

Architecture at the Nabataeans A Historical study

By

Usama Abdalhassan Aziz

University of Thi – Qar, College of Arts, Department of History, IRAQ

Email: usamaabdalhassan@gmail.com

Rana taima Husein Al-safe

University of Thi – Qar, College of Arts, Department of History, IRAQ

Email: ranataima@utq.edu.iq

Abstract

The importance of studying the effects of urbanization for the Nabataeans came from the importance of the role that the Nabataean kingdom played in the history of the northern part of the Arabian Peninsula, and its connection to commercial and political relations with the rest of the island, as well as its influence on the urban art of the nations that neighbored and preceded it, and developed it in a manner that suits their environment. Unique building style in history.

key words

Introduction

Studying the urban aspect of any of the ancient civilizations gives us the opportunity to identify what this or that nation occupies of a prominent and essential position in the course of the development of civilizations in general,

As the formation of the urban culture of any people is an important part of the formation of its civilization and a major motive that enables any society to take its role and position on the map of the ancient world, and since the Nabataeans were among the peoples who left their clear mark on the entirety of human civilization through their cultural heritage, so studying them is one of the things which is of great importance among historical studies, especially since it was characterized by a unique architecture style that was and still is admired, in addition to being a destination that no researcher would hesitate to explore and investigate. Hence, we chose to study urbanism in the Nabataeans and stand on the most important historical urban evidence in it:

The Nabataean state arose in the northwestern part of the Arabian Peninsula, in southern Syria, in the Levant desert and the northern coasts of the Red Sea (Al-Mofassal A., 1993, p. 39).

So that its lands overlap between the Levant and the coasts of the Red Sea and Sinai, and its capital is Petra and its old name is Sila (Al-Hamawi and Abi Abdullah, 1997, p. 236),

Historians agree that the Nabataeans are Arabs (Al-Mofassal A., 1993, pages 496-497),

And they migrated from the center of the Arabian Peninsula up to the year 500 BC. M (Nafi', 2017, pg 100), but they differ in which part of the island was their original home before they established their state,

There are those who believe that they are from Yemen based on commonalities that unite them, including methods of agriculture, irrigation, water storage methods, and others (Al-Hammouri, 2002, p. 17),

It was said that they and Quraish are of the same origin (Mehran, pg. 498) and there is another saying that they are from the sons of Nabayot bin Ismail, and an opinion sees that they came from the coasts of the Arabian Gulf, and others said that the origin of the Nabataeans are from southern Iraq, and it was said that they are nomadic tribes (Mahran, Studies in The History of the Ancient Arabs, pg. 494, while some researchers have suggested that the origin of the Nabataeans go back to the Thamud tribes (Al-Mofassal A., 2009, pages 15-16),

As for the era of the founding of the Nabataean state, it goes back to the fourth century B.C. (Al-Mofassal A., 2009, p. 50), and it was said to the second century B.C. (Gibran, 1998, p. 179).

As for religious architecture, it is one of the matters that the Nabataeans were very interested in, as it represented their veneration of their gods, Dhu al-Shara, al-Lat, and al-Uzza. 1998, p. 184),

And another temple is the Temple of Tannour, which is a square surrounded by corridors and has some rooms prepared for religious rituals (Abu al-Hamam, 2009, p. 112) as well as the Great Temple, which is one of the most important temples of Palmyra, and includes a theater and an amphitheater, as well as rectangular halls, and another temple called (the Triple Temple) because it is divided into three sections, the front section and the middle section, and the last of which is the inner one, which is known as (Holy of Holies).

It seems that the Nabateans were influenced by the Egyptian temples, as one of the temples of Petra, which is the temple of the palace of the Pharaoh's daughter, found the goddess Isis, who was worshiped in Egypt (Abu Al-Hamam, 2009, p. 110).

Another temple is one of the most important temples of Petra, which is the Temple of Al-Khazneh or the Temple of the God Manat, and it was said that it was a temple to the tombs of one of the Nabatean kings. Its height reaches its highest point of 130 feet, and the facade is preceded by six columns topped by crowns and rising to approximately 40 feet. At the top there is also a triangular art form whose base is based on the columns, which is many decorations and inscriptions, and above this form six columns were carved in the rocks and prominently,

So that each of the two columns forms an independent artistic form, and between the columns there are prominent artistic forms representing the gods such as the god (Isis). The columns are topped with very beautiful frames topped by an urn. As for the interior, it consists of four rooms. Two doors lead to a right room and a left room

(Abu Al-Hamam, 2009, p. 111).

In the context of religious architecture, there is nothing wrong with referring to the method of the Nabataeans in constructing their tombs, as it was divided into two parts, one carved in the rocks and is often influenced by what the Egyptians, Assyrians and Persians had. It is built with cut stone and is often collective in the form of a deep well that consists of a number of energies or burial chambers and are on top of each other (Abu al-Hamam, 2009, p. 115)

Military architecture was not absent from the Nabataean architecture, especially since the issue of protecting the security of the Nabatean cities was undoubtedly important, due to the great wealth it enjoyed, which was the focus of the greedy's attention.

