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Tolerance in Islamic Architecture

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by
Aya Mohamed el-Hakim

(under the supervision of Dr. Bernard O'kane)

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Dedication
To

my father Mohamed el Hakim,

my mother Nahed el Gohary and

my husband Moustafa Omar.

Thanks for your Support and help.

Acknowledgment

I would like to express my gratitude to all my teachers in the department that helped me to reach this stage; Dr. George Scanlon, Dr. Bernard O'kane, Dr. Chahinda Karim and Dr. Hoda el Saadi, who generously shared their wealth of knowledge with me and all their students. I would like to send also my deepest thanks and appreciations to my adviser Dr. Bernard O'kane for his continuous help and patient towards me until the whole work was accomplish.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

List of Figures

Chapter 1

A Forgotten Imprint

Historical Background

A. Tolerance before Islam

"There is a known history and a forgotten one; history that supports our perception of the present and history that suggests our future pathways."[1] Nowadays, Muslims are largely perceived in the west as brutal and terrorists, in the aftermath of several terrorist acts committed in the last few years. Such acts were committed for purely political and social reasons, were declared impermissible by the vast majority of Muslim scholars, and were widely denounced by the Muslim public; however, the image of Muslims has not witnessed noticeable improvement in western eyes. Seemingly, Muslim history was forgotten, deliberately by some and inadvertently by the rest. Unfortunately, many people in the west are not aware of this history. The history of Muslim conquests in the Middle East is full of tolerance and mercy.

What was the social condition before the arrival of Muslims to the Middle East? Was justice universally accessible or only enjoyed by special classes? Was freedom of faith secured for everyone? Was prosperity universally achieved or exclusively reserved for the elite?

The Romans seem to have been intolerant of ideological differences; in fact, they were brutal in the two main phases of their history. When the Romans were still predominantly polytheists, they inflicted cruelty on monotheists, i.e. Christians and Jews, and after embracing Christianity, they shifted their cruelty toward Christians who believed in different religious dogmas. The period from 284-304 CE passed into history as the "Age of Martyrs", in view of the fact that many people were persecuted for professing their Christian faith, and had their churches

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[1] Karabell, *People of the Book*, 3.

destroyed. During this period, Romans punished some Christians for disasters that befell the empire by throwing them to the lions. In times of drought or epidemics, Christians were ruthlessly punished for being responsible for these calamities. About one million Christians were killed throughout this period, according to many sources.[2] In 379, Constantine ordered that everybody within the Roman Empire convert to Christianity, and imposed the death penalty for defiance.

Some three hundred years before the *hijra* of the Prophet, Constantine the Great ordered that the ears of the Jews be cut off and that their arms and legs should be distributed throughout the Byzantine territory**.** In the fifth century, the Roman emperor forced the Jews out of Alexandria, which was a meeting point for Jews from all corners of the globe. The same Roman ruler destroyed Jewish temples and prohibited Jews from meeting for prayer. In addition, at Roman courts Jewish witnesses were always discredited and Jews' last wills were not executed after death. When Jews started resisting, the emperor seized their wealth and murdered a lot of them, striking terror among Jews all over the empire.[3]

This was the attitude of Roman Christians towards non-Christians, so what was their attitude toward Christians with different beliefs? In the fourth century, Romans embarked on destroying churches attended by Christians who held different beliefs concerning the nature of Christ, i.e. the Copts. Those churches were torn down and their books were confiscated.

The oppression suffered by Egyptian Copts mounted day by day, forcing them to flee into Upper Egypt seeking a safe haven in desert monasteries or mountainous caves. Five thousand large monasteries were constructed in Upper Egypt alone, hosting sixty seven thousand Christian

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[2]Zakī Shnūdah, *Tārikh al-aqbāṭ*, vol. 1, 110; apud Kamāl, *al-Fātḥ al-islāmī*, 26.

[3]Al-Maqrīzī, *Khiṭaṭ*, vol. 3, 52; apud al-Qaradawī, *Fiqh al-jihād,* 1219.

monks and twenty thousand nuns, along with small monasteries. The Christian martyrs of this epoch are still remembered by Egyptian churches until today.[4]

   On the other hand, the enormity of systematic persecution and agony suffered by Christians and Jews in Egypt and Palestine facilitated the Muslim conquest of their region. Nowadays, Christians in the Middle East widely deny that many of their ancestors converted to Islam from Christianity, during this period of history, and argue that all Middle Eastern Muslims are of Arab descent.[5] Many factors prepared the way for Christians to adopt Islam. The generous treatment given to Christians by conquering Muslims, which certainly compared favourably with their earlier treatment by the Byzantines, will be further elaborated later on, in this paper. In addition, Christians and Jews in all the conquered places were not forced to convert to Islam.[6] In fact, the Roman and Byzantine epochs represented a chapter of bloodshed and intolerance in Christian and Jewish history.

B. 1- The People of the Book at the time of the Prophet

   The time of the Prophet Muhammad can be broken down into two distinct phases in connection with the treatment of non-Muslims, i.e. the Makka period and the Madina period. In Makka, Muhammad provided Muslims with a system for social relations with non-Muslims at the individual level, whereas in Madina he, in his capacity as the head of the Muslim state, established a framework for inter-faith relations at the state level.

   When Muhammad met the Archangel Gabriel for the first time during his meditating retreat in the cave of Hiraa', he was not aware of his revealed duty to convey the divine message to humanity. Frightened by the extraordinary visitor, Muhammad headed to Warqah ibn Nawfal, a

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[4]Kamāl, *al-Fātḥ al-islāmī,* 33-34.

[5]O'Sullivan, "Coptic Conversion," 66.

[6]Erhart, "The Church of the East," 65-66.

knowledgeable religious Christian relative of his wife, seeking to clear up the mystification. Warqah told Muhammad that he was destined to be the last prophet of the world. Besides, the most important person in Muhammad's life before the *hijra* was Abu Talib, his polytheist uncle who did not convert to Islam until his death. Such facts, along with others, which will be revealed in this paper, indicate that Muslims associated with non-Muslims in all aspects of life.

Many *hadith*s of the prophet Muhammad confirm this and defend the rights of non-Muslims. For example, the Prophet said, "Who so ever persecuted a non-Muslim or usurped right or took work from him beyond his or her capacity, or took something from him or her with ill intentions, I shall be a complainant against him or her on the Day of Resurrection." In addition to this, he added, ''whosoever hurts a non-Muslim, he hurts me, and one who hurts me hurts Allah."[7]

The situation was considerably different in Madina where Muslims built their first state. As soon as the Prophet set foot in Madina, he regulated relationships between different communities of the city. Notably, the original residents of Madina tended to coexist peacefully with the new settlers who migrated from Makka, thanks to the prophetic policies, which effectively prevented wars that could have easily erupted in such a context.

Therefore, to regulate relations in Madina with non-Muslims, predominantly Jews, the Prophet drew up the Constitution of Madina, which stipulated that

> The believers and their dependents constitute a single community (*umma*). The constitution laid out
>
> the responsibilities of the tribe: they would each police themselves and administer justice to their own
>
> members, and murder was forbidden. No individual Muslim was to act in a manner contrary to the
>
> will or needs of other Muslims, and believers were enjoined to take care to their dependents. And as

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[7]Berween, "Non-Muslims," 96.

for the Jews, they belonged to the community and were to retain their own religion; they and the

Muslims were to render help to one another when it is needed.[8]

The constitution granted equal rights to every group of the community and established the principle of peaceful coexistence, but unfortunately, the Jews tended not to adhere to it. One of the three major tribes of Madina violated the constitution and tried to battle the Muslims and created a serious rift within the community; thus leaving Madina on the brink of civil war. The second tribe was expelled from Madina, following an act of sexual harassment committed against Muslim women. In a serious escalation, an angry Muslim killed the Jewish harasser and got killed in retaliation by the Jews. The converted Muslim who recommended the expulsion of the Jewish tribe from Madina was one of its members.

The third Jewish tribe betrayed the community of Madina during the foray of al-Khandaq, by getting involved in a conspiracy with the Quraysh tribe against Muslims. According to the plot, members of the tribe abandoned the defence positions, assigned to them by the Prophet, in order to enable the Quraysh attackers to conquer the city. It seems from the above that the Jews did not accept the fact that the last prophet came from Quraysh and not from them which made them envious.

Before the Prophet's death, and after his victory over the polytheists in Makka, he engaged in negotiations with different tribal delegations. The Najran delegation, representing the Christian community in the Arabian Peninsula, negotiated with him on several issues and concluded a treaty. By virtue of the treaty, Christians would refrain from inflicting harm on Arabs and, as required, they should fight alongside Muslims in their battles. Muslims in return undertook to reconstruct Christian buildings that had collapsed, and imposed a much-reduced

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[8]Karabell, *People of the Book*, 15.

poll tax on the poor, priests and monks. The Prophet prohibited Muslim househeads from compelling Christian housemaids, employed by them, to convert to Islam.[9]

From the evidence of this treaty, Christians seem to have realized at this point, that Muhammad and the Muslim *umma* were the up and coming power in the region, but also they wanted to build an alliance with Muslims against Jews and polytheists. It is worth mentioning that the sources did not indicate that the Najran converted to Islam, which indicates that these treaties did not have a religious compulsion but were political in nature.[10]

Thus, it is clear that there was no discrimination between Muslims and Jews as the Prophet established a "state of law". The law in Madina was rigorously enforced by administering punishment commensurate with the violation and harm caused to the community. Islam as a new religion was to bond relations with preceding communities as much as possible to be able to transmit the religious message in a time of peace.

B. 2- The People of the Book at the time of the four rightly-guided caliphs

After the death of the Prophet, the four rightly-guided caliphs adhered to the same principle of tolerance and honored all pacts made by Muhammad during his conquests. The four were similar in applying Islamic law, yet sources tend to highlight 'Umar's acts towards the People of the Book, perhaps because Abu Bakr died only two years after the prophet, and focused more on fighting apostates. In his ten years' reign, 'Umar adopted a strategy that was aimed at expanding the lands seized by the Prophet and Abu Bakr from the Persians and the Byzantines. The third caliph, 'Uthman, followed a strategy similar to his predecessor's, but historians focused more on

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[9]Erhart, "The Church of the East," 65-66.

[10]Ibid., 65-66.

his tragic death, just as the time of his successor 'Ali is mostly remembered in history for the intra-Muslim civil strife.

Abu Bakr continued the negotiations that the Prophet started before his death with the Catholic patriarch Isho 'yahb II who was mainly seeking to guarantee fair treatment for Christians and protection from Muslims.[11]

When 'Umar conquered Jerusalem in 638, Patriarch Sophronius escorted him. Sophronius obtained a promise that Muslims should leave Christian churches and Jewish temples intact.[12] 'Umar refused to pray inside the church of the Holy Apostles for fear that Muslims would develop the habit of praying in churches.

Jerusalem as a city was historically famous for its many battles and wars; it had been "raided, sacked and destroyed very many times."[13] Yet, the conquest of Jerusalem by the Arabs was non-violent. One patriarch awaited 'Umar at the wall of the city to hand him the keys, and told him that his description as a humble and just man was written in the bible. Other patriarchs, however, regarded the Arab occupation as punishment inflicted on Christians by God for their sins.[14] It is not strange that some Christians got this feeling; however, sources did not mention that they experienced injustice or accused the Muslim army of unfairness or intolerance.

Treaties that Muslims concluded did not contain any provisions about conversion to Islam, but they entrusted Muslims with the duty of protecting people and property, and authorized them to

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[11]Ibid., 67.

[12]Karabell, *People of the Book,* 32.

[13]Ibid., 32.

[14]Muslims these days tend to borrow the same theory of divine punishment to describe the occupation of Palestine.

levy a poll tax, similar to the taxes imposed by the Sassanians and Byzantines on their subjects. It is worth mentioning that the amounts of taxes imposed by the Muslims were less than the amount imposed by their ancestors. These treaties prohibited female slavery, and allowed Muslim men to marry Christians or Jewish women without obligating them to convert to Islam. "The property and land of neither peasants nor wealthier residents could be confiscated if the residents could prove that they did not actively work against the Arab invaders."[15] There are anecdotes preserved in the *Chronicle of Seen,* which indicates that the Muslims forbad violence in the conquered cities.[16] Although this chronicle dates from the 11th century CE, almost 500 years after the events, there was no reason for the author, a Christian, to exaggerate the tolerance shown by the Muslims in the past.

C. The People of the Book at the time of the Umayyad, Fatimid, Mamluk, Abbasid and Ottoman periods

When the Umayyads rose to power, the Muslims went through two civil wars before they restored stability. At this time, therefore, the People of the Book were not the center of attention for Muslims who had to give immediate political priority to stability. Likewise, they had to freeze conquests in the middle of the seventh century because of domestic discords.[17] The Umayyad capital, Damascus, had a predominantly non-Muslim population, "but day to day the decentralized nature of the empire meant that its inhabitants enjoyed substantial autonomy."[18] Every community was responsible for managing its internal affairs, and the treaties concluded

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[15]Erhart, "The Church of the East," 62-63.

[16]Ibid., 62-63.

[17]Karabell, *People of the Book,* 34.

[18]Ibid., 37.

in the time of the four rightly-guided caliphs remained in force at the time of the Umayyads. The non-Muslims continued to be considered second-class citizens, as opposed to Arab Muslims who formed the ruling elite. Nevertheless, the Umayyad perception of a second-class citizen was very different from the pre-Islamic perception; the People of the Book, in the Umayyad context, had equal rights with Muslims except for the right to be the head of state. The People of the Book lived under Umayyad rule in more favorable conditions; they assumed high public positions, paid less taxes, were protected against persecution, and enjoyed the right to freedom of religion.

At this time, Christians were chiefly concerned about protecting their churches both physically and socially. For instance, the residents of Hims, Syria, welcomed Muslims because they realized that under the Muslim rule the persecutions would come to an end and that they could enjoy freedom of religion. They said to the Muslims, "We like your rule and justice far better than the state of oppression and tyranny in which we were."[19] During this period, Christians were faced with problems that stemmed from intra-faith conflicts not inter-faith ones with their Muslim rulers; in Christian-Muslim disputes, the caliph sometimes issued his ruling in favor of the Christian disputant and in other cases in favor of the Muslim disputant.[20]

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[19]Guenther, "The Christian Experience," 368.

[20]Ibid., 369. One of the earliest writings from the genre of historical chronicles is a Maronite chronicle in the Syriac language, estimated to date from 664 extracted from the book of *The Seventh Century in the West-Syrian Chronicles by* Andrew Palmer. This is the first account to contain information regarding the reign of the Umayyads. The Maronites differed from the Jacobites around them in that they supported the policies of "Rome," as the Byzantines were known in the literature of the time. This chronicle gives an account of bishops of various

Unlike the Umayyads, the Abbasids were more open to the Persian Muslims. A nail in the

Umayyad coffin was systematic prejudice against non-Arab Muslims, who**,** for instance were

denied access to senior decision-making and executive positions. As a result, when the Abbasids

revolted against the Umayyads, non-Arab Muslims and ʿAlids helped them in speeding up the

fall of the Umayyad regime.

The Abbasid reign can be characterized by tolerance and coexistence, to the extent of having

established cooperation with Zoroastrians, not only with the People of the Book. On the other

hand, toward the end of their time in power, all forms of discrimination and prejudice appeared.

So what were the causes of this profound shift?

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conflicting sects who appeared before the caliph Muʿawiya to discuss theology. An agreement

was reached on a sum to be paid by the Jacobites to Muʿawiya so that he would not withdraw his

protection and let them be persecuted by the members of the (Orthodox) Church. Subsequent

chronicles are filled with accounts of their activity in choosing between rival claimants to the

seats of Patriarchates, usually at the request of the church bishops. The later Coptic *History of the*

Patriarchs cites a number of incidents where the Arab governor, ʿAbd al-ʿAziz, was involved in

the selection of a Patriarch. Once when faced with another request for arbitration, he called the

bishops together and rebuked them for their disagreement in doctrines and for holding to false

doctrines. The *History* also reports the refusal of the caliph Walid I to appoint a Patriarch for

Antioch, a seat which remained vacant until the Caliph Hisham did so. Erhart suggests that the

Arab involvement in ecclesiastical disputes may be evidence of their understanding of the

hierarchy of the church and willingness to work with such official representatives of various

groups of the subject population.

When the Abbasids first came to power, they moved the capital from Damascus to Baghdad, closer to Persia. This move was not only geographical but also political, i.e. to assure Persians that the Abbasid state was looking forward to enhancing bilateral cooperation. The Abbasids integrated people from all races and religions in the developing of their burgeoning state. Moreover, they launched an enormous translation movement into Arabic from Greek and Persian, and caliphal courts at this time hosted a huge number of scientific, religious, theological and artistic events. The policy of cultural openness was very helpful in elongating their time in power and increasing their geographical expansion.

During the period of al-Mahdi around 780 CE, the Nestorian Patriarch Timothy, the translator of Aristotle's works from Greek into Arabic, was invited to a theological debate with the Caliph. During the debate, the Caliph asked the patriarch whether or not he accepted Quran as God's word. He cleverly answered that it was not up to him to decide on this matter. According to Timothy, miracles and signs proved all the words of the Torah and Bible, whereas the Quran's words were not, and the caliph should know the answer of the question, especially since the Quran was lacking in similar supporting evidence.[21] Of course, it was too difficult for the patriarch to tell the caliph directly in his palace that he did not believe in the Quran as the book of God, but he managed to express himself tactfully, and the caliph tolerantly accepted the negative indirect message. These debates aimed to teach Muslims how to build their own thoughts, and how to accept thoughts of the others.

Christians and Jews, who formed the majority of the population at this time, contributed to the development of the Abbasid state. Owing to their well-known administrative skills, the People of the Book held important offices, including the treasury and public works, and they were

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[21]Karabell, *People of the Book,* 42-43.

employed as tax collectors, security guards, and scribes. In the time of Caliph al-Mansur, a Jew was one of the most important tax executives, and in the ninth century, many of the viziers of the Caliph were Nestorians or Nestorians converts.[22]

   Muslims, Christians and Jews lived together in a harmonious community, where Muslims would share with Christians and Jews their celebrations and the other way around. In addition, some converts to Islam continued to perform their old rituals even after embracing Islam.

   The relationship between the Abbasids and the People of the Book witnessed some ups and downs, though. The Abbasid rulers were faced with several crises that turned them against Christians at times; but the changing attitude affected not only the People of the Book, but also Muslims.

   The Abbasids were typically known for their tolerance, but within limits. In 806, during the reign of Harun al-Rashid, the Byzantines carried out an attack on Abbasid lands, and in the aftermath, the People of the Book suffered adverse consequences, including destruction of some churches. There are two historical allegations in this connection – some claimed that the caliph ordered the destruction as an act of retaliation; others claimed that the Jews committed these acts to stir up animosity between Christians and Muslims. Every time the Abbasids faced escalating threats from their enemies, the People of the Book became victims of discrimination. In the ninth century, they were ordered to wear hazel brown turbans and wooden symbols around the neck to differentiate them from Muslims.[23] At this time, Muslims were seemingly apprehensive of betrayal by their Christian fellow citizens, they feared that they might fight alongside the Byzantines.

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[22]Ibid., 46.

[23]Ibid., 55-56.

During the Fatimid era (969-1171 CE), non-Muslim communities enjoyed a high level of equal treatment, and were appointed to all the high official positions, to the degree that Muslims felt a sense of injustice to them.

> It is said that the Fatimid caliph al-ʿAziz appointed ʿIsa ibn Nasturus the Christian as his secretary and delegated a Jew called Menasseh as deputy in Syria. The Christians and the Jews felt strong because of these two, and they plagued the Muslims. The people of Fustat set to work and wrote a complaint and put it in the hands of a doll, which they made of paper. It said, by God who raised up the Jews through Menasseh and the Christians through ʿIsa ibn Nasturus and humbled the Muslims through you, will you redress my wrong? And they placed this doll with the note in its hand in the path of al-ʿAziz. When he saw it he gave orders to pick it up, and when he read what was in it and saw the paper doll, he understood what was meant. Then he arrested them both, took 300,000 dinars from ʿIsa, and also took much money from the Jew.[24]

Besides, for the first time, a Jew served as an aide to Caliph al-ʿAziz, who held him in the highest esteem. When the man, who had converted to Islam, died the Caliph went into deep mourning and closed the *diwan* for several days. The successor of the Jewish aide was another non-Muslim, ʿIsa ibn Nasturus, as mentioned earlier. It seems that the non-Muslim community achieved high status, to the extent that it inspired the writing of this poem, which became popular at the time:

> The Jews of this time have attained their uttermost hopes, and have come to rule. Glory is upon them, money is with them, and from among them come the counselor and the ruler. O people of Egypt, I advice you, turn Jew, for the heavens have turned Jew![25]

In addition to that, al-Zahir issued a prescript that provide for protecting non-Muslims and stating that converting to Islam was not an obligation.[26]

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[24]Gervers and Bikhazi, *Conversion and Continuity,* 226.

[25]Ibid., 227.

At the time of the Mamluks, Christians and Jews lived a life of luxury; they rode excellent horses,[27] wore fine clothes and occupied high positions. It happened that the vizier of the king of the *Maghrib* passed to meet the sultan of Egypt on his way to perform pilgrimage. They both met in front of the citadel where the sultan was accompanied by a group of amirs and his vizier; when a Christian passed by on horseback, many Muslims surrounded him, humiliatingly begging from him and kissing his feet.[28]

Alarmed by the scene, the sultan summoned judges and patriarchs of the Christians and the Jews, and enjoined them to honor their covenant with the rightly-guided Caliph 'Umar (known as the *'Umariyya* Covenant). The meeting with them ended with some restrictive and discriminatory measures. Jews were ordered to wear yellow turbans and Christians blue ones to be differentiated from Muslims. They were forbidden from riding horses, and prohibited from working in the sultanic bureau. The Christians felt constrained and attempted to use money to mitigate these harsh measures, but in vain. Muslims citizens destroyed churches and synagogues, and claimed before the *qadi* that only churches and synagogues built before Islam should be kept, the rest should be removed. Some churches were closed until the Byzantine ruler mediated for their reopening.[29] After a while dhimmis proposed to increase the amount of taxes by 700,000 dinars in addition to their normal taxes so that they could return to wearing white turbans. Shaykh ibn Taymiyya told the Sultan:

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[26]Ibid., 228.

[27]Ibid., 230.

[28]Ibid., 230.

[29]Ibid., 232.

> God forbid that at the first audience you hold in the majesty of kingship, you should help the dhimmīs for the sake of the vanities of this mortal world. Remember God's grace to you when he restored your dominion to you, crushing your enemy and giving you victory over your foes.[30]

It seems that also in the Mamluk era the People of the Book were well treated. Nevertheless, the Mamluks did not want the People of the Book to rise up to the level of humiliating Muslims. They insisted on the covenant of 'Umar, but it seems that they lost their tolerance with the People of the Book after the accident of the horseman.

The Ottomans were known for the millet system, which significantly augmented stability and prolonged the life of their empire. The millet system organized governmental life around divisions, where each religious community (millet) kept its own courts of law, which meant complete freedom and autonomy for the minorities. This flexibility offered the Ottoman Empire an opportunity to accommodate religious and ethnic diversity; indeed, Christians and Jews as well as all ethnic and religious groups enjoyed liberty at the time of the Ottomans.

Finally, it is clear that Muslims usually peacefully coexisted with People of the Book, with the exception of a few unpleasant incidents. To regulate inter-faith relations, Muslims concluded treaties with People of the Book in the days of the Prophet and the four-rightly caliphs. After that, the Umayyads, Abbasids, Fatimids, Mamluks and Ottomans were generally tolerant of Christians and Jews to the extent that they were appointed to all state positions. Muslims employed them to benefit from their administrative experience in building their state, but there were also times of tension, perhaps at times of nationwide decline. Discrimination against minorities was never meant to achieve prosperity for the majority, but rulers adopted these discriminatory practices to protect their thrones and wield influence.

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[30]Ibid., 233.

Chapter 2

The concept of tolerance in Islam

When the Ulema Speak

"There is no compulsion in religion. That is the word of the binding Quran, since the objective of the Arab conquests was not the spread of Islam; on the contrary, it was to establish God's holiness on earth. Christians had the right to remain Christians and Jews had the same right. No one forbade them from practicing their own rituals and no one harmed their priests and rabbis or their churches and temples."[31] Islam is a verbal noun originating from the trilateral root s-l-m, which forms a large class of words mostly relating to concepts of wholeness, completion, bonding, joining and peace.[32]

One of the most important concepts of Islam was the spread of peace among people and the support of the oppressed until they got their rights. Islamic laws changed the vision of the Arabs (and consequently of the whole world) when it forbad the infanticide of females and stated that women had the same rights and duties as men. Moreover, it stated that all men were equal in front of God regardless of colour, status or wealth; only piety counted.

The revolution in ethics and manners that came with Islam was not only related to Muslims but also to the People of the Book. Although it was normal for any civilization to wish to diminish any power or culture around it, yet the prophet came to change that concept and to assure that all the other religions, cultures and customs that were not contrary to Islam were to be admitted and accepted among Muslims.

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[31]Al-Sirganī, *Akhlāq al-ḥurūb,* 353.

[32]http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Islam.

Before we try to understand the meaning of tolerance in Islam we should highlight the meaning of tolerance in general. The idea of tolerance means the ability to respect the opinion of others even when they hold intellectual and moral beliefs considered contrary to one's own. The acceptance of the principle of tolerance and coexistence means overlooking reasons for division based on race, national association, religion, sect or tribe.[33] The principle of tolerance means in other words coexistence, based on the right to express opinion, belief, or the right of political participation. These rights are considered basic rights and basic freedoms after the indispensable rights of life and peace.[34]

Many *hadith*s and Quranic verses ordered Muslims to treat the People of the Book who lived with them kindly."Allah does not forbid you from those who do not fight you because of religion and do not expel you from your homes - from being righteous toward them and acting justly toward them. Indeed, Allah loves those who act justly"(60:8). Also there are verses that talk about the differences between people and tribes which prove that Islam admits differences and respect it**.** "O man kind, indeed We have created you from male and female and made you peoples and tribes that you may know one another. Indeed, the most noble of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous of you. Indeed, Allah is Knowing and Acquainted"(49:13).

Indeed, tolerance was not the invention of Islam, Christianity was based on the concepts of tolerance, and it forbad any kind of violence even if it was to defend oneself.[35] Unfortunately, the application of this tolerance was not reflected in the coexistence between the Christians of different sects during the third century. Even more, it was not applied during their wars with

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[33]Sha'bān, *Muqaddimat Jūrj Khidr, fiqh al-tasāmuḥ,* 63.

[34]Ibid., 63.

[35]Ibid., 75.

Muslims and Jews. For example, the wars between the Crusaders and the Muslims in 1099 and the inquisitions that occurred in Spain in 1492 against the Muslims and Jews.[36] Were the Muslims more tolerant during their application (especially in their wars) of this concept?

The concept of coexistence and tolerance started even before the emergence of the message of Islam; the prophet signed the agreement of *Fudul* with the different tribes of Quraysh in the six century (590-595). Its content provided the following: rejection of injustice and work to overturn it, respect for others regardless of their affiliation, realization of the truth and defending the oppressed and their rights, preservation of the lives and dignity of people.[37] Respect for the other reached its maximum level in the constitution of Medina in 622, which included the rights of other communities that lived there. In addition, the constitution adopted the concept of equality of rights and duties among Jews and Muslims, intercommunal relationships based on advice and rejection of sin, and the organization of criminal and legal relations according to Arab customs before Islam.[38]

The word peace with its derivatives occurs in the Quran 140 times while the word war with its derivatives appears only six times (fig. 1).[39] The difference between the two is the difference between the vision of Islam towards peace and war; the prophet was keen to avoid war as much as possible.[40]

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[36]Ibid., 78

[37]Ibid., 91-92.

[38]Ibid., 100.

[39]Al-Sirganī, *Akhlāq al-ḥurūb,* 67.

[40]Ibid., 68.

Tolerance in Islam was divided into two stages: the first stage was in Makka; the prophet Muhammad forbad his companions to hit back when they were tortured. The second stage was in Medina where the Prophet started to build a state; he arranged the constitution of Madina to govern laws between citizens. Here came the right of the Muslims to defend themselves, so that they would be able to build their nation. Laws and regulations of wars and captives were set. Muhammad's tolerance continued and was illustrated when he conquered Makka at the end of his life. He entered the city in a very humble way and forgave all the people in an extraordinary act of tolerance forgetting how they fought him and threw him out nine years before.

