The influence of *Ḥadīth* on the architecture of early congregational mosques

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The candidate confirms that the work submitted is his own and that appropriate credit has been given where reference has been made to the work of others.

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Dedication

To the soul of my mother
To my father, wife and son

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Eternal gratitude goes to Prof. Richard Morris whose notable experience, exceptional erudition and outstanding personality have had great impact on this work and the way I have dealt with it. He expertly knew how to guide me when it was vague, raise my spirits when it was hard, and renew my determination when it began to wane. I have been really privileged to have such a great supervisor and stupendous mentor.

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Also, I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to all the members and students of the IMS for the help and thoughtfulness they have shown towards me in general and during the very efficacious work-in-progress seminars in particular.

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I believe that I am indebted in every single positive thing in my life to my parents who provided me with indescribable affection, care and guidance when I was simply helpless. Most importantly, they provided me with a model which I have been trying to emulate. My thanks then goes to my wife, Marwa, the real partner of this long and arduous journey. She has supported me tirelessly and scrupulously to realize the goals and overcome the difficulties. I do believe that I have been blessed with a fantastic wife who always gives more than expectable. She shows limitless understanding and makes countless sacrifices at all times.

Finally, I do believe that whatever the words I use, I can never do justice with the above people and their value for this work.

Abstract

This study weighs up the influence of *Ḥadīth*, 'Traditions of Prophet Muḥammad', on the architecture of the major congregational mosques which were built from the rise of Islam in 1/622 to the end of the Umayyad period in 132/750.

The thesis is divided into eight chapters. The first is an introduction which deals with: the reasons behind underestimating the role of *Ḥadīth* in shaping mosque architecture, the main questions of the study, and the approaches and methodologies applied to deal with these questions. The second chapter discusses the historiographical problems of *Ḥadīth* and early Arabo-Islamic sources. The third examines the nature and functions of the sizable hypaethral building which was erected by the Prophet and which we believe was a mosque and not simply an abode for the Prophet and his family. The fourth chapter deals with the history and form of this structure, which represents, by definition, an embodiment of *Ḥadīth* regarding mosques. The fifth chapter, however, asks whether there was an 'orthodox' form of mosque according to *Ḥadīth*. It also tries to explore the features of such a form. The sixth and seventh chapters investigate whether and how *Ḥadīth* influenced the architectural evolution of the mosques which were built under the Rightly-guided Caliphs and those built by the Umayyads, respectively. Chapter eight is an epilogue that summarizes the findings of the study.

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Transliteration used

Consonants	**Long vowels**	**Diphthongs**
ء: [ʾ]	اَ: [ā]	نَو: [aw]
ث: [th]	ُو: [ū]	نَي: [ay]
ح: [ḥ]	ِي: [ī]	
خ: [kh]		
ذ: [dh]	**Short vowels (ḥarakāt)**	
ش: [sh]	◌َ (fatḥah): [a]	
ص: [ṣ]	◌ِ (kasrah): [i]	
ض: [ḍ]	◌ُ (ḍammah): [u]	
ط: [ṭ]		
ظ: [ẓ]		
ع: [ʿ]		
غ: [gh]		
ق: [q]		
ة in pause: [ah]		
otherwise: [at]		

Glossary of early Islamic architecture terms

Ājurr: kiln-baked brick

Al-ṣuffah al-muqaddamah (also *al-ẓullah, al-mughṭṭā, al-muqaddam* and *bayt al-ṣalāt*): the front [shaded] part of the mosque, i.e. sanctuary

ʿArīsh: simple booth or arbour

Aʿwād: wooden pulpit

Bāʾikah: arcade

Balāṭāt: [vertical] aisles, bays

Firākh: small arches

Ḥāʾiṭ: [walled] orchard

Ḥanāyā: the arches of *bayt al-ṣalāt*

Isṭiwān or *Isṭiwānah*: column

Jiṣṣ: gypsum mortar

Junbatayn (also *mujannabatyn*): two side *riwāqs*

Khawkhah: wicket

Khushub: [wooden] piers

Labin: mud brick

Manārah (also *ṣawmaʿah* and *miʾdhanah*): minaret

Mawākhīr: back *riwāqs*

Mirbad: threshing-floor

Murabbaʿah: quadrangular courtyard

Nijāf: wooden architraves

Qisīy: arches

Raḥbah: a free wide area

Riwāq: aisle

Safāfīd: dowels [of iron]

Saffūd (spike): dome's finial

Sahwah: the interior of a chamber, or a niche in the wall

Sawārī: rows of columns

Shurrafāt (also *shuraf* and *qudhaf*): crenellations or cornices.

Ṭunuf: friezes

Turʿah (pl. *turaʿ*): door

ʿUqūd: ties, also arches

Uskūb: [horizontal] aisle

Wajah al-ṭayqān, soffits or spandrels

List of plans, illustrations and tables

Plan and illustrations

Tables and charts

Chapter 1: Introduction – aim, scope, questions and methodology

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1.1.   Aim and scope

This study weighs up the influence of *Ḥadīth*, 'Traditions of Prophet Muḥammad',[1] on the architecture of the major congregational mosques which were built during the early decades of Islam, particularly from the rise of Islam in 1/622 to the end of the Umayyad period in 132/750.[2]

The original aspects of this study will be indicated through identification of the main reasons behind the undervaluation of the influence of *Ḥadīth* on mosque architecture, and the problems this has caused. The questions of the study and the methodologies used to approach them will then be reviewed. Finally, the key points of the discussion will be summarized.

1.2.   Why *Ḥadīth* influence on mosque architecture has been underestimated?

Islamic archaeology evolved out of two independent strands of enquiry. One was an interest in the historical significance of art; the other emerged in the context of

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[1] For *Ḥadīth* definition and categories, see chapter 2 and table 1. For clarity, '*Ḥadīth*' with a capital 'Ḥ' will be used when the genre is being referred to. When a single tradition of the Prophet is meant, then '*ḥadīth*' with small 'ḥ' will be used. The letter 's' will be added when it is in the plural.

[2] *Ḥadīth* is the second most important source of Islamic law after the *Qurʾān*. The reason why the latter is not systematically addressed in this thesis is that it only has limited bearing on the issue of shaping the architecture of early mosques. See Oleg Grabar, 'Art and Architecture and the Qurʾan' in *Early Islamic Art, 650-1100*, I, Constructing the Study of Islamic Art (Hampshire: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2005). First published in *Encyclopaedia of the Qurʾan*, ed. by Jane D. McAuliffe, ed. (Leiden: Brill, 2001), I, pp. 161-75. However, there are few aspects of influence of the *Qurʾān* on the building of mosques. A clear example is the verses which deal with the event of changing the *qiblah* direction towards the Kaʿbah in Mecca after having been towards Jerusalem. Such cases will be dealt with in due course.

Orientalist studies. The coalescence of these two strands in the late nineteenth century marked the real beginning of academic exploration of the artistic and archaeological patrimony of the Islamic lands.[3] This disjunctive evolution helps to explain why not much effort has since been made to relate Islamic architecture to the religious context in which it originally developed. Such 'secular' perspective has tended to dominate most modern western as well as Arab scholarship.[4]

Some of the early western studies of Muslim artistic and cultural heritage did take the religious background into consideration. This might have been due to the fact that such studies were conducted in the context of a broader treatment of oriental culture. The works of Edward Lane,[5] Max van Berchem,[6] Caetani,[7] and Henri Lammens[8] are good examples of studies that considered the influence of Islam, mainly as a set of traditions and practices, on the architecture of mosques. However, only a few of them paid any attention to the effect of the two main sources of Islamic law, *Qur'ān* and *Ḥadīth*, in giving the mosque its architectural shape. The fact that this already-

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[3] See Stephen Vernoit, 'The Rise of Islamic Archaeology', *Muqarnas*, 14 (1997), 1-10 (p. 1).

[4] Examples for this approach can be found in G.T. Rivoira, *Moslem Architecture: Its Origins and Development*, trans. by Rushforth (London: Oxford University Press, 1918; repr. 1975); Martin Briggs, *Muhammadan Architecture in Egypt and Palestine* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1924); K.A.C. Creswell, *Early Muslim Architecture*, 2 vols (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1969); al-Sayyid ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz Sālim, 'Al-ʿImārah al-Islāmiyyah fil Andalus wa Taṭawwuruhā', *ʿĀlam al-Fikr*, 8 (1977), 89-166; Kamāl al-Dīn Sāmiḥ, *Al-ʿImārah fī Ṣadr al-Islam* (Cairo: Al-Hayʾah al-Miṣriyyah al-ʿĀmmah lil Kitāb, 1987).

[5] Edward W. Lane, *The Manners and Customs of the Modern Egyptians* (London: 1836).

[6] Max van Berchem, 'Architecture' in *The Encyclopaedia of Islam* (London: 1908). See also Max van Berchem, 'Muhammadan Architecture in Syria and Egypt', in *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics* ed. by James Hasting and John A. Selbie, 13 vols (Paris: Leroux, 1908-27), I, pp. 757-60.

[7] Caetani, *Annali dell'Islam*, 10 vols (Milan: 1905-26).

[8] Henri Lammens, *Islam: Belief and Institutions*, trans. by E. Denison Ross (London: Methuen, 1929).

limited approach declined in later studies is attributable to the historiographical problems which arose in western scholarship *vis-à-vis* the authenticity of early Arabic writings, with *Ḥadīth* included.[9] A prevalent argument that the mosque, both institutionally and architecturally, had not yet materialized during the time of the Prophet may well have reinforced this trend.[10] These factors together resulted in an undervaluing of the influence of *Ḥadīth* on mosque design. The majority of writers contented themselves with quoting the story of building the first mosque of the Prophet from the books of *Ḥadīth*. Sometimes, one or two exhaustively repeated, yet not properly examined, *ḥadīths* are mentioned to give evidence that Islam did not favour the act of perfecting buildings.[11] Only few scholars, such as Caetani and later on Pedersen,[12] have paid attention – while discussing the nature of the Prophet's communal building – to those *ḥadīths* which are dedicated to mosques and their regulations.[13]

In his well-known *Annali dell'Islam* (1905-1926), Caetani adopted a clear skepticism towards the sources. Unlike the traditionally established image of the mosque of the Prophet, Caetani's reading of the relevant *ḥadīths* led him to argue that this hypaethral building which was built by the Prophet was a house and not a mosque (see 3.2). Without taking investigation further in this direction, later scholars have followed this approach, implying that there is nothing relevant in *Ḥadīth* to consider. Although Islam has left numerous

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[9] In addition to the works mentioned in footnote 3, see Richard Ettinghausen, Oleg Grabar and Marilyn Jenkins-Madina, *Islamic Art and Architecture: 650-1259*, p. 20; Jonathan M. Bloom and Sheila Blair, *Islamic Arts* (London: Phaidon, 1997), p. 5.

[10] This argument is examined in chapter 3.

[11] For example, see Creswell, *Early Muslim Architecture*, I. I, 8-9.

[12] J. Pedersen and others, Masdjid', in *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd edn, VI (1991), pp. 644-707 (pp. 645-6).

[13] See al-Bukhārī, *ḥadīths* no. 377-492; Muslim, *ḥadīths* no. 1161-569.

monuments in many places in the world and countless antiquities in the world's museums, they have argued that its concern with the transitory nature of this life is traditionally argued not to support any kind of massive or decorated structures. Martin Briggs, for instance, began his book by saying: 'It cannot be claimed that the date of Muhammad's birth in Mecca, in AD 570, forms in itself a definite landmark in the history of art.'[14]

Opinions and analyses expressed by members of this 'sceptical tendency' are often characterized by inconsistency. Paradoxical or contradictory statements not only flow from scholars who generally share the sceptical standpoint, but also from the same scholar. Few pages after his just-quoted statement, Briggs says that the 'shelter' built by the Prophet was the 'origin' of the later *līwān*, and that the tamarisk pulpit he used may have been the embryo of the later *minbar*. Briggs added that the fact that Bilāl, the Prophet's muezzin, used to call to prayers from a high point in the mosque vicinity made it necessary to provide the later minaret.[15]

It is a fact, however, that a religion, cult, or a philosophical or political scheme is the heart of any civilization. Architecture is the mistress art, and the architecture of a given nation at a particular time is accordingly believed to personify its culture. Departing from such concepts, a group of scholars such as Grabar,[16] Hillenbrand,[17] and Johns[18] began to pay heed to the influence of

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[14] Briggs, *Muhammadan Architecture*, p. 1.

[15] Ibid, pp. 21-2.

[16] See, for example, Oleg Grabar, *The Formation of Islamic Art*, rev. edn (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1987).

[17] Robert Hillenbrand, *Islamic Architecture: Form, Function and Meaning*, ed. by Case Bound (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994).

[18] Jeremy Johns, 'The "House of the Prophet" and the Concept of the Mosque', in *Bayt al-Maqdis: Jerusalem and Early Islam*, ed. by Jeremy Johns, *Oxford Studies in Islamic Art*, 9 (1999), 59-112.

Islam on the style of art and architecture that developed in the Islamic lands. However, it is Islamic traditions and customs, as distinct from Islamic original teachings, that are widely regarded to have had the eventual influence on the distinguishing characteristics of mosque architecture.[19] Hillenbrand, for example, paid attention to the influence of the way the Muslim arrange themselves in collective prayers on the mosque design (see 5.7.2). Even with this approach, scholars have been generally reluctant to investigate the role of *Ḥadīth* on the main components of mosque architecture, regarding features such as minarets, *miḥrābs*, domes and *minbars* as innovations of later times.

