parallel rectangular bricks, the upper and lower rectangles being larger than the rest of the rectangles. Al-Daraji, Hamid Muhammad, "Building materials in ancient Iraqi architecture bricks"", Heritage and Civilization Magazine, fourth issue, issued by the Regional Center for Conservation Cultural property in the Arab countries - Baghdad 1982, pp. 97-98

⁹ A name given to the window opening in the wall, regardless of size and shape. There were wide ones that supplied the rooms and rooms of the building with light and air, and narrow ones that were high in the outer walls if they opened in them. This was subject to climatic

necessity on the one hand and religious and social necessity on the other hand. Ghalib, Abd al-Rahim, Encyclopedia of Islamic Architecture. , 1st edition, Arab Press, Beirut, 1988, p. 141 ¹⁰ Balcon: A balcony or seat in theaters and cinemas. It is from the French and perhaps in Persian (balakhana), meaning a high place. Al-Daraji, Hamid Muhammad, Architectural and Artistic Terms in Heritage Architecture, Baghdad, 2013, p. 29.

¹¹ The eight-pointed star expresses the concept of the universe and the Creator of the universe in Islamic thought, which consists of two squares facing each other with one center, a square representing the four directions, as is the square of the Holy Kaaba, and another square representing the four elements of nature - water, air, fire, and earth.

¹² Al-Daraji, Hemid Muhammad, Columns and Capitals in Heritage Architecture, Dar Al-Murtada Press, Baghdad - 2007 AD, p. 9

¹³ It is a small room located on the upper floor of the house, with an average height of about (2 meters) and it is semi-suspended and that is why it is called the hanging room. The floor of the room is made of thick wooden planks and it is the ceiling of the room under which it is located. Jassim, Alaa Hussein , Components of Planning and Architecture for Iraqi Heritage Buildings , Research accepted for publication in Essen magazine ,P 5

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مجلــة دراسات في التاريخ والآثار



Figure No. (1) The location of the palace



Figure No. (2) The facade of the palace



Figure No. (3): Ground floor plan (SBAH)



Figure No. (4): The transverse hall after the main entrance



Figure No. (°): brick panel

مجلـــة دراسات في التاريخ والآثار

Palace of Pasha Abd al-Latif al-Mandil in Basra (Analytical archaeological study)







Figure No. ($^{\vee}$) The facade of the first floor overlooking the courtyard



. Figure($^{\Lambda}$). Roof and windows to the central courtyard