We can say that the prophet Muhammad in building his nation established a new science called military ethics. He was fair, merciful and loyal. "O you who have believed, be persistently standing firm for Allah, witnesses in justice, and do not let the hatred of people prevent you from being just. Be just; that is nearer to righteousness. And fear Allah; indeed, Allah is acquainted with what you do" (5:8). In addition, he did not impose Islam on anyone. Before any war he recommended to his army "do not cut a tree, do not kill a woman or a child, do not enter the country at night so that you don't frighten a child or a woman, do not kill a priest, do not destroy a church."[41]

Moreover, he was keen on the safety of children during war. Once during the battle of Hunain he sent a group to investigate and report. When they returned to the prophet they told him that they had met a group of polytheists and they fought, during which children were killed.[42] He scolded them and told them that the best of Muslims were sons of polytheists.[43] The prophet here not only

[41]Ibid., 96.

[42]At that time, teenage boys fought in armies.

[43]Al-Sirganī, *Akhlāq al-ḥurūb,* 105.

separated the acts of the polytheists from their children but he also tried to open the hearts of his friends towards them by reminding them that they were once in the same situation before their conversion to Islam. In addition to that, while the prophet was fighting he would not kill those who were not adults even if they held weapons and fought.[44]

Furthermore, he did not kill any women in his life time except two who were killed as punishment for killing other people. It is worth mentioning that no female rape or any harassment of women happened during all his wars.[45] All these facts, if compared with other past or present wars revealed great tolerance.

Concerning monks and priests, he assured them that their churches were safe and they had the right to stay in place. They were not obliged to convert to Islam.[46] For example, when he entered Khibar after his victory over the Jews he found many copies of the Torah which he ordered to be returned to their owners.[47] Also, he did not fight with those who were forced to be in the enemies' army (some Meccans were forced to fight the prophet and his army) even if they were holding weapons.[48] This brings up the question: was Islam spread by the sword?

Some people argue that the spread of Islam was by force. The verses of the Quran proved the contrary; "There shall be no compulsion in [acceptance of] the religion. The right course has become clear from the wrong (2:256)." "The truth is from your Lord, so whoever wills -let him believe; and whoever wills - let him disbelieve (18:29).""But if they turn away - then we have not

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[44]Ibid., 106.

[45]Ibid., 111.

[46]Ibid., 113.

[47]Ibid., 139.

[48]Ibid., 115.

sent you, [O Muhammad], over them as a guardian; upon you is only [the duty of] notification"
(42:48).These verses explain the meaning of freedom in Islam but unfortunately not all the
Muslims applied these laws and concepts. All these verses and others denied any obligation to
people to convert to Islam and proved that Islam ensured the freedom of belief and freedom of
religion.

Islam was spread in the world after the conquest of some regions such as Syria and North Africa
and in other countries, such as Indonesia, Malaysia and China, it was spread by the Muslims
traders who reached these faraway areas. Conquests were made to spread the knowledge of Islam
but not to force people to convert to it. For example**,** when ʿAmr ibn al-ʿAs conquered Cairo he
negotiated with its ruler to pay the *jizya* to the Caliph and to keep the city under Byzantine
authority, or to convert to Islam without paying anything, or to face war. Many Orientalists, such
as Margoliouth believed that Muslims obligated the People of the Book to convert to Islam.[49] If
there was obligation in the conquered regions to convert to Islam, we would not find until now
churches surviving in all these area. We know from historical sources that the conversion took
years in many cities such as Cairo.[50] If Islam was spread by force in these lands why did Jews and
Christians continue to live there?[51]

The concept of tolerance was adopted by many rulers in Islam. The caliph ʿUmar underlined
this concept when he said "how could you enslave people while they were born free?" In a similar
vein is the quote of ʿAli ibn Abi Talib: "you will not be a tyrant devouring their rights, since

[49]http://ar.wikipedia.org/wiki/مرجليوث

[50]See chapter 3.

[51]Al-Sirganī, *Akhlāq al-ḥurūb*, 162.

they are either brothers to you in religion or your equivalents in humanity."[52] Moreover, the

Abbasid caliph al-Ma'mūn was known for his famous saying "I swear by God Allah that I indulge

in forgiveness that I fear not being accredited for. And if only people knew how much I love

forgiveness, they would flatter me by sins."[53]

Besides all this, there is other important data which suggests the importance of the concept of

tolerance for Muslims. The numbers of Muslims killed during any war or even dispute[54] between

them and the polytheist at the time of Muhammad was 295, while the numbers of polytheist was

1603.[55] These numbers compared with others from the past are small and show that the Islamic

civilization was not eager for blood.

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[52]Sha'bān, *Muqaddimat Jūrj Khidr*, *fiqh al-tasāmuḥ,* 139.

[53]http://ar.wikipedia.org/wiki/المامون .

[54]These numbers includes all the people killed from the two groups (Muslims and Polytheist) not

only in wars but even in any clashes that occurred between them during the age of the prophet.

[55]http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_expeditions_of_Muhammad. Every battle or expedition is

listed and its reference from the original sources listed beside for example:

| Battle of Hunayn | January 630 [241] | To attack the people of Hawazin and Thaqif for refusing to surrender to Muhammad and submit to Islam because "they thought that they were too mighty to admit or surrender" after the Conquest of Mecca[254] | • Muslims: 5 killed[255]
• Non-Muslims: 70 killed,[254] 6000 women and children captured[256] | • [Quran 9:25] [Quran 9:26] [257] ,
• Sahih al-Bukhari, 4:53:370, Al-Muwatta, 21 10.19[257] |

A. Muslim laws governing relations with the People of the Book

After the conquest, the Muslims found themselves living within a community of Christians and Jews. It was necessary to enact new laws concerning every detail in the life of Muslims when they dealt with non-Muslims, who were called *fiqh ahl al-dhimma*. One of these was the "law of the churches." Churches that were located in Muslims cities were divided in three ways**.**

1- New Muslim cities built during Islam.

These cities were newly built by Muslims, e.g. Fustat, Cairo, Baghdad, Basra and Kufa. According to Islamic laws, Christians or Jews were not allowed to drink wine, eat pork and build churches or synagogues in them and even the ruler (according to the law) did not have the right to allow them to do these actions.[56] However, if there was already a church or a synagogue present and the new city was built near or around it, then the religious building should be left intact.[57]

2. Cities built before Islam and taken by force (*'unwa*)

According to Islamic law, Christians and Jews did not have the right to built new religious buildings on these lands taken by force. Concerning the churches or synagogues which were already there, did they have the right to keep them or should the Muslims destroy them? There were two opinions in this case, first that these religious building should be demolished since the lands were owned by Muslims and all the anti-Islamic symbols should be removed.[58] The second opinion was the acceptance of these religious buildings in the cities conquered by force and based on the treaties made with the People of the book at this time. This opinion was extracted from the fact that the prophet himself when he took Khaybar did not demolish any synagogues. In addition,

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[56]Ibn Qaym al-Juziah, *Aḥkām ahl al-zimma,*1178.

[57]Ibid., 1185.

[58]Ibid., 1199.

his companions after him did not demolish any church in Jerusalem, Egypt or even Damascus (later the church of Saint John was pull down at the time of the Umayyads.).[59] So what interpretation of the law should the Muslims follow?

According to Ibn al-Qayam, the ruler should see and decide what was more beneficial for the Muslims. If the Christians were a majority and they used all their churches then there was no need to destroy them but if they were a minority and the numbers of Muslims was increasing then there was no objection to take over the site of the religious building. Thus, it depended on the benefits to the two groups, the Muslims and the People of the Book, but the final decision went to the Muslim ruler.[60]

3. **Cities built before Islam and taken upon voluntary acquiescence of the city residents (*sulḥan*)**

In that case also, there were two governing criteria. First, if they both agreed that the lands were owned by the People of the Book then the Muslims would only take the *jizya.* They then had the rights to build new religious buildings and keep the old ones as well, as the prophet did with the people of Najran.[61]

The second case was if they both agreed that the lands were owned by the Muslims, and the People of the Book should pay the *jizya*. In that case, the situation of the churches would depend on the treaties made by the two groups. In most of the cases the treaty of 'Umar[62] was applied.[63]

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[59]Ibid., 1199.

[60]Ibid, 1200.

[61]Ibid, 1202.

[62]See chapter 3.

[63]Ibn al-Qaym al-Juziah, *Aḥkām ahl al-zimma,* 1202.

However, if the Christians were living in a village alone within the Islamic countries, they could keep and build new churches, drink wine and eat pork.[64]

Thus, it is obvious that destroying churches was not approved in Islamic law except in limited cases. The introduction of new churches was forbidden except if the whole town was owned by the People of the Book or if the town was conquered by a treaty which agreed that the land owners were the Christians and not the Muslims. Did the Muslims follow these laws?[65]

B. Application of the law

The four rightly-guided caliphs followed these laws completely. After the conquest of Egypt and Syria, none of the churches was demolished. Nevertheless, at the time of the Umayyads the situation changed. Damascus was conquered by a treaty, which obligated the Muslims to leave the churches intact. When al-Walid became the ruler, he wanted to take a church to build a mosque in its place. He decided to compensate the Christians by giving them the churches outside Damascus which were taken after wars (*'unwa*) to be able to take the church of Saint John which was owned by the Christians according to the treaty (*sulḥan*).[66] At that time, the Christians accepted this but later at the time of 'Umar ibn 'abd al-'Aziz they complained to him and he ordered that the site of the mosque should return to the original owners. When the Muslims heard this, they went to the Caliph asking him to reconsider this opinion but he refused. The Muslims then went to the priests trying to convince them of the artistic and religious

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[64]Ibid., 1206.

[65]Chapter four discusses the cases of conversion and destruction of churches that happened during Islamic history in detail.

[66]Ibn al-Qaym al-Juziah, *Aḥkām ahl al-zimma,* 1191.

importance of the mosque (it was considered a master piece even at this time). The Christian community accepted and went to the caliph telling him to leave the mosque intact.[67]

Moreover, the Umayyads converted a church into a mosque in Aleppo and Hama, which was conquered by force (*'unwa*). According to the law, they had permission to take these lands. Yet 'Amr ibn al-'As didn't destroy any church in Cairo or in Alexandria although they were taken by war (*'unwa*).

During the time of the Abbasids, Mamluks and Fatimids no church was pull down except at the time of al-Hakim, a notoriously capricious ruler, who destroyed part of the church of the Holy Sepulcher in Jerusalem.

In addition to that, the conversion of many churches into mosques happened during the time of Mehmet al-Fatih, after the conquest of Constantinople, which gave the ruler the right to confiscate its churches if this was needed. The church of Hagia Sophia was converted into a mosque and the church of the Holy Apostles was destroyed to make room for the mosque of al-Fatih.

It is important to mention that Islamic laws are not static; they evolve overtime depending on the context. Nowadays, many Muslim jurists accepted the idea of building new churches in Islamic cities as long as there is no compelling reason to forbid it.[68]

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[67]Ibid., 1191.

[68]The most important *sheikh* who allows this is Yussuf al-Qaradawy**,** is the head of the World Federation of Muslim Scholars**,** in his book, *Fiqh al-jihād*, 925.

Chapter 3

The Concept of Tolerance in Islamic Architecture

A. Urban location as an indication of tolerance or Intolerance

"If actions do indeed speak louder than words, it is necessary to look beyond the rhetoric and the politically correct answers to actual deeds."[69] What really mattered to the people who lived together in a city were the laws and their applications, which governed the relations between them. Many times rulers made tolerant speeches but their words had no impact on reality. The importance of architecture was to indicate whether the relations between Muslims and People of the Book were tolerant or intolerant. "One demonstrable way of identifying both tolerance and intolerance between religious communities is to look at whether or not places of worship, such as churches, synagogues, mosques and temples, are allowed to remain or to be added to the religious landscape."[70] The following discusses many architectural cases of construction and demolition to categorize actions taken by the Muslims towards religious buildings as tolerant or intolerant.

1. Demolishing churches to signify power shifts.

After conquering any country around the Mediterranean, Muslims faced a new community whose majority were Christians and Jews. At that time, Muslims were concerned to set the frame of relations between them and the new citizens. Treaties and laws were made to regulate these relations. All these laws were supposed to respect the religions of the People of the Book and their buildings. Yet, some exceptions occurred which sent a political message to the Byzantines that the Muslims were the new leaders of these cities.

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[69]Emmett, "Siting of Churches," 452.

[70]Ibid., 452.

However, these destructive actions were usually minor.[71] The pulling down of churches or religious buildings was one form of discrimination against the minority. For example, in 1009 the Fatimid ruler al-Hakim destroyed part of the church of the Holy Sepulcher[72] in Jerusalem (the same church that 'Umar ibn al-Khattab had refused to pray in).

On the other hand, sometimes the destruction was, rather than being discrimination, a demonstration of the power of the new ruler. In 709 the church of Saint John was taken by the Caliph from the Christians and was demolished to build a congregational mosque instead, the Great Mosque of Damascus. The site of the church had always been used throughout history as a religious one for the ruling power. It started as a temple for the god Hadad in the Aramaic period, then it was transformed later into a Roman temple for Jupiter, then into the church of Saint John and finally into a congregational mosque.

It was not the only action of destruction by the Umayyads. Similar to the mosque of Damascus was the Great mosque of Aleppo**.** It was built in the courtyard of a Byzantine church which had been a Roman temple before.[73] All these actions were to send a message that a new regime was ruling now and had the power to demolish churches and to convert them into mosques.

2. Building mosques near churches

Sometimes building mosques near churches was evidence of good relations between the two groups. However, in other cases the mosque was built by the ruler to undermine the power of the church. The following are examples illustrating the two cases.

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[71]For further information, see chapter four.

[72]Emmett, "Siting of Churches," 453.

[73]Ball, *Syria: A Historical and Architectural Guide*, 133**.**

A. To show tolerance between the Muslims and the Christians

When 'Umar ibn al-Khattab entered Jerusalem he refused to tear down a church or pray in it so as not to encourage Muslims in conquered cities to pray in churches. He walked out of the church of the Holy Sepulcher and prayed in a nearby area where a mosque was subsequently built, the eponymous mosque of 'Umar. In this case, the result was a mosque standing opposite the church, which could portray tolerance and good interfaith relations. The idea of building this mosque near the church would also always remind Muslims that it was not appropriate to pray in a church. If this mosque had been built far away from the church the power of this message would have been diminished or forgotten.

B. Undermining the power of the church

On the other hand, the Dome of the Rock with its golden dome and monumental scale was built to impress Muslims, in competition with Byzantine churches. It was built by 'Abd al-Malik ibn Marwan in Byzantine style to compete with the church of the Holy Sepulcher which was also covered by a spectacular dome[74] (figs. 2-3). As a result, it would "overshadow the role of the church in the landscape."[75]

3. Keeping churches in place while restricting any future extension.

Intolerance in architecture differed from time to time. Some rulers dared to demolish religious buildings (rarely in Islamic history); others accepted the presence of churches but forbade adding or extending any elements to them. In addition, new churches were not allowed to be built. The elimination of extending churches happened at the time when the state was in its

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[74]Emmett, "Siting of Churches," 455.

[75]Ibid., 455.

first days (directly after the conquest of any city) and wanted to establish the new religion. Muslim rulers were concerned that their subjects could be influenced by other religions. According to Islamic law[76] Christians could not build new churches unless it was agreed upon in their treaty with the Muslims. Treaties were made only if the city was conquered, *sulhan*. In addition, if the whole country was Christian, they had the right to build new churches. However, if it was conquered after war *('unwa)* it was forbidden to build new churches. They would be allowed to maintain their churches but they did not have the right to extend them.[77]

To be able to judge these restrictions (whether they were fair or not) we should refer to the numbers of Christians in the cities and check whether they were increasing or decreasing after the conquest. The number of Christians could be measured from the records of conversion. However, the Islamization of any conquered city did not depend only on conversions but also on immigration by the Muslims from the Arabian Peninsula to these new cities. However in Egypt the first records that appeared on this issue were at the time of the Ottomans (the first census occurred in 1846 which recorded the Copts as 8% of the population),[78] although we could get some approximate information from historical evidence.

According to al-Maqrizi Muslims began to outnumber Christians in most Egyptian villages after their revolt in 831.[79] This opinion could be corroborated by the fact that this was the last rebellion of the Copts in their history (they had rebelled twice previously, in 725 and 739) which meant that after that time they became a minority and were less likely to rebel. Tamer al-Leithy

[76]See chapter 2.

[77]Ibn al-Qaym, *Aḥkām ahl al-ẕimma,* 1214-1215.

[78]O'Sullivan, "Coptic Conversion," 68.

[79]Ibid., 70.

has also pointed out that the Copts of Egypt converted slower than any other conquered city.[80]

The Islamization of Egypt reached its maximum in 1354 (when Muslims were 90% of the population).[81] In contrast, in Iran Richard Bulliet's studies showed that the number of Muslims had reached 80% of the whole population by 960.[82]

However, the late conversion of the Copts did not mean necessarily the late Islamization of Egypt. There was evidence from early Islamic writers about Muslim immigration to Egypt; the Kalbite tribal was deported in 640 at the time of 'Umar from Syria to Egypt with the aim of increasing the Arab Population there and to reduce the tribal tension in Syria.[83] In addition, al-Kindi's history showed at the time of the Umayyads an increase in the number of Arab soldiers enrolled in the Egyptian military list (*diwan*). They were settled in al-Fustat and later a second group consisting of 27,000 was settled in Alexandria.[84] They were permitted to leave their garrisons in spring to take a break and to return in summer. In fact, many of them did not return and stayed in the countryside, becoming farmers and traders.[85]

The treaty of 'Umar did not mention anything about churches' extension. However, it seems that the Christians put this restriction on themselves in return for being protected by the Muslims.

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[80]Ibid., 71. Extracted from the PhD *Coptic Culture and Conversion in Medieval Cairo, 1293-1524 A.D.*

[81]Ibid, 67.

[82]Ibid., 74.

[83]Ibid., 72.

[84]Ibid., 72.

[85]Ibid., 72.

The following is a letter sent from the Christians to the caliph showing the commitments of the Christians toward the Muslims.

> In the name of God, the Merciful and Compassionate.
>
> This is a letter to the servant of God 'Umar ibn al-Khattab, Commander of the Faithful, from the Christians of such and such a city. When you came against us, we asked you for safe-conduct (*aman*) for ourselves, our descendants, our property, and the people of our community, and we undertook the following obligations toward you:
>
> We shall not build, in our cities or in their neighborhood, new monasteries, churches, convents, or monks' cells, nor shall we repair, by day or by night, such of them as fall in ruins or are situated in the quarters of the Muslims.[86]

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[86] Gervers and Bikhazi, *Conversion and Continuity,* 217-218.

We shall keep our gates wide open for passersby and travelers. We shall give board and lodging to all Muslims who pass our way for three days.

We shall not give shelter in our churches or in dwellings to any spy, nor hide him from the Muslims.

We shall not teach the Quran to our children.

We shall not manifest our religion publicly nor convert anyone to it. We shall not prevent any of our kin from entering Islam if they wish it.

We shall show respect toward the Muslims, and we shall rise from our seats when they wish to sit.

We shall not seek to resemble the Muslims by imitating any of their garments, the qalansuwa, the turban, footwear, or the parting of the hair. We shall not speak as they do, nor shall we adopt their *kunya*s.

Thus, from the above it is obvious that the number of Christians and Jews diminished in conquered cities due to the introduction of Islam. The movement of Islamization was rapid (even with the slow conversion of Copts) due to the increase in immigration. For instance, in Fustat in the first years after the conquest (after 646) the number of Arabs soldiers was around 40,000. Counting their families, the total was around 100,000 citizens.[87] Therefore, the augmentation in the number of Muslims in the conquered cities in general and the fact that the former Coptic majority would turn into a minority made the building of new churches less likely, either because there was no physical need for them or by treaty to ensure the protection of Muslim rulers.

In my opinion, if the number of Christians or Jews in any neighborhood was increasing or they lived in an area without a religious building they should have had the right to build a church

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We shall not mount on saddles, nor shall we gird swords nor bear any kind of arms nor carry them on our persons.

We shall not engrave Arabic inscriptions on our seals.

We shall not sell fermented drinks.

We shall clip the fronts of our heads.

We shall always dress in the same way wherever we may be, and we shall bind *zunnār* round our waists.

We shall not display our crosses or our books in the roads or markets of the Muslims. We shall only use clappers in our churches very softly. We shall not raise our voices in our church services or in the presence of Muslims, nor shall we raise our voices when following our dead. We shall not show lights on any of the roads of the Muslims or in their markets. We shall not bury our dead near the Muslims.

[87]Kennedy, *The Great Arab Conquests*, 162.

or a synagogue. The forbidding of extensions to churches or construction of religious buildings was a kind of discrimination and could be considered as an intolerant action. However, sometimes extensions were not necessary because the number of Christians was not increasing.

4. Christians accepting the conversion of churches into mosques: a sign of cooperation and friendliness?

Sometimes conversion of a church was a sign of coexistence. As seen previously, at the time of the Umayyads during the reign of 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz the Caliph was ready to demolish the Great Mosque of Damascus and to give the Christians back the land. After mediation of the ulema with the Christians, they accepted compensation instead of demolishing the mosque. In a spirit of toleration the Christians went to the caliph asking him to leave the mosque to the Muslims, which proved that they accepted the conversion of the site of the church into a mosque as a sign of friendliness with Muslims.[88]

The action taken by the Caliph was fair and was received with an open mind and heart by the Christians. They both proved that they could convey messages of fairness and tolerance through architecture, which gave the standing building a deeper meaning on good relations between the two groups.[89]

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[88]Khaled, *Khulafā' al-rasūl*, 624-625. The same story is found in Ibn al-Qaym, *Aḥkām ahl al-zimma,* 1191.

[89]Emmett, "Siting of Churches," 458. In 1972 the large Byzantine-style Greek Orthodox Basilica (built in 1952 in Chicago), was sold to an American African Muslim to be converted into the Mosque of Maryan, proving a high level of coexistence between different religions.

5. Allowing new churches to be built as a sign of tolerance

Peace and cooperation were the norm in relations between the Muslims and the People of the Book. Troubles were the exception, which happened at the time of wars with the Byzantines and the Crusaders; "partly because of the general heightening of religious loyalties and rivalries, partly because of the often well-grounded suspicion that they were collaborating with the enemies of Islam."[90]

The most obvious examples of allowing new churches to be built as a sign of tolerance were in the Ottoman period. They had flexibility towards differences of religion.[91] "From secular law to religious law, from orthodoxy to varieties of syncretism and heterodoxy, from the diverse administration of ethnic and religious difference, a space for alternatives and for movement existed. The concrete outcome of religious forbearance was actively constructed in the organizational and relational systems that the Ottoman state and the diverse groupings maintained."[92]

The tolerance of the Ottomans let many Jews who were persecuted in Europe to find refuge in their lands.[93] Moreover, Christians were welcomed in Ottoman lands. There were many examples of "social and culture interchange of migration and relocations."[94] Many cases of

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[90]Kennedy, *The Great Arab Conquests*, 217.

[91]Barkey, "Islam and Toleration," 9.

[92]Ibid., 9.

[93]Ibid., 15.

[94]Ibid., 15.

marriage occurred between sultans and the Christian or Jewish elite, as well as normal citizens and People of the Book.[95]

Consequently, building churches or synagogues was encouraged by the Sultans; sometimes they donated land for this purpose. The idea of giving land to Christians spread in the nineteenth century; at that time (1825) the Ottomans faced many attacks from the Greeks. The power of European countries had risen while Ottoman power had been deteriorating. Muslim citizens hoped that the Ottomans could regain some of their lost power and authority. However, "the pronouncement read aloud by the *Tanzimat* representatives shattered that hope. With European military intervention increasingly a reality, their former self confidence could easily turn to panic."[96] In January 1848, an imperial order reached the city of Aleppo from the Ottoman sultan stating that church repairs and additions could be made without application to the Porte. However, the Christians wrongly interpreted this and made plans to build new cathedrals, which enraged the local Muslims. In 1850, the Muslims rioted, their violence being directed against Christian churches, shops and homes. Although the Christians outside the walls of Aleppo were attacked by Muslims, those living in the Muslim quarters inside the city walls were not touched or harmed.[97] This suggests that the Muslims worried about the growth of the European influenced Christian power rather than the deeply rooted Christian community.

Later, similar laws of construction of religious building were made applicable to both Muslims and People of the Book, such as the Ottoman *hatt-i-humayun* (noble prescript).[98] It

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[95]Ibid., 15.

[96]Masters, *Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Arab World,* 157-158.

[97]Ibid., 157-158.

[98]Emmett, "The Siting of Churches," 455.

dated to 1856 and was applicable to Egypt. The law guaranteed equality for both Muslims and

Christians in erecting their own religious buildings.[99] For example, the land of the church of

Saint Anne, which fell into ruin, was presented to Napoleon III by the sultan Abdulmecit in

1856, in gratitude for French support in the Crimean war. In addition, he donated land to the

Christians in Constantinople to build the Crimean Memorial Church between 1858 and 1868.[100]

In 1869, the sultan 'Abd al-'Aziz gave Prince Frederic III a plot of land near the church of the

Holy Sepulcher to build a church on it.[101]

6. Restricting the construction of mosques near churches

Prohibiting the building of a mosque near churches in Islamic lands can be considered as an

act of tolerance; but if this restriction was in Christian lands, it would be considered as an act of

intolerance. Such laws in a Muslim context could improve relations between the two groups. For

instance, in 1990 there was an attempt to build a mosque near the Basilica of the Annunciation in

Nazareth. Muslim scholars in Palestine and in Egypt objected to this action by issuing a fatwa.

Moreover, rulers of the Islamic world objected to the idea. A Saudi prince promised to finance a

new mosque if it was built away from the Basilica.[102]

Conclusion

The location, proportions and the urban fabric of religious buildings are indications of tolerant

or intolerant relations between the People of the Book and Muslims. Destroying a church and

restricting extensions to it or the building of new churches were acts of intolerance. On the other

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[99]Ibid., 455.

[100]Wikipedia/ Crimean Memorial Church.

[101]http://www.sacred-destinations.com

[102]Emmett, "The Siting of Churches," 462.

hand, allowing churches to be built and restricting the construction of mosques near churches were acts of tolerance. Building mosques near churches could signify either tolerance or intolerance depending on the situation and the intention. Indeed examples of cooperation and coexistence between the Muslims and the People of the Book are many but unfortunately, there is more focus recently on the conflict rather than on agreement.

Another important point, which is related to the idea of the meaning of tolerance in architecture, is contextual architecture; in other words, we can say that Islamic Architecture was influenced by the culture of all the countries where it was built. For example, the Great Mosque of Cordoba in Spain is totally different than the Great mosque of Damascus which is also different than the mosque of 'Amr in Egypt (figs. 4-5). Each one of them was influenced by the context of the city where it belonged. Some could argue that this contextual architecture could be due to the lack of Islamic masons. Of course, this is partly true, but Islamic architecture was not just a process of collecting regional forms together; it implemented its thoughts and concepts from the beginning. Moreover, it also introduced new elements and features gradually throughout time. But Muslims were tolerant to preceding civilizations. Temples, and churches decorated with crosses were left intact and in Islamic architecture architectural elements were used from earlier civilizations.

Chapter 4

Secrets Revealed

A. Demolishing churches - a common Muslim practice or an extraordinary one?

The Muslim conquest could be considered as a "revolution in human history."[103] Muslims

changed many concepts throughout their journey as well as developing their own culture.

Humanity lost a lot when this train of progress stopped. We can say that the flow of technology

and innovation started before the Muslims and they added a full chapter to it. The following

civilizations took this flow and continued it. But, what was really missing in these new

civilizations was tolerance and sympathy for the other; whoever this other was.

Every leader (at least in the area studied) of a Muslim army wanted to conquer a city with a

minimum number of casualties by making fair treaties. Moreover, leader's advice before battle

was not to touch women, children and the elderly and especially not to harm any religious

building. Therefore, the norm was to leave these buildings intact, as happened in Jerusalem,

Cairo, Alexandria, Spain, North Africa, Persia and Iraq. In all these countries, churches and

temples were left untouched, except in some cases where some churches were converted to

mosques or were demolished to be replaced by mosques. These cases can be enumerated, as

Appendix 1 demonstrates. Why did this happen? Where did it happen? And was this a break in

the history of tolerance of Islam?

B. How many verified cases of church demolition?

The data in Table 1[104] starts from the beginning of the Islamic conquest until the end of the

Ottoman Dynasty on the studied area of the thesis, Spain, North Africa (Libya, Tunis, Morocco

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[103]Kennedy, the Great Arab Conquests, 34.