The fact that many architectural features are standard to the oldest surviving mosques suggests that a canonical type of the mosque did exist early in the Islamic history. Such a template would have been copied by the builders of all later mosques, combined with further modifications inspired from the varying architectural heritage of each Muslim territory.[20] The architectural evolution of this universally-endorsed 'Ur mosque', and the many influences that shaped it, have been debated since the beginning of the study of Islamic architecture.[21] Some attention has been paid to the sizable building which was

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[19] See Hillenbrand, *Islamic Architecture*, p. 36.

[20] See Johns, 'House of the Prophet', pp. 64- 71. On such a mosque template, see also Thallein Mireille Antun, 'The Architectural Form of the Mosque in the Central Arab Lands: From the Hijra to the End of the Umayyad Period: 1/622-133/750' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Oxford, St. Cross College, 2007), p. 168.

[21] For the range of scholars' different approaches in this respect, see Prisse d'Avennes, *L'Art Arabe d'apres les Monuments du Caire* (Paris: 1878); Richard Ettinghausen, 'Islamic Art and Archaeology', in *Near Eastern Culture and Society,* ed. by T. Cuyler Young (Princeton, NJ., 1951); Paul Casanova, *Histoire et description de la citadelle du Caire: Mémoires de la Mission Archéologique Française au Caire* (Cairo: The University Press, 1955); K. A. C. Creswell, 'The Evolution of the Minaret with Special Reference to Egypt' *Burlington Magazine,* 1 (1926), 127-83 (133-46); J. M. Rogers, 'From Antiquarianism to Islamic Archaeology', *Quaderni dell'Istituto Italiano di Cultura per la R.A.E.*, 2 (Cairo: 1974); Oleg Grabar, 'Islamic Art and Archaeology', in *The Study of the Middle East:*

erected by the Prophet and which we are told attained a communal function in his time. The majority of studies adhered to the old yet still accepted idea that in an elementary form the 'mosque' of the Prophet at Madīnah was the prototype for the congregational mosques of the first centuries of Islam.[22] Despite doing so, many of them hesitated to call it a mosque.[23] This may be attributed to the powerful influence of the thesis of 'the house of the Prophet', first put forward by Caetani.

1.3. Problems with these views

The tendency to underrate the influence of *Ḥadīth* on mosque architecture is in contradiction with the fact that the idea of the mosque itself is intrinsically a result of *Ḥadīth* teachings.[24] The large number of *ḥadīths* about the obligatory nature of *ṣalāt*, 'prayers', and the virtue of performing *ṣalāt* in the mosque, should have been the foremost grounds for erecting mosques and attending them.[25] The positioning of mosques, which is in turn dictated by the direction of *qiblah*,[26] and the restrictions on building mosques over the graves of the pious, may be two

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Research and Scholarship in the Humanities and the Social Sciences, ed. by L. Binder (New York: 1976), pp. 229-63; ʿĀmir Sulaymān, *The History of Ancient Iraq* (Baghdad: Baghdad University Press, 1982); Stephen Vernoit, *The Rise of Islamic Archaeology* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994); Wladyslaw Kubiak, *Al-Fustat: Its Foundation and Early Urban Development* (Warsaw, 1982).

[22] See Rivoira, p. 1. See also Edward Lane's explanation of the word, 'gâmi, the congregational mosque': *Arabic English Lexicon: Derived from the Best and the Most Copious Eastern Sources*, 8 vols (London: Williams and Norgate, 1863-93).

[23] See, for example, A. C. Dickie, *The Great Mosque at Damascus* (London, 1911); Creswell, *Early Muslim Architecture*, I. I, 6-16.

[24] See Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī, *Fatḥ al-Bārī bī Sharḥ al-Bukhārī*, 14 vols (Cairo: Muṣṭafā al-Ḥalabī: 1959), II (Book of Prayers), 3-497.

[25] See, for example, Abū Bakr Aḥmad b. al-Ḥusayn al-Bayhaqī, *Al-Jāmiʿ li Shuʿab al-Imān*, ed. by Mukhtār al-Nadawī, 14 vols (Riyadh: Maktabat al-Rushd, 2003), *ḥadīths* no. 2567-703.

[26] Ibn Ḥajar, *Fatḥ*, II, 42-50. The *qiblah* is the direction which the Muslims are commanded to face during prayer. It is the direction of the *Kaʿbah* in Mecca.

telling examples of the substantial influence of *Ḥadīth* on mosque layout and location.[27]

Further, the traditional views about *Ḥadīth* tendency towards simplicity and frugality seem to conflict with the fact that some of the architectural works made at early mosques, by command of people known for their piety and close adherence to Islamic teachings, applied 'sumptuous' materials. For example, the works of the Caliph ʿUthmān b. ʿAffān (23-35/643-55), who was the third caliph in Islam and one of the closest Companions to the Prophet, witnessed the first recorded use of dressed stones in mosques.[28] Another example is the works of the pious Umayyad Caliph ʿUmar b. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz (99-101/717-20), who before ascending to the Umayyad throne made radical changes in the architecture of the Prophet's mosque. The works of ʿUmar resulted in the introduction of some elements such as the minarets and the concave prayer niche for the first time in the mosque of the Prophet and possibly in the history of mosque architecture. According to traditional Muslim as well as western views, the Umayyad mosques reflected the Umayyad liberal attitude.

Islamic law requires each worker to do his work properly and efficiently (see 5.10 and 5.11). Craftsmanship thus invoked spiritual as well as practical dimensions. Could we, accordingly, understand the massive mosques built under the Umayyads in the light of the fact that Islam always demands its followers to perfect their work? Or is mosque architecture regarded as a concern which is more religious than secular (which means that it has its own established conventions which are not allowed to be modified)?

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[27] Ibn Ḥajar, *Fatḥ*, II, 75.

[28] On ʿUthmān's work at the mosque of the Prophet, see chapter 6.

1.4. Modern scholarship and the origins of the mosque

While pre-Islamic architectural models and the context they could have provided for the development of the mosque are important to discuss, in what follows these will be reviewed – only briefly – as this thesis takes the influence of *Ḥadīth* on the architecture of early mosques as its starting point.

It seems that a number of reasons have coalesced to make quite a number of scholars believe that mosque architecture was derived from non-Islamic origins.[29] These reasons may include: the rarity of building materials in Arabia, the lack of archaeological and historical evidence for architectural heritage in Arabia in pre and early Islamic times, and most importantly the traditionally fixed disinclination of the Prophet towards building. Another reason may be the opinion of Ibn Khaldūn, the widely respected Islamic historian and philosopher, about the Arab's reluctance to arts and their ignorance of crafts.[30] These, and other factors, combined together to get a number of scholars from the western vanguard such as Gertrude Bell, Lammens, Richmond, and Creswell to think that early Muslims were unaware of architecture.[31] These, and other scholars who followed their steps, depreciated the influence of the prophetic model on shaping Islamic architecture in general and mosque architecture in particular. They thought that the origin of mosque architecture

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[29] The response of Muslim scholars to such theory varied. It ranged from seeing nothing outrageous in borrowing some elements and features from the architectural types of other civilizations to fiercely defending the originality of Islamic architecture for it is seen as a reflection of Islam itself.

[30] In his *Muqaddimah*, Ibn Khaldūn states: 'the Arabs were the farthest people from crafts'.

[31] Examples are: G. Bell, *Palace and Mosque at Ukhaiḍir: a Study in Early Mohammadan Architecture* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1914), p. vii; H. Lammens, La cite arabe de Taif à la veille de l'hégire, Special issue of Mélanges de l'Université Saint-Joseph, t. 8, fasc. 4, (Beirut: Imprimerie Catholique, 1922), VIII, 183; Richmond, *Moslim Architecture*, p. 9; Creswell, *Early Muslim Architecture*, I. I, 10-11.

is to be sought elsewhere. The argument that mosque design was derived from the ancient Egyptian temples, which was first put forward by Saladin,[32] was accepted by Hautecœur more than 40 years later.[33] Such theory, however, was contested by a number of later scholars, such as Briggs who concluded that no disagreement can be clearer than the one found between the architecture of mosques and that of Pharaonic temples.[34] Other less popular theories have been compared the architecture of the mosque to other architectural types such as the Persian palaces and *apadānas*.[35]

More recently, Jeremy Johns seeks the architectural, as well as the institutional, origins of the mosque in what he calls 'the family of the mosque: synagogue, church, and bayt al-ʿArab'.[36] The institutional parallelism between the mosque and the synagogue, in particular, has already received much attention, especially given the assumed analogy between prayer in Islam and its Judaic predecessor particularly in the rabbinic period.[37]

Many scholars argue that there is a similarity between the forms and places of communal prayer in Islam and Judaism (particularly after the

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[32] Saladin: *La Mosquée de Sidi Okba à Kairouan* (Paris: E. Leroux, 1899), p. 37.

[33] Louis Hautecœur and Gaston Wiet, *Les mosquées du Caire* (Paris: E. Leroux, 1932).

[34] Briggs, *Muhammadan Architecture*, p. 15.

[35] For these views, see E. Diez, *Die Kunst der Islamischen Volker* (Berlin, 1915), p. 8 ff; Creswell, *Early Muslim Architecture*, I. I, 21-2; Elie Lambert, 'Les Origines de la Mosquée et l'Architecture Religieuse des Omeiyades', *Studia Islamica*, 6 (1956), 5-18; Elie Lambert, 'La Mosquée du Type Andalou en Espagne et en Afrique du Nord', *Al-Andalus*, 14 (1949), 273-89. These views have been dealt with by Aḥmad Fikrī. Aḥmad Fikrī, *Masājid al-Qāhirah wa Madārisuhā: al-Madkhal* (Cairo and Alexandria: Dār al-Maʿārif, 1963), pp.5-21, 280-90.

[36] See footnote 18.

[37] See Reuven Kimelman, 'Rabbinic Prayer in Late Antiquity', in *Cambridge History of Judaism, vol. iv, the Late Roman-Rabbinic Period*, ed. by S. T. Katz (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), pp. 573-611.

destruction of the temple in 70 CE).[38] After that date – from tannaitic (70-220 CE) to amoraic times (220-500 CE) – the synagogue underwent a stage of 'templization', and the Jewish prayer underwent a stage of 'sacrificization'.[39] In his 'The Foundation of Muslim Prayer', Khaleel for example, argues:

> While some narrations suggest that Muhammad taught the Muslims all the rituals of prayer, others show that some of these Muslims had performed this form of ʿibāda before Islam.[40]

There are a number of main motives for such suggestion. First, among the various derivations of the word *ṣalāt*, one was used in both Judaism and Christianity in pre-Islamic times to designate institutional prayer,[41] Second, some of the movements of prayer mentioned by the *Qurʾān*, such as *qiyām* 'standing position', *rukūʿ*, 'genuflection', and *sujūd*, 'prostration' were known to pre-Islamic nations and mentioned in the Tanakh.[42] Third, Arabian Jews used to practice five prayers a day before the number was reduced to three by combining two in the morning and two in the evening.[43] Forth, according to some reports, the Muslim *ṣalāt* was developed gradually in the early days of Islam. Al-Balādhurī related that there were only two daily prayers each

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[38] See Richard Bell, *The Origin of Islam in its Christian Environment* (London: Macmillan, 1926); S. Goitein, *Studies in Islamic History and Institutions* (Leiden: Brill, 1968); Hava Lazarus-Yafeh, *Some Religious Aspects of Islam* (Leiden: Brill, 1981); J. P. Heinz, 'The Origins of Muslim Prayer: Sixth and Seventh Century Religious Influences on the Ṣalāt Ritual' (unpublished master's thesis, University of Missouri-Columbia, 2008).

[39] See Kimelman, p. 573.

[40] M. Khaleel, 'The Foundation of Muslim Prayer', *Medieval Encounters*, 5, 1 (1999), 17-28.

[41] Goitein, *Studies in Islamic History*, p. 74; Erwin Rosenthal, *Judaism and Islam* (London and New York: World Jewish Congress and Thomas Yoseloff, 1961), p. 22.

[42] Khaleel, p. 20.

[43] See Goitein, *Studies in Islamic History*, p. 84; Abraham Katsch, *Judaism in Islam* (New York: Bloch Publishing, 1954), xx, xxi.

composed of two *rak'as* in the earliest years of Islam.[44] Fifth, the reports about the Prophet leading a host of prophets in prayer during the Night Journey suggest that it was already realized by the traditionists that the Prophet Muḥammad and the preceding prophets were familiar with the same prayer.[45] Further, the traditions which put Moses in relation to the story about the number of daily prayers enjoined on the Muslims suggest also Judaic origins of the Muslim prayer. Moreover, the group of *ḥadīths* which forbid the Muslims to act, in their prayer, differently to the Jews imply a considerably conceivable correspondence between the Muslim and Jewish prayers.[46] For instance, Kister uses the *ḥadīth* commanding the Muslims to pray in shoes so as to distinguish themselves from the Jews to say that this would have been the only difference.[47] Khaleel suggests that this plethora of *ḥadīths* were written after the departure of the Prophet to deny the Judaic influence on the Muslim prayer.[48]

In a number of particulars, this view is not much practical. First, there is no evidence that such movements as *qiyām*, *rukūʿ* and *sujūd* were all standard to Jewish prayer. Further, Khaleel anticipated that had the Muslim prayer been different in anything than that of the Jews, the Prophet would have indicated to his disciples – in the *Qurʾān* – the reason behind such difference. The fact that Prophet Muḥammad declared Islam as the seal and

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[44] Al-Balādhurī, *Ansāb al-Ashrāf*, vol. I, ed. by M. Hamidullah (Cairo, 1959). See also Uri Robin, 'Morning and Evening Prayers in Early Islam', in *The Development of Islamic Ritual*, ed. by Gerald Hawting, The Formation of the Classical Islamic Period, 26 (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006), pp. 105-9 (pp. 105-6).