Therefore, a number of watchtowers were built in both the city of Petra and the city of Umm al-Jimal, and the tower is a high building consisting of one room or several observation rooms, which are climbed by stairs, and some forts or castles were also established, including Al-Waira Castle. It is located outside the city of Petra and its entrance contains a bridge over a moat, and this bridge leads to an entrance that leads in turn to a room carved in the rock containing defensive walls, towers, contracts, water tanks, internal buildings, and another fortress called Al-Habis Castle in relation to Jabal Al-Habis. Integration with Al-Waerah Castle to monitor trade routes (Abu Al-Hamam, 2009, p. 133).

With regard to the architecture of the palaces that the people of influence and wealth have been building, there are many evidences of it, such as a palace called Al-Zantour and another called Abbouda Palace in the Negev and called (Villa Colt) and Athrah Palace. These palaces included a large number of multi-use rooms, whether they were for sitting or The bedroom, or as kitchens or stores, as it included a water system commensurate with its luxury (Abu Al-Hamam, 2009, p. 112).

As for the construction of houses, the environment, conditions and climate controlled the way they were built. There were two types of them, one that is small and seasonal, often for the summer and spring, and it consists of one room, to which the family shelters during the harvest seasons, or picks fruits in the fields, or guards them before returning to their main homes. In cities and villages, this type of house is usually inexpensive, as it depends on the abundantly available stone that is placed on top of each other without the need for mortar, and it does not require building many walls, and tree branches are used in the roofing of these houses, and there is a function Others for this house are used as shops as they are close to the caravan routes (Abu al-Hamam, 2009, pp. 101-102).

However, some of these buildings were expanded to become permanent homes for some of the Nabatean residents. They now include a number of rooms, and some of them are built in the form of two floors. The mortar was used to install stones. It also included some accessories such as stores and a room for animals (Abu al-Hamam, 2009, p. 103).

There is another method followed by the Nabateans to build houses, which usually consist of two or three rooms adjacent to each other, and clay is used to stabilize the stone and paint the walls from the outside and the inside. As for the roof, it is supported by timber or stones arranged in the form of domes or arches, and then clay mortar is placed on it, and they made these houses internal courtyards and tight doors, and built around them some facilities necessary for their daily life, such as storage rooms, rooms for animals, and a sheepfold. These buildings were suitable for permanent residence in summer or winter. These houses are built on the outskirts of agricultural areas and villages, and this style of construction remained prevalent until the later ages (Abu al-Hamam, 2009, pp. 104-105).

As for the architecture of houses in cities, it has taken another form, as it was built on flat land, the construction is close to each other, and the surfaces are close together.

The windows of the houses are high, overlooking the inner canal or the street, which is often narrow in places where their houses are close together.

As for the doors, they were made of wood, although the building materials differed from one Nabatean city to another. In the city of (Umm al-Jamal), whose ruins are located today, east of the town of Mafraq, at a distance of 12 kilometers and north of the road leading to Baghdad by 6 kilometers on the edge of the desert plain (Al-Majidi, 2012, p. 117).

The black volcanic stone was relied upon, a type of stone thrown by volcanoes that is easy to cut and shape. The Nabataeans in this city used it to build the walls and ceilings of their homes, as well as to make doors, and some houses consisted of two floors, but the construction style is similar to what we mentioned earlier, where the house is composed From a courtyard surrounded by rooms and other facilities, such as places for washing, was built in the core of the wall, as well as a well in the form of a ground tank to store rain water (Al-Majidi, 2012, p. 118).

Among the forms of urban adaptation to the environment, the Nabateans in their capital, Petra, resorted to carving their homes in the mountains of mountainous areas where the appropriate environment is available, especially the availability of caves and caves that are formed as houses, and this naturally makes the size of these houses different depending on the size of the cave that forms the nucleus of the house.

They were keen to construct a large room surrounded by a group of rooms whose height is about three meters, and it is decorated with drawings and ornaments, and the walls are covered or painted, and some of them have a balcony. The Nabataeans were influenced by the Greek character in the design of their decorations (Al-Majidi, 2012, P 119- 120)

There are other houses that were built from mud only, and they are the houses of the poor and the serfs, and the mud used in the construction is mixed with some materials (such as straw) to give the mud some cohesion (Abu al-Hamam, 2009, p. 107)

The Nabataeans were interested in public baths. Archaeological excavations revealed two baths in the city of Petra, specifically on the main street called Al-Amuda Street, one of them larger than the other, and the design of each of them consists of a reception place. And then entering the bathroom, whose walls contain niches for placing lamps, and in its walls there are protruding columns colored in red and yellow, and the columns bear a crown at the top (Al-Majidi, 2012, p. 123).

Conclusion

- 1- The Nabataeans made the best use of their resources, especially the commercial aspect, to create a good living environment for them, and this is evident from their luxurious architecture.
- 2- They also worked on exploiting geography and adapting it to suit their needs, so they carved mountains and rocks and turned them into homes, palaces and temples, which no one else had preceded them.
- 3- The Nabataean type of their building styles according to the economic need. The temporary houses were near the farmer, not the permanent houses in the cities.
- 4- The Nabataeans sought to combine what they borrowed from Egyptian architecture or other civilizations, with their own style, to create a unique architectural and engineering form.

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