[104]See table 1 in appendix 1.

and Algeria), Cairo, Alexandria, Jerusalem, Damascus, Hama, Aleppo and Istanbul under various Islamic Dynasties.

Analysis of Table 1

From the table, we can notice that the cases of demolishing churches were few, while churches conversions into mosques were many. This raises the question of whether this conversion was due to urgent need (the absence of space to build new mosques) or to diminish the influence of Christianity in the area?

In Egypt (Cairo and Alexandria), no church was demolished or converted. Therefore twelve churches remained intact from 639 until now. In Jerusalem, only one church was demolished at the time of al-Hakim who was known for his discrimination against Sunni Muslims, Jews and Christians. Later the church was rebuilt at the time of the Crusades. Two other churches were destroyed during the siege of Salah al-Din. From a total of twenty five churches in Jerusalem only three were destroyed, two of them in the war, the Chapel of the Ascension and Mary's Tomb.

In Damascus, only one church was destroyed and the other two remained intact. In Aleppo, there were three conversions during the Umayyad period and seven churches were left intact. In Hama there was one conversion of the only known church in the town.

The largest conversions of churches to mosques happened during the Ottoman period in Istanbul.[105] We had 23 conversions and one church was destroyed by Muhammad al-Fatih; all of them were in the Fatih district. There were sixteen churches left intact in Istanbul until now.

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[105]This study focus only on Istanbul and not the rest of Anatolia.

From the above, the total number of churches built before or during the Islamic conquest was around 131, five of which were destroyed (two of them in a war) and nearly 27 were converted to mosques; while around 104 remained intact until now. Additionally, all the churches in Morocco, Tunisia and Spain remained intact. Therefore, only 32 churches were destroyed or converted during the whole of Islamic history (almost thirteen centuries) in this area.[106] According to Islamic law,[107] the conversion that happened in the cities of Aleppo, Hama, and Constantinople were allowed due to the fact that these cities were taken by assault (*'unwa*). However, the conversion of the church of Saint John in Damascus was not allowed since the city was conquered peacefully (*sulḥan)*. But why did these conversions take place?

Some could argue that these conversions were accepted by religious view, so the rulers did not mind taking that action. However, I believe that these conversions were made not because Islamic law allowed it, but because of urban need. Trying to trace where and when exactly they were made will explain this and why some rulers did it in some countries and in others they did not. For example, why did the Umayyads convert churches in Damascus, Hama and Aleppo but not in Jerusalem and in Cairo?

C. Was demolition more commonly practiced at a particular time?

In Damascus, "Given the area's topography, the city was established between two hostile zones: the mountain summit, where there is risk of the river swelling due to its gentle slopes - and the foot of the mountain, where the closeness of the phreatic layer inhibits extensive dense urban development. The site established slightly overhangs the riverbed and constitutes a valley

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[106]This statistics were made depending of the data in the table of the churches made by me.

[107]See Chapter Two.

deep enough to contain floods."[108] While urban and economic life continued to develop after the conquest, the architectural design and urban planning changed gradually to Islamic concepts. "The broad, colonnaded streets were invaded and divided up by intrusive structures, both houses and shops became more like narrow winding lanes than the majestic thoroughfares of classical antiquity; and the extensive, open agora, scene for markets and meetings, was gone."[109] Due to this dense topography and due to the Islamization of the urban planning in the city, it seems that it was very difficult to find new focal points in Damascus to place a large congregational mosque (figs. 6- 7- 8).

Thus, the conversions that happened in Damascus, Hama and Aleppo were due to the density of those cities. Some could argue that this density was the same in Jerusalem. This is true but in Jerusalem the site where the Dome of the Rock was built was at that time empty except for a small mosque built by 'Umar ibn al-Khattab which facilitated the mission of the Umayyads. They removed the small mosque and used the site; there was no need to convert any church into a mosque. In Cairo, there was already a new city, which was built by 'Amr ibn al-'As with its mosque before the Umayyads ruled it.

The other important area where a large movement of conversions occurred was in Constantinople. We can divide these conversions into two sections; first the conversion of Hagia Sophia which was a political act because this church was the most important one in the east. The conversion here meant that Muslims finally were the rulers of the Byzantine capital in the east including their largest church. The second step of conversion happened due to the rapid Islamization of Constantinople. "Ottoman documentary records for the periods 1520-1535 reveal

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[108]Lababedi, The Urban Development of Damascus, 15.

[109]Ibid., 19.

that the population of Anatolia during this period, about five million was more than 92% Muslim and only 8% Christians."[110] This means that even before the conquest of Constantinople all the regions around it were fully Islamized, so the fact of its subsequent Islamization was a matter of time. After its conquest it was normal that a large movement of migration occurred there from all the Muslims citizens who were living in the region due to the fact that it was a metropolitan city and it became the Ottoman capital. Most of the churches' conversions were in the Fatih district (which took place ten years after of the conquest of Constantinople) because the Christian populations moved to another area, which will be explained subsequently.[111] Thus we can say that conversions here occurred not only because of urban need (it was difficult to find places to build mosques in such a crowded city) but also because of the increase in the Muslim and the decrease in the Christian population. On the contrary, many churches were left intact; the following are some examples of these cases.

D. Places where Muslims left churches intact

Egypt where churches witnessed tolerance

1. Cairo

The conquest of Egypt was not in the mind of the caliph 'Umar and the Muslims until 'Amr ibn al-'As proposed the idea to the caliph. 'Amr ibn al-'As, who was known to be a courageous warrior and was the leader in many Muslim battles, had a dream to conqueror Egypt. He knew about it from his mercantile activities before the coming of Islam; he had seen Alexandria and was fascinated with its beauty and architecture. For an Arab Bedouin, who lived most of his life in the desert, the sea of Alexandria with its buildings and the prosperity of the Nile Valley were

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[110]O'Sullivan, "Coptic Conversion and the Islamization of Egypt," 75.

[111]See Chapter Four, al-Fatih Mosque.

for him heaven. At this time, the Muslims had just taken Syria; the caliph was slightly hesitant about the issue. However, he told 'Amr to make his way to Cairo until further notice.

On his way to the fortress of Babylon, and while he was still in the desert, a messenger was sent from the caliph; 'Amr supposed that this was an order to return unless he was already within Egypt. He tried to delay the messenger until he entered Egypt because he didn't want to return.

The Copts, who lived in Egypt at this time and who were badly treated by the Byzantines, accepted the conquest of Egypt. However, this is not the opinion of all historians. Did the Copts welcome the arrival of the Muslims or only accept them? Did the Copts help the Byzantines or not? Or were the Copts neutral, waiting to ally themselves with the victor?

One of the most famous accounts was that of Hanna al-Naqyusi (John, Bishop of Niku), who is known for his hatred of Muslims and the Arabs in general. The importance of this account is that all the information in it was totally the opposite of what the Arab and Muslim historians wrote. John said that the Muslims on their way to Fayum took the sheep of the Copts and when they entered the city they killed the elders, ladies and children. He added also that 'Amr arrested the Byzantine judges and shackled their hands and legs and took all their possessions. He also doubled the taxes on the farmers and was very cruel to them and burned the crops in Damietta and destroyed the houses in Alexandria. John added that the Copts wanted to fight the Muslims with the Byzantine ruler but he ran away. This was an indication by the bishop that the Copts didn't fight the Muslims.[112]

The bishop mentioned the Copts who helped the Muslims by hating the Byzantines, but also mentioned that some of them helped the Muslims out of fear.[113] He added also that the taxes

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[112]Kamāl, *al-Fāth*, 139-140.

[113]Ibid., 139-140.

were so high that the Copts were obliged to sell their children to pay them. At the end he insulted

the Copts who converted to Islam and described the prophet as a beast.[114] This showed the

author's deep prejudice against Islam.

Sawiras ibn al-Muqafʿ describes the historical events with a more unbiased vision. He said

that the victory of the Muslims over the Byzantines was due to the latter's unfairness and cruelty.

He mentioned that they drove the Coptic bishop Benjamin to hide for ten years to protect himself

and his religion, but that after the conquest of Egypt ʿAmr allow him to return. Benjamin then

asked the Copts to help the Muslims in their war against the Byzantines. Sawiras also added that

ʿAmr made a treaty with the Copts and fought only the Byzantines until he defeated them.[115] It is

worth mentioning that the Byzantines at the beginning of the Muslim attacks put the Copts who

lived in the fortress in prison which indicate their fear that they would spy for the Muslims.[116]

The testimony of the historians is not the only evidence of the tolerance and coexistence of

the Muslims and Copts. There are other architectural and urban features that have stood in Cairo

for more than a thousand years that can demonstrate how the relationship of the two groups was.

But to understand this coexistence better, we should investigate the steps taken by ʿAmr after the

fall of the fortress of Babylon.

1. The fortress of Babylon[117]

What was the architecture of the fortress at this time like? It was a polygonal structure, with

walls about 18 feet thick. The height of the walls was 60 feet**.** The towers were higher, built from

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[114]Ibid., 141.

[115]Kamāl**,** *al-Fāth*, 145.

[116]Butler, *Fath al-ʿArab*, 239.

[117]Butler, *Fath al-ʿArab,* 209-210.

alternate bands of stone and brick (fig. 9). Attached to each of the south and east sides were round watchtowers.

Inside the fortress there was on the eastern side an agricultural area in addition to many churches and a synagogue.[118] What remains of these churches until now is the Elevated Church, the churches of Abu Serga and Mar Gergis and the synagogue.[119] The Caliph's decision was to build another settlement, that of Fustat, adjacent to Babylon. This decision, and the preservation of the churches within Babylon, are an indication of the tolerance of the Muslim conquest.

2. 'Amr ibn al-'As Mosque

The mosque was built in 642 within the city of al-Fustat; the original mosque is not related to what remains now. It was smaller, about twenty nine by seventeen meters (figs. 10- 11). On its northeastern side separated by a line was the house of 'Amr. The mosque (fig. 12) was rectangular without a court; it was not covered with any decoration and it lacked minarets or a niche for the qibla wall. Creswell assumed that it was built from mud brick and palm trees like the mosque of the prophet. During the expansion of the mosque in 673 four *sawma'a*s were erected on the top of the roof of the mosque in al-Fustat. They were reached by an outer staircase, which indicated that there was no staircase to reach the roof. Creswell interpreted this addition as a copy of the Temenos Damascus whose base was the foundation of the minarets of the mosque of Damascus. After his expansions of the mosque, the name of the governor of Egypt**,** Maslama ibn Mukhallad, was written on the walls of the mosque and then all the mosques of Cairo erected minarets on their roof.[120]

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[118]Ibid., 213.

[119]Ibid., 217.

[120]Doris Behrens-Abouseif, *Islamic Architecture in Cairo*, 47-48.

The fact that the Muslims lived in their own city and not with the Copts is a sign of respect for the original citizens of Cairo at this time; they did not want to invade their civilian life because the Muslims at this period were mostly part of the army. Regarding conversion to Islam, no obligation was made. Thus, the initial isolation of the military from civilians and the coexistence of the Muslims with the Copts later are indications of respect and tolerance.

B. Alexandria

After the defeat of the Byzantines in Alexandria, the city was occupied by the Muslims who were fascinated by its marvelous architecture and beauty. What did it look like at this time? After he entered the city ʿAmr sent to the Caliph a letter in which he described it. "God conquered for us a city in which there are four thousand palaces, four thousand bathes, four hundred recreational places, twelve thousand sellers of vegetables and forty thousand Jews as dhimmi."[121] According to Butler and Ahmad Kamal the numbers in the letter could have been slightly exaggerated. Yet it indicates that the city was beautifully designed (fig. 13) and it shows that ʿAmr was dealing with the Jews from the first day as citizens under his responsibility. In addition, there is no mention in the letter of any libraries in the city.

One of the biggest accusations against the Arabs was the pulling down of the library of Alexandria, which had been full of important scientific and religious texts. According to Butler the story which said that the Caliph ordered ʿAmr to set fire to the books of the library because it contained knowledge not relevant to Muslims beliefs, is not true. The story of the fire appeared five hundred years after the conquest. Moreover, the man who narrated the story telling that the Arabs set fire to the library actually was dead before the Arabs conquered Alexandria. This means that the Arabs were not related to this fire and that the library was damaged before the

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[121]Butler, *Fath al-ʿArab,* 319.

arrival of the Muslims. His story referred to one of the two libraries in Alexandria; the first was the one attached to the temple and this was lost in the fire that happened in the attacks of Julius Cesar in the year 48 BCE. The other library was the one related to the Serapium, which either was transferred or lost; anyway this was two centuries before the conquest.[122] Butler added, in defense of the Arabs (actually he was defending the truth as he said, not the Arabs[123]), that the historians in the fifth and sixth centuries and even those at the beginning of the seventh century did not mention anything about the presence of a library.[124]

Thus, the conquest of Cairo and Alexandria by 'Amr ibn al-'As should be considered as tolerant. He did not destroy any churche**s** or houses, he did not abuse anyone and he built his own city to give the inhabitants of Cairo their privacy. Moreover, he left Alexandria without any change. The first mosque built there was probably in the 8th century (al-Nabi Daniel) at the time of the Umayyads. We can say that the presence of the old churches in Babylon and Alexandria are a great witness to Muslim tolerance and cooperation.

The conquest of Syria

By the six century Christianity was the religion of the majority of the inhabitants of Syria; there were also some Jewish communities especially in Palestine and there were still some pagans in different regions of Syria.[125] Christianity was the religion of the governing people, by the six century it was impossible for anyone who held a religion other than Christianity to work

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[122] Ibid., 368-369.

[123]Ibid., 370.

[124]Ibid., 369.

[125]Kennedy, *the Great Arab Conquests,* 66-67.

in an important government office. Yet, the Christians of Syria were not a homogenous group; they were divided about the issue of the divinity of Christ and his incarnation.[126]

Syria enjoyed prosperity and wealth until 540, a century before the Muslim conquest when a severe plague devastated the entire region. Towns where the populations were dense were affected severely. The plague returned in the seventh century, although it is difficult to confirm how many were lost with the absence of statistics. However, historians assumed that the Black Death that ravaged the Middle East and Western Europe in 1348 killed over a third of the population, which was probably similar to the proportion in the six century.[127]

When the Muslims conquered Syria (630 – 640), the region was already affected by the plague of 540; many people had been killed which greatly affected the amount of population in Syria. Moreover, the region was affected by the recent war between the Byzantines and the Persians, which helped open the way to the Muslims. Although there were factors which facilitated the mission of the Muslims, the Byzantines remained the first universal power at this time.

In 629 was the first confrontation of the Muslim and the Byzantine forces in a place called Mu'ta, now in Jordan. Despite the defeat of the Muslims, they sent the Byzantines a message that they were a powerful army that they should wary of in the future. Immediately after the prophet's death Abu Bakr sent an expedition (that had been previously prepared by the prophet) that was the start of the conquest of Syria. From 632 until 640 all the region of Syria became under Muslim authority, except for the coastal city of Caesarea.[128]

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[126]Ibid., 66-67.

[127]Ibid, 68.

[128]Ibid., 72.

It is worth mentioning that Heraclius regretted the loss of Syria.

> As he withdrew, he [Heraclius] took with him all the garrisons from the districts along the new frontier, creating a sort of no man's land between Byzantine and Muslim territory at the northeastern corner of the Mediterranean. A later Syriac source, deeply hostile to everything Byzantine, says that Heraclius gave orders to this troop to pillage and devastate the villages and towns, as if the land already belonged to the enemy. The Byzantines stole and pillaged all they found, and devastated the country more than the Arabs.[129]

The Muslims were welcomed by the citizens of Syria; they were received with a "carnival atmosphere."[130] Citizens came to the street with the entrance of the army playing music with drums and cymbals. Yet the Muslims met some resistance on the Syrian and Palestinian coast because it was the area where many Greeks still lived.

2. The conquest of Jerusalem

The conquest of Jerusalem for the Muslims was of a great religious importance. Muslims had prayed toward the Aqsa mosque for almost eight years, and from there the prophet went on his holy night journey to meet God. It is considered by Muslims the third most sacred place after al-Masjid al-Haram and the prophet's mosque, which were the only places to which Muslims should leave their countries to travel.

Only for Jerusalem did the Caliph come from Madina to take its key when the patriarch refused to give it to anybody except to him. As mentioned before (Chapter One), the caliph refused to pray at the church of the Holy Sepulcher and issued a document that Muslims were forbidden to pray in church; he made an agreement with the Christians of the city:

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[129]Ibid., 87-88.

[130]Ibid., 88.

In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate. This is the assurance of safety (*aman*) which the servant of God 'Umar, the Commander of the Faithful, has given to the people of Jerusalem. He has them an assurance of safety for themselves, for their property, their churches, their crosses, the sick and healthy of the city and for all the rituals, which belong to their religion. Their churches will not be inhabited by Muslims and will not be destroyed. Neither they, nor the land, on which they stand, nor their cross, nor their property will be damaged. They will not be forcibly converted. No Jew will live with them in Jerusalem.

The people of Jerusalem must pay the taxes like the people of other cities and must expel Byzantine and the robbers. Those of the people of Jerusalem who want to leave with the Byzantines, take their property and abandon their churches and crosses will be safe until the reach their place of refuge. The villagers (who had taken refuge in the city at the time of the conquest) may remain in the city if they wish but must pay taxes like the citizens. Those who wish may go with the Byzantines and those who wish may return to their families. Nothing is to be taken from them before harvest is reaped.

If they pay their taxes according to their obligations, then the conditions laid out in this letter are under the covenant of God, are the responsibility of His Prophet, of the caliphs and of the faithful.[131]

The agreement was witnessed by Khalid b. al-Walid, 'Amr b.al-'As and Mu'awiya b. Abi Sufyan. According to Kennedy it is not sure whether this agreement was the real one written by the Caliph or an old fabrication but it is an indication of the thoughts of the Muslims towards the People of the Book. What was not usual is the clause concerning the condition of the Jews who were also prohibited from entering the city at the time of the Romans. The fact that this clause was transmitted from Islamic sources was an indication of the strong hand of the Christians in the agreement.[132] After making this agreement Muslims needed to built a mosque as they refused to pray in the many churches which were in the city at that time.

[131]Ibid, 91-92.

[132]Ibid, 92.

A. The Mosque of 'Umar

The caliph started to look for a site to build a mosque. One of his companions who was a Jewish convert to Islam suggested that the rock at the center of the platform would be the direction of their prayer on that special day. The caliph refused and said that the Ka'ba should be their only direction on this day and everyday. The caliph knew very well that this place was the location of the Jewish temple destroyed by the Romans after the Jewish rebellions in 70 CE and was left as a rubbish heap at the time of the Byzantines. The Caliph cleared the site.[133] It was known that he ordered the muezzin Bilal (known as the prophet's muezzin) to call for prayer on this special day and this was followed by a speech from the caliph. Probably, there was a small structure built at the place. Certainly, when the Christian Pilgrim Arculf visited Jerusalem at 670 before the construction of the Dome of the Rock, there was some kind of prayer place; this is why sometimes the Dome of the Rock was misleading as referred to as the mosque of 'Umar.[134]

The mosque of ʿUmar was built in front of the church of the Holy Sepulcher near to the area where 'Umar prayed (fig. 14). We do not have a description of this mosque in its primitive form[135] but we have a description by Arculf of the architecture of the other mosque built by the caliph at the same period on the platform of al-Aqsa mosque. Arculf said that it was "a quadrangular house of prayer, which they have built rudely, constructing it by setting planks and great beams on some remains of ruins: this house can, it is said, hold three thousand men at

[133]Ibid, 93.

[134]Creswell, *A Short Account*, 10.

[135]Historians were interested more at the history of the platform of al-Aqsa.

once."[136] Similar to it was the mosque of 'Umar built in front of the church of the Holy Sepulcher.

The question is: if the caliph was known for his tolerance and fairness why did he build the mosque**s** near the church? The church of the Holy Sepulcher was in a very dominant place near the site of the rock. Jerusalem was a very old city where it was difficult to find an open space for building. It seems also that the caliph wanted to have a prayer place near the church, to give a message that he had demolished the church to build a mosque and that he preferred to unify Christians and Muslims and not to make Islam dominant over Christianity by destroying the church. It could be argued that this strong message has survived until now.

The fact that the mosque was built in a simple form at the time of 'Umar was a sign of tolerance. Unlike the Umayyads, the caliph did not have any intention to compete with the architecture of the churches around. The architecture of the mosque did not surpass the glory and the size of the church. The mosque was built from stones without any dome to eliminate competition with the church. At that time, Muslims did not want to overshadow the dome of the church unlike the domes of al-Aqsa and the Dome of the Rock, which were built later competing with the church of the Holy Sepulcher (figs. 15- 16).

B. The al-Aqsa Mosque and the Dome of the Rock

The al-Aq**s**a Mosque is the second oldest surviving mosque in Islam after the Ka'ba in Mecca, and is third in holiness and importance after the mosques in Mecca and Medina. The Umayyad caliph al-Walid built or substantially rebuilt al-Aqsa mosque in 711 CE. Nothing remains from this structure due to the earthquake of 747. It was rebuilt again by al-Mahdi and

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[136]Creswell, *Early Muslim Architecture*, 1:34.

many changes were made to it by successive dynasties (Ummayad, Abbasid, Fatimid, Ayyubid and even the Crusaders) until it reached its form today.

Unlike the Dome of the Rock, which reflects classical Byzantine architecture, the dome of al-Aqsa Mosque is characteristic of early Islamic architecture. Nothing remains of the original dome built by al-Walid.

The Dome of the Rock (fig. 17) is one of the most important architecture buildings in the Islamic world. It was build to legitimize the presence of the Umayyads as rulers who came to rule after two civil wars. Al-Muqaddasi had another explanation (which is more relevant to the previous one) of the presence of the building. He said that al-Walid, noting the greatness of the churches of Jerusalem, wanted to astonish and attract the minds of the Muslims to Muslim instead of Christian architecture.[137]

It was finished in 691. It is composed of a central dome surrounded by two octagonal ambulatories. The decoration inside is made from Byzantine-influenced mosaics.[138] Some of these decorations were interpreted as the triumph of the Islam over the Byzantines (fig. 18). Other ornamentations were symbol of "holiness, wealth, power and sovereignty."[139] Quranic verses are inscribed to attest the role of Muhammad and explain that Jesus was not the son of God. Clearly the building was full of messages to the Christians to explain to them the perception of Jesus in the new religion and to confirm that Muslims were powerful rulers who had defeated the Byzantines. So, was there any meaning of tolerance (contextual or urban

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[137]Ibid., 18.

[138]http://archnet.org/library/sites/one-site.jsp?site_id=41.

[139]Oleg Grabar, *The Formation of Islamic Art*, 59.

tolerance)[140] in these two buildings? Or in the Umayyad period, did the concepts of tolerance of the prophet, followed by the four rightly-guided Caliphs, change?

According to Grafman the mosque of al-Aqsa was an imitation of Herod's Stoa, a classical basilica on the elevated platform. It was composed of four rows and two aisles with a central nave. Inside there were 162 huge columns.[141] He believed that the ruins mentioned by the pilgrim Arculf were in fact part of Herod's Stoa, while other historians believed that the Caliph 'Umar built a small mosque in this place before Umayyad times. But Grafman's opinion has no proof; it is not logical to believe, considering the importance of the place, that after the Muslim conquest the site would remain in ruins until the Dome of the Rock was built. As mentioned before 'Umar cleared the site. The basilical plan of al-Aqsa can not be denied, since Jerusalem was full of churches at this time. In addition, the mosque of Damascus was built at the same time of al-Aqsa, so it would not be surprising if they influenced each other.

The Dome of the Rock and al-Aqsa mosque were inspired by Byzantine architecture and art (fig. 19). It is true that, regarding the availability of masons at the time, the majority of them could have been Byzantine. Yet the final result could be seen as an example of Byzantine art adapted to an Islamic concept and spirit. I see it as a sign of acceptance by the Muslims of Byzantine art. Even if this art came from a civilization that was at war with them they didn't mind adapting their culture as long as it was not against Islam. In fact they admired Byzantine art, which shows that their war with the Byzantines was not based on hate; it was a war of concepts and meaning. Once it ended Muslims could extend bridges of beauty and comprehension. Islam was the only religion that didn't have a prototype in its architecture;

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[140]See chapter 3.

[141]Grafman and Rosen-Ayalon, "The Two Great Syrian Umayyad Mosques," 1.

mosques in Jerusalem were different from mosques in Persia, India and Spain (Islamic architecture respected its context). What happened later to al-Aqsa and the Dome of the Rock?

In 1099, the Crusades were launched by Pope Urban to release Jerusalem from the hands of the Muslims. The siege of Jerusalem was cruel.[142]

> The city was not just sacked; it was desecrated and its inhabitants were massacred. In spite of the paltry efforts of Godfrey and the other Christian general, Tancred, to exercise restraint, their soldiers swept through the city and killed every single soul they found. The massacre was not limited to Arab and Turkish Muslims. The Jews of the city took refuge in their synagogues only to be locked inside and burned alive. Eastern Orthodox monks tried to keep the shrine of the Holy Sepulchre from being looted by soldiers more interested in booty than in blessings, but they were cut down where they stood.[143]

The new rulers of Jerusalem converted the al-Aqsa mosque and the Dome of the Rock into churches.[144]

What the Crusaders did was shocking to the Muslims, and was a blotch on human history. This can be contrasted with 'Umar's conduct; he entered the city peacefully, refused to pray in churches (unlike the Crusaders who damaged the Holy places) and made a treaty which gave the People of the Book all their rights.

But the relations between Muslims and Crusaders lasted for along time which influenced the Crusaders to some extent. They lived together for years enjoying the religious diversity of the east which was absent in the west. The Crusaders wore similar clothes to the Christians of the

[142]Karabell, *People of the Book,* 87-88.

[143]Ibid., 100-101.

[144]http://archnet.org/library/sites/one-site.jsp?site_id=41.

east and followed some of the same rules of government made by previous Muslims. As long as the taxes were paid every society was free to follow its own ritual. ''They did not change a law or cult practice."[145] Thus, their siege of Jerusalem was in contrast to what was done by 'Umar and the Muslims in their conquest. The tolerance shown earlier by 'Umar not only allowed the churches of Jerusalem to survive until now but also broadcast a message about the meaning of coexistence between nations.

E. Cities where Muslims demolished churches to build mosques

1- Damascus: The Great Mosque of Damascus

   Unlike the cases of Jerusalem, Cairo and Alexandria, the mosque of Damascus was built at the site of the Cathedral of St. John after demolishing it. The site was a historical one which represented the faith and the religion of the power that ruled Syria. Generally in the cities there were vital urban and political focal points which were important for those who ruled, to assist their control and dominance over the city, an example being the Hagia Sophia in Constantinople. The site was not at the centre of the city but at a focal point. However, the Muslims at that time chose to transform its famous basilica to one of the most important monuments of Islamic Architecture (fig. 20). Despite this transformation of its function, the importance of the site remained intact.

The temple of Jupiter

   In Aramaic times the site was a temple dedicated to the God Hadad (fig. 21). Later it became a Roman temple for Jupiter constructed by Jayrun ibn Sa'ad ibn 'Ad until the time of Musa ibn 'Amran when it became a place of prayers for the Jews. Later at the time of the Christians, it was

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[145]Karabell, *People of the Book*, 108

transformed into the Basilica of St. John. Finally, it became a mosque. The site has been used as a place of prayer for different believers for almost four thousand years.[146]

The temple (fig. 22) was built in the centre of the site, stretching from the large arch from Bab al-Barid to another large arch, Bab Jairoun, measuring 380 meters in length and 310 meters in width. Inside the large walls was the bazaar. The temple had an opening in the centre of the four sides of its walls and at each corner there was a tower. The decoration inside the temple was Greco-Roman. It had a colonnade around the walls.[147]

After excavating the site of the temple, the remains of the main facade and the towers were found. According to Ibn Shakir the Greeks prayed towards the north where there was a niche, opposite the triple doors on the south. The concept of an open space in front of the temple was very common in ancient Syrian architecture. Normally, the open space was followed by the temple and it did not take a large space as at this site. The temple was for priests only; the open space in front of it was dedicated to all the citizens.

The Basilica of Saint John

According to René Dussaud, the basilica was built inside the temple. His theories about the basilica were refuted by Creswell as we are going to see later. Dussaud believed that the temple stood in the middle of the temenos but denied its conversion into a church at the time of Theodosius.[148] He added that the basilica was built in two stages. Then from his point of view the church was converted to a mosque; al-Walid added to it only the transept and the dome.[149] He

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[146]Dussaud, "Le Temple de Jupiter," 224.