[45] Khaleel, p. 24

[46] Khaleel, pp. 25-6.

[47] Menahem Kister, 'Do no Assimilate Yourselves...', *Jerusalem Studies in Arabic and Islam*, 12 (1989), 321-71.

[48] Khaleel, p. 27.

heir of all preceding Abrahamic religions does not necessarily mean, as presumed by Khaleel, that the way of worship he practiced should be identical to that of the previous prophets. In addition, the *Qur'ān* does not include many details of Muslim rites which are usually dealt with by *Ḥadīth*. Also, there is no enough evidence that the ritual of *ṣalāt* underwent a phase of gradual development. The above report of al-Balādhurī is particularly rare.

The account of the Prophet Muḥammad leading a group of prophets in the Night Journey does not necessarily reflect the historians and biographers' realization that all prophets, with Prophet Muḥammad included, were familiar with one type of prayer. The account deals with an event whose context is wholly exceptional and beyond the rules of this life.

With all said, Islam shares many ritual details with other Abrahamic religions. This is attributed to the fact that a Muslim is commanded to believe in the message of all prophets and show the highest respect to them.[49] A primary task of Prophet Muḥammad was not to establish a new religion, but rather to revitalize the pristine religion of Abraham.[50] This may give explanation to why the places of prayer of the adherents of the previous religions are called 'mosques' by the *Qur'ān*, and may also explain the many pre-Islamic observances that were retained by Islam:

> The Messenger believeth in what hath been revealed to him from his Lord, as do the men of faith, each one (of them) believeth in Allāh, His angles, His books, and his Messengers. "We make no distinction (they say) between one and another of His Messengers." And they say: "We hear, and we obey: (we seek) thy forgiveness, our Lord, and to Thee is the end

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[49] *Qur'ān*, II. 136.

[50] *Qur'ān*, XVI. 123.

of all journeys."[51]

> Without doubt, among men, the nearest of kin to Abraham, are those who follow him, as are also this Prophet and those who believe: and Allāh is the Protector of those who have faith. [52]

After reviewing the stories of an array of prophets in a *sūrat al-anbiyāʾ*, 'the chapter of prophets', the *Qurʾān* states:

> Verily, this Ummah (brotherhood or nation) of yours is a single Ummah and I am your Lord and Cherisher: therefore serve Me (and no other).[53]

Nonetheless, the Prophet Muḥammad was noticeably keen to persuade his disciples not to emulate the followers of other prophets in religious matters as these religions were, according to the Muslim view, corrupted afterwards. This may well explain why the Prophet was particularly heedful to put himself in relation to Prophet Moses, for example, calling him 'brother Moses',[54] while refusing to adopt any of the Jewish or Christian device to prayers.[55]

It seems that this parallelism was Johns' departure point to seek the origins of 'the concept of the mosque' in what he calls 'the family of the mosque: synagogue, church, and bayt al ʿArab'. Johns' rationale for such selectivity was, in addition to geographical propinquity, the fact they all of these types was mainly composed of a peristyle forecourt leading to a covered space (sanctuary).

The weakness of Johns' theory lies initially in that he compares this

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[51] *Qurʾān*, II, 285.

[52] *Qurʾān*, III. 68.

[53] *Qurʾān*, XXI. 92.

[54] Ibn Rustah, *Al-Aʿlāq al-Nafīsah wa Yalīh Kitāb al-Buldān lil Yaʿqūbī*, ed. by M. J. De Goeje (Leiden: Brill, 1891), VII, 66.

[55] Al-Bukhārī, *ḥadīths* no. 603, 604.

architectural type to a template which the mosque attained after decades from the rise of Islam, while Johns' article, like this study, embarks to investigate the impulses which might have shaped the architecture of the earliest mosques which were mainly of hypaethral character. In other words, if the 'concept of the mosque' was inspired from such a forecourt type, why was not it applied to the earliest mosques of Madīnah, Baṣrah and Kūfah?

Moreover, the particular synagogue which is most architecturally similar to the mature stage of the mosque was that at Dura-Europos. The architectural similarity between both types is attributable – in addition to the whole arrangement– to their orientation towards a certain direction of prayer (*qiblah*), the existence of the Torah-niche (*miḥrāb*), the seat of honour (*minbar*), and the ablution device in the forecourt (*mīḍaʾah*). According to Johns, this arrangement, where axial peristyle forecourt was the central motif, was however an exception in synagogue architecture. The difficulty of drawing on this approach lies, as Johns indicates, in a number of facts: (i) only some of the above features existed in other Diaspora synagogues, such as Priene and Sardis;[56] (ii) while courtyards were generally applied in the model of Capernaum, no archaeological evidence exist to imply that such characteristic element in mosque architecture was found in most synagogues; (iii) as far as archaeological evidence can tell, courtyards –such as in the case of Capernaum – were usually attached to one of the sides of the assembly hall. This means that they were neither axial nor forecourts.[57]

Johns himself admitted a number of difficulties in such research. For example, there is no archaeological evidence so far to tell us about the form of

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[56] Johns, 'House of the Prophet', p. 97.

[57] Johns, 'House of the Prophet', p. 98 (quoting Seager 1992, pp. 93-5).

the pre-Islamic synagogues in Arabia.[58] Even in the 'rare' cases where the design of the synagogue is very analogous to that of the mosques, as in Dura-Europos, this is not enough evidence for a straightforward connection. The fact of the matter is that the chronological and geographical distance disqualifies such connection in the case of Dura-Europos. Other synagogues with axial peristyle forecourt are too rare, and generally built much earlier to the rise of Islam and located far away in the Diaspora, which makes it quite implausible to influence the earliest mosques. Similar conditions preclude the influence of the pre-Islamic temples found at Nabataea and the Yemen.[59]

In spite of the fact that the basilical church with atrium is both chronologically and geographically eligible to have influenced the early architectural evolution of the mosque, the possibility that it could be the prototype of the mosque is difficult. Johns states:

> It is simply the wrong shape. In church, the central axis is typically three or four times longer than the width of the structure. In mosque, the length and width of the structure are typically equal, or nearly so; unlike the church, the mosque may be wider than it is long.[60]

While admitting that none of the three architectural types seems to have been the direct predecessor of the mosque, [61] Johns argues that the features that amalgamate these religious building types which were prevalent in the Near East in pre-Islam were previously referred to by Lambert.[62] Further, the assumption that the type of the mosque does belong to such a family is

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[58] Johns, 'House of the Prophet', p. 99. There is textual evidence, however, that synagogues did exist in pre-Islamic Madīnah. See Lecker 1995, pp. 41-2.

[59] Johns, 'House of the Prophet', pp. 101-2.

[60] Johns, 'House of the Prophet', p. 102.

[61] Ibid.

[62] Lambert 1950 & 1956.

identified by the *Qur'ān* itself:

> For had not God driven back one group of people by means of another, there would surely have been torn down *ṣawāmiʿ* [retreats of Christian hermits?], *biyaʿ* [Christian churches or Jewish Synagogues?], *ṣalawāt* [places of prayer], and *masājid*, in which the name of God is abundantly commemorated.'[63]

The most – if not only – perceptible aspect of this Quranic passage, however, is not to confirm any institutional or architectural unity of the above places of prayer, but rather to underscore the concept that all these are places where the God of all prophets, with Prophet Muḥammad included, is worshipped. Johns concludes:

> The attribution to the concept of the mosque to a Late Antique family of religious building types has not, however, brought us any closer to indentifying the immediate origins of that concept. This line of inquiry peters out in the absence of archaeological evidence for the mosque in the Ḥijāz during the *jāhilī* and Prophetic periods. That all my attempts to trace the evolution of the mosque have ended in failure, persuades me to retrace my steps and pick up a thread left hanging towards the beginning of this article, when it was suggested that the crucial question is whether the mosque gradually evolved from pre-existing architectural forms, or whether it was created by the new Islamic elite.'[64]

This result reached by Johns is identical with that of Hillenbrand who after indicating why the synagogues, churches, fire temples, Arabic and Indian temples were not suitable to (regularly) accommodate Muslim prayers, argued that early Muslim architects 'looked elsewhere for inspiration'.[65] While not

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[63] *Qur'ān*, XXII. 40 (as translated by Johns, p. 102).

[64] Johns, 'House of the Prophet', pp. 102-3.

[65] Hillenbrand, *Islamic Architecture*, p. 36.

excluding the probable impact of pre- Islamic types on mosque architecture, this study sets out to investigate whether this source of inspiration was Islamic teachings represented in the sayings and actions of the Prophet.

1.5.   Questions of the study

In order to measure the influence of *Ḥadīth* on the architecture of early congregational mosques, two questions must be posed: what are the features of mosque architecture according to *Ḥadīth*; and whether and how the architecture of early congregational mosques was influenced by *Ḥadīth*? The first question invites a number of subsidiary questions: is there what can be called an orthodox form of mosque? To what extent can *Ḥadīth* be regarded as reliable for architectural purposes? Did *Ḥadīth* deal with all the architectural elements of the mosque? How can those features which are not referred to in *Ḥadīth* be weighted?

The second basic question entails a cluster of subsequent questions: what was the form of early mosques? What kinds of evidence do we have to reconstruct them? Were the builders of these mosques aware of the relevant *ḥadīths*? Did they consider them when building the mosques? How could we know? How can we use *Ḥadīth* to look at the question of how Muslims perceived their mosques? How were they to be used? How were they to be decorated? What facilities did they have to make them usable? Did mosques and their architectural forms influence *Ḥadīth* in any way?

1.6.   Methodology

1.6.1.   Approaching *Ḥadīth*

Ḥadīth forms a controversial topic for Muslim as well as non-Muslim scholars. Both groups believe that a great number of *ḥadīths* were forged in later times to serve political or sectarian agendas. The main difference between the two is that the criteria used by Muslim scholars to judge the authenticity of a certain *ḥadīth* are in

some cases different to those employed by western scholars. Additionally, while Muslim scholars highly appreciate what are traditionally known as the six canonical books of *Ḥadīth*,[66] a number of western academics argue that even such books are unsafe as historical sources.[67] Generally, Muslim scholars take these collections on the trust, mainly because both their *matn*, 'text', and *sanad* or *isnād*, 'chain of transmitters', were repeatedly examined by careful scholars who subjected them to what is traditionally agreed to be a high degree of scrutiny. More particularly, however, modern Muslim scholars have sometimes adopted different opinions to those developed by early *Ḥadīth* scholars. The vanguards of western scholars, on the other hand, were deeply suspicious of *Ḥadīth* regarding much of it as later forgeries. At this point, we will not pre-empt the following discussion about *Ḥadīth* and its historiographical issues (see 2.1), but it is important to note that there is a clear positive change in western scholarship towards accepting a considerable part of *Ḥadīth*.[68] The dominant tendencies are now neither dismissive nor

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[66] These are: *Ṣaḥīḥ* of al-Bukhārī (d. 256/870), *Ṣaḥīḥ* of Muslim (d. 261/875), *Sunan* of Ibn Mājah (d. 273/886), *Sunan* of Abū Dāwūd (d. 275/888), *Sunan* of al-Tirmidhī (d. 279/892) and *Sunan* of al-Nasāʾī (d. 303/916). See *Mawsūʿat al-Ḥadīth al-Sharīf: al-Kutub al-Sittah, Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, Sunan Abī Dāwūd, Jāmiʿ al-Tirmidhī, Sunan al-Nasāʾī wa Sunan Ibn Mājah*, rev. by Sheikh Ṣāliḥ b. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz Āl al-Sheikh (Riyadh: Dar as-Salam, 1999).

[67] See G. H. A. Juynboll, 'Ḥadīth and the Qurʾān', in *Encyclopedia of the Qurʾān*, II (2002), pp. 378-9. See also Sebastian Günther, 'Modern Literary Theory applied to Classical Arabic Texts: Ḥadīth Revisited', in *The Ḥadīth: Critical Concepts in Islamic Studies*, ed. by M. Shah (Abingdon: Routledge, 2010), pp. 28-33; Sebastian Günther, 'Fictional Narration and Imagination within an Authoritative Framework: Towards a New Understanding of Ḥadīth', in *The Ḥadīth: Critical Concepts in Islamic Studies*, ed. by M. Shah (Abingdon: Routledge, 2010), pp. 34-68.

