

Engravings in Old City Jerusalem –An analytical cultural study

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Abstract

This study aimed to collect and document every existing engraving. It also aimed to protect these engravings from any attempts of forgery, damage or loss.

The study adopted an integrated method. It used the historical method to collect and organize engravings. The descriptive method was used to narrate and depict engravings. As for the analytical and statistical methods, they were used to classify patterns into categories and investigate them from a cultural perspective.

I also relied on descriptive and analytical backgrounds as well as observations and field visits to take pictures, measurements and notes of their current status and the extent of attention dedicated by the Ministry of Islamic Waqf and its staff to these engravings.

This study consisted of an introduction, three chapters, a conclusion references and table of contents. In the first chapter, I studied engravings etymology, linguistics, emergence, development, significance and types. The second chapter investigated the emergence, development, significance and types of Arabic Islamic engravings. The third chapter dealt with religious, historical, literary and social engravings.

The study reached a number of conclusions mainly that Caliphs and Sultans, over different Islamic eras, paid attention to Islamic architecture. It was also revealed that the religious aspect was the direct reason behind the flourish of Islamic urbanization and feelings of holiness of the place inside the city of Jerusalem. The study also showed that some engravings were either defaced or damaged as a result of erosion and negligence on part of the Islamic Waqf or in fact were purposefully damaged by humans like Zionist settlers and occupation army. Also, they were damaged by reckless, ignorant and irresponsible individuals who did not know the importance of these engravings especially with regard to the Al Aqsa Mosque and the most valuable ruins for all Moslems.

Accordingly, the study made several recommendations especially concerning restoration of defaced engravings. It also recommended adoption of mechanisms to protect existing engravings. There should be an increased awareness of the people of the significance of these engravings inside Jerusalem walls especially in Al Aqsa Mosque.