[147]Ibid., 227-228.

[148]Creswell, *Early Muslim Architecture*, 1:182.

[149]Ibid., 183.

said that when the basilica was built, the triple door of the temenos at the south received on its walls invocations from the Trinity.[150]According to some historians, a central transept was built and then the triple doors at the south became the main entrance of the basilica and the other entrances were blocked. However, this argument was not correct due to the fact that the temple was orientated opposite the direction in which the Christians prayed which obligated them to destroy parts of the temple. They constructed their church based on the south walls of the temple; the basilica was composed of three naves without a transept at the first stage[151] and the triple door was considered as a main entrance with some inscriptions on it dedicated to the concept of the Trinity. The presence of this wall in the church helped to understand the evolution of the building from a temple to a basilica.

Creswell refuted Dussaud's beliefs. He said that the temple was converted to a freestanding church away from the walls and the triple doors. He added that the drawings (fig. 23) given by Dussaud failed to agree with his texts; the church at the second stage shows an open arcade in place of the north wall of the previous plan. Creswell added that when Dussaud spoke about an entrance being opened in the north wall, one can conclude that the north wall remained from the first stage. Besides, no texts mentions additions of the fifth century; moreover Dussaud didn't have any evidence to show that the transept was a later addition.

The site divided between the Muslims and the Christians

The beginning of the war between the Muslims and the Byzantines in Syria after the death of the prophet was at the time of the Caliph Abu Bakr when he sent Yazid ibn Abi Sufyan[152] in the

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[150]Ibid., 234.

[151]Ibid., 235.

[152]Al-Waqidī, *Futūh al-Shām*, vol.1, 6; al-Balādhurī, Aḥmad Ibn Yaḥyā, *Futūḥ al-Buldān*, 111.

first siege to Syria. Abu 'Ubaida ibn al-Jarah was sent to Syria to support the Muslims to

continue their conquest there. When the Muslims reached the borders of Damascus, the Caliph

decided to send Khalid ibn al-Walid to lead Abu 'Ubaida and his army in the final battles.[153] On

his way to Syria, the Byzantines saw Khalid and knew from their ancestors that the fall of Syria

would be under his leadership.[154]

 Khalid surrounded the city from the east gate and Abu 'Ubaida from Jabiya gate. Knowing

his peaceful personality, the Byzantines went to Abu 'Ubaida to negotiate with him to enter the

city without war in exchange for leaving their churches intact.[155] 'Ubaida agreed to make this

treaty to save the Muslims' blood. He entered the city peacefully at the same time that Khalid

was entering from the west gate fighting the Byzantines without knowing anything about the

treaty.

 The two leaders met each other at the church of Mariam. After many negotiations, Khalid

acknowledged 'Ubaida's treaty because as an Arab he couldn't change his promises. Was the

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[153]Ibid, 39. And al-Balādhurī, *Futūḥ al-Buldān,* 114.

[154]Ibid., 43. (A wise man called Sham'ān told them the description of the leader who was going

to conquer Syria which matched exactly Khalid's prophecy). See also al-Balādhurī, *Futūḥ al-*

Buldān, 114.

[155]Ibid., 158. Al-Balādhurī mentioned that Khalid entered the city peacefully, he was the one

who made the treaty with the Byzantines and not 'Ubaida who entered the city fighting the

Byzantines. Al-Balādhurī mentioned also that there was a story telling what was mentioned by

al-Waqidī but he was more certain of his story. I believe the story of al-Waqidī is more reliable

because 'Ubaida was the leader. In addition it was known that he was not a man of war unlike

Khalid who was known in the whole region as a warrior. Al-Balādhurī, *Futūḥ al-Buldān*, 124.

city was taken by force or by treaty? It was considered conquered by a treaty because Khalid agreed with what ʻUbaida had done.[156]

When was the site divided between Muslims and Christians? According to al-Waqadi, Damascus was conquered in the year 13 H. (634 CE) on the same day of the death of the Caliph Abu Bakr. The Muslims took a section of the church to use as a mosque in the reign of Muʻawiyah ibn Abi-Sufyan, in 661 CE. The palace of the caliph was immediately south of the temenos.[157] The Christians took the western part from the south wall to the west, while the Muslims took the eastern part.

The whole church demolished

In the reign of al-Walid 709 CE, the space for prayer became inadequate for the Muslims. He wanted to make a congregational mosque appropriate to the position of the Umayyads. The caliph negotiated with the Christians to takeover the whole site and in return he would gave them much money and some of the churches that were confiscated (sources mentioned that some of the churches were taken as booty).[158] Some scholars believe that the church was converted to a mosque but this is not true.[159] Creswell added that "can we believe, in the face of all this, that the work of al-Walid was confined to the erection of a dome?"[160]

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[156]Ibid, vol.2, 243. And al-Balādhurī, *Futūḥ al-Buldān*, 124.

[157]Dussaud, "Le Temple de Jupiter", 243.

[158]Ibn al-Qaym al-Juziah, *Aḥkām ahl al-zimma*, 1191.

[159]Creswell, *Early Muslim Architecture*, 187. Ibn al-Faqih said and many other scholars that the mosque absorbed the *kharaj* of the empire for seven years This information was related by Ibn Hauqal, Muqaddasi, Yaqut and Ibn ʻAsakir and others.

[160]Ibid., 187.

Creswell believes that there was a confusion within the words of the scholars between the church and the temenos (fig. 24); he said that the Muslims and the Christians shared the temenos together not the church. The Christians prayed in their church and the Muslims prayed in the open court of the temenos surrounded by its arcades. This situation remained for a long time until al-Walid became the Caliph and the number of Muslims praying inside the walls of the temenos became inadequate; the caliph pulled down the church and the colonnade around the temenos, only the four enclosing walls and the four corners were left. He got rid of the whole church to build a new structure. The prayer hall (figs. 25- 26) was basilical and attached to an open courtyard with a main transept covered by a pediment and a dome.

Marble was used for cladding the lower parts of the walls in all the mosque, while the mosaics were used to cover the top of the walls, the arches and the soffits of the vaults. One of the famous scenes inside the mosque was the image of the Barada River flowing near the Umayyad palaces the vegetations and the trees, which could also refer to the heavens. Quranic inscriptions in gold and royal blue were also added.

The fact that al-Walid took the church from the Christians seventy years after the conquest of Damascus could be considered as a turning point in Islamic concepts of tolerance which gave the right to Christians to keep their churches and obliged Muslims to safeguard them (based on the treaty done by 'Ubaida). Moreover, he demolished the most important church in Damascus with an upper hand in the negotiations done with the priests while he gave them their churches confiscated as booty in return. I believe it was difficult for the Christian community to refuse the offer, fearing al-Walid.

In addition, he was not bigoted, considering his use of the arts of the previous culture of the city. If al-Walid hated the Christians he would have scorned their art and he have would let their

workers make the mosque only with Islamic concepts instead of the new combination of Islamic and Byzantine art. Moreover, many Byzantine buildings remained; he didn't do, as earlier civilizations did, demolishing the traces of their predecessors. Thus, the taking of the site of the church was exceptional and symbolic and because of urban needs.[161] But this action affected the general concept of Islamic tolerance.

However, the situation of the Christians flourished when 'Umar ibn Abd al-'Aziz governed as he was famous for his fairness and justice. The priests went to him complaining about what was done to their church by al-Walid. He ordered the destruction of the mosque and the return of the site to the Christians.[162] The decision was shocking to the Muslims ulema so they went to the caliph trying to convince him to reverse his decision, but he refused and set a date and time to demolish the Great mosque. The religious ulema negotiated with the priests and the Christians to find another solution to keep the monument and at the same time compensate the Christians for their generous acceptance of this new agreement. The Christians community agreed and went to the Caliph to tell him that they accepted the compensation[163] which was to take some of the old churches confiscated as booty from the time of the conquest.[164]

The act of the caliph showed not only tolerance but fairness; he could have simply gave the Christians money or another piece of land but he chose the most fitting way. On the other hand, the Christians were generous to the Muslims when they accepted the compensation. Thus, we

[161]See chapter four, the analysis of the table of churches.

[162]Kaled, *Khlafā' al-rasūl*, 624-625.

[163]Ibid., 624-625.

[164]Ibn al-Qaym al-Juziah, *Aḥkām ahl al-zimma*, 1191.

could say that this architectural masterpiece belonging to Damascus survived all these years thanks to the tolerance of the Christians.

2. The great mosque of Aleppo and its similarity with the mosque of Damascus

Aleppo was known to be the second oldest city of Syria after Damascus. It was conquered by force by the Muslims in 637 CE. The Great mosque of Aleppo was built in 715 CE only ten years after the mosque of Damascus. The resemblances between the two mosques were not only in the importance of their locations (focal points of the city) but also in the circumstances of both of them.

The mosque of Aleppo was built in the courtyard of a Byzantine church named the great Byzantine cathedral of Aleppo which had previously been previous a Roman temenos temple.[165] The cathedral was built by the Empress Helena in the fifth century and was rebuilt by Justinian after the destruction of Aleppo by the Persians in 540. Parts of the cathedral remained and were incorporated in the *madrasa* of Halawiya (next door to the mosque) built in 1123 (fig. 27). Though the church remained standing until the time of the Crusaders, when the Muslims feared cooperation between the Christians and their enemies, they moved the Christians out of the walls of the city to a new quarter and turned the church into a *madrasa*.[166]

On the other hand, the mosque was rebuilt several times; the plan (fig. 28) is the only part that remained from the time of the Umayyads. Inside the sanctuary there was the shrine of the head of Zachariah (fig. 29), John the Baptist's father, another similarity to the mosque of Damascus.

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[165]Ball, *Syria: A Historical and Architectural Guide*, 133.

[166]Ibid., 134.

Thus, there was a large similarity between the Great mosques of Aleppo and Damascus; they were both built on an ancient religious site. Inside each, there was a tomb of a member of the family of Zakariah which was left intact as the Muslims believed in them as religious figures and as symbol of cohesion between the two religions. The Umayyads didn't mind using Christian labour or Byzantine art or even incorporating walls from churches in their mosques. That could be considered as an act of tolerance and acceptance to the other.

It seems that the Umayyad wanted to send an architectural message to the Byzantines that they had become the leaders of these cities to the extent that they could convert their large churches into mosques, and that the capital of their state should have a powerful image because they did not make this conversion or destruction in Jerusalem (conquered by a treaty). In Jerusalem they chose to leave the churches intact. I believe also that these conversions were made in some cities while not in others because of urban needs, e.g.in Jerusalem the site of the Dome of the Rock was empty at this time.

The conversion of the churches at the time of the Crusades could be analyzed from another point of view. The Muslims feared the relations between local Christians and the Crusaders. In Aleppo the Muslims considered the church at this time as a subversive zone which led them to convert one church into a mosque and to move the Christians outside the walls into another quarter. This could be considered as an example of the conflict in the treatment with the minorities when the state was in danger. Even if the church harbored spies, it was not acceptable to demolish the church if the Christians were paying the *jizya*.

3. The Great Mosque of Hama

The mosque of Hama was built (fig. 30) in the 8th century. Some sources mentioned that it was built in 636 CE but this is doubtful, because at this time even in the cities that were conquered by

force, churches were left intact, as in Cairo and Alexandria. Besides, the great mosques in Damascus and Aleppo were built later by the Umayyad Dynasty.[167] The Hama mosque was completely destroyed by the president Hafez al-Asad in 1982 in a "deliberate act of retaliation"[168] toward the upcoming power of the Muslim Brotherhood party in Hama.

The church, earlier transformed from a Roman temple, was adapted to be a mosque. The origin of the basilica could be noticed in the plan which consisted of three aisles. The courtyard was surrounded by an elevated covered portico with a treasury on one side like that of Damascus.

It is not known exactly when the basilica was transformed into a mosque. In addition to that, historians like Sauvaget and Creswell argued that the architectural remains in the mosque were from the Umayyad period. Sauvaget believed that the east arcade includes features from the Umayyad period because of the semi-circular arches which as he mentioned were used in Syria only exceptionally after the Umayyad dynasty (in the Ayyubid period), He added that the alternation of piers and columns was another feature of this era. He believed that the west and east walls were from the same date.[169]

On the other hand, Creswell showed that the alternation of columns with piers existed later in the mosque al-Hanabila of the Salihiyya quarter in Damascus. Creswell added that the south part of the east *riwaq* (figs. 31) was a part of the ancient *riwaq* but he wasn't sure that it belonged to the Umayyad era.[170]

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[167]Bernard O'Kane, "The Great Mosque of Hama Redux," 220.

[168]Ibid., 219.

[169]Ibid., 222.

[170]Ibid., 222.

In his article the "The Great Mosque of Hama Redux", O'Kane commented on Creswell's arguments; he affirmed that there were *riwaq*s in the Umayyad period because of the presence of the treasury (fig. 33) which couldn't have been built in a place other than a courtyard.[171]

Thus, this mosque was also converted from a church like the two previous ones in Damascus and Aleppo. The Umayyads did not care any longer about the treaty of 'Umar or the strategy of 'Amr ibn al-'As in Cairo and Alexandria. However, they did not mind leaving remains from the church in the mosque if they were not conflicting with Islamic concepts. Also, they used Byzantine laborers and accepted their art with the introduction of some Islamic features. What was different in Aleppo and Hama was that the Christians did not ask for compensation at the time of 'Umar ibn 'Abd al-Aziz period an indication that they knew the Islamic law which states that Muslims in the cities conquered by wars (*'unwa*) had a license to take a church's site if there was a need for it.[172]

4. The Zaytuna mosque an influence of Cordoba

Before the conquest of Islam, in the first half of the six century North Africa was reconquered by the Byzantines (after the defeat of the Vandals). Their administrative language was Greek, a foreign tongue. Tension arose between the African Christians and the church of Constantinople which reached the level of persecutions. Moreover, the cities suffered from abandonment due to the absence of security, the religious and urban situations paved the way for the Islamic conquest.[173]

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[171]Ibid., 222.

[172]See chapter 2.

[173]Kennedy, *The Great Arab Conquests,* 202.

'Amr ibn al-'As, after his conquest of Alexandria, tried to continue to North Africa. The campaign didn't face any real opposition until he reached Barqah. There he made a treaty with the Berbers and not with the Byzantines. 'Amr continued to Tripoli and then returned to Egypt, leaving 'Uqba as its governor.[174] 'Uqba later became the leader of the expedition to North Africa where he showed extreme courage and heroism.

'Ibn Nafi' constructed the city of Qayrawan in 670, He chose the site because it was far from the sea and the Byzantines couldn't reach it. He built a government house, houses for the citizens and a mosque.

On the coast, in the city of Tunis, the Zaytuna mosque was built in 732 CE on the ruins of an old Roman Basilica. The original mosque was built by Hasan ibn Nu'man but a century later, it was rebuilt by the Aghlabid Amir Abu Ibrahim Ahmad (856-863) with his other large project, the mosque of Qairawan.

The Zaytuna plan was similar to Cordoba. It was a trapezoidal plan (figs. 34, 35) with twelve portals around a large court and with four additional portals that linked the covered prayer area to the market. There was also a small door to the east of the mihrab, which provided a direct access for the imam. An elegant dome was added over the mihrab in 991 CE during the Zigrid period to highlight the T-plan.

Although in this case the mosque was built on the ruins of a church, this was hardly intolerant. The design of the mosque combined several cultures such as Andalusian (figs. 36, 37), North African and Byzantine, which was in the normal way of Islamic architecture to interact with the surrounding cultures and to form its own style in the building.

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[174]Ibid, 206-207.

5. Legends, wonders and misery - the Great mosque of Cordoba

The conquest of al-Andalus by the Muslims was one of their great achievements in history. After the conquest of North Africa, Tariq ibn Ziyad was sent by Musa ibn Nusayr to conquer al-Andalus in 711 CE.[175]

Islamic rule continued in al-Andalus. In the year 750 CE the Umayyad prince ʿAbd al-Rahman al-Dakhil succeeded in escaping the new rulers of the Islamic lands, the ʿAbbasids, to the only place where he could be accepted and legitimized, al-Andalus. At this time, al-Andalus was having political disturbances which was an excellent environment for the introduction of a new ruler.[176]

ʿAbd al-Rahman made Cordoba the capital of Spain in 756 CE. One of his most important buildings was the mosque of Cordoba. What was the history of this mosque and its surroundings?

The origin of the mosque of Cordoba is a debatable issue; some historians believed that it was built over a Christian church while others suggest that it was built on the site of a Roman warehouse.[177] What are the facts of the matter?

Spain was under the Roman Empire from the first century CE until the fifth century CE when the Christian Visigoths took over Cordoba which remained under their rule for three centuries until the Muslim conquest.[178]

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[175]Ibid, 311.

[176]Al-Sirganī, "Saqr quraysh".

[177]Mills, *Origin of the Mosque of Cordoba*, 20.

[178]Ibid., 20.

One of the reliable sources on the history of the mosque is al-Razi; he said that 'Abd al-Rahman al-Dakhil dismantled the church of St. Vincent which was originally a Roman Temple, to build the mosque instead of it. Creswell criticized al-Razi's chronicle by saying that this story was invented due to its resemblance to the scenario of the mosque of Damascus. He noted that story of the conversion of the Great mosque of Damascus was transmitted by Ibn al-Jubayr to Spain at the end of the twelve century so that "it became linked to the Cordoba mosque shortly afterwards"[179] then integrated into the account of al-Razi in the thirteenth century and later adopted by others such as ibn Adhari and al-Maqqari. Moreover, Creswell added that Gayangos points out that in the list of churches mentioned by Florez as existing in Cordova before the conquest there is no mention of one dedicated to St. Vincent.[180] Many other modern historians, such as Henri Terrasse, Felix Hernandez and Manuel Gomez, agreed with the opinion of Creswell that there was no evidence of a previous church. Thus, it seems that this church was one of the legends of al-Andalus especially since excavations showed some Roman mosaics and foundations of houses.[181]

The first stage of the mosque was designed at the time of 'Abd al-Rahman between 784 and 786. It was a rectangular prayer hall with a courtyard like the Umayyad mosques in Syria. The number of aisles was at first eleven divided by ten arcades of twelve arches each resting on marble columns and running perpendicular to the qibla wall (fig. 38, 39). Similar to many major early Islamic mosques many additions were made to it.[182]

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[179]Creswell, *Early Muslim Architecture,* 2:138.

[180]Ibid., 2:138.

[181]Mills, *Origin of the Mosque of Cordoba*, 27.

[182]Creswell, *A Short Account of Early Muslim Architecture*, 226.

The Syrian influence is clear in this mosque due to the fact that it was built by the Umayyad 'Abd al-Rahman I. Perpendicular aisles to the back wall were seen before in al-Aqsa mosque.[183] Its horseshoe arches (fig. 40) were an influence from the baptistery of Mar Ya'qub at Nisibin.[184] Its double tiers of arcades (fig. 41) were an influence from the Great mosque of Damascus and the Umayyad Aqsa but the treatment is different from what was seen in Cordoba. Creswell suggested that it was inspired from the surrounding context such as, for example, the Roman aqueduct de Los Milagros at Merida. However, the treatment in the mosque is not the same, an indication of the creativity of the Muslim architect who did not copy but was inspired by the surroundings.

From the previous, it is obvious that Muslims in Spain were similar to Muslims in other cities, who borrowed from earlier cultures; but this time they took also from previous earlier Muslim architecture. So, were the social relations between Muslims and the People of the Book reflected in their architecture?

The relations between the Christians, Jews and Muslims were part of Cordoba's fame. The number of inhabitants grew to reach hundreds of thousands which at that time was larger than Paris,[185] London and Rome combined, and the same as Baghdad and Constantinople.[186] Cordoba, like Baghdad, was a cultural and intellectual centre. It was also a great market linking the east to

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[183]Ibid., 226.

[184]Ibid., 74.

[185]http://www.islamicity.com/mosque/ihame/sec5.htm. At this time the number of inhabitants of in Paris was 38,000 while in Cordoba it was about 500.000.

[186]Karabell, *People of the Book,* 69.

the west; it was described by one of the Christian visitors as "the ornament of the world".[187] John of Gorze, a delegate of a German prince, was astonished when he saw the luxurious court of the Caliph.[188]

The lands of Spain were not only acquired by conquest, but also by treaties. The king of the area around Murcia in the south east made a treaty with 'Abd al-Aziz the son of Musa which says:

> In the name of God, the Merciful, the compassionate. This text was written by Abd al-Aziz ibn Nusayr for Tudmir ibn Ghabdush, establishing a treaty of peace and the promise and protection of God and his prophet (may God bless him and grant him his peace). We ('Abd al-Aziz) will not set any special conditions for him or for any among his men, nor harass him, nor will they be separated from their women and children. They will not be coerced in matters of religion, their churches will not be burned, nor will sacred objects be taken from the realm as long as Theodemir remains sincere and fulfils the following conditions we have set for him:
>
> He had reached a settlement concerning seven towns: Orihuela, Valenuntila, Alicante, Mula, Bigastro, Ello and Lorca.
>
> He will not give shelter to fugitives, nor to our enemies, nor encourage any protected person to fear us, nor conceal news of our enemies.
>
> He and each of his men shall also pay one dinar every year, together with four measures of wheat, four measures of barley, four liquid measures of concentrated fruit juice, four liquid measures of vinegar, four honeys and four of olive oil. Slaves must each pay half of his.[189]

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[187]Ibid, 69.

[188]Ibid., 70.

[189]Kennedy, *the Great Arab Conquests,* 316.

The Christians were needed to work in agriculture, because it was not only a source of food but a source of income as well. Taxes were taken from them as usual but they worked also as tax collectors. The Jews benefitted from their presence with Muslims as much as possible. They lived under Muslim protection without the discrimination they suffered at the time of the Visigoths.[190] They were a link between the Muslims in Spain and the rest of the world. They were great traders, agents for the Muslim ruler who wanted to import or to export.[191]

We are not sure if they helped the Muslims in their conquest but it seemed that they welcomed their arrival.[192] Two Jewish names were famous in the tenth century, Hasdai ibn Shaprut and Samuel the Naigid. Hasdai was the leader of the Jewish community in Cordoba. He became an adviser to the caliph and also his doctor. Samuel was a great warrior and poet; he was the chief of the Muslim armies. Jews played a large role in the eleventh century when the caliph's power began to decrease and there were multiple cities competing for power, since they possessed skills in translation and administration which were needed at that time. They were multilingual, well educated and trustworthy.[193]

Thus, the relations between Muslims and People of the Book were based on cooperation. The Christians were good farmers; they would both (Muslims and Christians) say each others prayers together to guarantee rainfall and they would pray side by side on their holidays. The Jews helped in state as translators.[194]

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[190]Karabell, *People of the Book*, 71.

[191]Ibid, 71.

[192]Kennedy, *The Great Arab Conquests,* 311.

[193]Karabell, *People of the Book,* 77.

[194]Ibid, 82.

On the other hand, there were moments of intolerance but not only with People of the Book but also with the Muslims themselves. In the eleventh century the Almoravid Berbers were fighting the Arab elites and their army contained a mixture of Arabs, Berbers and Christians. When the Berbers attacked Cordoba they were brutal and burned the palace and the library. But this sort of brutality was not frequent. Confrontation within Muslim dominions after the tenth century also happened between Muslims and Christians because of the wars that happened on the borders between Léon and Aragon in the north.[195]

Previously we noted that the spirit of the Prophet and his followers was still present in the minds of the Muslims while making their treaties or dealing with the People of the Book. However, tensions between the two groups increased during war and especially at the time of weakness of the state. In these cases discrimination was not against the Christians only but also against the Muslims, even if they never reached the level of persecution.

The fall of Cordoba in 1492 put an end to the cooperation between the Muslims and the Christians. The Muslims accepted to give the city to the Christians after a treaty was made. It mentioned that the governors of the city could go to North Africa with their money and the Muslims who stayed should be secured with their properties and money. Muslim laws applied among themselves. Christians didn't have the authority to enter Muslim houses without permission. Mosques should be kept intact and Muslims were free to practice their religious rituals as before.

Once the Christians entered Nasrid territory, they renounced the covenant, and mosques and their endowments were confiscated. The Cordoba great mosque, as well as all the other mosques,

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[195]Ibid, 82.

was converted into a church. A decree was released in 1501 to burn all Arabic and Islamic books in the open squares of the city. Every Muslim was obliged to convert to Christianity.

After the conquest of Ferdinand III of Castile in 1236, he established the church of Saint Clemente within the Great mosque of Cordoba. At the end of the fifteenth century a chapel was erected in the northern part of the extension of al-Hakam (fig. 42- 43).[196] At the beginning of the sixteenth century, a larger cathedral was built at the center of the mosque. When it was visited by Charles V, he said to the clergy responsible of the construction:"If I had known what you wished to do, you would not have done it, because what you are carrying out there is to be found everywhere, and what you had formerly done does not exist anywhere else in the world."[197]

From the previous, we can conclude that the Great mosque of Cordova was built over a warehouse or ruins of an old Roman building which was not a church. The idea of the church divided and later converted to a mosque was probably a legend taken from the history of the Great Mosque of Damascus, since the history of al-Andalus was not written before the tenth century. The architectural style was quite different from Roman architecture with its famous horseshoe two-tier arches but we know that it was done in the reign of Abd al-Rahman.

The spirit of the treaties of the prophet and his companion was revealed in the treaty made by 'Abd al-'Aziz. The idea of church conversion stopped at the time of al-Andalus although it was built by an Umayyad Caliph (there is not any evidence of churches being converted to mosques); we can say that the Umayyads in Spain were not following the same strategy of their relatives in Syria. This strategy was reflected in the cooperation between the Muslims and the People of the Book.

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[196]Creswell**, *Early Muslim Architecture,* 2:145.

[197]Ibid., 2:145.

Tolerance and cohesion was the background for the development of al-Andalus; although there were some tribulations between the Muslims and the Christians at time of war and weakness of the state they never reached the level of brutality seen later on the Christian side. What the Christians did after the fall of Cordoba was one of the greatest atrocities done in history. This brutality affected the architecture of Cordoba by the demolition of some mosques even though they did not do the same with the Cordoba mosque due to its rare beauty. Despite all this brutality by the Christians towards the Muslims, the fact that they left the structure of the mosque with its decoration revealed a hidden admiration of the Muslims' skills which is one of the contradictions and wonders of al-Andalus.

F. The conquest of Constantinople: fulfilment of a prophecy

The conquest of Constantinople was a dream to all Muslim rulers, which started from the very beginning of the history of the Muslim state. This was due to its important location that led some historians to say that if the world was one nation, Constantinople would be its capital. Moreover, Muslims wanted to conquer this city because of the prediction of the prophet that will now be discussed.[198]

Due to its location near Syria and to the prophet's *hadith*: "Verily you shall conquer Constantinople. What a wonderful leader will he be, and what a wonderful army will that army be,"[199] many leaders wanted to have this honour**.** The Caliph Mu'awiya started the first siege (44 H /664 CE) but it failed; he tried several more times without success. One of the longest fought sieges in the Umayyad era was by Sulyman ibn 'Abd al-Malik (98 H. / 716 CE) which also failed

[198]Al-Ṣalābī, *al-Dawla al-'uthmāniyya,* 88.

[199]Necipoglu, "The Life of an Imperial Monument," 199.

to conquer the city. Attempts continued until the time of the Abbasid Caliph Harun al Rashid (190 H /805 CE) when he undertook a large campaign to conquer the city. Although he could not win the battle it affected the internal stability of Constantinople.[200]

Many unsuccessful attempts had occurred during Islamic history to take Constantinople, which was the Byzantine capital. Muhammad al-Fatih prepared an army of 250,000 persons (a huge number for this time) with strong new weapons. He brought a Hungarian engineer and put in his hands all the financial and human resources, which helped him to design and produce several huge canons. He also prepared a maritime fleet composed of four hundred ships.[201] He made several treaties with the principalities around Constantinople to secure their neutrality during his war with it.

The Byzantines tried to bribe al-Fatih with money; when he refused the Byzantine emperor asked for help from all the European countries including the Catholic pope (the two churches were enemies). The pope of the Orthodox Church offered the pope of the Catholic Church to put the Eastern Church under his authority if he received help in this war. This agreement angered the residents of Constantinople, who said that they preferred to watch Turkish turbans (referring to Muslims) walking in their country instead of seeing the Latin hat (referring to the Catholics) in their streets.[202]

The Muslim army besieged the city for a long time. The Byzantines offered money but the Sultan refused and sent to them a letter saying that if the city surrendered, he would guarantee

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[200]Al-Ṣalābī, *al-Dawla al-ʿuthmāniyya*, 88.

