

Name

Instructor's Name

Course Number

Date

Islamic History

1. The Arabs living in the period of Umayyad caliphates had a significant impact on the formation of aesthetic and intellectual traditions in Islamic culture by borrowing its elements from other cultural, non-Islamic trends. In particular, they paid great attention to the development of medicine. Specifically, after Umayyad caliphates had come to power, medical research became more flexible and ceased to rely solely on Islamic traditions. Healers began to study the practices of Greek and Christian scientists, which allowed them to improve their professional knowledge. In the days of Umayyad caliphates, the first hospitals also appeared. Their founder was al-Walid ibn 'Abd al-Malik (Hamarneh 373). In this regard, the period of Umayyad rule was characterized by the development of medical sciences, which borrowed its theoretical and practical base from non-Islamic cultures.

The times of Umayyad were also notable for the development of classical Islamic music, the founder of which was Ibn Misjah. This direction of art took much from other cultures, mainly from Persian and Byzantine. Ibn Misjah paid considerable attention to these practices, transforming and then adapting them to the Islamic musical worldview. However, many Byzantine and Persian musical elements were preserved in traditional Islamic music.

Other cultures have also had a significant impact on the development of art, sculpture, and design in the Islamic world. For instance, Islamic designers were inspired by the features of

wall decoration in Christian traditions (Ettinghausen et al. 26). For example, Christians used colored mosaics to decorate their religious and domestic architectural structures. Islamic artists adopted a similar style but excluded elements of human figures from their works. Therefore, the aesthetic traditions of the Islamic world took only the basis and idea of mosaics but changed these approaches to Muslim cultural needs. To illustrate, instead of depicting figures of people or animals, the artists began to focus on geometric shapes and floral patterns. In addition, they created relief mosaic laid out in the form of three-dimensional compositions. It is also necessary to note the borrowing of Chinese traditions by Arab artists and sculptors in creating ceramic works. In particular, the Chinese usually covered the outer surfaces of various vessels with intricate patterns that are close ideologically to Islamic culture. In this regard, the Arabs formed the aesthetic traditions of the period of Umayyad caliphates under the significant influence of other cultures, which has ultimately formed a unique cultural environment.

Finally, significant transformations, which covered a wide range of both secular and religious styles, took place in the field of architecture. In particular, the Muslims' capture of new lands, which included Persia, Rome, and Byzantium, allowed them to transform their own architecture by adopting many elements from other cultures. Southeast Asia, which also came under the influence of the Muslim world, provided Islamic art with its architectural achievements. Accordingly, Muslim architecture began to apply the knowledge gained in the construction of domestic and religious objects. The main Islamic architectural types for large or public buildings included a mosque, tomb, palace, and fort. However, it is necessary to note that the Byzantine Empire had a significant impact on the process of the formation of Islamic architecture. For example, many of its architectural elements were used in the construction of

buildings and structures in Islamic regions. In particular, one of the characteristics of a Byzantine structure is its unique high dome, which includes religious elements and symbols richly decorated with carvings. In addition, Byzantine architects usually created churches with six or more walls that acted as support for the dome. Finally, such structures necessarily had a variety of texts carved in stone. Accordingly, Islamic architecture used all these elements. It is noted that the Dome of the Rock is a vivid example of this style (Najm 726). In particular, this structure also has a high dome richly decorated with decorations and carvings. The building has the shape of an octagon, the function of which is to maintain this massive dome. It also uses stone carvings, which bear important messages. However, Islamic traditions somewhat modified the architectural elements of the Byzantine Empire. In particular, the text carved by Byzantines in stone for aesthetic reasons was changed to the Holy Scriptures, which strengthened the religious significance of the buildings. Islamic architects also began to use more geometric decor and floral ornaments, abandoning images of people.

2. Islamic traditions do not provide for the use of human images in cultural objects since it involves the worship of these figures, which is unacceptable in the Islamic religious worldview. Instead of this approach, it uses other decorating methods as a design format. The sacred attitude towards human images influenced Muslim artists to create new aesthetic trends, in which mathematical symbolism played the main role. In particular, Islamic design often uses geometric patterns that have evolved over centuries (Ettinghausen et al. 61). These images have different combinations, but their main elements are circles and squares, which can alternate in a certain sequence, overlap each other, and thereby create unique patterns typical of Islamic art. These patterns may make up the entire decor, form frames for floral or calligraphic ornaments, or

recede into the background around other motifs. It is possible to find them in the design of a wide variety of artworks. For example, such motifs often adorn carpets or ceramic products. They are also elements of interior decoration for premises. The second most frequent element of early Islamic art is the floral motif, which customarily include three groups - the tree of life, the vine, and flower rosettes. The tree of life is an image of a plant with fruit and flowers on its branches, and the vine is a wavy line with stylized leaves that are often twisted into a spiral, sometimes with flowers, buds, and fruits. Finally, a floral rosette is an image of a stylized flower in full bloom. These motifs can also be found in both religious and secular art of the Islamic world. That is, it is possible to see them as elements of the wall-paintings on religious architectural structures and in the form of domestic paintings on walls or vessels, details of decorations, and so on. In this regard, the stylized forms of plants, along with strict geometric lines, are the main tools of artistic expression in Islamic art. It is also necessary to note that Islamic religious culture focuses on plant motifs, which is predetermined by the need to describe an earthly paradise figuratively, thereby enhancing the religious feelings of believers. In turn, secular art is aimed mainly at increasing the importance of the role of abstract or geometric decoration and at creating luxury goods that do not have a theological connotation.

Works Cited

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