[68] Fuat Sezgin, *Geschichte des arabischen Schrifttums*, (Leiden, 1967).

wholly uncritical, but seek to harness *Ḥadīth*, or aspects of it, to good historical effect.[69]

Most of the *hadīths* that will be dealt with in this study were put in written form in the third/ninth century.[70] There is no doubt, then, that they can be used as a genuine basis for understanding what Muslims believed, *in illo tempore*, to be the traditions of the Prophet. In the next chapter, views about whether these traditions are genuinely attributed to the Prophet will be discussed. The study will also pay heed to the early collections of *Ḥadīth*, particularly those which were collected around 132/750. Examples are the *Jāmiʿ* of Muʿammar b. Rāshid (d. 153/770), which was later included in the *Muṣannaf* of ʿAbd al-Razzāq (d. 211/826), and the *Muwaṭṭaʾ* of Mālik (d. 179/795). This is because of the present focus on mosques which were built from the rise of Islam to the end of the Umayyad period (1-132/662-750). It should be noted, however, that the fact that most of the *ṣaḥīḥ* books of *Ḥadīth*

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[69] For a thorough review of scholastic atmosphere in this regard, see Herbert Berg who has grouped modern scholars according to their opinions regarding *Ḥadīth* authenticity. Herbert Berg, *The Development of Exegesis in Early Islam*: *The Authenticity of Muslim Literature from the Formative Period*, (Routledge, 2000). See also Juynboll, *Muslim Tradition: Studies in Chronology, Provenance and Authorship of Early Ḥadīth* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), pp. 1-8; Schoeler, *The Genesis of Literature in Islam: From the Aural to the Read*, trans. by Shawkat M. Toorawa, New Edinburgh Islamic Surveys (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press; rev. edition 2009), pp. 1-9.

[70] For information about the date, content and weight if authenticity of these collections, see chapter 2. See also J. Robson, 'Ḥadīth', in *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd edn, III (1986), pp. 23-8 (p. 24). *Ṣaḥīḥ hadīths* are not to be found in canonical collections only. Many of them can be found in less renowned collection like *Muwaṭṭaʾ* of Mālik, *Musnad* of Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal, *Sunan* of al-Dārimī and others. See Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ, *ʿUlūm al-Ḥadīth* (*Muqaddimat Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ*), ed. by Nūr al-Dīn al-ʿItr (Damascus: Dār al-Fikr, 1986), p. 19; G. H. A. Juynboll, *Encyclopaedia of Canonical Ḥadīth* (Leiden: Brill, 2007); J. Brown, *The Canonization of al-Bukhari and Muslim: The Formation and Function of the Sunni hadīth Canon* (Leiden: Brill, 2007).

which we have today were compiled in the third/ninth century does not necessarily mean that the *ḥadīths* they include were not already known and circulating in the previous two centuries of Islam.[71]

In addition to testing the circulation of *Ḥadīth*, whether oral or written, in early Islam, there is another point of reference that would help us measure its influence on the architecture of early mosques, that is the form of the 'mosque' of the Prophet. By definition, this should represent an embodiment of his *Ḥadīth*. For this reason, the study will investigate in detail the form and functions of this sizable building which Muslim traditions clearly refer to as a mosque.[72] Yet, here too dispute occurs. As already hinted, although western scholarship generally attributes the origin of mosque architecture to this building which is believed to have been built during the Prophet's lifetime and under his own supervision,[73] it often calls it a 'house'. However, despite this reservation a growing number of western Islamic specialists are now coming to believe that this hypaethral building was a mosque (see chapter 3).

Because of its central importance for the study, an entire chapter will be dedicated to discussion of the nature, function and institution of this simple, yet potentially momentous, building. Another chapter will be devoted to deal with the history, form and material of this building. It should further be pointed out that even for those who refuse to admit it as a mosque, a building of the Prophet will be very relevant to this discussion as it will reflect his *sunnah* in

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[71] On ways of publicizing *Ḥadīth* in early Islam, see next chapter.

[72] The term 'tradition' is usually used in this study to refer to early Arabic accounts, esp. *Ḥadīth*. It is understandable that the same term is also used in literature to refer to the *sunnah* and practice of the Prophet, but this usage is rarely applied here. Whenever applied, I make sure the context indicates that clearly.

[73] On the holders of this opinion, see 4.1.

terms of building.[74]

1.6.2.   Studying early mosques

The mosques on which the influence of *Ḥadīth* is to be measured are those built under the Rāshidūn, 'rightly-guided', Caliphs and the Umayyads.[75] The reason for this selection is that during such period a standardized type of the mosque had emerged.[76] Nonetheless, investigating these early mosques is difficult, chiefly because the original forms of many of them were either considerably changed or entirely overwritten, and archaeological evidence for those built before 40s/660s is not yet available.[77] The earliest mosque to be fully excavated and whose date is archaeologically accepted is that of al-Ḥajjāj b. Yūsuf at Wāsiṭ (84/703). Earlier mosques where archaeological evidence is extant are the Aqṣā mosque (early 40s/660s) and the second construction of the mosque of Kūfah which was presumably carried out by Zīyād b. Abīh in 50/670.[78]

In the absence of archaeological testimony, the study, analysis, and reconstruction of early missing structures will mainly rely on early historical accounts.[79] Can these be verified?[80] As in the case of *Ḥadīth*, there has been a change in modern western scholarship towards accepting many of these sources as reliable tools for research. Hillenbrand, for example, refers to the early mosques as having 'been convincingly analysed on the basis of the

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[74] Whenever used in this thesis, the term '*sunnah*' designates the Prophet's approach of life based on the sayings, actions and approvals which are attributed to him.

[75] In some cases the influence of *Ḥadīth* on later mosques will also be considered.

[76] See Johns, 'House of the Prophet', pp. 64-9; 71. See also Grabar, *Formation*, pp. 106-12.

[77] See Johns, 'House of the Prophet', pp. 59, 62-5; Antun, pp. 9- 57,169

[78] Ibid.

[79] 'Early' is here taken to embrace the first surviving written Arabic records.

[80] A whole chapter will be dedicated to discuss the historiography of these early sources as well as *Ḥadīth*. The current scholastic atmosphere, in this respect, will also be reviewed.

copious literary sources'.[81] While this gives ground for optimism, this present study takes nothing for granted and will try to apply a critical treatment to the sources (see 2.2).

1.6.3. How can the influence of *Ḥadīth* on the architecture of early mosques be measured?

As already hinted, we need to examine whether the architects and builders of early mosques were aware of relevant *ḥadīths*, and whether they really considered them when building these mosques. But, how one would know if they did? The records of *Tarājim*, 'biographies [of notable people]', and *ʿIlm al-Rijāl*, 'knowledge [of the reliability] of *Ḥadīth* transmitters' would be important here, for they would help us know if a certain builder or designer was aware of *Ḥadīth*.[82] Even so, how could we decide if such a builder was aware of relevant *ḥadīths*? The stories of building these mosques would be telling in this sense. Depending on their veracity, in many cases, such stories will represent an invaluable source for this study. While such histories could help us know whether *Ḥadīth* was taken into account during building, it should be noted that the reverse cannot necessarily be assumed: that is, if we are not told that *Ḥadīth* was taken into consideration, this does not mean it was not.

In cases of ambiguity, the architectural composition of mosques will be significant in helping us measure the influence of *Ḥadīth* on how they were built. There are other ways to explore this. For instance, what form did *Ḥadīth* take before the 3rd/ 9th century? Would it be likely for a mosque founder to be acquainted with *ḥadīths* that assign particular building methods for mosques? Would such knowledge inevitably influence the architecture of the mosque he

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[81] Hillenbrand, *Islamic Architecture*, p. 38.

[82] These are records dealing with the biographies and reliability of *Ḥadīth* transmitters. See Juynboll, *Muslim Tradition*, pp. 134-7.

built? Also, what other purposes could have been served by frequent references to mosque fabric, location and layout, if these things were not being influenced directly? There is additional scope of using later, better-documented evidence to show the emergence of a tradition of linkage between *Ḥadīth* and mosque design. While this cannot prove that such a link existed from the start, traditions seldom spring up *ex nihilo* overnight, and by tracing this one backwards, the gap might be narrowed.

Finally, it is worth noting that the aim of this study is not to prove that the influence of *Ḥadīth* on the architecture of early congregational mosques was strong. Rather, it sets out to examine the existence, nature and weight of such influence. The effect of *Ḥadīth* might have been strong on one mosque and weak on another. The study's main objective is to define and contextualize the different phases of this influence and to integrate the verdict with the religious, political, social, economic and environmental context in which a mosque was built.

This study tries to avoid simplistic assumptions. To illustrate, if we consider the question of the *qiblah*, for example, the influence of *Ḥadīth* on the architecture of a particular mosque is not to be basically judged by whether such a mosque is 'accurately' adjusted towards the *Kaʿbah*. The Companions or *tābiʿīs*,[83] who were in charge of specifying the *qiblah* of a certain mosque, did not have the sophisticated tools that could have enabled them to do that precisely. Hence, not being 'accurately' orientated towards the *qiblah* does not mean that it was not at all orientated towards it.[84] Here, the influence of *Ḥadīth*

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[83] A *tābiʿī*, which literarily means a follower or a successor, is a Muslim who met or accompanied the Companions of the Prophet.

[84] See Ibn Taymiyyah, *Majmūʿat al-Fatāwā*, ed. by ʿĀmir al-Jazzār and Anwar al-Bāzz, 3rd edn, 37 vols (Mansura: Dār al-Wafāʾ, 2005), XXII, 127-32.

is represented in the builders' keenness to follow the Prophet's works and sayings. This could have resulted in works of architectural significance. Equally, a mosque might have been built using ephemeral materials and in a simple arrangement for reason other than following the Prophet's archetype e.g. what was available and common when such a mosque was built.

A number of mosques, whose *qiblas* were fixed by the Companions and which later proved to be wrongly laid out, received architectural amendments to be accurately orientated towards the Kaʿbah.[85] Such amendments arguably reflect the influence of *Ḥadīth* which asserts that being orientated towards the *qiblah* is a fundamental requirement for the soundness of prayers. The works of the Companions who were in charge of setting the early *qiblas* were corrected by later devout people who had more sophisticated instruments by which to align mosque layouts.[86] Nonetheless, the fact that the works of the former builders were less precise does not mean they did not try to follow *Ḥadīth* in this respect.

1.7.   Main points in the discussion

In what follows, some points will recur in discussion because of their special significance and because they interlace with other relevant topics. These are:

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[85] See al-Maqrīzī's discussion on that: II, 256-64.

[86] For instance, the *qiblah* of the mosque of Fusṭāṭ which is said to have been orientated by eighty Companions in 21/641 was corrected by the Umayyad governor Qurrah b. Sharīk in early 92/711. Dr Ann Christys, however, has kindly drawn my attention to, and translated relevant passages from, a recent Spanish paper which argues that the inaccurately-orientated *qiblahs* of the earliest mosques in Andalusia, and which were attributed to prestigious *tābiʿīs*, were retained by later patrons. This has been explained by the fact that for the latter, the works of those *tābiʿīs* were of considerable religious weight insomuch as they were considered to legitimate later conduct. See Susana Calvo Capilla, 'Las primeras mezquitas de al-Andalus a través de las fuentes árabes (The First Mosques in al-Andalus According to the Arabic Sources: 92/711-170/785)', *Al-Qantara*, 28/1 (2007), 143-79.

- Liturgy and architecture: did either of the two have stronger impact on the mosque? In other words, was mosque architecture shaped by factors like the accessible materials, climatic conditions and natural architectural evolution? Or was it Islamic teachings and the way the Muslims pray that influenced the architecture of early mosques?

- Site: does *Ḥadīth* specify places where mosques are not allowed to be erected? What are these? What reasons were there behind such restriction?

- Payment: who subsidized building and decoration of mosques? Was it a binding responsibility or only a benevolent deed?

- Did the building of mosques give the patron a good reputation? Or did the desire to elevate and decorate them work against him?

- Who were the builders of mosques? Were non-Muslim masons allowed to participate in building and decorating mosques?

- Materials: what was the availability of materials like stone and wood in the towns where early mosques were built? Did *Ḥadīth* militate in favour of or against certain materials?

- Decoration: how did *Ḥadīth* interact with decoration? What was permissible and what was not? And why?

- What is *Ḥadīth* attitude towards spolia and the conversion of houses of prayers of other faiths into mosques?

- Demolition of mosques for expansion: was it allowed? Did the Prophet do it?

- The Kaʿbah: how was it to be architecturally treated according to *Ḥadīth*? Was it allowed to be demolished and rebuilt? Was the Prophet reported to do so? Did he express desire to do so?

Finally, this study will also consider the influence of mosque architecture on *Ḥadīth*, asking whether and how the architectural and artistic traditions of the early mosques influenced *Ḥadīth* literature.

Chapter 2: *Ḥadīth* and early Arabic sources – an historiographical discussion

Chapter 2: *Ḥadīth* and early Arabic sources – an historiographical discussion

How does modern scholarship regard *Ḥadīth*? This is a critical question for our treatment of *Ḥadīth* literature in the chapters that follow. This chapter consists of two main sections. The first deals with the early stages of *Ḥadīth* collection, how this evolved from oral to written traditions, followed by a review of western *Ḥadīth* scholarship. Section two discusses the historiography of early Arabic writings, and reviews some of those that will be the main sources for the study of early mosques. The aim is to ascertain whether and how early Arabic writings, with *Ḥadīth* included, can be an appropriate source for the study of early mosques.