[201]Ibid, 92.

[202]Ibid, 93.

their safety.[203] Before the last confrontation, the sultan ordered his army to be mindful of Islamic precepts when they entered the city, not to damage any church or temple and to leave the priests, the women, the child and the old people free.[204]

The city fell on the 29th of May 1453. The sultan went directly to Hagia Sophia where many of the Christians were hiding. When one of the monks opened the door, he ordered him to calm the people and to let them return to their homes. When the people heard this, they returned calmly to their houses and some of the hiding priests converted to Islam.[205] So why did al-Fatih directly go to Hagia Sophia? What did he mean by this action? In addition, what were the importance and the history of this building that led him to convert it to a mosque?

1. Hagia Sophia

The most obvious case of transformation or Islamization of an ecclesiastical building was Hagia Sophia. What makes it an important case to study is the presence of the two layers of history in the building and because it was an important monument in both the Byzantine and Islamic eras. The Byzantine Church of Hagia Sophia (fig. 44) stands atop the first hill of Constantinople at the tip of the historic peninsula, surrounded by the waters of the Sea of Marmara, the Bosphorus and the Golden Horn on three sides. It was built by Justinian I between 532 and 537 and was located in close proximity to the Great Palace of the Emperors, the Hippodrome, and the Church of Hagia Irene. The third known church to be built at its site since 360, the Justinian church replaced the smaller basilica built by Theodosius II in 415, which burnt down in the Nika riots against Justinian I and Empress Theodora. Beginning construction

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[203]Ibid, 96.

[204]Ibid, 107.

[205]Ibid, 111.

immediately after suppressing the revolt, Justinian commissioned the physicist Isidoros of Miletus, and the mathematician Anthemios of Thrales to build a church larger and more permanent than its precedents. The emperor assigned the building to mathematicians rather than architects to cope with the proportions of the enormous building and its dome.[206]

Centuries after it was built, the building had a huge reputation especially with the Muslims. For them the conquest of Constantinople became a dream due to its difficulty. A Byzantine source mentioned that at the time of Bayazid I, half a century before Mehmet II conquered Constantinople, he wanted to transform the church into a royal mosque when he contemplated the building during one of his sieges. This indicates how prestigious this monument was.[207]

The dream was realized when Mehmet II (al-Fatih) succeeded finally in conquering Constantinople in 1453. As mentioned above, when the victorious Sultan made his formal entry into the vanquished city, he directly visited Hagia Sophia. Was it only to see the beauty of the building that he heard about? Or was it to declare to the whole world that the Muslim's conquest of Constantinople meant the defeat of the Byzantines which was symbolized by the church? The court historian Tursun Beg describes how the Sultan was impressed by the dome of the church, its marble floor resembling the wavy sea and its artistic golden mosaics. The appreciation of the Sultan is also registered in his *waqfiyya*, where it is referred to as the "exquisitely ornamented church." This appreciation was due to the fact that all previous Ottoman mosques were smaller. Of course, later buildings were affected by Hagia Sophia. But what architectural feature attracted the Sultan?[208]

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[206] http://archnet.org/library/sites/one-site.jsp?site_id=2966.

[207] Necipoglu, "The Life of an Imperial Monument," 196.

[208] Ibid, 197.

The plan of Hagia Sophia is rather simple. It is a rectangle 70 m. x 75 m., with 4 piers inside it creating a square. Seventy feet from the ground are four huge semicircular arches (the east and west freestanding while the north and south are embedded inside the walls that form the nave, more like relieving arches). At the four corners of the square four pendentives rise to support the huge dome, a shell with 40 ribs. From the east and west sides two huge semi domes of the same diameter as the main dome, continue the inner structure of the church. From the corner points of what would be half an octagon in each of these semicircles rise smaller exedras topped by semi domes again. In a sense, the main dome is supported on pendentives and the side semi-domes rest on squinches[209] (fig. 45).

All around this inner structure runs a colonnade forming two singles aisles of irregular form as it runs around the central plan. Above them on the second storey there are galleries. Outside on the west end, an atrium connects the two aisles around the nave. Opposite the entrance, an exedra terminates the end of a barrel vault between the piers supporting the east semi-dome. Between the piers of the north and south walls, columns stand for support. The columns are of monolithic marble and have bronze collars on the top and bottom. Above them the tympana are pierced with many openings for light.[210]

The church is built of stone (mainly the piers), brick and granite. The mortar used was thick like the brick, which might have been the reason behind an earlier deformity of the building. The attraction of the plan appears in the bringing together of the longitudinal nave with the centralized plan. But most of all it is the emphasis on height that gave the structure an

[209]http://archnet.org/library/sites/one-site.jsp?site_id=2966.

[210]Ibid.

accentuation of the central axis.[211]

Mehmet II, who was fascinated by this architecture, wanted to use the building as a royal mosque. But how could he legitimize this act? He ordered the historians at this time to write the history of the city and the building. He knew from them that the original building of the church signified the victory of Christianity over paganism so for him it would be the same; the mosque would present the triumph of Islam over Christianity. In addition to that, there was a myth that Abu Ayyub al-Ansari, one of the companions of the prophet, during one of the many sieges prayed there after taking permission from the Byzantines which was very unusual, and gave the place a spiritual meaning.[212] Moreover, there was a license in Islamic law that gave the ruler permission to convert or destroy churches in cities that were taken by war.[213] All these factors and the fact that it took the Muslims eight sieges to conquer the city paved the way to the conversion from a church into a mosque; for them it was a symbol of power, dignity and faith.

Actually the repairs to the church had been taking place continuously. The first dome which was most probably a shallow one collapsed in 558. It was rebuilt as a steeper ribbed dome in 563. Some changes already took place with this rebuilding because the first dome had caused some structural deformities to the base. To solve this some changes were made in the colonnades and the gallery arcades, exchanging the first and shifting the latter from their places. According to Eveliya Celebi, Mehmet II sent the Byzantine emperor an Islamic architect to repair damage caused by an earthquake before its conquest by three years which demonstrates how much the building was in the mind of the Muslims and that its maintenance and safety was important to

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[211]Ibid.

[212]Necipoglu, "The Life of an Imperial Monument," 200.

[213]See chapter 2.

them.[214] Also, it proves that at this time Muslims were flexible to deal with monuments of other religions, even more than in the present.

Mehmet II attached a few signs related to Islam into the church; he removed the crosses, the relics and added the first two minarets which signified that the mosque had become an imperial mosque. He removed the bell and built a madrasa behind the mosque to teach Islamic theology. At the interior he added a marble mihrab and a mimbar which were off-axis, facing Mecca; consequently the rugs were put in this direction which affected the interior. The figural mosaics at eye level were plastered over; the ones above were there until the 16th century. Inside the building the Sultan put relics of victory. At this stage the mosque was made a waqf with shops and other property to maintain it.[215]

In 1526, Suleyman the magnificent offered as a waqf two enormous candlesticks removed from the cathedral of Buda after his conquest of Hungary.[216] At this time Hagia Sophia became the symbol of the continuous victory of Islam over the Byzantine world. When Selim II came to the throne, the architect Ahmet responsible for the mosque told the sultan that the building needed reinforcement. He began to renovate it by demolishing adjacent buildings (kitchen, rooms, latrine, and houses) which were affecting its walls (fig. 46). The sultan ordered compensation to those who would lose their buildings but some of them refused saying that the sultan was not obliged to restore the church. This incident proves that until that time the history of the church was dominant over the mosque in the minds of people. The sultan ordered Sinan to build buttresses around the building and one minaret at the southwest with the addition of two

[214]Necipoglu, "The Life of an Imperial Monument," 202-203.

[215]Ibid., 203-204.

[216]Ibid., 203-204.

madrasas and a mausoleum but he died before the project was completed. The two madrasas were never completed and the mausoleum was only completed by his son Murat III. Selim while thinking about this project told Sinan "it is my wish to renovate the noble mosque in order to make it my own royal monument."[217] His words indicate how much he wanted his name to be linked to the glory of the building; the fact that he wanted to be buried in the mosque instead of his own mosque in Edirne proved that he wanted Hagia Sophia to be stamped by his name. He was the first Sultan to be buried there possibly because there were already restorations done by him at this time, so he declared his wish to be buried in Hagia Sophia.[218]

However, what was behind the decision of Selim to be buried in Hagia Sophia instead of making his own mausoleum connected to his mosque in Edirne? It is known that Sultan Selim II was fascinated by Edirne because of the presence of the Tunca Palace and his passion in hunting in this area, so he decided to make his imperial mosque there instead of Istanbul. In Edirne, twenty-nine monuments are located within a concentrated area five kilometers in diameter. Sinan choose a site for Selim's mosque called the Sari Tepe which occupied the most dominant view of the city[219] and which was related to the two mosques built around 130 years before the Selimiye, the Eski cami and Üç Şerefeli mosque. Sinan suggested that the spatial organization of the three mosques together looked like the Salute in Venice which prompted Sinan not to use the normal type of complexes, which normally included a mausoleum in the Selimiye mosque in this case.[220] Therefore, here the Sultan decided to build his mausoleum in the Hagia Sophia to be linked with

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[217]Ibid., 203-204.

[218]Ibid, 205.

[219]Cinici, "The Urban Arrangement of Selimiye Mosque at Edirne," 86-87.

[220]Ibid., 86-87.

its glory as mentioned before and to have a memorial to him in the capital of Istanbul.

At the time of Murat III Sinan built another minaret for the symmetry of the building. He tried to gave these two minarets an appearance similar to the first two built by Sultan Mehmet II. The ideas of surrounding the building with four minarets appears to reinforce the architectural competition between Hagia Sophia and the Selimiye mosque built in Edirne between 1568 and 1574. Hagia Sophia was always in the minds of the architects while designing any other Ottoman building from the time of Mehmet II onwards. Also, the monumental dome of the Selimiye mosque built between 1572 and 1573 (the same time of the restoration of Hagia Sophia) was planned to be larger than the one built by Justinian, and if the two madrasas had been completed it would confirm the long dialogue between the two monuments. Not only Selim was buried there but also Murat III and Mehmet III had their mausoleums around the building.[221]

After all these rehabilitations to transform the church into mosque (fig. 47) comes the question, could the building really function like a mosque? The mosque plan should ideally always be a rectangle or a square, because the greatest number of those praying should pray in the front lines since the prophet mentioned that the best of the rows are the first then the second and so on. In this case the longest rows of those praying would be in the center not near the mihrab. In addition the idea of making the mimbar and the mihrab off axis in the space to face Mecca and not in the center of the apse is uncomfortable; architecturally the visitor entering the place could not see them easily. All these factors are not desirable in a mosque.

After the conquest of Constantinople, many buildings were affected by the design of Hagia Sophia. The mosque of Bayezid II (1501-6), covered by an upper structure consisting of a dome and two half domes, reminds us of the upper structure of the Byzantine church. Actually, the

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[221]Necipoglu, "The Life of an Imperial Monument," 210.

mosque is not identical with the church because the plans are different, one is a basilica the other is a square prayer hall, but the distribution of the domes covering the plan is affected by Hagia Sophia. The Sulyemanie (1555-1557) mosque is also derived from Hagia Sophia; both are covered with one large dome and two semi domes, both had four minarets and royal mausoleums attached to them. Also, the Kilich Ali Pasha is considered one of the mosques inspired by Hagia Sophia; it is covered by a central dome and two semi-domes (with only one minaret because it is not a royal mosque).

Finally, it is obvious from the previous that the idea of transforming Hagia Sophia from a church into mosque was not because of the absence of mosques in the area or for the urgent necessity to have a praying area for the victorious army. The choice of Hagia Sophia was made thoughtfully and this was proven by the fact that the first thing done by Mehmet II after conquering the city was to enter the church immediately and to call for prayer from inside, prove to the whole world and the citizens of the city that Constantinople, the capital of Christianity in the east, after all the attempts to capture it was now under the authority of the Muslims. The sultan did not intend to harm the Christians because he was very tolerant to all of them, but he altered the building for political reasons.[222]

The huge building was a symbol of power and domination from the time of Justinian until Ottoman times. During the Ottoman dynasty, after the conquest of Constantinople the message sent was the dominance of the Muslims over the city. In the 16th century the message was the continuance of the Muslims domination over the Christian world. Even in modern times after Ataturk ruled he transformed it into a museum; he wanted to say that the time and power of the

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[222]In fact at this time the church was a political and religious entity, it was responsible of all the Byzantine attacks towards the Islamic world.

Muslim Ottomans was over.

2. Al-Fatih Mosque

Ten years after the conquest of Istanbul, Sultan Muhammad decided to build a mosque on the site of the church of the Holy Apostles. Why did he choose to build his own mosque on the site of a church while he was the one who ordered his army not to harm a religious building?

To understand this choice we have to read more about the urban fabric of the church at this time. According to Eviliya Celebi, the church was "dilapidated".[223] After the conversion of Hagia Sophia, the sultan ordered the Greek patriarchate to move to the church of the Holy Apostles, which became the administrative centre of the Greeks. Soon the number of Muslims increased in the area, which let the Patriarch of the church to move his religious activities to the main Christian part of the city called the Phanar district and gave the church to the sultan. This development took some time, which explains why the sultan made this decision after ten years. He made it when the urban importance of the church decayed which made the way open to the Muslims to take the land. Why did he build the mosque instead of converting it from a church?

Due to the previous experience in Hagia Sophia, which led to architectural problems in the function of the mosque as said before, the sultan took the decision of building a new mosque instead of converting it. Moreover, the glory of Hagia Sophia, the beauty of its architecture and its historical layers made the idea of conversion more valuable than the idea of destruction. The political and religious meaning in this case was stronger. What was the shape of the new mosque and was it influenced from Byzantine architecture?

Atik Sinan designed the mosque, built in 1463 and finished in 1470; it was the first mosque

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[223]Mehmet Aga-Oglu, "The Fatih Mosque at Constantinople," 179.

to be built in Istanbul and the largest at its time.[224] The real design of the mosque was known

from an artist who drew the city of Constantinople probably between 1557 and 1561(fig. 48).

From the drawing, we can distinguish the rectangular shape of the mosque with its two minarets

and the cupolas of the courtyard on the right side; on the high wall of the mosque there are three

side cupolas. To the right of the minaret we have the usual portico covered with five domes in

typical Ottoman style. There was also a courtyard surrounded by arcades with an ablution

fountain in the middle.[225] Only the courtyard and the portico remained intact after the terrible

earthquake of 1766.[226]

According to Aga-Oglu, the style of the mosque can be considered as a development of

Ottoman architecture rather than direct influence from Byzantine churches in Istanbul.[227] The

main element of the mosque was the square dome, which was an important element in Ottoman

and Seljuk architecture. In older mosques, this element appeared independently as in Mahmud

Chelebi in Iznik. The other important element in al-Fatih was the domed square, which was a

new feature in Turkish architecture.

The mosque could be considered as a continuation of Seljuk Turkish architecture, which in

turn was influenced by Persian and Syrian architecture. For example, the arcades running in front

of the mosque were a characteristic of all the madrasas in Anatolia.

The Fatih mosque in its old shape was also a part of the evolution of other designs with a

semi-dome over the qibla wall which in their turn was developed in the Beyazid mosque at

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[224]Godfrey Goodwin, *A History of Ottoman Architecture*, 121.

[225]Mehmet Aga-Oglu, "The Fatih Mosque at Constantinople", 183-184.

[226]Godfrey Goodwin, *A History of Ottoman Architecture*, 122.

[227]Mehmet Aga-Oglu, "The Fatih Mosque at Constantinople," 184.

Constantinople (fig. 49).[228]

   We could not deny that this last development was by the influence of Hagia Sophia but even

without it, it was the normal sequence of evolution in the Turkish architecture. However,

Byzantine architecture was a catalyst in the design. Moreover, the Hagia Sophia encouraged the

enlargement of the prayer hall. "We are therefore justified in saying that the time of the conquest

of Constantinople does not signify this sudden revolution in late Turkish architecture as art

historians have hitherto believed. On the contrary, it was a movement of the Turkish architectural

spirit that grew out of Anatolian conditions, attaining only gradually its acme in the new

capital."[229]

   Yet, the treatment of the two, Hagia Sophia and the Holy Apostles, differed in the mind of

the Sultan. In Hagia Sophia, the building was treated more as a political building, like the

ministry of defense or the republican palace nowadays, due to the continued attacks by the

Byzantine Empire on Muslims lands. At these times, the church had the upper hand in all the

decisions of the empire. Transforming the building into an Islamic one was important way of

sending a message to the western church first and the rest of the world secondarily that the

Muslims were now the leaders of the eastern world.

   On the other hand, Mehmet was not contradicting with himself when he destroyed the church

of the Holy Apostle which had already been abandoned by the Christians and the priests due to

the increase of Muslims in the area that lessened the importance of the church. The priests

themselves moved their church to another area before the desire of the Sultan became apparent.

According to the Islamic law, he had the right to take the land of the church if the Christians

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[228]Ibid., 192.

[229]Ibid., 192.

were not using it or their numbers decreased in the district. What proved that were the demographic changes in the number of Christians at certain districts and that most of the church conversions that happened were at the district of al-Fatih.[230] After the movement of the Christians towards another district, the sultan decided to take the building and to build his own mosque. Of course at this time the idea of leaving a building empty without use was not appreciated and the science of conservation and the idea of museums were not present yet.

Thus, revealing the concepts behind the conversion of each church or the concepts for leaving many of them intact as seen previously helps us to understand more why these actions were taken.

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[230]See chapter 4, analysis of the table.

Chapter 5

Conclusion

   This research aimed to study some aspects of architecture and mosque building related to the concept of tolerance in Spain, North Africa (Libya, Morocco and Algeria), Cairo, Alexandria, Jerusalem, Damascus, Hama, Aleppo and Istanbul under various Islamic Dynasties. From the previous chapters we can see that the concepts of tolerance and cohesion were central to Muslim belief. We know this not only from manuscripts showing treaties made by different rulers in different lands conquered by Muslims but also from a large body of further evidence. For those who deny that this concept is related to Islam, I would argue that the survival of churches with all their images demonstrated this concept. The surviving buildings can help to trace relations between the Muslims and Christians throughout Islamic history.

   However, this relation as we saw started before building even the state of Islam; it started from Muhammed's first day in prophecy when he saw the angel Gabriel and needed an explanation, for which he received help from a Christian called Waraqah ibn Nawfal. When the first state of Islam was built the civil rights of People of the Book and even the polytheists were written down in the constitution of Madina. When the state of Islam grew, treaties were made between the Christians living in the Arabic peninsula and the prophet; converting to Islam was not an issue in these treaties, they were more about political issues and not religious ones.

   The rules of the prophet to deal with the People of the Book were followed by the four rightly-guided caliphs. Due to different political issues the caliph 'Umar ibn al-Khattab was the most famous one of all the four caliphs in his tolerant policies towards the People of the Book.

   The history of the Umayyads, Abbasids, Fatimids, Mamluks and Ottomans were full of examples of tolerance, some caliphs even exaggerated the amount of rights given to the People

of the Book, like the Fatimids. Others were busier fortifying their state which led them not to focus so much on the treatment of the People of the Book, as in the Umayyad Dynasty. But at least the Christians lived in circumstances better than their lives in Byzantine times. The Abbasids and the Ottomans were the most cooperative and liberal with the Christians.

However, this tolerance and cohesion was broken at the times of wars with the Byzantine and the Crusaders. Christians were under suspicion of being spies for the enemies. In addition to that, they were badly treated at the time of the fall of any dynasty. At those times the ruler, feeling loss of control tried to impose what power he had over the minority who were also under suspicion of starting troubles in the state. Also, the minorities were badly treated when the ruler was known for his unfairness, for example the Fatimid ruler al-Hakim.

Cases of intolerance during Islamic history were few. The evidence for this in the small number of churches destroyed has been considered previously. But in general, the most intolerant cases in Islamic history are by no means comparable with the persecutions and suffering of the Jews and the Christians done by the Byzantines.

The concept of tolerance to the other was an obligation to each person who wanted to be a good Muslim. Many verses in the Quran and many *hadith*s tackle it. Islam continued the concept of tolerance mooted by Christianity, but the examples known in Christianity were between Christians dealing with each other tolerantly. Experiences of tolerance during wars and between different nations were one of the important areas in which Islam exercised tolerance.

Islamic law is very detailed on this point. There were many important laws extracted from Quran and *sunna* to tell Muslims exactly how to deal with the People of the Book after conquering any country. The most important laws for us were those concerning the churches. They were divided into three categories. The first one was about new cities built during Islam,

where according to Islamic laws, Christians or Jews were not allowed to drink wine, eat pork and build churches or Synagogues in them and even the ruler had not the right to allow them to do these actions.[231] But if there was already a church or a synagogue present and the new city was built near or around it, then the religious building should be left intact.[232]

The second category was cities taken by assault. According to Islamic law, Christians and Jews did not have the right to build new religious buildings on these lands taken by force. Concerning the churches or synagogues which were already there, did they have the right to keep them or should the Muslims destroy them? There were two opinions in this case. The first was that these religious building should be demolished since the lands were owned by Muslims and all the non-Islamic symbols should be removed.[233] The second opinion was the acceptance of these religious buildings in the cities acquired by force based on treaties made with the People of the Book at that time. The second opinion was applied in Cairo, Alexandria, Jerusalem and Spain.

The last one was about cities taken upon treaty. In that case also, there were two governing criteria. First, if they both agreed that the lands were owned by the People of the Book then the Muslims would only take the *jizya.* They then had the right to build new religious buildings and keep the old ones as well, as the prophet did with the people of Najran.[234] The second case was if they both agreed that the lands were owned by the Muslims**,** and the People of the Book should pay the *jizya*. In that case the situation of the churches would depend on the treaties made between the two groups.

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[231]Ibn Qaym al-Juzia, *Aḥkām ahl al-zimma,* 1178.

[233]Ibid., 1199.

[234]Ibid., 1202

It is obvious that the Islamic law respected the presence of religious buildings which belonged to Christians and Jews and which were present in all the conquered cities. Constrains were made only about building new ones and even that was accepted sometimes by negotiations. The importance of these laws was to highlight more and more the meaning of acceptance of the other in Islam, even if Muslims' beliefs were totally different than those of the Christians. For example, Islam didn't believe in the crucifixion of Jesus although Muslim rulers accepted the presence of crosses.

However, the meaning of tolerance and acceptance in Islam was not only related to the idea of leaving churches intact. It had also another meaning related to the idea of respecting the culture and the context of the city that Muslims lived in. This concept was illustrated in the architecture of each mosque. Indian mosques were totally different from Andalusian ones which were again different from the Egyptian ones. Some historians would relate this to the idea of the lack of Muslim masons. Actually, the first monumental building, the Dome of the Rock (691), was built after the conquest of the city (637) by almost fifty years, and by this time a new generation of Muslims masons would have appeared. Besides, the final appearance of the monument was Byzantine in its decoration but with the presence of Arabic calligraphy which was purely an Islamic feature. All this confirms that the final image of the building was actually in the hands of either Muslim patrons or the Muslim architects who did not reject the culture of the new city where they lived. They didn't set a fixed form for mosque (T-Shape, nine bay or four iwan) or for its decoration.

The history of churches after the Islamic conquest can help us to evaluate more the tolerance of Muslims. We saw in chapter four that only five churches in the area studied were destroyed (two of them in a war) and nearly 27 churches were converted to a mosque in the studied area

throughout all the different dynasties. However, 131 pre-Islamic churches in that area remained intact until now. It is important to mention that most of the converted churches were due to Muslims occupying crowded urban areas. For example, the Umayyads converted only the churches in Damascus, Aleppo, Hama while they left all the churches in Jerusalem, Egypt and Spain intact. The Ottomans in Constantinople[235] began to convert their churches ten years after their conquest, except for Hagia Sophia. We can say that the conversion started after ten years due to the urban changes and the Islamization of this area.[236]

From all the above, we can conclude that from the beginning of the Islamic message tolerance and cooperation were among the main concepts of Islam. The first immigration in the Islamic History was to the Habasha (Ethiopia at that time was under a Christian ruler) to escape from the torture of the polytheists. There the Muslims were protected under the Christian ruler al-Najashi. The message continued after the death of the prophet from one generation to another. Conversion to Islam was never an obligation, actually it took a long period for the People of the Book to convert; their conversion was gradual and not under pressure. I believe that without such tolerance and cooperation it was impossible for Muslims to be the leaders of the world in such a short period of time and to conquer such a large territory without having large civilian revolts. It was only due to their comprehension of the other that their civilization continued and later, when this comprehension disappeared, their dynasties fell. Muslims were not angels, they made mistakes and at times discriminated especially rulers who did not follow the real Islam. But if all their good and bad actions were compared to previous civilizations like the Romans and the

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[235]It is important to mention here that this research studied only Constantinople and not the rest of Anatolia and the Balkans.

[236]See chapter 4.

Byzantines or were compared with the Crusaders in Jerusalem or the Christians in Spain, we could say that they were a real role model and that their history of tolerance should be better known to let everybody know about their imprint in the world to confirm their place in ethical human history.

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Figures

الحرب ٦ مرات
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السلام ١٤٠ مرة
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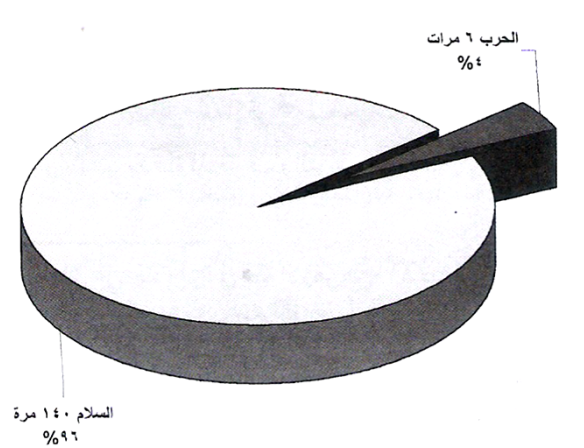
Figure 1. A graph showing the ratio between the appearance of the word peace (140 times) in Quran with its derivatives and the the word war (6 times) (from al-Sirganī, *Akhlāq al-ḥurūb*, fig. 2).

Figure 2. The Dome of the Rock (from http://www.sacred-destinations.com/israel/jerusalem-dome-of-the-rock)

Figure 3. The dome of the Holy Sepulcher (from
http://hawkebackpacking.com/israel_jerusalem_holy_sepulchre.html)

Figure 4. The Great Mosque of Cordoba, Spain (from
http://archnet.org/library/sites/one-site.jsp?site_id=31)

Figure 5. The Great Mosque of Damascus, Syria (from
http://archnet.org/library/sites/one-site.jsp?site_id=7161)
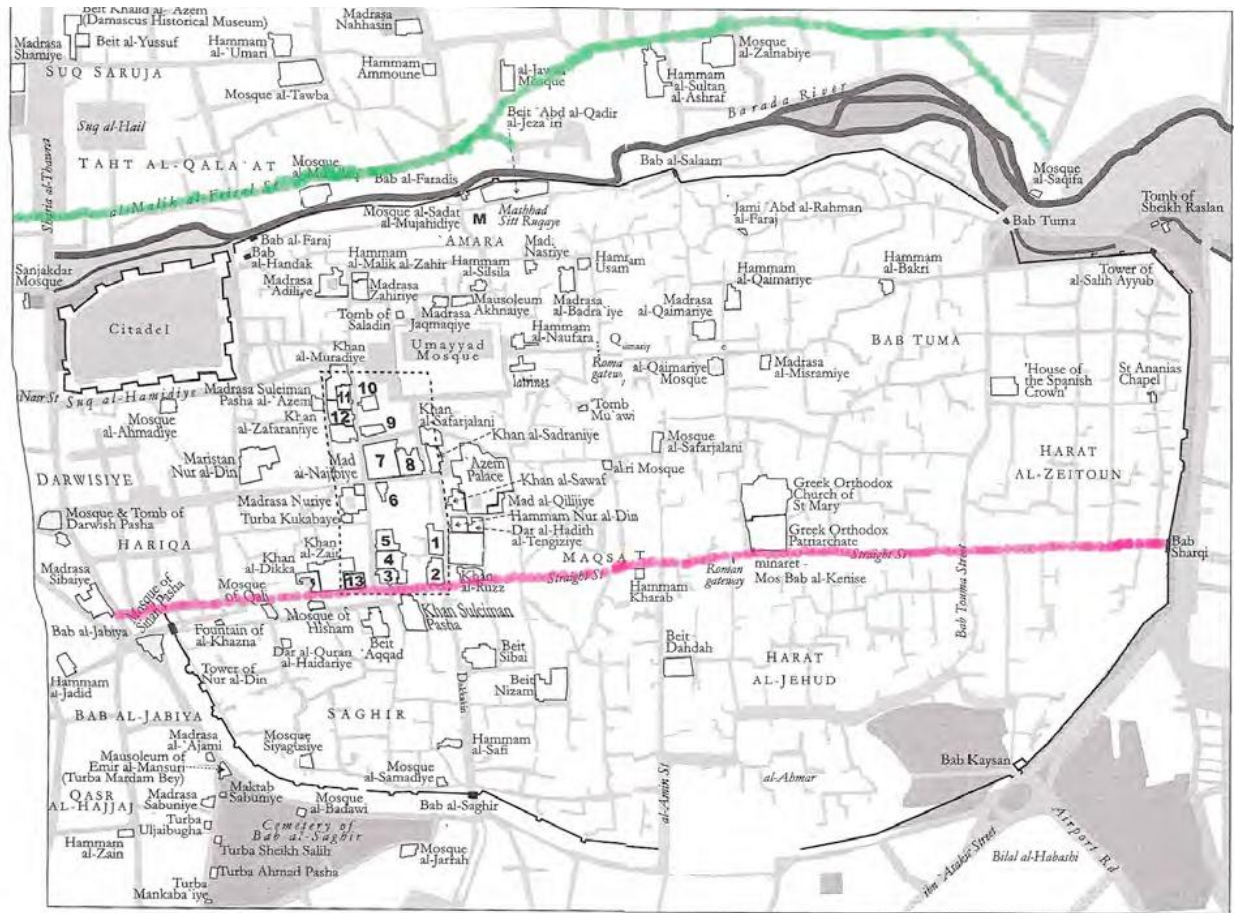
KEY: 1 Khan al-Amud; 2 Khan al-Fuqani: 3 Hammam al-Hayyatin; 4 Khan al-Ju. Tutun; 9 Hammam al-Qishani; 10 Khan al-Haramin; 11 Khan al-Sh. Qatana; 12
5 Madrasa As'ad Pasha al-'Azem; 6 Madrasa 'Abdullah al-'Azem; 7 Khan al-Harir; 8 Khan al-Jumruk; 13 Khan Jaqmaq

Map 1 The walled city

━━━ King Feisal St
━━━ Medhat Basha (Straight St)

Figure 6. Damascus Walled city (from Lababedi, *Urban Development,* Map 11)
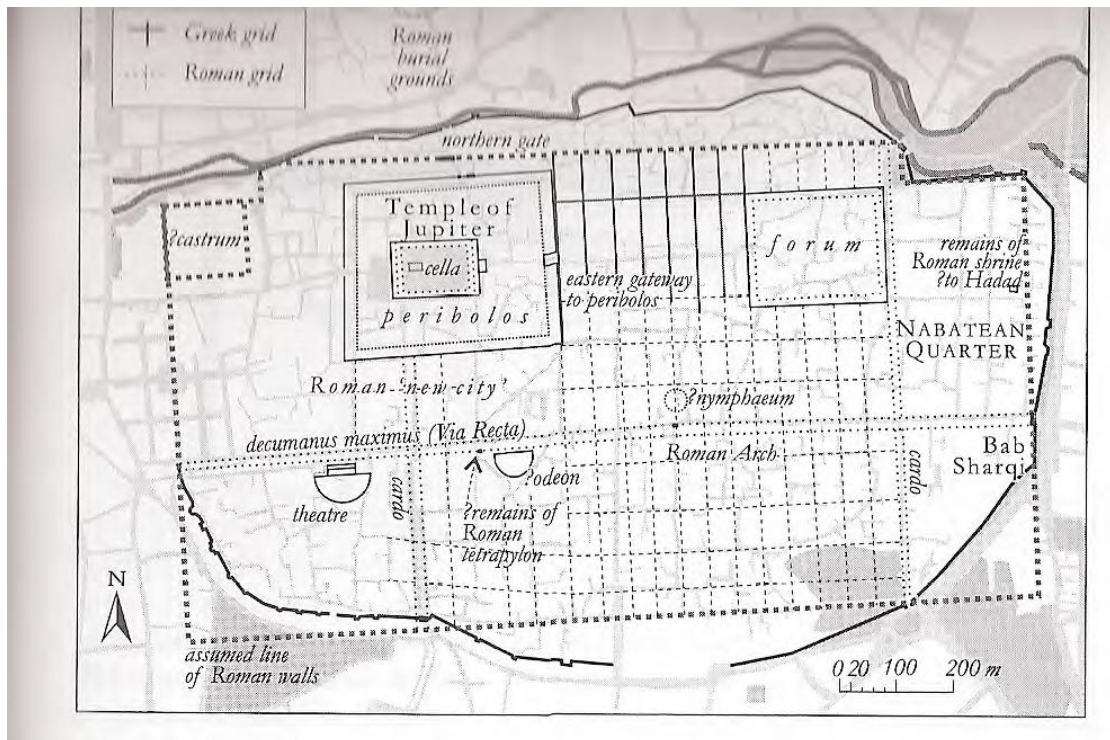
Figure 7. The Roman city of Damascus (from Lababedi, *Urban Development*,

fig. 3)
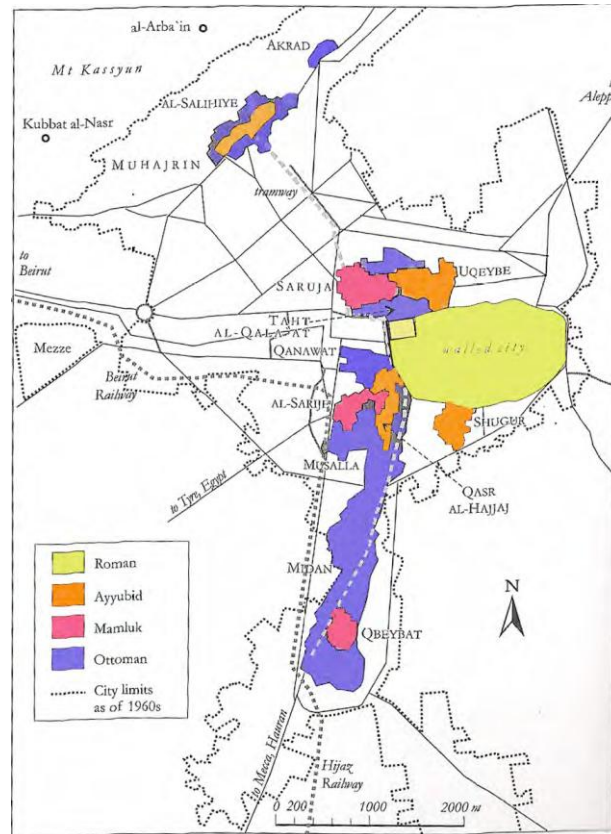
Figure 8. Historical Development of Damascus indicating that until the Umayyad time the Muslims were located within the walled city (from Lababedi, *Urban Development*, Map 4)
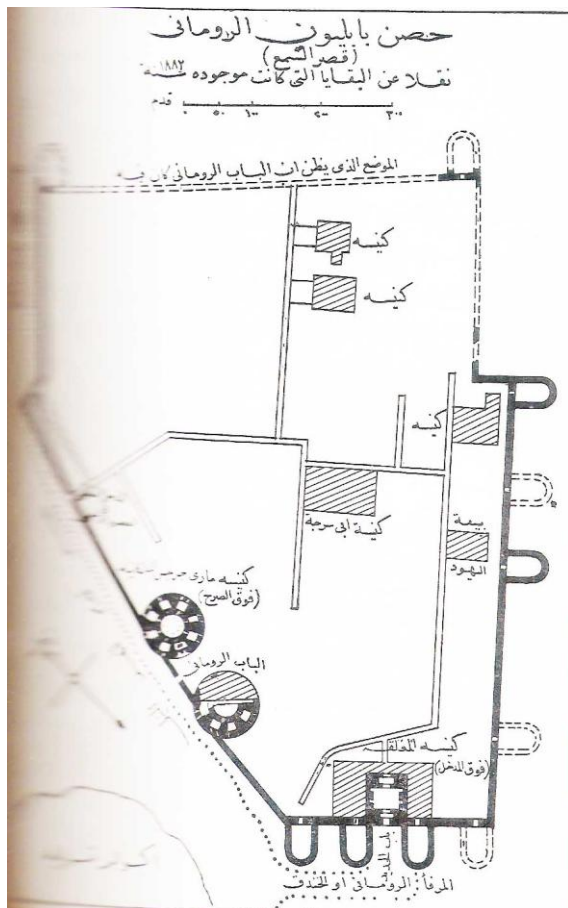
Figure 9. The fortress of Babylon including
the churches and the Synagogue (from Alfred
G. Butler, *Fatḥ al-ʿarab,* 209).
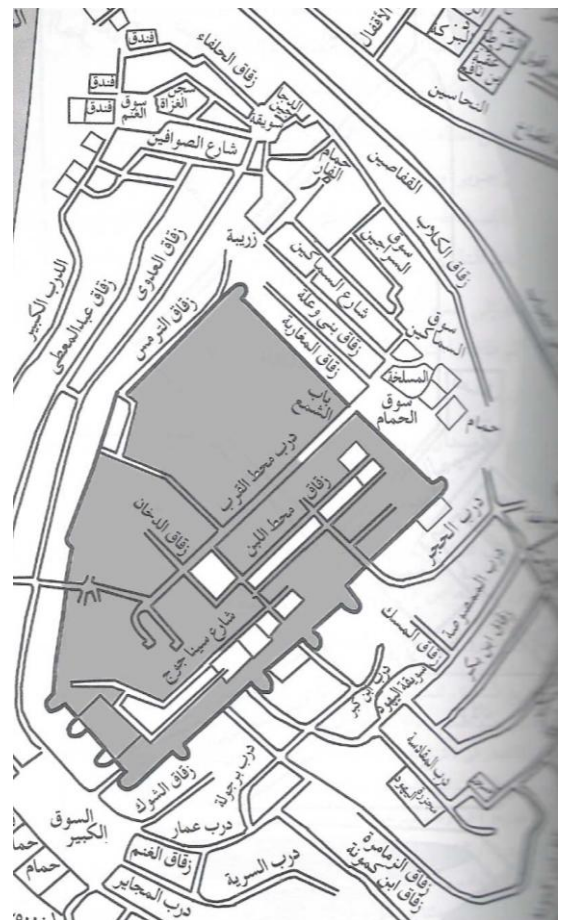
Figure 10. Showing Babylon
Fortress and its surrounding after
the Fustat was built (from Kamāl,
al-Fāth, 285).

Figure 11. Showing the Plan of al-
Fustat and in the middle of it the
mosque of ʿAmr (from Kamāl, *al-
Fāth*, 337).
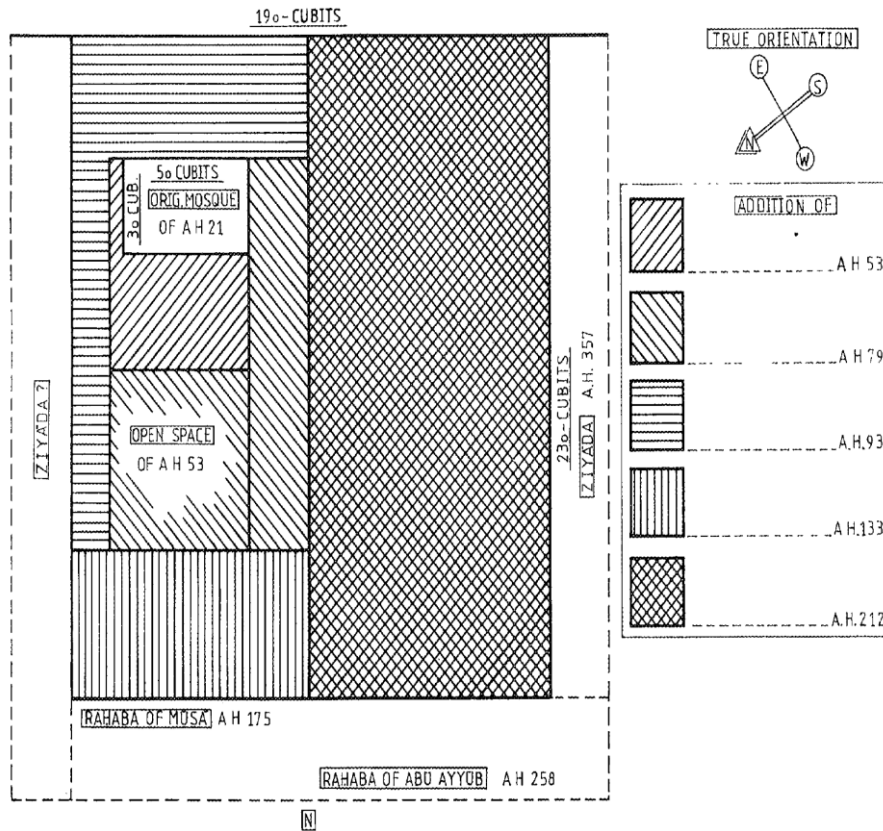
Fig 11 Plan showing the consecutive enlargements at the mosque of ʿAmr (Creswell)

Figure 12. Plan of the Mosque of ʿAmr ibn al-ʿAs and its development phases (from Abouseif, "Early Islamic Architecture" fig. 11)
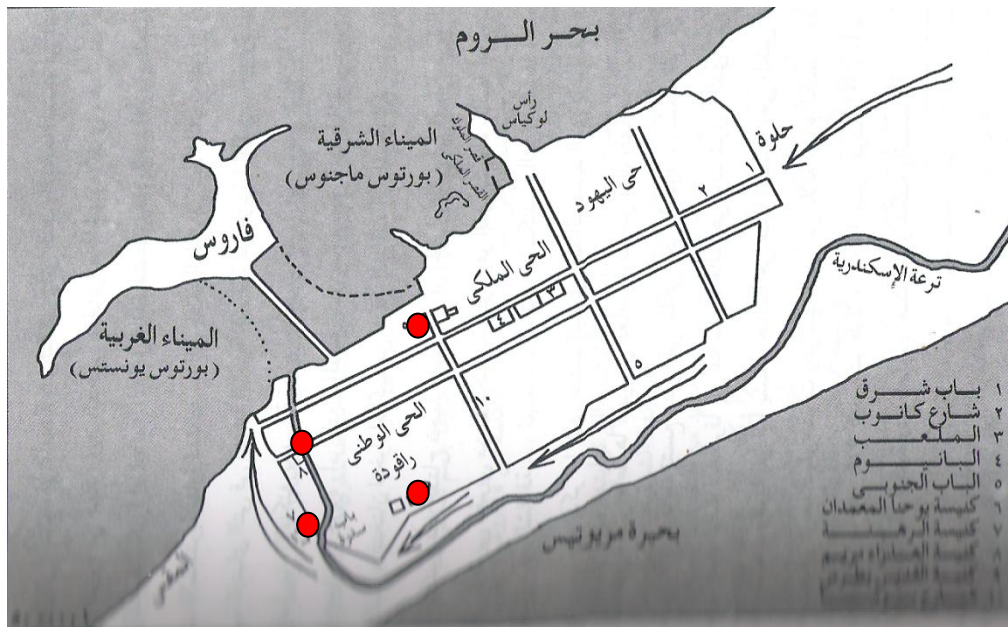
Figure 13. The plan of Alexandria at the time of the conquest indicating the location of the important churches (from Kamāl, *al-Fāth*, 318)

Figure 14. General view from southwest with mosque 'Umar in the foreground and the minaret of Khanqah Salahiyya in the background (from http://archnet.org/library/sites/one-site.jsp?site_id=5557).

Figure 15-16. The mosque of 'Umar built without any dome, unlike the Dome of the Rock (from http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mosque_of_Omar_(Jerusalem)).
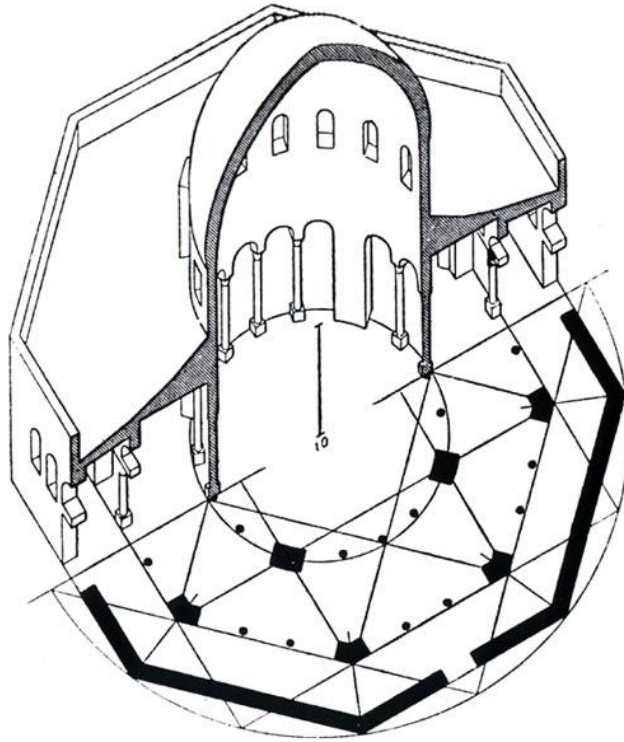
Figure 17. The interior of the Dome of the Rock indicating the small space surrounding the dome (from Creswell, *A Short Account,* fig. 2).

Figure 18. Interior mosaic in the Dome of the Rock (from http://www.websters-online-dictionary.com/definition/mosaic).
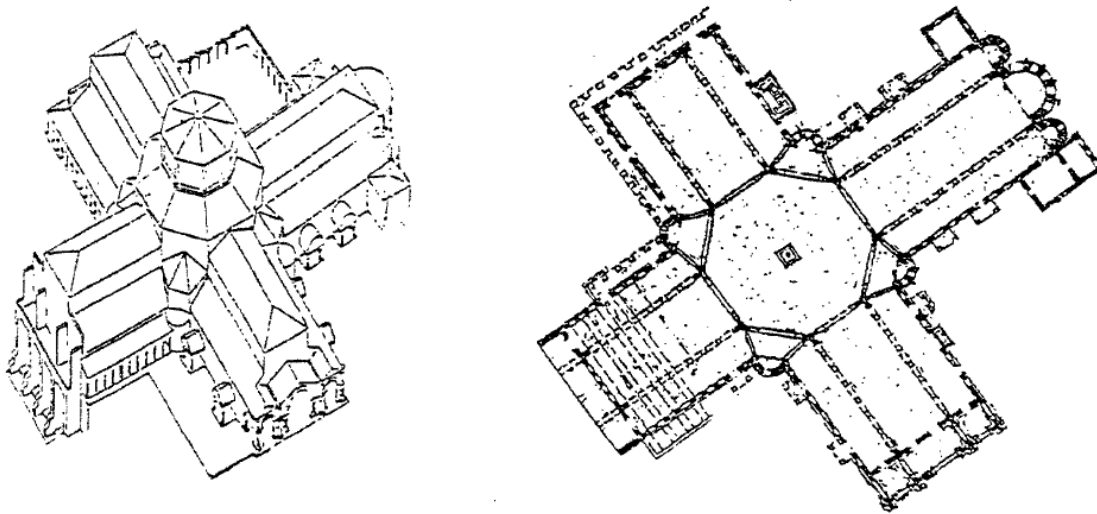
Fig. 8 a-b. (a) Reconstruction (left) and (b) plan (right) of the church at Qalaʿat Simʿan. (Adapted from K. Kohlmeyer and E. Strommenger, eds., *Land des Baal*, and Baedeker, *Palestine*, respectively)

Figure 19. The church at Qalaʿat Simʿan whose dome inspired the Muslims while building the Dome of the Rock and al-Aqsa mosque (from Grafman, "The Two Great Syrian Umayyad Mosques", fig. 8)
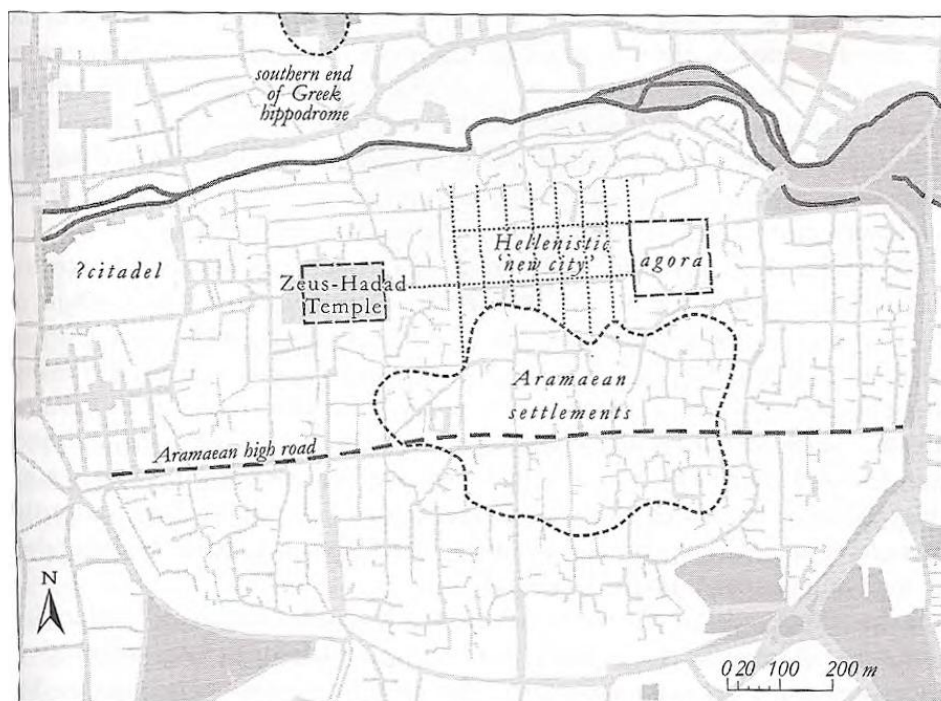
Figure 20. The Greek Temple located within Damascus street map (from Lababedi, *Urban Development,* fig. 2)
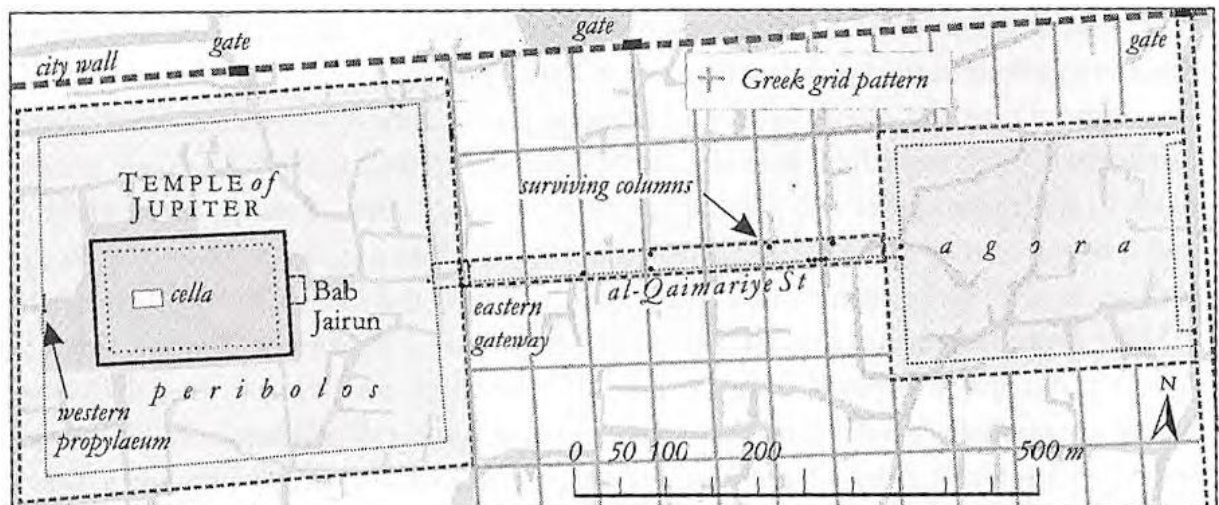
Figure 21. The Greek Temple of Jupiter indicating its eastern approach and Damascus street map (from Lababedi, *Urban Development,* fig. 1)
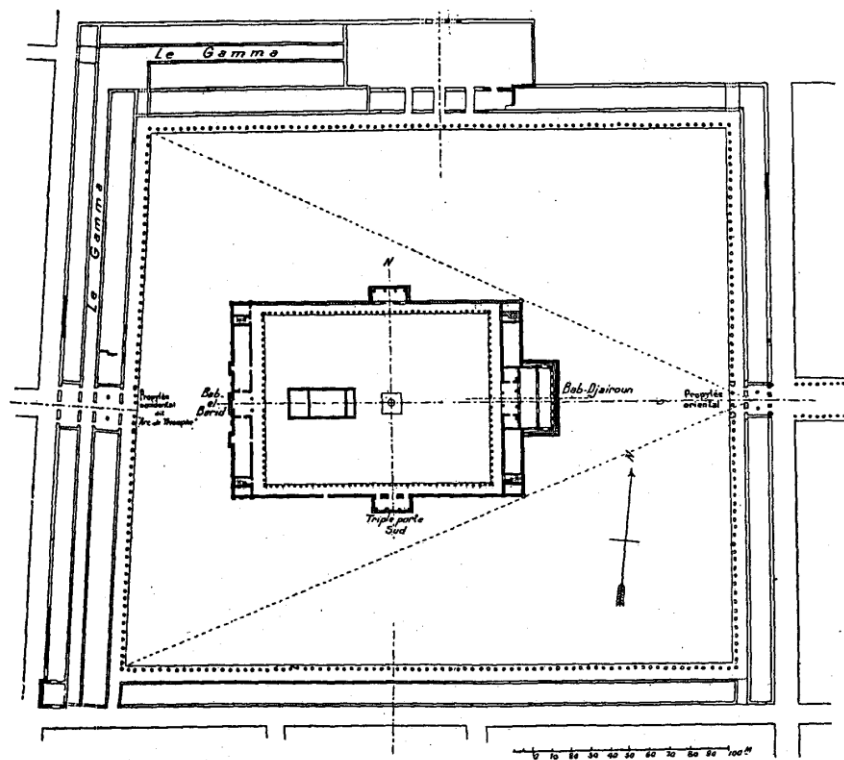
FIG. 3. — Plan du sanctuaire de Jupiter Damascénien, d'après Dickie, Watzinger et Wulzinger.