2.1.   The study of *Ḥadīth*

2.1.1.   Definition

The word '*ḥadīth*' means all that is new. It also means *khabar*, 'news [that is reported]'.[1] Traditionally, *Ḥadīth* is defined as the traditions relating to the words and deeds of Prophet Muḥammad of Islam. According to jurists, there are three sorts of *Ḥadīth*: what the Prophet said (or what was said about him), what he did and what he approved.[2]

A related term is *sunnah* which primarily means the (straight) route or method.[3] *Sunnah* is traditionally defined as the Muslim orthodox way of life

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[1] Al-Azharī, *Tahdhīb al-Lughah*, ed. by M. ʾAwaḍ Murʾib, 15 vols (Beirut: Dār Iḥiyāʾ al-Turāth al-ʾArabī, 2001), IV, 234-5, Ibn Manẓūr, *Lisān al-ʾArab*, ed. by A. al-Kabīr, M. A. Ḥasab Allāh, H. M. al-Shādhilī, rev.edn, 6 vols (Cairo: Dar al-Maʾārif, 1981), II, 797. According to Ibn Manẓūr, the infinitive of the verb *ḥaddatha*, 'tell or report' is *taḥdīth* and not *ḥadīth*. Ibn Manẓūr, II, 796-7.

[2] In spite of not being considered by Muslim jurists, the physical features of the Prophet are also regarded by many scholars as a part of his *Ḥadīth*. On the categories of *Ḥadīth* based on authenticity, see table 1.

[3] Ibn Manẓūr, III, 2124-5.

based on the deeds and teachings of the Prophet. According to *Ḥadīth* scholars, *sunnah*, 'beaten track', is the sayings, deeds, approval or physical appearance which are attributed to the Prophet. In this sense, *sunnah* is equivalent to *Ḥadīth*.[4] Yet, a remarkable difference between the two of them in early Islam, particularly in Madīnah in the time of Mālik, is that *sunnah* designated the *ʿamal*, 'practices', and thus had authoritative character, while *ḥadīth* designated texts and thus had an illustrative character.[5]

For some, the term *sunnah* designates all that is proved by a legitimate evidence whether from the *Qurʾān*, the reports of the Prophet, or what the *ṣaḥābīs* had convened such as the collection of the *Qurʾān* and the adoption of the *dawāwīn*. Hence, *sunnah* is taken to be the opposite of *bidʿah*.[6] A group of early scholars used the term *sunnah* to specify the approaches of Abū Bakr and ʿUmar as well as the stories of the ancients.[7] As a result of *ahl al-ḥadīth* successful campaign, the concept of the *sunnah* was later narrowed to exclusively designate the deeds and saying of the Prophet alone whether or not these had any bearing on legislation.[8]

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[4] ʿAjjāj al-Khaṭīb, *Al-Sunnah Qabl al-Tadwīn*, 2nd edn (Cairo: Maktabat Wahaba, 1988), pp. 15-8. On the *sunnah*, its definition and status in Islamic teachings, see G. H. A. Juynboll, *Studies on the Origins and Uses of Islamic Ḥadīth* (Aldershot: Variorum, 1996), pp. 97-118; Alfred Guillaume, *The Traditions of Islam: An Introduction to the Study of the Hadith Literature* (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1924), pp. 10-1. On the origin of the concept 'prophetic' *sunnah*, see Juynboll, *Muslim Tradition*, pp. 30-9.

[5] See Yasin Dutton, *The Origins of Islamic Law: the Qurʾan, the Muwaṭṭaʾ, and Madinian ʿAmal*, 2nd edn (New York: Routledge, 2002), p. 178.

[6] Muṣṭafā al- Sibāʿī, *Al-Sunnah wa Makānatuhā fī al-Tashrīʿ*, ([n.p.]: Dār al-Warrāq, 2000), p. 66; ʿAbd al-Ghanī ʿAbd al-Khāliq, *Ḥujjiyat al-Sunnah* (Mansura: Maṭābiʿ al-Wafāʾ, [1992 (?)]), p. 46.

[7] ʿAbd al-Khāliq, p. 57.

[8] According to jurists (*uṣūliyyūn*), the sayings and actions of the Prophet are divided into two main types: what he said and did as a messenger and what he said and did as an ordinary human. See al-Dahlawī, *Ḥujjat Allāh al-Bālighah*, I, 223-4. See also ʿAbd al-Khāliq, pp. 56-60.

The ancient schools of law including the Medinese, the Syrians and the Iraqians were using the term 'sunnah' to refer to the community ideal way of living, which was already mirrored in the accredited doctrine of the school.[9] While Schacht assumes that sunnah was used in such early time to designate the broad meaning of a past practice, evidence from literature suggests that the notion of continuity of practice – which must be attributable to the Prophet – was usually subsumed.[10] Although the Iraqians were the first to assign to the term sunnah the authority of the Prophet, labeling it as 'the sunnah of the Prophet', it was not until the time of al-Shāfiʿī (d. 204/819) that sunnah was used to exclusively refer to the contents of the Prophet's traditions.[11] The relatively slow development of ancient schools doctrine when compared to that of the traditions – particularly those related to the Prophet – paved the way for al-Shāfiʿī's successful movement to particularize it to the Prophet and thus secure for it a higher legislative authority.[12]

Sīrah is another branch of knowledge related to the life and sayings of the Prophet. It is differentiated from Ḥadīth literature in that it consists of much broader corpus of material which was amassed by the early biographers of the Prophet. However, the most notable difference between Ḥadīth and Sīrah lies in the way in which each was collected. Although many of its early reports were accompanied by isnād, 'chain of transmitters', the Sīrah literature is known not to have been subjected to the same degree of authentication as was Ḥadīth. This could be attributed the fact that the content of the latter was much more

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[9] See Joseph Schacht, The Origins of Muhammadan Jurisprudence (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1950, repr. 1975), pp. 58-77.

[10] This concept is evidently clear in Malik's letters to al-Layth Ibn Saʿd and Abū Yūsuf about the ʿamal ahl al-Madīnah. See Dutton, p. 164.

[11] Schacht, pp. 73-80.

[12] Schacht, p. 80. For more on al-Shāfiʿī's role in this regard, see chapter 2.

crucial for Islamic law.

Type of *Ḥadīth*	Definition
Musnad (subjective)	A *ḥadīth* whose unbroken strand of transmission goes back to the Prophet
Ṣaḥīḥ (sound)	A *musnad ḥadīth*, neither *shādh*, 'unique' or *muʿallal* 'faulty', with unbroken chain of reliable narrators
Ḥasan (fair)	A *musnad ḥadīth* narrated by a reliable chain, but of lesser grade than *ṣaḥīḥ*
Ḍaʿīf (weak)	A *ḥadīth* that does not qualify for the standards of being *ṣaḥīḥ* or *ḥasan* and, hence, it cannot be taken as a foundation of an Islamic judgment
Gharīb (strange)	A *ḥadīth*, whether *ṣaḥīḥ* or *ḍaʿīf*, which differs in context with another *ḥadīth* of a more reliable strand
Majhūl (unknown)	A *ḥadīth* whose strand includes an unknown person
Maqṭūʿ (disconnected)	It could be a *ḥadīth* terminating with a *tābiʿī*, a *ḥadīth* with incomplete strand, or a saying of *ṣaḥābī* that begins: 'we used to do […]'
Marfūʿ (traceable)	A *ḥadīth* attributed to the Prophet. It could be *muttaṣil* (connected), *munqaṭiʿ* (interrupted) or *mursal* (not referred to)
Mauqūf (untraceable)	A *ḥadīth* (also known as *athar*) of, or about, a *ṣaḥābī*
Muḍṭarib (confounding)	A *ḥadīth* whose different narrations, which are equally reliable, disagree on the strand or in the text. It is regarded as a kind of *ḥadīth ḍaʿīf*
Munqaṭiʿ (disconnected)	A *ḥadīth* with an incomplete strand or a strand that include an anonymous transmitter
Mursal (not referred to)	A *ḥadīth* in which a *tābiʿī*, 'Follower' attributes a saying to the Prophet without referring of the Companion from whom he took the *ḥadīth*.

Table 1: Main categories of *Ḥadīth* based on authenticity[13]

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[13] The categories of *Ḥadīth* are thoroughly discussed by Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ, *ʿUlūm al-Ḥadīth*, ed. by Nūr al-Dīn al-ʿItr (Damascus: Dār al-Fikr, 1986). On a glossary of technical terms used in the *Ḥadīth*

2.1.2. Perspectives on the history of *Ḥadīth* transmission – incentives and challenges

Islamic teachings are primarily based upon two sources: *Qurʾān* and *Ḥadīth*. As early as the dawn of Islamic history, followers of the new religion were gauging the soundness of their deeds according to these two origins and maintained a number of strategies to keep aware of such knowledge (see 2.1.3.2). In the absence of a definitive text that integrated these two codes, dispute sometimes arose regarding the exact wording of a verse or a *ḥadīth*. Within the lifetime of the Prophet this problem was not especially taxing.[14]

2.1.3.1 During the Prophet's life

According to traditions, it was during the Prophet's life that a conscientious and scrupulous process of *Ḥadīth* collection materialized. The Prophet's ardency to teach his disciples stimulated them to learn and disseminate his teachings.[15] The Prophet used a number of successful strategies to proselytize. These included: assigning certain places for teaching,[16] repeating speech,[17] dedicating certain times

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literature, see also Guillaume, pp. 181-2; G. H. A. Juynboll, *Encyclopedia of Canonical Ḥadīth*, (Leiden: Brill, 2007), pp. xxiii-xxv; *Bulūgh al-Marām Min Adillat al-Aḥkām: Attainment of the Objective According to Evidences of the Ordinances*, compiled by Ibn Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī (Riyadh: Dār al-Salām, 1996), pp. 549-78.

[14] For an example of how the Prophet arbitrated a dispute over the reading of a verse of the *Qurʾān*, see Muslim, *ḥadīth* no. 6776; Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal, *Al-Musnad*, ed. by Aḥmad M. Shākir and Ḥamzah A. al-Zayn, 20 vols (Cairo: Dār al-Ḥadīth, 1995), *ḥadīths* no. 158, 277. See also Guillaume, pp. 13-4; al-Zahrānī, *Tadwīn al-Sunnah al-Nabawiyya: Nashaʾtuhu wa Taṭawwuruhu min al-Qarn al-Awwal ilā Nihāyat al-Qarn al-Tāsiʿ al-Hijrī* (Riyadh: Dar al-Minhāj, 2005), pp. 25-6.

[15] For more information about the high status of learning, see *Qurʾān*, XXXV. 28; III. 18; XXXIX. 9; Ibn Ḥanbal, *ḥadīths* no. 374-5; Abū Dāwūd, *ḥadīth* no. 3641.

[16] These were Dār al-Arqam at Mecca and the mosque at Madīnah. See M. M al-Aʿẓamī, *Dirasāt fī al-Ḥadīth al-Nabawī wa Taʾrīkh Tadwīnih* (Beirut: al-Maktab al-Islāmī, 1980), pp. 50-4.

[17] Al-Bukhārī, *ḥadīths* no. 94-6.

for teaching women,[18] and educating *ahl al-ṣuffah*.[19] According to many *ḥadīths* in the orthodox collections,[20] the Prophet advised his Companions to transmit *Ḥadīth* to later generations, and permitted some of them to put it in writing.[21] Sprenger argued what still seems to be good evidence that some *ḥadīths* were committed to writing as early as the lifetime of the Prophet.[22] Muslim scholars argued other factors for the propagation of *Ḥadīth*, such as the roles of the Prophet's wives, the Prophet's delegates to other places, and that of the Arab convoys who came to Madīnah to acknowledge Islam and then returned to their people to disseminate it.[23]

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[18] Al-Bukhārī, *ḥadīths* no. 101, 102.

[19] This term designates the most indigent amongst the Prophet's Companions for whom he dedicated a roofed place at one of the mosque's corners as they had no shelter. On the *ṣuffah* and its inhabitants, see Muḥib al-Din b. al-Najjār, *Al-Durrah al-Thamīnah fī Tārīkh al-Madīnah*, ed. by M. Z. ʿAzab (Cairo: Maktabat al-Thaqāfa, 1981), pp. 165-6; Ḥusayn b. Muḥammad b. al-Ḥasan al-Diyārbakrī, *Tārīkh al-Khamīs fī Aḥwāl Anfas Nafīs*, 2 vols (Cairo: Maṭbaʿat ʿUthmān ʿAbd al-Rāziq, 1885),I, 347; Jaʿfar b. al-Sayyid Ismāʿīl al-Barzanjī, *Tārīkh al-Masjid al-Nabawī al-Musammā Nuzhat al-Nāẓirīn fī Masjid Saiyyd al-Awwalīn wal Ākhirīn*, (Cairo: al-Maktabah al-Jadīdah, 1914), p. 10.

[20] Al-Bukhārī, *ḥadīths* no. 87, 99; Ibn Mājah, *ḥadīths* no. 230-6; al-Tirmidhī, *ḥadīths* no. 2656-8; Aḥmad ʿAlī Thābit al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, *Sharaf Aṣḥāb al-Ḥadīth*, ed. by M. Saʿīd Ughlī (Ankara, University of Ankara, 1969), pp. 15-21.