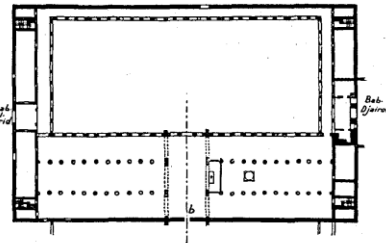Figure 22. Plan of the temple of Jupiter (from Dussaud, "Le Temple de Jupiter'', fig. 3)
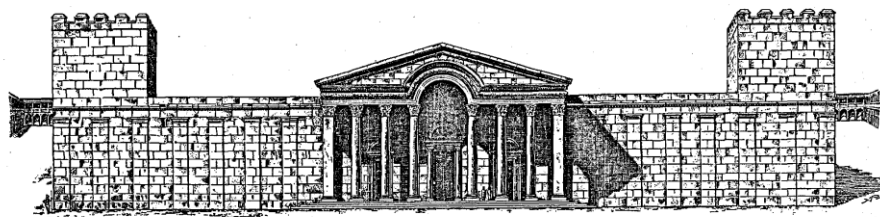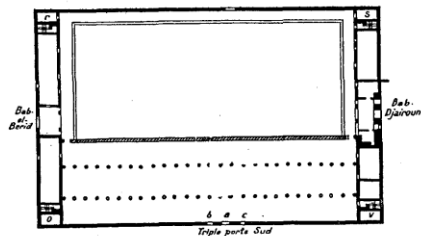
Figure 23. Plans of the mosque of Damascus according to Dussaud (Dussaud, "Le Temple de Jupiter damascénien" Pl. LII)

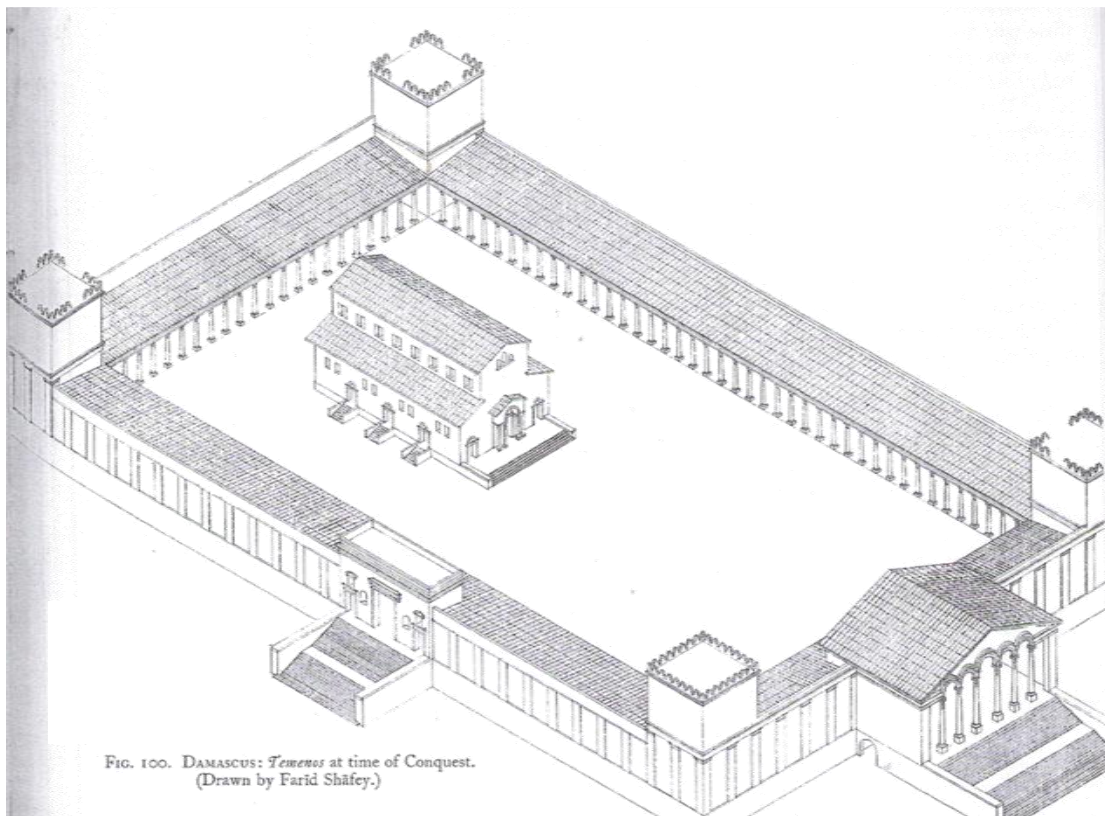Figure 24. Isometric indicating the location of the Basilica within the temenos at time of conquest (Creswell, *Early Muslim Architecture,* fig. 100)
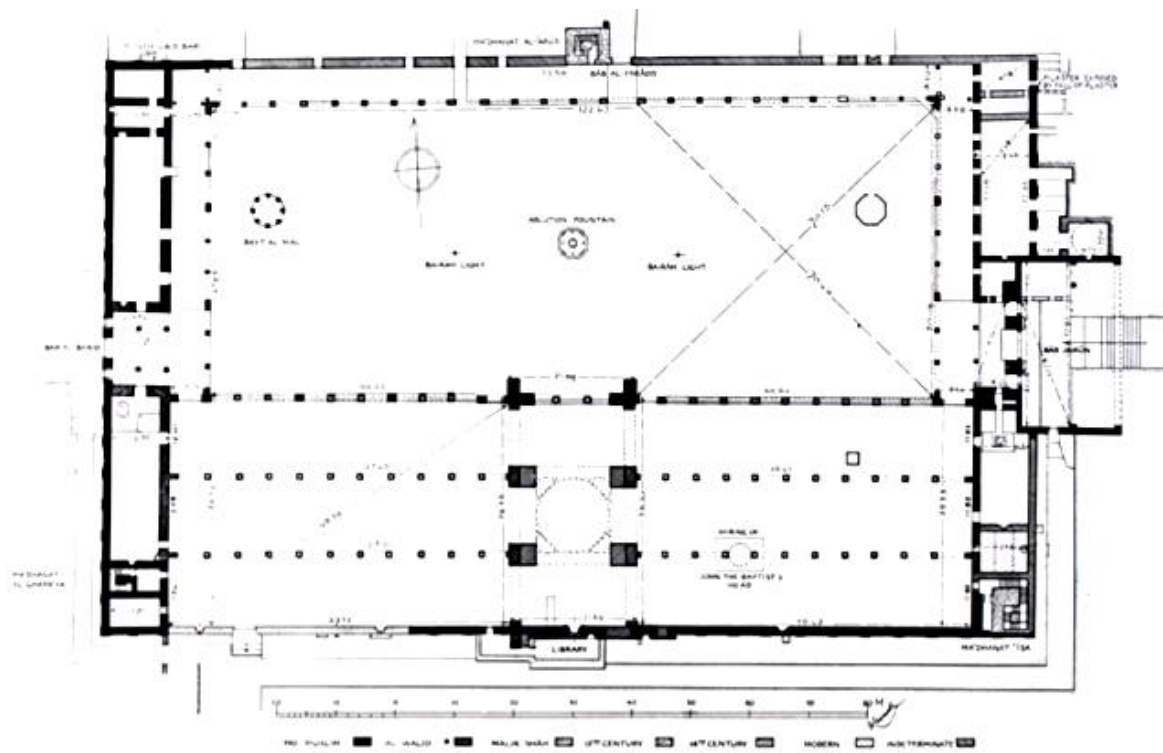
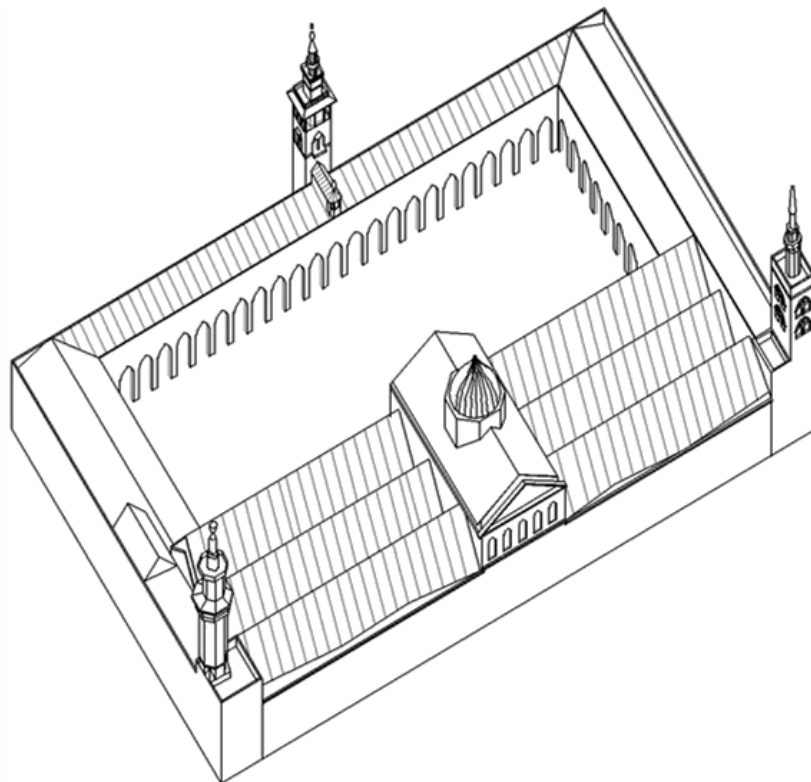Figure 25. Plan of the mosque of Damascus built by al-Walid (from Creswell, *A Short Account*, fig. 9)

Figure 26. Axonometric of the Great Mosque of Damascus
(from http://archnet.org/library/sites/one-site.jsp?site_id=7161)

Figure 27. Byzantine Corinthian Columns inside the madrasa of Halawiya (from
http://archnet.org/library/sites/one-site.jsp?site_id=2693)
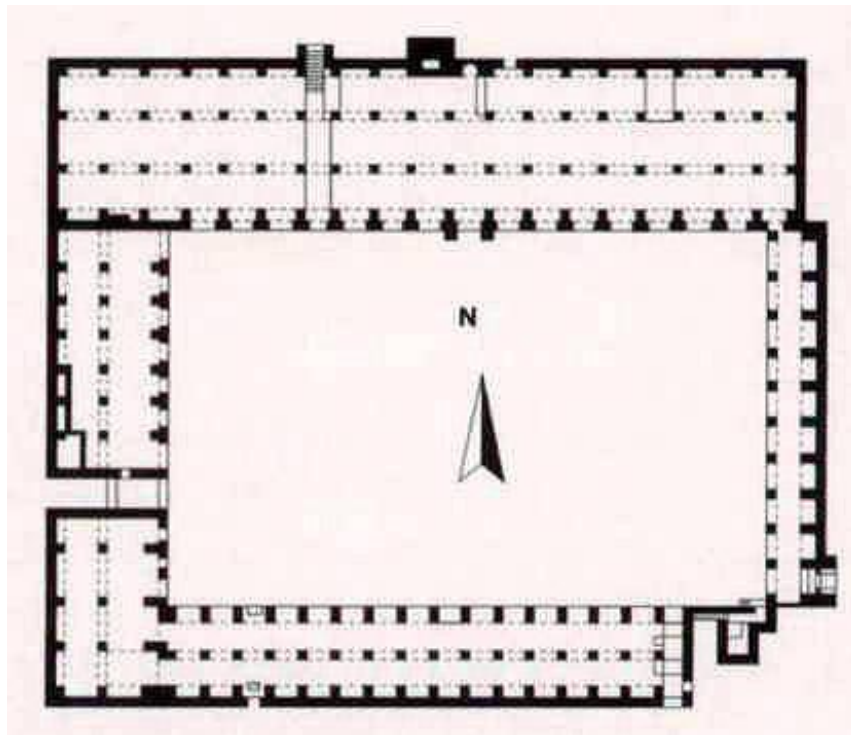
Figure 28. Plan of the Great Mosque of Aleppo (from http://islamic-arts.org/2012/aleppo-
%E2%80%93-architecture-and-history/)

Figure 29. The shrine of Zachariah inside the Great Mosque of Aleppo (from
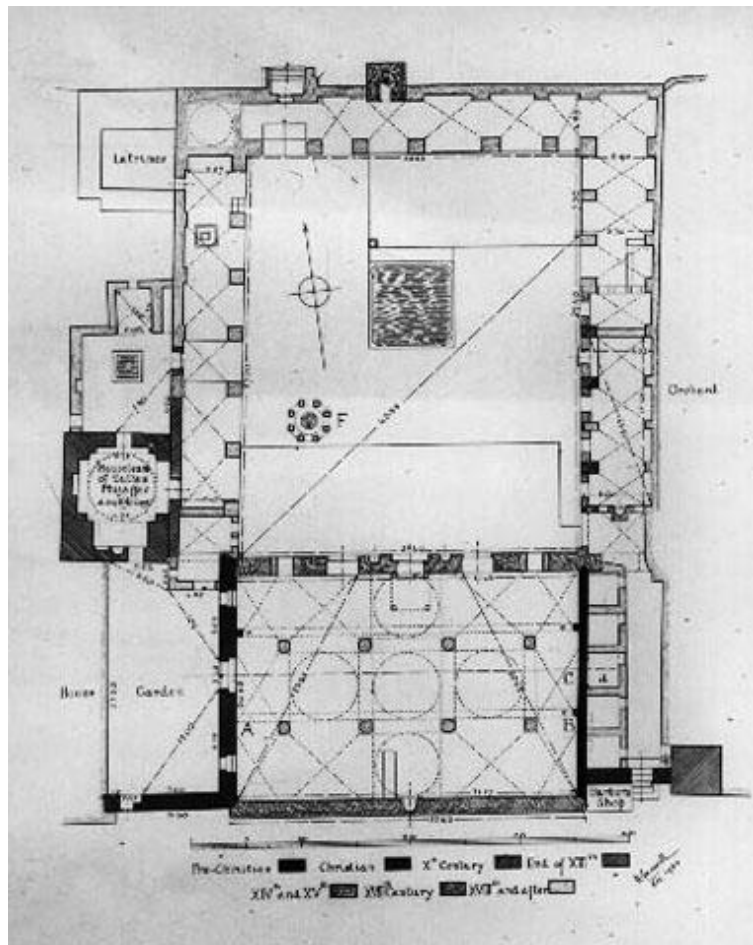http://archnet.org/library/sites/one-site.jsp?site_id=7501)

Figure 30. The plan of the Great Mosque of Hama (from
O'Kane, "The Great Mosque of Hama", fig. 9.2)

Figure 31. Courtyard of the mosque of Hama (from http://archnet.org/library/sites/one-site.jsp?site_id=7999)

Figure 32. Riwaq of the mosque of Hama (from http://archnet.org/library/sites/one-site.jsp?site_id=7999)
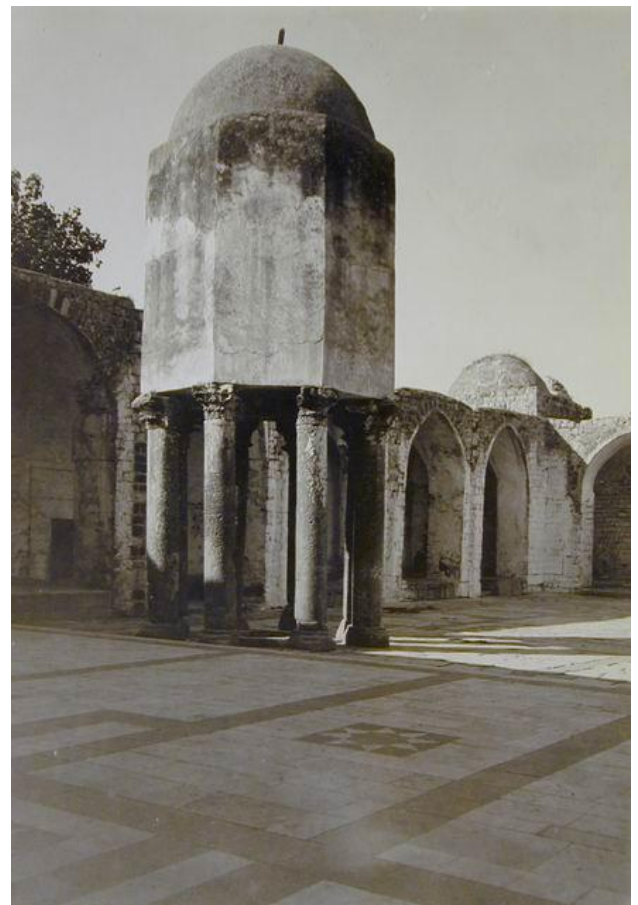
Figure 33. Treasury of the Great Mosque of Hama (from http://archnet.org/library/sites/one-site.jsp?site_id=7999)
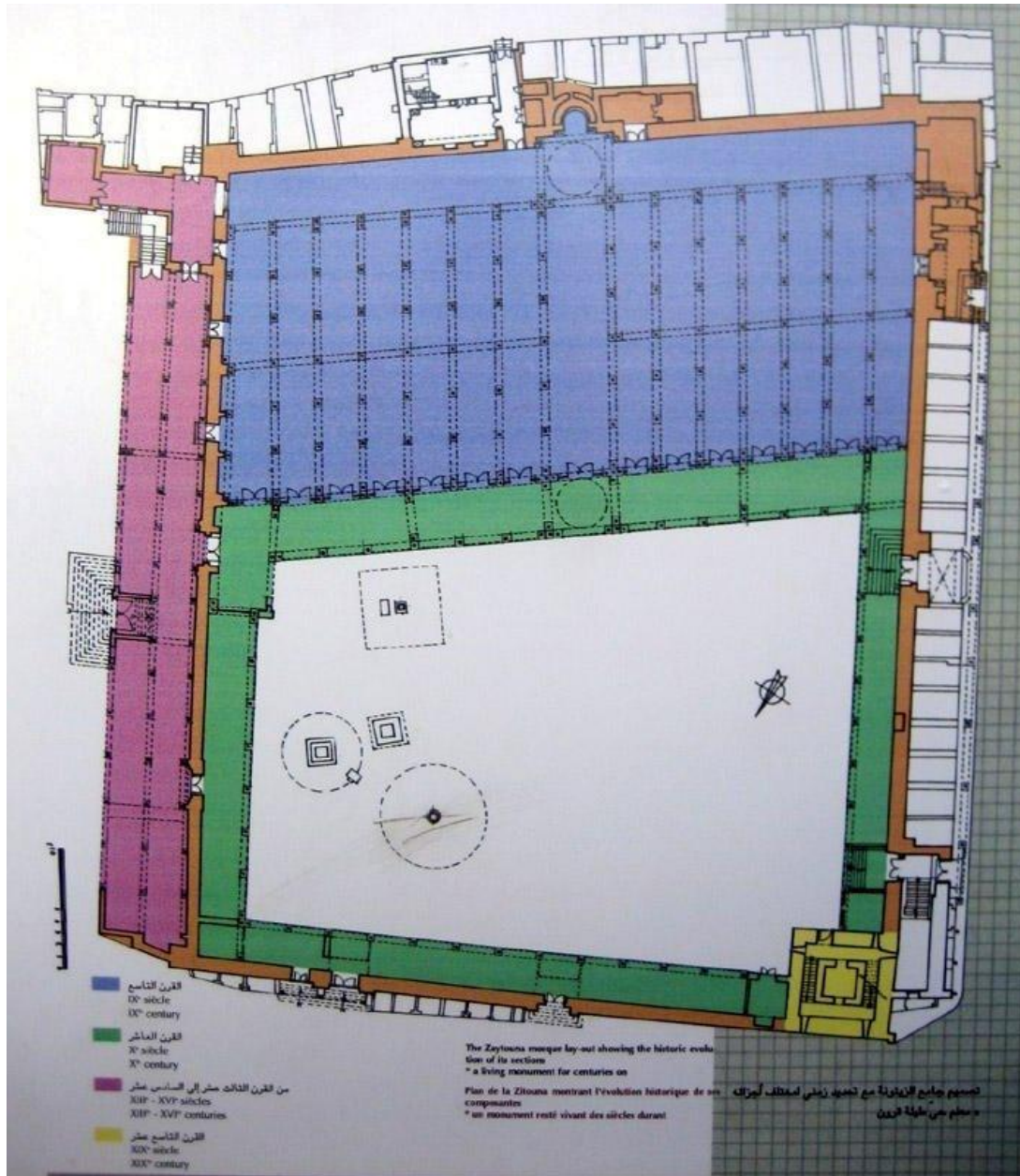
Figure 34. Plan of the Zaytuna mosque showing different construction periods. Blue is ninth century, green is tenth century, pink is thirteenth to sixteenth century, and yellow is nineteenth century (from http://archnet.org/library/sites/one-site.jsp?site_id=14061)
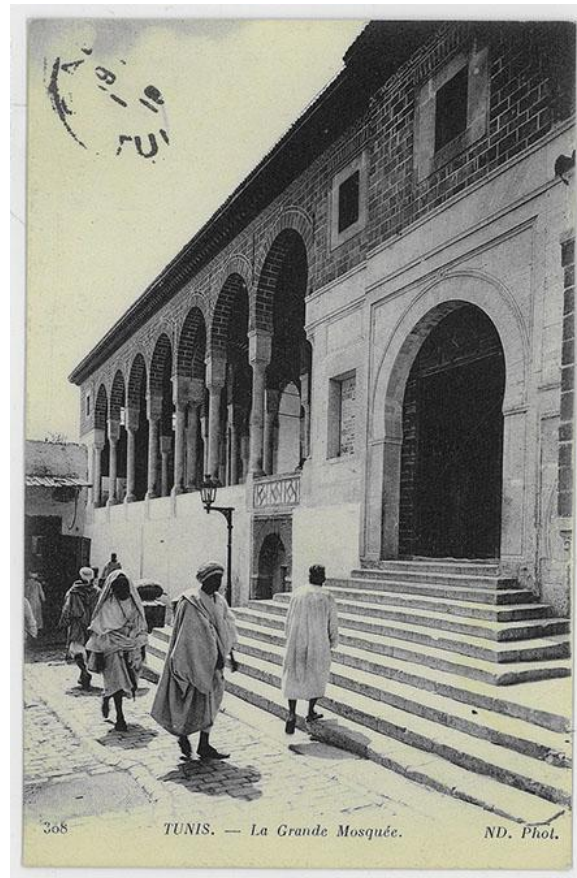
Figure 35. Outer facade of the Zaytuna mosque (from http://archnet.org/library/sites/one-site.jsp?site_id=14061)

Figures 36- 37. Horseshoe arches in the mosque of Zaytuna, similar to Cordoba mosque (from http://archnet.org/library/sites/one-site.jsp?site_id=14061)
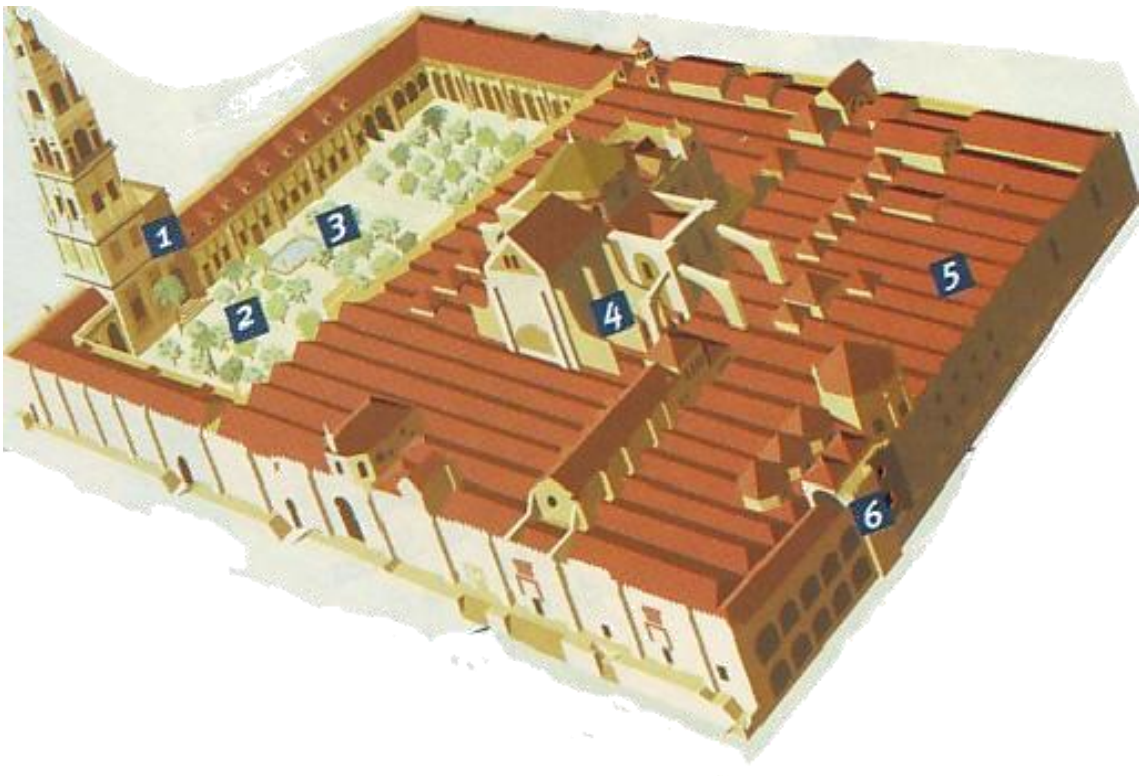
Figure 38. Isometric of Cordoba Mosque, 1-bell tower, 2-Patio
de Los Naranjos, 3-water source, 4-Christian cathedral, 5-prayer
hall, 6-Mihrab area (from http://www.spanish-
fiestas.com/cordoba/mosque/)
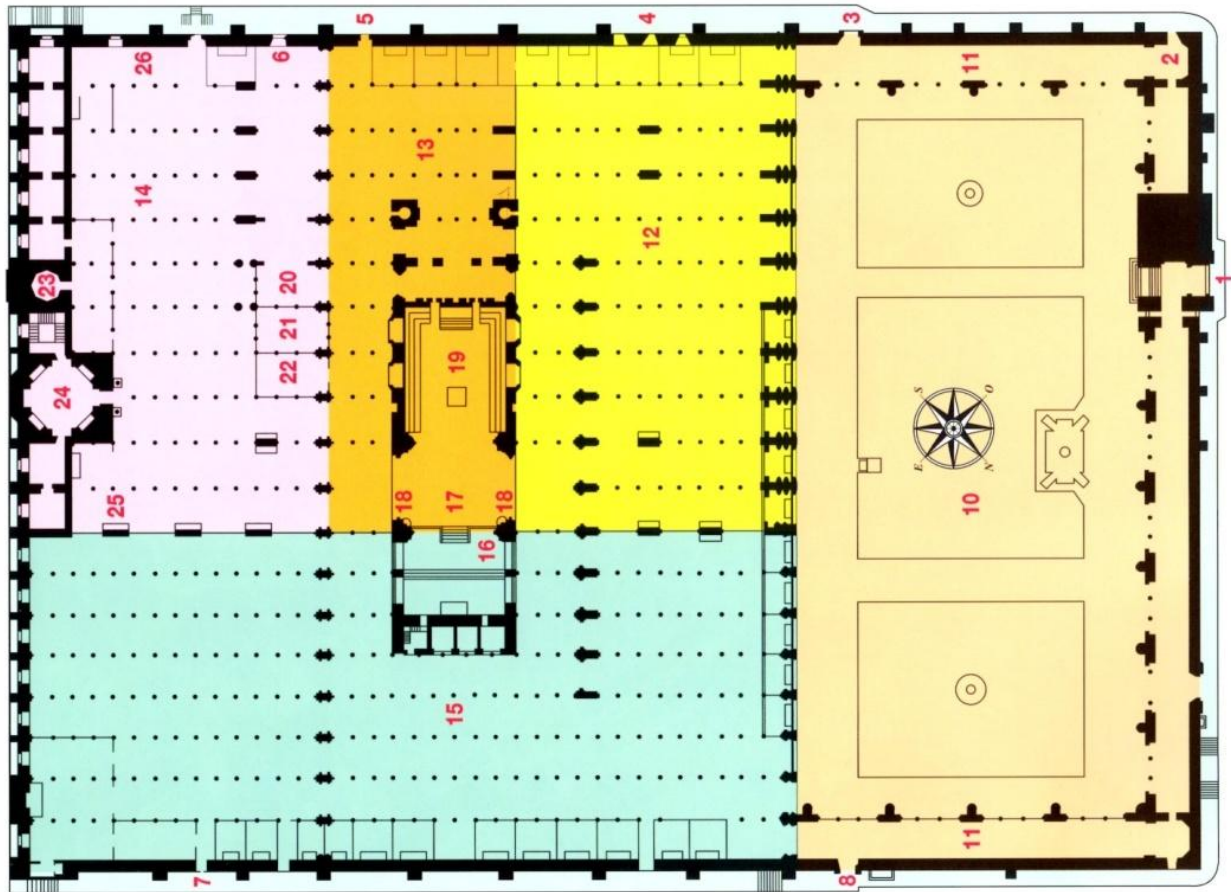
Figure 39. Plan of the development and extensions of the Cordoba mosque. The yellow area (#12) was the earliest part, built in 786 by Abd-ar-Rahman I. The gold area (#13) was an extension with 80 columns by Abd-ar-Rahman II in 832. The next extension is the pink area (#14) by Al-Hakam III in 962. This extension in the green area (#15) added 8 aisles and 356 new columns. The cathedral can be seen in the middle, built partly in the gold and green areas. The mihrab is the small area (#23) on the right side of the pink area. The light tan area on the right side of the plan (#10) is the Orange Tree Courtyard. (from http://cathedralquest.com/SpainDay11.htm)
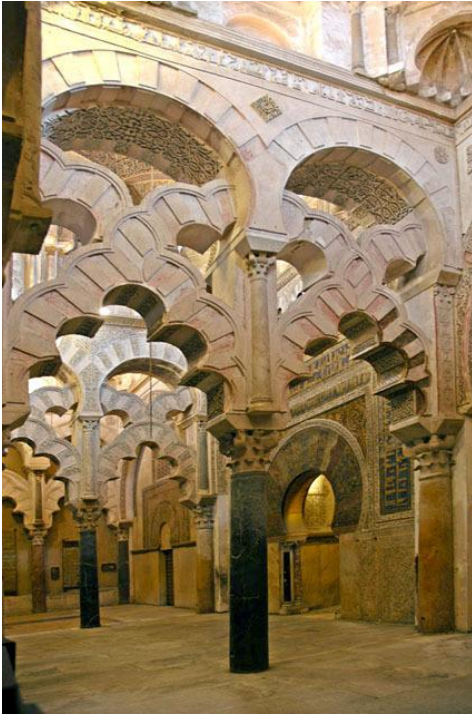
Figure 40. The horseshoe arches**,**
Cordoba mosque (from
http://archnet.org/library/sites/one-
site.jsp?site_id=31)

Figure 41. The double tiered arches,
Cordoba mosque, an influence of the
Great Mosque of Damascus (from
http://archnet.org/library/sites/one-
site.jsp?site_id=31)
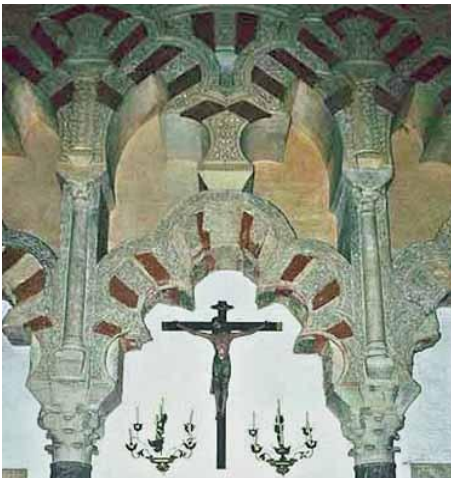
Figure 42-43. Interior of the chapel built inside the mosque of Cordoba (from
http://archnet.org/library/sites/one-site.jsp?site_id=31 and
http://cathedralquest.com/SpainDay11.htm)

10. PLAN OF ST. SOPHIA IN CONSTANTINOPLE.
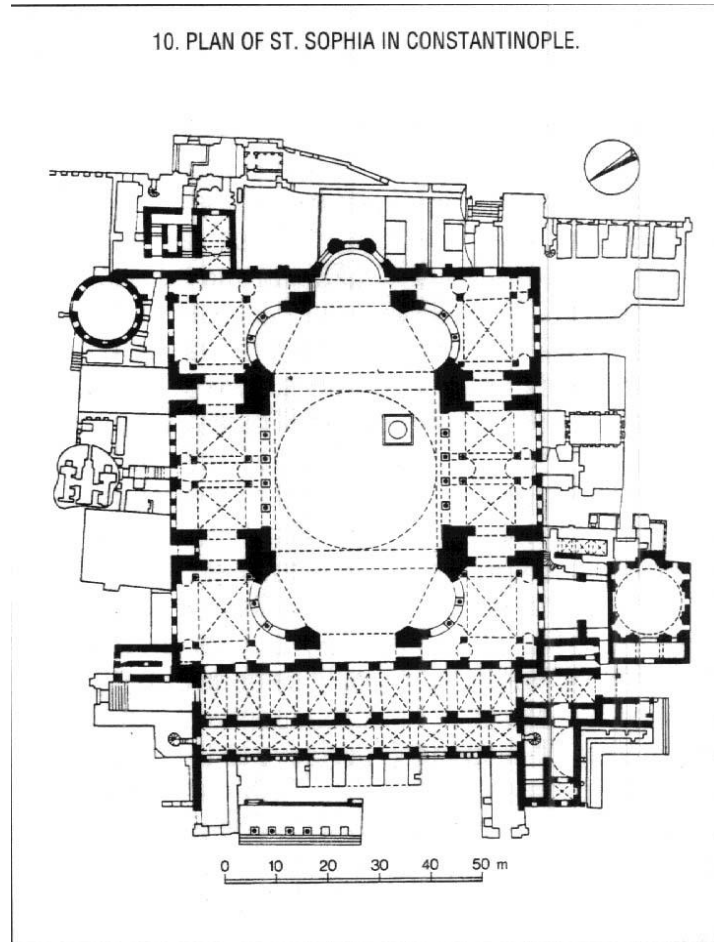
Figure 44. Plan of Hagia Sophia before the Islamic conquest (from
http://www.studyblue.com/notes/note/n/byzantine-early-middle--late/deck/2856412)

10. SECTION OF ST. SOPHIA IN CONSTANTINOPLE.
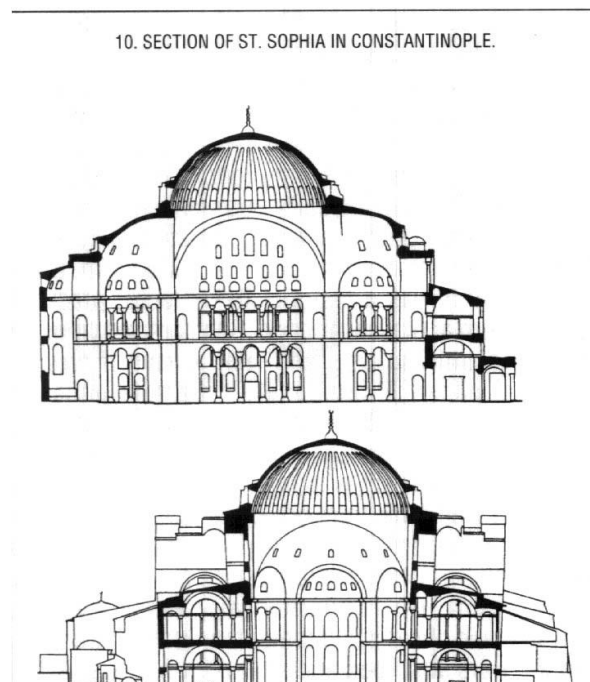
Figure 45. Section of Hagia Sophia (from
http://archnet.org/library/sites/one-
site.jsp?site_id=2966)
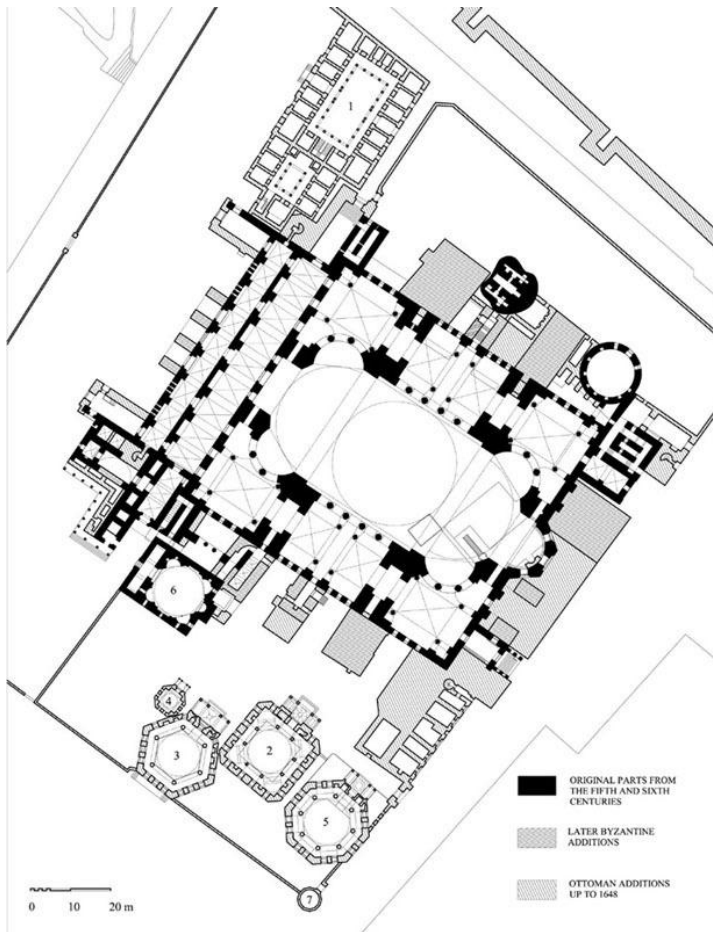
Figure 46. The plan of Hagia Sophia at the time of the Ottomans (from http://archnet.org/library/sites/one-site.jsp?site_id=2966)

ORIGINAL PARTS FROM
THE FIFTH AND SIXTH
CENTURIES

LATER BYZANTINE
ADDITIONS

OTTOMAN ADDITIONS
UP TO 1648

0   10   20 m

Figure 47. Interior of the mosque of Hagia Sophia (from http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hagia_Sophia)
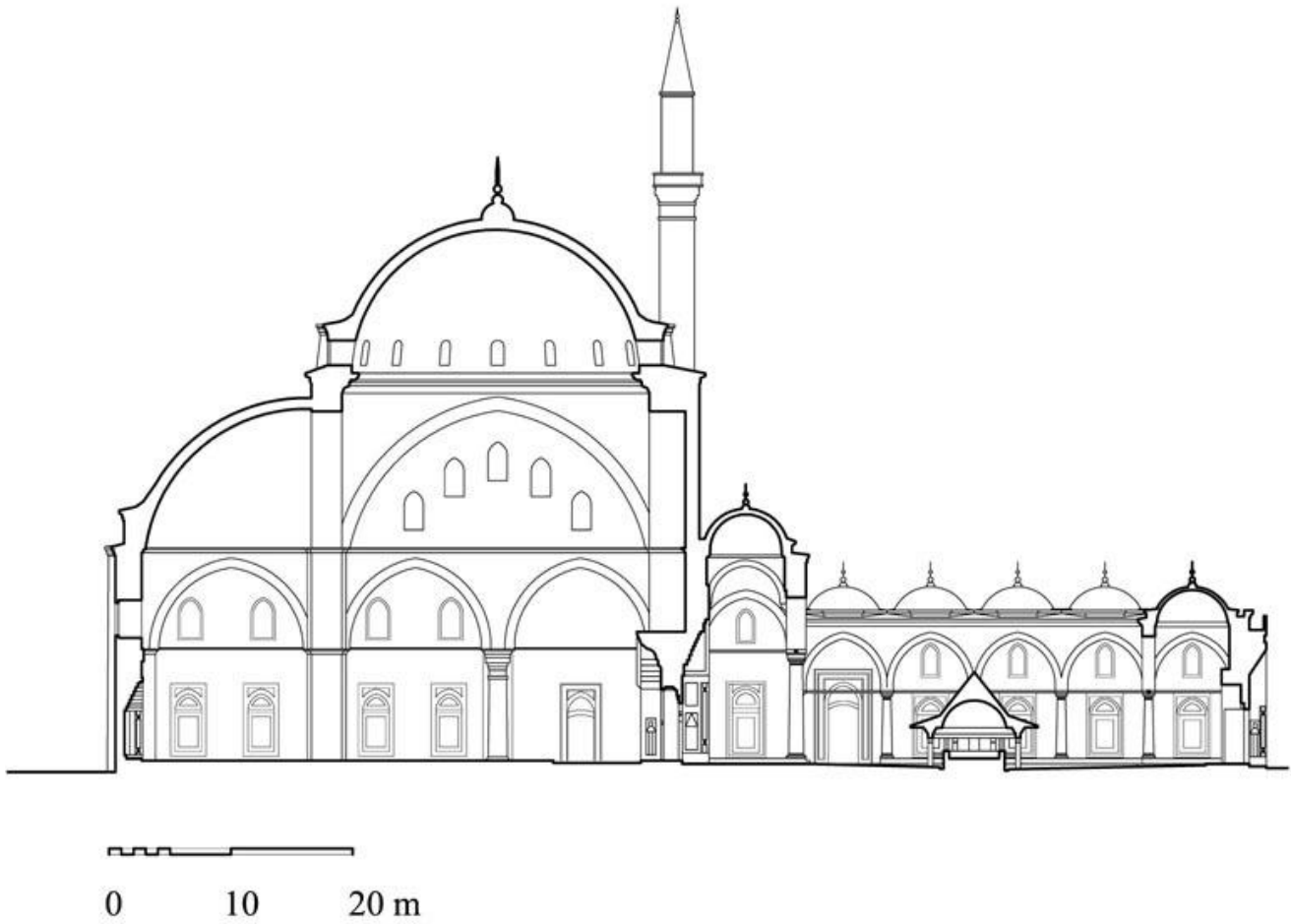
Figure 48. Hypothetical cross-section of the original mosque of Mehmet II (from http://archnet.org/library/sites/one-site.jsp?site_id=2958)
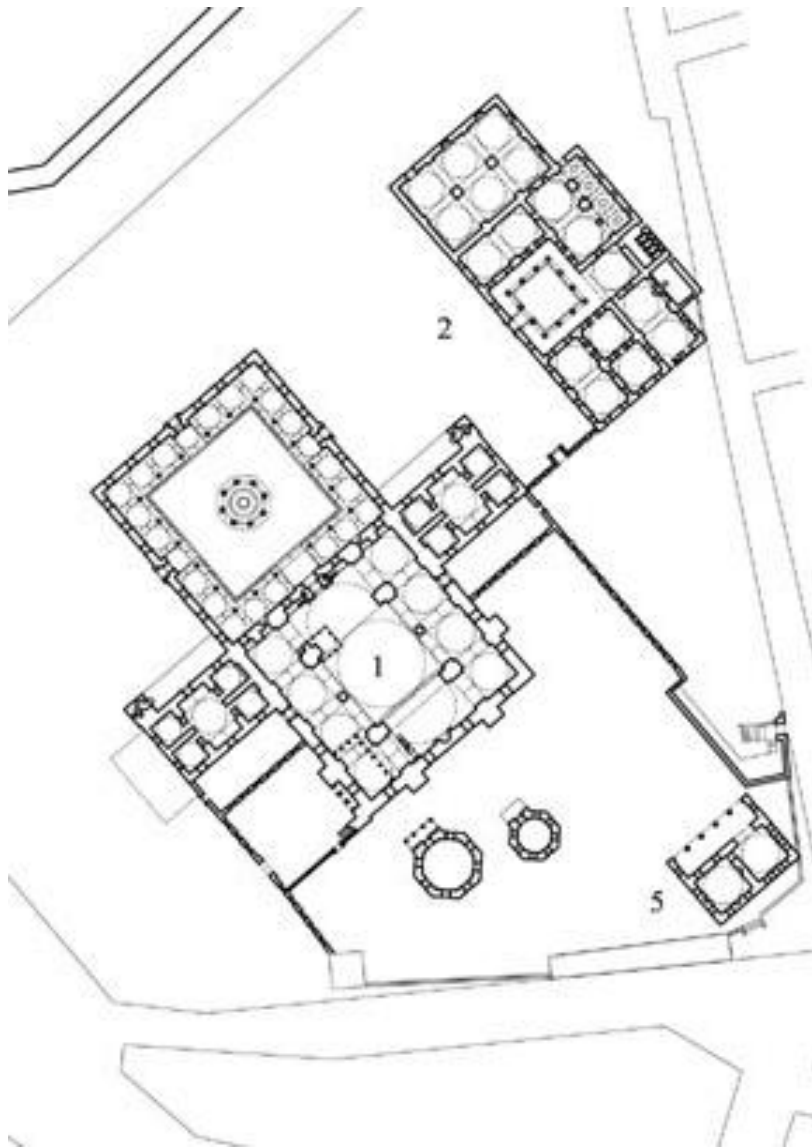
Figure 49. The complex of Beyazid in Istanbul (from
http://archnet.org/library/sites/one-site.jsp?site_id=7707)

Appendix 1
Table 1

Name of the church	Date of construction	location	Situation during Islamic history
Jerusalem			
Church of the Holy Sepulcher	135 CE	Jerusalem	Remained intact
Church of All Nations	4th century Byzantine church destroyed by an earthquake, and built later by crusader	Jerusalem	Remained intact
Cenacle known as Upper room	4th century	Jerusalem	Remained intact
Chapel of the Ascension	390 CE	Jerusalem	Part of it destroyed by the army of Salah al-Din in the 12th century
Church of Bethphage	4th century rebuilt in the 12th century and renovated 1883	Jerusalem	Remained intact
Church of the Pater Noster	Built over a site of a Byzantine church built in the 4th century, destroyed by Persians in 614, constructed by the crusader in 1152	Jerusalem	Damaged in the siege of Jerusalem in 1187, abandoned until it was ruined in 1345, rebuilt n 1851
Church of St. Peter in Gallicantu	Built in 457	Jerusalem	Destroyed by Al-Hakim in 1010, rebuilt by the crusaders in 1102, after the fall of Jerusalem it

			was damaged and not rebuilt until 1931.
Church of the Condemnation and Imposition of the Cross	From the Byzantine period	Jerusalem	Remained intact
Ecce Homo	Old Roman gateway, transformed into a Roman church	Jerusalem	Incorporated into a monastery for Uzbek Dervishes in the 16th century which was later demolished
Mary's Tomb	Built in 5th century, destroyed and rebuilt 1130, destroyed and rebuilt by the Franciscan in the 14th century	Jerusalem	Destroyed by Salah al-Din but the Crypt was left intact, rebuilt in the 14th century
Nea Ekklesia of the Theotokos	Built in 543	Jerusalem	Destroyed by an earthquake in 746
St Anne's Church	Between 1131 and 1138	Jerusalem	Remained intact
Augusta Victoria Hospital	Church hospital built in 1907	Jerusalem	Remained intact
Dominus Flevit Church	Byzantine site, a small chapel built 1187 by the Crusader	Jerusalem	Church fell into ruins during the sixteenth century where it became a mosque built by the Ottoman
Chapel of Saint Helena	12th century	Jerusalem	Remained intact
Templum Domini	In the 12th century	The crusader transformed the Dome of the Rock into a church	After the siege of Palestine the Dome of the Rock returned to the Muslims again
Cathedral of St.	12th century	Jerusalem	Remained

James, Jerusalem			intact
Church of St. James Intercisus	Not known	Jerusalem	Remained intact
Church of the Flagellation	Church built in 1839 over a crusader shrine, the site was given to the Franciscan by Ibrahim Pasha of Egypt	Jerusalem	Gift from the Ottoman
Christ Church, Jerusalem	From 1842 to 1849	Jerusalem	Remained intact
Convent of the Sisters of Zion	In 1857	Jerusalem	Remain intact
Church of Maria Magdalene	1886	Jerusalem	Remained intact
St. George's Cathedral	1899	Jerusalem	Remained intact
Lutheran Church of the Redeemer	1893	Jerusalem	Remained intact
Damascus			
House of Saint Ananias	1st century	Damascus	Remained intact
Mariamite Cathedral of Damascus	2nd century	Damascus	After the Muslim conquest it was closed until 706 when al-Walid ordered to reopen it as a compensation of taking over the church of John the Baptist
Church of Saint john the Baptist	1000 BC Armenians temple, Roman temple at 1st century CE, 4th century became a church	Damascus	Destroyed to be a mosque between 706 and 715
Aleppo			
The great Byzantine Cathedral	It was a Roman temple	Aleppo	Converted to a mosque at 715

Church of Tutah	Unknown date of construction	Aleppo	Converted around the mid of the seventh century
Church (later called the madrasa of Muqaddamiyya)	Unknown date of construction	Aleppo	Converted to the madrasa of Muqaddamiyya in 1168
Cathedral of the Forty Martyrs	15th century	Jdyda quarter, Aleppo	Remained intact
Mar Assia Al-Hakim Church	15th century	Jdyda quarter, Aleppo	Remained intact
Cathedral of Our Mother of Reliefs	1840	Jdyda quarter, Aleppo	Remained intact
Cathedral of Virgin Mary	1843	Jdyda quarter, Aleppo	Remained intact
Saint Elias Cathedral	1873	Jdyda quarter, Aleppo	Remained intact
Saint Anthony of Padua Church	1910	Suleimaniya district, Aleppo	Remained intact
Hama			
The church of Hama	Built as a Roman temple in 250 CE	Hama	Converted to a church at the time of the Umayyads
Cairo			
The Hanging Church	3rd century	Babylon, Cairo	Remained intact
Saints Sergius and Bacchus Church (Abu Serga)	4th century	Babylon, Cairo	Remained intact
Saint Barbara Church	5th or 6th century	Babylon, Cairo	Remained intact
Church of Saint Menas	6th century	Fom al Khalij, Cairo	Remained intact
Saint Mercurius Church	6th century	Babylon, Cairo	Remained intact
Church of St. George	10th century	Babylon, Cairo	Remained intact
Church of the Virigin Mary	10th century	Harit Zweila, Fatimid Cairo	Remained intact
Church of the Holy Virgin	11th century	Babylon el Darag, Cairo	Remained intact
Saint Mary Church	1660	(Romans ally) in Elghoureya, Cairo	Remained intact
Saint Mark's Coptic Orthodox Cathedral	1800	Azbakeya, Cairo	Remained intact

Alexandria			
Coptic orthodox church	First one built in built in 60 CE	Alexandria	Remained intact
Caesareum of Alexandria	Roman temple transformed into church in the 4th century	Alexandria	Remained intact
Tunis			
Saint Louis Cathedral	1884	Carthage	Remained intact
Cathedral of St. Vincent de Paul	1893	Tunis	Remained intact
Libya			
Santa Maria degli Angeli	1645	Tripoli, Libya	Remained intact
Church of the immaculate Conception	1858	Benghazi, Libya	Remained intact
Morrocco			
Basilica of Tanga	1469	Tanga, Morocco	Remained intact
Church of Saint Andro	1880	Tanga, Morocco	The land of the church was donated by the Sultan al Hassan I, remained intact.
Constantinople			
Hagia Sophia	In 360	Constantinople	Converted to a mosque in 1453
Church of the Holy Apostles	4th century	Lies in the district of al-Fatih Istanbul	Destroyed by al-Fatih and he built a mosque on the site in 1461
Cathedral of the Holy Spirit	4th century	Taksim square in Istanbul	Remained intact
Chora Church	4th century	Lies in the district of al-Fatih Istanbul	Converted into a mosque in the 16th century by the ottomans, turned into a museum in 1948
Hagia Irene	4th century	Constantinople	In 1453 used as

			a warehouse by al-Fatih and in the 18th century during the reign of Sultan Ahmmad it was used as a weapon museum
Martyrion of Hagios Karpos and Papylos	4th century	Constantinople	Remained after the conquest and was burned during the fire of Samatya, later reconstructed from the money of Mahalle during the reign of Sultan Mahmud II and remained until now
Church of Saint Menas of Samatya	4th century	District of al-Fatih, Constantinople	Remained intact
Church of Hagios Andreas ente Krisei	Beginning of the 5th century	Lies in the district of al-Fatih Istanbul	Converted between 1486 and 1491 by the Grand Vizier Mustafa Pasha
Church of the Theotokos Peribleptos	5th century	District of al-Fatih, Constantinople	Remained intact
Church of St. George of Samatya	5th century	Constantinople	Remained intact
Church of St. Mary of Blachernae	In 450	Sixth hill, Fatih district of Constantinople	Fire attacked the building in 1435, the ruin was neglected until 1867 where a small church was built and remained intact.

Church of Saints Sergius and Bacchus	In 527, survived until 11th century	Fatih district Constantinople	Was in ruin and the site was used by the Ottomans
Church of St. Mary of the Spring	In 559	district of Zeytinburnu Constantinople	Remained intact
Church of San Domenico	In the 6th century, rebuilt in 1233 during the fourth crusades	Beyoğlu, Constantinople	Converted to a mosque
Church of Saint John the Baptist at Lips	Built over a shrine from the 6th century	Constantinople	In 1497 during the reign of sultan Beyazid it was turned into a small mosque
Church of San Paolo	6th century	district of Beyoğlu, Constantinople	Converted to a mosque by the al-Fatih between 1475 and 1478
Church of the Theotokos Kyriotissa	6th century	District of al-Fatih, Constantinople	The church was assigned by al-Fatih to the Dervishes
Saint Andrew	6th century	District of al-Fatih, Constantinople	Converted to a mosque between 1486 and 1491
Church of St Euphemia	7th century	Constantinople	Remained intact
Church of St. Mary of the Mongols	7th century	District of Fatih in Constantinople	Remained intact
Church of the Virgin of the Pharos	Built in the 8th century	Great palace of Constantinople	Remained intact
Church of Hagias Theodosias	9th century	District of al-Fatih, Constantinople	Converted into mosque in 1490
Church of Saint Nicholas of the Caffariotes	9th century	District of al-Fatih, Constantinople	Converted to a mosque under the reign of Murad (1623-1640), in exchange the Armenian got

			another church in Balat.
Church of St. Mary	Between the 9th and 10th century	Sixth hill, Fatih district of Constantinople	Converted into a mosque by the Ottomans in 1640
Church of Theotokos at Lips	In 908	District of al-Fatih, Constantinople	In 1497 converted to a small mosque during he reign of Beyazid.
Myrelaion church	10th century	District of al-Fatih, Constantinople	Converted in 1500 into a mosque during the reign of Beyazid
Pammakaristos Church	Around 10th and 11th century	District of al-Fatih, Constantinople	Converted by Murad III into a mosque
Church of Christ Pantepoptes	Before 1087	District of al-Fatih	Remained intact
Church of Hagios Theodoros	Between end of 11th century and beginning of 12th century	District of al-Fatih, Constantinople	Converted after the conquest of Istanbul
Church of Saint Thekla of the Palace of Blachernae	Between the 11th and twelve century	District of al-Fatih, Constantinople	Converted into a mosque between 1509 and 1512
Chapel of Saint Michael	1118 and 1124	District of al-Fatih, Constantinople	Converted to a mosque shortly after the conquest
Church of the Theotokos Eleousa	Between 1118 and 1124	District of al-Fatih, Constantinople	Converted shortly after the conquest into a mosque
Church of Christ Pantokrator	Between 1118 and 1124	District of al-Fatih	Converted after the conquest into a mosque
Church of Hagia Theklatu Palatiu ton Blakhernon	Not known	District of al-Fatih, Constantinople	Converted into a mosque in 1512 by Mustafa Pasha
Church of Saint John the Forerunner	12th century	District of al-Fatih, Constantinople	Converted to a mosque between 1587 and 1598
Saint Paul church	1325	Galata	Converted to a

			mosque during the reign of Mehmed II between 1475 and 1478
Church of St. George, Istanbul	In 1600	Phanar district, Constantinople	Remained intact
Church of St. Peter and Paul,	1604	Galata	Destroyed due to a fire two times and rebuilt in 1843
Crimea Memorial Church	Built on a land donated by the sultan Abdulmecit between 1858 and 1868	Taksim District, Constantinople	Remained intact
Bulgarian St. Stephen Church	19th century	District of al-Fatih, Constantinople	Remained intact
Spain			
San Pedro	4th century	Córdoba, Spain	Remained intact
Basilica de Marialba	4th century	Marialba, Spain	Remained intact
Villa Fortunatus, basilica	6th century	Near Fraga, Spain	Remained intact
Basílica de Vega del Mar	6th century	Marbella, Spain	Remained intact
San Juan de Baños	661	Spain	Remained intact
São Frutuose	665	Montelios, Spain	Remained intact
San Pedro de la Nave	680	Spain	Remained intact
Santa Comba de Bande	7th century	Spain	Remained intact
Santa Lucia de El-Trampal	7th century	Alcuéscar	Remained intact
São Gião de Nazaré	7th century	Spain	Remained intact
Santa Maria	7th century	Melque, Spain	Remained intact
Santa Maria	7th century	Quintanilla de Las Viñas, Spain	Remained intact
Valdecebadar	7th century	Near Olivenza, Spain	Remained intact
Santa Cristina	7th century	Lena, Spain	Remained intact
Santianes	774-783	Pravia, Spain	Remained

			intact
Santa Maria	8th century	Vilanova, Spain	Remained intact
San Julián de Los Prados	9th century	Oviedo, Spain	Remained intact
San Salvador	893	Valdediós, Spain	Remained intact
Santa Maria	Unknown date	Bamba, Spain	Remained intact
Mesas de Villaverde	Unknown date	Villaverde, Spain	Remained intact
Santa Maria	10th century	Lebeña, Spain	Remained intact
San Cebrián	10th century	Mazote, Spain	Remained intact
São Pedro	10th century	Lourosa, Spain	Remained intact
Santiago	10th century	Peñalba, Spain	Remained intact
San Pablo	Unknown date	Córdoba, Spain	Remained intact
Tarragona basilica in the amphitheatre	11th century	Tarragona, Spain	Remained intact
San Nicolás de la Villa	13th century	Córdoba, Spain	Remained intact
Seville cathedral	13th century	Seville, Spain	Remained intact
Santa Maria Magdelena	13th century	Seville, Spain	Remained intact
San Marcos	13th century	Jerez de la Frontera, Spain	Remained intact
San Dionisio	15th century	Jerez de la Frontera, Spain	Remained intact
church of St. Mary of the Incarnation	15th century	Marbella, Spain	Remained intact
Ermita de Santiago	15th century	Marbella, Spain	Remained intact
Chapel of Santo Cristo de la Vera Cruz	15th century	Marbella, Spain	Remained intact
Priory Church	15th century	Province of Cádiz, Spain	Remained intact