[21] See ʿAbd Allah al-Dārimī, *Sunan*, ed. by al-Dārinī, 4 vols (Riyadh: Dār al-Mughnī, 2000), *ḥadīths* no. 500-28; Abū Bakr Aḥmad b. ʿAlī b. Thābit al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, *Taqyīd al-ʿIlim*, ed. by Saʿd ʿAbd al-Ghaffār ʿAlī (Cairo: Dār al-Istiqāmah, 2008), pp. 74-83.

[22] Sprenger, 'On the Origin and Progress of Writing down Historical Facts among the Musulmans', *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal* (1856), 303-29; Guillaume, pp. 15-8.

[23] M. M. Abū Zahwu, *Al-Ḥadīth wal Muḥaddithūn: ʿInāyat al-Ummah al-Islāmiyyah bil Sunnah al-Sharīfah* (Cairo: Maṭbaʿat Miṣr, 1958), pp, 56-7; ʿAjjāj, pp. 69-73. See also Juynboll, *Muslim Tradition*, pp. 9-11, 23-30.

2.1.3.2 Under the Rāshidūn Caliphs

If tradition is to be believed, the Companions' interest in learning *Ḥadīth* began as early as the time of the Prophet.[24] They believed that being adherent to his *Sunnah* was the only way to salvation. Among strategies they used to learn *Ḥadīth* were accompanying the Prophet at the mosque, attending teaching circles, travelling in search of knowledge,[25] exchanging knowledge between one other, having turns in escorting the Prophet,[26] asking about what they had missed of *Ḥadīth* and helping one another in studying and memorizing it.[27] Yet, the most influential way of preserving *Ḥadīth* was writing.[28] As we just said, the Prophet is reported to have allowed, sometimes ordered, some of his Companions, such as ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿAmr b. al-ʿĀṣ to write *Ḥadīth*.[29]

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[24] See Abū Dāwūd, *ḥadīths* no. 3646-50; Schoeler, *Genesis*, pp. 40-1. See also footnotes 11, 12 and 20.

[25] Al-Bukhārī, *ḥadīths* no. 78, 88. On *ḥadīths* about the importance and merit of learning and seeking knowledge, see al-Dārimī, *ḥadīths* no. 581-91; Nūr al-Dīn ʿAlī b. Abī Bakr al-Haythamī, *Mujammaʿ al-Zawāʾid wa Manbaʿ al-Fawāʾid*, ed. by Ḥusayn al-Dārānī, (Beirut: Dār al-Maʾmūn lil Turāth, 1991), *ḥadīths* no. 479-541. On a tentative chronology of seeking knowledge, see Juynboll, *Muslim Tradition*, pp. 66-70.

[26] Ibid, *ḥadīth* no. 89.

[27] Al-Bukhārī, *ḥadīths* no. 103,104,105,116,117; Husyan Shawwāṭ, *Ḥujiyyat al-Sunnah*, (Washington: American International University, [n.d.]), pp. 59-63.

[28] For a more comprehensive list of those Companions who committed *ḥadīth* to writing and the content of their *kutub*, 'documents', see al-Aʿẓamī, *Dirasāt*, pp. 92-142. See also, Nabia Abbott, *Studies in Arabic Literary Papyri*, 3 vols (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1957-72), II, 238. For more information about the Companions' stances towards writing, see ʿAjjāj, pp. 309-21; al-Zahrānī, pp. 25-30; Abū Zahwu, pp. 65-79.

[29] See al-Tirmidhī, *ḥadīths* no. 2666-8; al-Baghdādī, *Taqyīd*, pp. 86-107; Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah, *Zād al-Maʿād fī Hadī Khayr al-ʿIbād*, 27th edn, 6 vols (Beirut: Muʾasasat al-Risāla, 1991), III, 457-8; Abū Zahwu, p. 54. Some of the Prophet's *ḥadīths* are said to have been written in his lifetime by a number of his Companions like Saʿd b. ʿUbādah (d. 15/636) and Jābir b. ʿAbd Allāh (d. 87/706). See M. A. al-Darwīsh, 'al-Tadwīn al-Mubakkir lil Sunnah Bayna al-Shahīd al-Doctor Ṣubḥī al-Ṣāliḥ wal Mustashriqīn: Qirāʾah fī Kitāb " *Ulūm al-Ḥadīth wa Muṣṭalaḥuh*"', pp. 9-12. For examples of the

After the departure of the Prophet, the need for a documented form of, and relationship between, *Qurʾān* and *Ḥadīth* became more pressing. The rise of doctrinal and political disputes made it unavoidable. Such problems began as early as the death of the Prophet. The first caliph, Abū Bakr, was faced by a series of frantic revolts and riots by the enemies of the burgeoning Islamic empire.

The following *ḥadīth*, however, has raised controversy since early Islam regarding early documentation of *Ḥadīth*. On the authority of Abū Saʿīd al-Khudrī the Prophet said: 'Do not write down [anything] of me. Whoever writes other than the *Qurʾān* should delete it [...]'.[30] While reflecting a real debate about writing down, this, and other *ḥadīths*,[31] is regarded by a majority of scholars,[32] to have been particular to the time of the Prophet when the *Qurʾān* was being revealed. According to these scholars, such a command was issued by the Prophet, lest *Ḥadīth*, which is the Prophet's own sayings and words, should have been confused with the *Qurʾān* which is Allāh's word.[33] Once the revelation was completed and it was assured that no more verses were going to be revealed, it was permissible and even essential to write down *Ḥadīth* to preserve the Prophet's teachings. Other reasons for the aversion of writing down *Ḥadīth* include the persistence to avoid, according to Muslims, the devastating mistake committed by the Jews and the Christians who abided

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ṣuḥuf, 'scripts of *Ḥadīth*' written by the Companions, see Akram al-ʿUmarī, *Buḥūth fī Tarīkh al-Sunnah al-Musharrafa*, 5th edn, 2 vols (Medina: Maktabat al-ʿUlūm wal Ḥikam, 1984 [?]), II, 294-6.

[30] Muslim, *ḥadīth* no. 7510; Aḥmad b. ʿAlī Abū Yaʿlā, *Al-Musnad*, ed. by H. Salīm Asʿad, 2nd edn (Beirut: Dār al-Maʾmūn lil Turāth, 1989), *ḥadīth* no. 1288.

[31] On these *ḥadīths*, see al-Haythamī, *ḥadīths* no. 675-8; al-Baghdādī, *Taqyīd*, pp. 17-41; ʿAjjāj, p. 303.

[32] Examples are al-Baghdādī, *Taqyīd*, pp. 49-66; Akram al-ʿUmarī, I, pp. 291-2; ʿAjjāj, pp. 303-20; Abū Zahwu, 122-7; al-Aʿẓamī, *Dirasāt*, pp. 76-83.

[33] Ibid.

themselves by books other than the divine revelation alone. The early Muslims were afraid that documents of *Ḥadīth* could distract people from the *Qurʾān*.[34] This is in addition to the fear that the collectors of *Ḥadīth* would rely heavily on writing and thus neglect the need to memorize it by heart.[35] Further, early traditionists were afraid that the written *Ḥadīth* would fall into the hand of dishonest people who would then misuse it.[36] Some of them were even reported to have asked their heirs to destroy the documents they wrote after they would die.[37] Another reason was the limited number of those who knew writing. It was thought then that they should assign priority to writing the *Qurʾān*. It is, however, said that when the number of writers multiplied the Prophet asked some them to write *Ḥadīth*.[38] It was also argued that the Prophet prevented the *ṣaḥābīs* from writing down *Ḥadīth* because many of them did not manage to write properly, and thus there was the possibility of making a lot of mistakes.[39]

The contradictory reports about writing may reflect later debate and

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[34] See al-Dārimī, *ḥadīths* no. 485, 487, 493-7; al-Baghdādī, *Taqyīd*, pp. 49-61; Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr, *Jāmiʿ Bayān al-Ilm wa Faḍlih*, ed. by Abū al-Ashbāl al-Zuhayrī, 2 vols (Dammam: Dār Ibn al-Jawzī, 1994), *ḥadīths* no. 335-58; ʿAbd al-Khāliq, p. 427.

[35] Al-Baghdādī, *Taqyīd*, pp. 62-5; Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr, *Jāmiʿ Bayān al-ʿIlm*, *ḥadīths* no. 359-62, 371, 373; ʿAbd al-Khāliq, pp. 428-9; Gregor Schoeler, *The Oral and the Written in Early Islam*, ed. by James E. Montgomery, trans. by Uwe Vagelpohl, Routledge Studies in Middle Eastern Literatures (Abingdon, Routledge, 2006), p. 118. It is, however, reported that some of those who obliterated the *ḥadīths* they had written regretted that later. See al-Baghdādī, *Taqyīd*, pp. 64-5.

[36] Al-Dārimī, *ḥadīths* no. 481, 483; al-Baghdādī, *Taqyīd*, pp. 66-9; Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr, *Jāmiʿ Bayān al-ʿIlm*, *ḥadīth* no. 364.

[37] Al-Baghdādī, *Taqyīd*, pp. 67-9; Schoeler, *Oral and Written*, pp. 117-8.

[38] ʿAbd al-Khāliq, p. 429. See also al-Dārimī, *ḥadīth* no. 500; Jalāl al-Dīn al-Sūyūṭī, *Miftāḥ al-Jannah fī al-Iḥtijāj bil Sunnah* (Cairo: Idārat al-Ṭibāʿah al-Munayriyyah, [n.d]), p. 37.

[39] Ibn Qutaybah, *Taʾwīl Mukhtalif al-Ḥadīth*, ed. by M. M. al-Aṣfar, 2nd rev. edn (Beirut, al-Maktab al-Islāmī, 1999), p. 412.

discourse. Our earliest *ḥadīth* in this regard date to the early 3rd/9th century. And we know that this period witnessed heated discussion about the historicity and authoritativeness of *Ḥadīth* as a source of Islamic law.

The preservation of *Ḥadīth* was a basic requirement for the Muslims who are commanded according to *Qurʾān* to follow the Prophet's ideal.[40] According to one *ḥadīth*, 'he who is asked for knowledge (*ʿilm*) but did not pass it (*fakatamahū*) will be bridled by God with a curb of fire on the Last Day.'[41] The fact that there were restrictions on writing *Ḥadīth*, especially in the time of the Caliph ʿUmar b. al-Khaṭṭāb did not arguably retard the process of *Ḥadīth* documentation. Indeed, ʿUmar himself is reported to have said: 'Bind knowledge with writing.'[42] Although such restrictive procedures could have affected the amount of *Ḥadīth* being transmitted negatively,[43] they should have alerted those who narrated it to take extra care.[44]

Putting restrictions on the transmission of *Ḥadīth* was apparently one of the ways used to preserve the true teachings of the Prophet which were, by then, mainly kept in the memories of the Companions. In the first generation after the Prophet, it was feared that if *Ḥadīth* was freely transmitted, its original text would become more vulnerable to deformation either intentionally (by

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[40] *Qurʾān*, III. 32, 132; IV. 59; V. 92, VIII. 1, 20, 46; XXIV. 54, 56; XLVII. 33, etc.

[41] Abū Dāwūd, *ḥadīth* no. 3658; Ibn Mājah, *ḥadīths* no. 261-6. For more *ḥadīths* about the Prophet's advice to his followers to promulgate the knowledge they had from him, see al-Haythamī, *ḥadīths* no. 586-602.

[42] Al-Dārimī, *ḥadīth* no. 514.

[43] Al-ʿAbbās b. ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib, al-Zubayr b. al-ʿAwwām and Abū ʿUbaydah b. al-Jarrāḥ were among the Companions who narrated a restricted number of *ḥadīth*. They advised people not to narrate all what they hear for this would lead to making errors.

[44] Ibrahim al-Qaṭṭān, 'Tadwīn al-Sunnah wa Aṭwāruh', in *Al-Buḥūth wal Dirāsāt al Muqaddamah lil Muʾtamar al-ʿĀlamī al-Thālith lil Sīrah wal Sunnah al-Nabawiyyah*, ed. by ʿAbd Allāh I. al-Anṣārī, 7 vols (Beirut: Manshūrāt al-Maktabah al-ʿAṣriyyah, 1981), III, 178-9.

enemies) or accidentally (by the pious, through forgetfulness, accident and the like).[45] A number of strategies were used by the Companions to scrutinize the oral transmission of *Ḥadīth*. In addition to asking the transmitter for other witnesses and an oath,[46] they compared the transmitted *ḥadīths* to the supreme authority – the *Qurʾān*. Generally, two kinds of transmitted *ḥadīths* were known in this early phase: *ḥadīth mutawātir*[47] and *khabar al-wāḥid*.[48]

According to Azami, fifty of the Prophet's Companions either wrote *Ḥadīth* or assigned others to write on their behalf – mainly because of their ignorance of writing.[49] Seven of them, however, are said to have narrated the major part of it.[50] Companions are said to have studied *Ḥadīth* together and advised the *tābiʿīs* to learn it.[51] Centres of *Ḥadīth* were reportedly established

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[45] Yaḥyā b. Sharaf al-Dīn al-Nawawī, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim bi Sharḥ al-Nawawī*, 18 vols (Cairo: al-Maṭbaʿa al-Miṣriyyah, 1929), I, 80-8.

[46] Abū Zahwu, pp. 69-70, 69.

[47] '*Tawātur* is the technical ḥadīth term for such a broad attestation of a particular ḥadīth through multiple *isnād* strands in the sources that large-scale mendacity in that tradition thus supported is considered to be absurd (*muḥāl*), or: out of question.' Juynboll, *Canonical Ḥadīth*, pp. xxiv-xxv. See also Juynboll, *Muslim Tradition*, pp. 206-17.

[48] *Khabr al-wāḥid* is a 'tradition or report going back to one single authority'. Juynboll, 'Khabar al-Wāḥid', in *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd edn, IV, 896. On *akhbār al-āḥād*, see al-Bukhārī, *ḥadīths* no. 7246-67.

[49] On the written *ḥadīths* in the time of the Companions and the *tābiʿīs*, see al-Azami, *Dirāsāt*, pp. 84-327. See also Robson, 'Ḥadīth', p. 24. Some of the old copies of these early *ṣaḥīfas* are said to have survived. See al-Zahrānī, pp. 71-3; Ṣubḥī al-Samarrāʾī's introduction to *Al-Khulāṣah*. Al-Ḥusayn b. ʿAbd Allāh al-Ṭeib, *Al-Khulāṣah fi Uṣūl al-Ḥadīth*, ed. by Ṣubḥī al-Samarrāʾī (Baghdad: Maṭbaʿat al-Irshād, 1971), p. 10.

[50] These are: Abū Hurayrah (5374 *ḥadīths*), ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿUmar (2630), Anas b. Mālik (2286), ʿĀaʾisha (2210), ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿAbbās (1660), Jābir b. ʿAbd Allāh (1540), and Abū Saʿīd al-Khudrī (1100). Ibn al-Ṣalāh, p. 295. On the collective *taʿdīl*, 'regarding as pious, trustworthy and honest' of the *ṣaḥābīs*, see Juynboll, *Muslim Tradition*, pp. 190-206.

[51] Ibn Ḥajar, *Fatḥ*, I, 170, 175; al-Baghdādī, *Sharaf*, pp. 93-8; ʿAjjāj, p. 147.

as early as the time of conquests in places including: Madīnah, Mecca, Kūfah, Baṣrah, Syria and Egypt.[52]

2.1.3.3 Under the Umayyads (41-132/661-750)

After the time of the Rāshidūn, a number of reasons led to the favouring of written over oral transmission.[53] Among them was the fact that the chains of narrators were getting longer, that many Companions had died, the emergence of antagonistic movements, and that the rise of writing in general had weakened people's dependency on their memories. Against this background, the reasons for maintaining restrictions on writing *Ḥadīth* no longer existed.[54] The *tābiʿīs'* activities resulted in the writing of a large number of *ṣuḥuf*.[55] Some of these, or rather recensions of which, are said to have reached us.[56]

Under the Umayyads, the activities of collecting, assessing and cataloguing of *Ḥadīth* were developed on a large scale. Two of the most zealous individuals in this respect were the Caliph ʿUmar b. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz (ruled from 99/717 to 101/720) and Ibn Shihāb al-Zuhrī (50-124/670-741).[57]

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[52] For more information about the earliest development of these centres, their teachers and students, see Juynboll, *Muslim Tradition*, pp.39-66; ʿAjjāj, pp. 164-75.

[53] See Muʿammar (in *Muṣannaf* ʿAbd al-Razzāq), *ḥadīths* no. 20484-9.

[54] Al-Zahrānī, p. 74.

[55] For examples of these *ṣuḥuf*, see al-Zahrānī, p. 75.

[56] Fuat Sezgin, *Geschichte des arabischen Schrifttums*, trans. by Fahmī Ḥijāzī as: *Taʾrīkh al-Turāth al-ʿArabī*, 10 vols (Ryadh: Idārat al-Thaqāfa wal Nashr, 1991), I, 153-64.

[57] Al-Zuhrī was a renowned *Ḥadīth* scholar on whose authority a large number of *ḥadīths* is narrated. Although his *al-Maghāzī al-Nabawiyyah* reached us, al-Zuhrī is mainly known for the quotations in the works of later *Ḥadīth* compilers and historians. See Muḥammad b. Saʿd b. Manīʿ, *Kitāb al-Ṭabaqāt al-Kabīr*, ed. by ʿAlī M. ʿUmar, 11 vols (Cairo: Maktabat al-Khanjī, 2001), VII, 429-39; Abū ʿAbd Allāh Shams al-Dīn al-Dhahabī, *Siyar Aʿlām al-Nubalāʾ*, ed. by Ḥassān ʿAbd al-Mannān, rev. edn, 3 vols (Beirut: Bayt al-Afkār al-Duwaliyyah, 2004), pp. 3700-8; A. A. Duri, *The Rise of Historical Writings Among the Arabs*, ed. and trans. by Lawrence I. Conrad, introduction by Fred M. Donner (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1983), pp. 28, 95-110; N. A. Fārūqī, *Early*

According to al-Bukhārī *et alii*, ʿUmar commanded *Ḥadīth* to be written down by trustworthy scholars, lest it should have been mislaid.[58] ʿUmar is also said to have sent these records of *Ḥadīth* to the territories under his caliphate so that they would be the supreme reference to be consulted.[59] Al-Zuhrī, on the other hand, was one of those to whom this task was assigned and he was by far the most active.[60] Some of the *Ḥadīth* records of al-Zuhrī, which are now missing, were still preserved in the Umayyad period.[61]

The efforts to collect *Ḥadīth* were confronted by the emergence of

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Muslim Historiography: A Survey of the Early Transmitters of Arab History from the Rise of Islam up to the End of the Umayyad Period (Delhi: 1979); Horowitz 'The Earliest Biographies of the Prophet and their Authors', *Islamic Culture*, 2, (1928), 22-51; Juynboll, *Muslim Tradition*; M. Lecker, 'al-Zuhrī', in *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd edn, XI (2002), 565-6.

[58] Al-Bukhārī, *ḥadīth* no. 100. In addition to al-Zuhrī, ʿUmar entrusted this task with scholars such as Abū Bakr b. Muḥammad b. Ḥazm (d. 120/737). He said to him: 'See what has been [extant] of the *Ḥadīth* of the Prophet or the *sunnah* of the past and write them down; I have been afraid that knowledge would vanish and its people would die.' Al-Dārimī, *ḥadīths*, no. 504-5; al-Baghdādī, *Taqyīd*, pp. 136-7; Sezgin, I, 120-2; Guillaume, pp. 18-9. On Abū Bakr b. Ḥazm, see Ibn Saʿd, VII, 414-5.

[59] Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr, *Jāmiʿ Bayān al-ʿilm wa Faḍlih*, 2 vols (Cairo, al-Maṭbaʿah al-Munayriyyah), I, 76; Abū Naʿīm al-Aṣbahānī, *Ḥilyat al- Awliyāʾ* (Cairo: Maṭbaʿat al-Saʿādah, 1938), III, 363.

[60] Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr, *Jāmiʿ Bayān al-ʿIlm* (al-Maṭbaʿah al-Munayriyyah), I, 76, al-Baghdādī, *Taqyīd*, pp. 137-9. For more on the efforts of ʿUmar b. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz and Ibn Shihāb al-Zuhrī in writing *Ḥadīth*, see Guillaume, pp. 18-9; Schoeler, *Genesis*, pp. 2, 47-50.

[61] See Ibn ʿAsākir, *Tārīkh Madīnat Dimashq: wa Dhikr Faḍllihā wa Tasmiyat man Ḥallahā min al-Amāthil aw Ijtāza bi Nawāḥīhā min Wāridīhā wa Ahlihā*, ed. by Muḥib al-Dīn ʿUmar Gharāmah al-ʿAmrawī, 80 vols (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, 1995-2000), LIX, 390-422 (p. 400). On al-Zuhrī and his pioneering efforts in collecting *Ḥadīth*, see Harald Motzki, 'Der Fiqh des Zuhri: die Quellenproblematik', *Der Islam*, 68 (1991), 1-44; Harald Motzki, *The Origins of Islamic Jurisprudence: Meccan Fiqh before the Classical Schools*, trans. by Marion H. Katz, Islamic History and Civilization: Studies and texts, 41 (Leiden: Brill, 2002), p. 27; Sezgin, I, 121; Juynboll, *MuslimTradition*, pp.146-58, 168-71. See also Schoeler, *Genesis*, pp. 47-50; *Ḥadīth: Origins and Developments*, ed. by Harald Motzki, the Formation of the Classical Islamic World, 28 (Aldershot: Ashgate/Variorum, 2004), p. 6.

religious sects such as the Shīʿīs and the Khārijīs.[62] Both denominations influenced, in a way, the development of *Ḥadīth* transmission.[63] This is in addition to other factors such as: the disagreements that arose in the circles of theologians and jurists; the rise of the *zindīqs*, 'heretics' and the *qaṣṣāṣūn*, 'story-tellers'; and tribal and sectarian fanaticism; the desire to urge the people to do good deeds; the emergence of legal and philosophical polemics; and the habit of flattering rulers.[64]

In response to these threats, the early *tābiʿīs* implemented what they believed to be workable measures to preserve *Ḥadīth*. Writing was presumably the foremost strategy they followed. Fuat Sezgin has listed a number of *ṣaḥīfas*, 'scripts' written by early *tābiʿīs*. He also opined that many leafs of 3rd/9th century recensions of these early manuscripts are preserved in the library of Shahid Ali in Turkey and the Dār al-Kutub al-Ẓāhiriyyah in

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[62] On the Khārijīs, their political revolts, sects and doctrine, see Ersilia Francesca, 'Khārijīs', *EQ*, III (2003), 84-89.

[63] On the Shīʿīs and the Khārijīs, how they emerged, their political and religious views, and how they affected *Ḥadīth* and early historical accounts, see fourth and fifth parts of Muḥammad b. Jarīr al-Ṭabarī, *Tarīkh al-Rusul wal Mulūk*, ed. by M. Abū al-Faḍl Ibrahim, Dhakhāʾr al-ʿArab, 30, 2nd rev. edn (Cairo: Dār al-Maʿārif, 1967); Julius Wellhausen, *Aḥzāb al-Muʿāraḍah al-Siyāsiyyah al-Dīniyyah fī Ṣadr al-Islam: al-Khawārij wal Shīʿa (The Religio-Political Opposition Parties in Early Islam: Khawārij and Shiʿites)*, trans. by A. Badawī (Maktabat al-Nahḍa al-Miṣriyya, 1958); Ibn Hazm, *Al-Faṣl fil Milal wal Niḥal*, ed. by M. Ibrāhīm Naṣr and ʿAbd al-Raḥmān ʿUmayra, 2nd, 5 vols (Beirut: dār al-Jīl, 1996), V, 35-56; Abū Mansur al-Tamīmī al-Baghdādī, *Kitāb al-Milal wal Niḥal*. ed. by Albert N. Nader (After a Manuscript conserved at the Library of Waqfs in Baghdad) (Beirut: Dar el-Mashriq, 1970); al-Ḥākim (Robson's transl.), p. 28; Akram al-ʿUmarī, II, 22-5; Abū Zahwu, pp. 86-7, 96-7; ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz Muḥammad Nūr Walī, *Athar al-Tashayyuʿ ʿala al-Riwāyāt al-Tāʾrikhiyya fī al-Qarn al-Awwal al-Hijrī* (Medina: Dār al-Khuḍayrī, 1996); Juynboll, *Muslim Tradition*, pp. 129-31; Tarif Khalidi, *Arabic Historical Thought in the Classical Period* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994, repr. 1995 and 1996), pp. 39-40.

[64] See al-Ḥākim (Robson's transl.), pp. 27-30; Akram al-ʿUmarī, II, 25-4; ʿAjjāj, pp. 187-218.

Damascus.[65]

The aftermath of such early efforts was a flurry of *ḥadīths* compilation and their writing down in what became traditionally known as *muṣannafāt*.[66] The manuscripts of many of these *muṣannafāt* have been found, edited and published. Accordingly, they are now available in many of the world's libraries.[67] Because some of such early compilations were committed to writing as early as the first half of the second/eighth century, there is a great possibility that the *ḥadīths* they contain were already then circulating and known to people of that time, and especially to scholars. There is a realistic possibility, then, that these *Ḥadīth* collections (and some others) might have been consulted by builders of the mosques in the late Umayyad period. The collections concerned are listed in the table below:

Name and date	Place
ʿAbd al-Malik b. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz b. Jurayj (d. 150/767) [68]	Mecca
Muḥammad b. Isḥāq (d. 151/768)	Madīnah
Muʿammar b. Rāshid (d. 153/770)	Yemen
Saʿīd b. Abī ʿArūbah (d. 156/773)	Baṣrah
Abū ʿAmr ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Awzāʿī (d. 156/773)	Shām
Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. Abī Dhiʾb (d. 158/775)	Madīnah
Rabīʿ b. Ṣabīḥ (d. 160/777)	Baṣrah
Shuʿbah b. al-Ḥajjāj (d. 160/777)	Baṣrah
Abū ʿAbd Allāh Sufyān al-Thawrī (d. 161/778)	Kūfah
Al-Layth b. Saʿd (d. 175/791)	Egypt

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[65] On scholars' responses to Sezgin's theory, see Schoeler, *Oral and Written*, pp. 28-9.

[66] Robson, 'Ḥadīth', p. 24. *Muṣannafāt* are compilations arranged in chapters according to the subjects of Islamic jurisprudence.

[67] See Akram al-ʿUmarī, pp. 143-325.

[68] See Guillaume, *Traditions of Islam*, pp. 19-20.

Ḥammād b. Salamah b. Dinār (d. 176/792)	Baṣrah
Mālik b. Anas (d. 179/795), the writer of *Al-Muwaṭṭa* [69]	Madīnah
ʿAbd Allāh b. al-Mubārak (d. 181/797)	Khurasān
Hishām b. Bashīr (d. 188/804)	Wāsit
Jarīr b. Abd al-Ḥamīd al-Ḍhabī (d. 188/804)	Ray
ʿAbd Allāh b. Wahb (d. 197/813)	Egypt
Sufyān b. ʿŪyaynah (d. 197/813)	Mecca
Wakīʿ b. al-Jarrāḥ al-Rūʿāsī (d. 197/813)	Iraq
ʿAbd al-Razzāq b. Hammām al-Ṣanʿānī (d. 211/826), the writer of *Al-Muṣannaf* [70]	Yemen
Saʿīd b. Manṣūr (d. 227/842), the writer of *Al-Sunan* [71]	Khurasān and Mecca
Ibn Abī Shaybah (d. 235/849), the writer of *Al-Muṣannaf* [72]	Kūfah

Table 2: Early *Ḥadīth* collections

In addition to these, we are told about a number of earlier *ṣuḥuf* and *kutub* written by *ṣaḥābīs* such as Abū Mūsā al-Ashʿarī (d. 50/670), Samurah b. Jundub (d. 60/680), Jābir b. ʿAbd Allāh (d. 78/697), and early *tābiʿīs* like Ibrāhīm al-Nakhʿī (d. 96/715), Saʿīd b. al-Musayyab (d. 94/713), al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī (d. 110/728), Rajāʾ b. Ḥaywah (d. 112/730), ʿUrwah b. al-Zubayr, his son Hishām (d. 146/763) and al-Zuhrī (d. 124/742).[73]

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[69] Mālik b. Anas, *Al-Muwaṭṭaʾ: Riwāyat Abī Muṣʿab al-Zuhrī*, ed. by Bashshār Maʿrūf and Maḥmūd Khalīl, 3rd edn, 2 vols (Beirut: Muʾasasat al-Risālah, 1998).

[70] Abū Bakr ʿAbd al-Razzāq b. Hammām al-Ṣanʿānī, *Al-Muṣannaf*, ed. by Ḥabīb al-Raḥmān al-Aʿẓamī, 12 vols (South Africa [?]: al-Majlis al-ʿIlmī, 1970).

[71] The *Sunan* of Saʿīd b. Manṣūr is composed of two big volumes. Volume one, which is unfortunately still missing, includes two parts and it is supposed to contain the *ḥadīths* about *ṣalāt* and mosques. Luckily, volume two, which includes parts three and four, has been found. Part three has been edited by Ḥabīb al-Raḥmān al-Aʿẓamī in 1967, while half of the fourth part has been edited by Āl Ḥumayyid in 1993.

[72] Abū Bakr ʿAbd Allah b. Muḥammad b. Abī Shaybah, *Al-Muṣannaf*, ed. by M. ʿAwwāmah, 26 vols (Jeddah: Dār al-Qiblah; Beirut: Muʾasasat ʿUlūm al-Qurʾān, 2006).

[73] See Akram al-ʿUmarī (pp. 294-9), and references are therein.

Generally, the writers of early collections were putting each group of relevant *ḥadīth*s in one chapter. In these collections, *ḥadīth*s were set side by side with *addenda* of sayings of *ṣaḥābī*s and *fatāwā*, 'religious opinions' of early *tābi'ī*s.[74] These early collections bear such titles as *Muṣannaf*,[75] *Sunan*, 'traditions', *Muwaṭṭa'* 'well-trodden or readable', or *Jāmi'*, 'compiler', and their materials were mainly based on the earlier *ṣuḥuf*.

According to some scholars it was also in the Umayyad period that *isnād*, 'a careful examination of the chain of transmitters', was invented to protect *Ḥadīth* from the above threats.[76] Caetani argues that it was al-Zuhrī who developed the institution of *isnād* for the first time in Islam. Caetani maintains that this technique was later elaborated by some of al-Zuhrī's disciples such as Mūsā b. ʿUqbah (d. 141/757) and Ibn Isḥāq (d. 151/678).[77] According to Horovitz, however, *isnād* appeared and was certified as early as 75/694.[78] In spite of the set of evidence adduced by Horovitz to enhance his theory, it was challenged by Schacht who – quoting Ibn Sirīn's statement about the institution of *isnād* – argued that it was not until the beginning of the 2nd/8th century that it was required and applied.[79] Ibn Sirīn said: 'people used

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[74] Ibid, p. 301. See also Khalidi, p. 18.

[75] See G. H. A. Juynboll, 'Muṣnnaf', in *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd edn, VII (1993), p. 662.

[76] On *isnād*, its definition and function, see Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ, pp. 1-4-26; J. Robson, 'Ḥadīth', pp. 23-8; Robson, 'Isnād', in *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd edn, IV (1997), p. 207; Robson, 'Al-Djarḥ wa'l Taʿdīl', in *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd edn II (1991), p. 462; al-Ḥākim al-Naysābūrī, *An introduction to the Science of Tradition: Being al-Madkhal ilā Maʿrifat al-Iklīl*, ed. and trans. by J. Robson, Oriental Translation Funds: New Series 39 (London: the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland, 1953), pp. 9-12; Marston Speight, 'Oral Traditions', p. 70; Juynboll, *Canonical Ḥadīth*, pp. xvii-xxiii; G. H. A. Juynboll, *Studies*, pp. 343-83.

[77] Caetani, I, 31. See also M. Zubayr Ṣiddīqī, *Ḥadīth Literature: Its Origin, Development & Special Features* (Cambridge: the Islamic texts Soceity, 1993, repr. 2008), p. 79.

[78] J. Horovitz, 'Alter und Ursprung des Isnad', *Der Islam*, 8 (1917), 39-47 (pp. 43-4).

[79] Schacht, pp. 36-7.

not to ask about *isnāds*, but when the civil war (*fitnah*) occurred, they began to say: "Name your narrators!"[80] Based on the date of Ibn Sirīn's death, which is 110/728, and the date of the civil war which was instigated by the murder of the Umayyad caliph al-Walīd b. Yazīd in 126/744, Schacht concluded that the above statement is misattributed to Ibn Sirīn.[81] Robson, on the other hand, suggested another interpretation of the word *fitnah* which would best refer to the arbitrary which took place in the aftermath of the struggle between ʿAlī and Muʿāwiyah in 36-7/657-8.[82] Robson accordingly suggested that *isnād* would have appeared, albeit in a primitive form, as early as the mid-first century.[83] This hypothesis of Robson was later adopted by Abbott who further enhanced it by a plethora of recently discovered material evidence.[84]

   Bushayr b. Saʿd is reported to have come to Ibn ʿAbbās (d. 68/687) and narrated *ḥadīths* before him. Ibn ʿAbbās asked him to repeat the first *ḥadīth*. Bushyar, then, wondered: 'I am not certain whether you recognized all my *ḥadīths* and denied this one, or recognized this one and denied all my *ḥadīths*.' Ibn ʿAbbās replied: 'we used to report the Prophet's *ḥadīths* as no one was attributing lies to him. But when the people became careless about sayings and deeds (*falamma rakiba al-nāsu al-ṣaʿabata wal dhalūl*), we abandoned the

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[80] Translated by Ṣiddīqī (p. 79), this statement of Ibn Sirīn was reported by Muslim in his introduction to *bāb: bayān anna al-isnād min al din*, 'the chapter of: indicating that *isnād* is a religious matter'. See also al-Nawawī, *Sharḥ Ṣiḥāḥ Muslim*, I, 84; al-Dārimī, *ḥadīth* no. 430; Schacht, pp. 36-7.

[81] Schacht, pp. 36-7.

[82] J. Robson, 'Standards Applied by Muslim Traditionists', *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library*, 43 (1961), 459-79 (p. 460).

[83] See J. Robson, 'The Isnād in Muslim Tradition', reprinted from *Transactions of the Glasgow University Oriental Society*, 15 (1965), pp. 15-26; Robson, p. 164 (footnote 1).

[84] Abbott, *Studies*, II, 2; cf. II, 5-32; Ṣiddīqī, p. 80.

practice of reporting his *ḥadīths*.[85]

Such tone of skepticism on the part of Ibn ʿAbbās and others led to that, by passage of time, *isnād* developed into the only accredited currency in the circles of *Ḥadīth* scholars. Ibn Sirīn is reported to have said: 'this information one is collecting is religion. So consider from whom you accept your religion.'[86] Similar statements are also attributed to Ṭāwūs b. Kaysān (d. 106/724),[87] and ʿAbd Allāh b. al-Mubārak (d. 181/797) who said: '*isnād* is [a matter] of religion; unless there was *isnād*, whosoever would say whatsoever.'[88] Sufyān al-Thawrī, (d. 161/778) is also reported to have said: '*isnād* is the weapon [namely evidence] of a believer [namely a scholar]. If he has no weapon, with what will he fight?'[89]

2.1.3.4 Under the ʿAbbāsids (132-656/750-1258)

Although the Marwānīd period witnessed an early phase of 'emerging culture of documentation', the legacy of the Prophet was more generally passed down orally for more than a century after his death in 11/632.[90] The majority of the *Ḥadīth* compilations that we possess today were written down at the beginning of the ʿAbbāsid period.

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[85] Al-Dārimī, *ḥadīth* no. 440; Ajjāj, p. 222.

[86] Translated by Burton, this statement of Ibn Sirīn was reported by Muslim in his introduction to *bāb: al-isnād min al din*, 'the chapter of: indicating that *isnād* is a religious matter'. See John Burton, *An Introduction to Ḥadīth* (Edinburgh, Edinburgh University Press, 1994), p. 106. See also al-Dārimī, *ḥadīth* no. 433.

[87] Al-Dārimī, *ḥadīths* no. 428, 439. On Ṭāwūs, see al-Dhahabī, *Siyar*, pp. 2053-7.

[88] Al-Baghdādī, *Sharaf*, p. 41; al-Nawawī, *Sharḥ Ṣiḥāḥ Muslim*, I, 87.

[89] Al-Baghdādī, *Sharaf*, p. 42; Ajjāj, p. 223.

[90] Chase F. Robinson, *Islamic Historiography*, Themes in Islamic History, 1 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), p. 20. See also Marston Speight, 'Oral Traditions of the Prophet Muḥammad: a Formulaic Approach', in *The Ḥadīth: Critical Concepts in Islamic Studies*, ed. by Mustafa Shah (Abingdon: Routledge, 2010), pp. 69-78.

The technique of *isnād* whose importance had already been conceived in the Umayyad period, and may be earlier, was heavily utilized by the ʿAbbāsid compilers. No *ḥadīth* was to be accepted unless it was equipped with reliable *isnād* which could be traced back to the Prophet or at least a Companion. A number of norms were, and still are, used by *Ḥadīth* scholars to decide whether a certain *isnād* is trustworthy. One of these was to assure that transmitters were of reliable knowledge, reputation and memory. Two consecutive transmitters in a strand must have lived in the same time and place or at least been known to have met each other. Like *isnād*, the *matn*, 'text' of an alleged *ḥadīth* was also to be scrutinized. For example, it must be logically convincing and linguistically flawless and, more importantly, not contradict any verse of the *Qurʾān*. Any report which failed to meet these tests was rejected.[91]

After the fashion of the collections that were compiled towards the end of the Umayyad period, the entries of the ʿAbbāsid *Ḥadīth* books were arranged according to the *masānīd*, namely the groups of *ḥadīths* narrated by each *ṣaḥābī*, even if they covered different subjects.[92] The published *Musnad* of Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal (d. 240/854), *Muṣannaf* of Ibn Abī Shaybah (d. 235/850) and *Musnad* of ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Dārimī (d. 255/869) were some of these *masānīd*. After naming 37 of these collections, al-ʿUmarī argued that one could not say that these are the only *masānīd* (or *musnads*) to exist today, for thousands of Arabic manuscripts are found in the libraries of Constantinople, Morocco and other libraries in different parts of the world.[93]

The fact that such collections included both sound and weak *ḥadīths* might have made it difficult for laymen to use them; in a given case most

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[91] Ibid. On the criticism of *Ḥadīth* by Muslims, see Guillaume, pp. 77-97.

[92] See Guillaume, p. 2-6; Akram al-ʿUmarī, II, 302.

[93] Akram al-ʿUmarī, II, 307.

readers did not have the knowledge to judge the degree of authenticity. In addition to the awkward way of dividing these early collections, this might have been the direct reason for Muḥammad b. Ismāʿīl al-Bukhārī (d. 256/870) to write his *Ṣaḥīḥ*, which he restricted to sound *ḥadīths*. Yet, this is not to say that his book included all sound *ḥadīths*. Al-Bukhārī organized the chapters of his book according to the subjects of *fiqh*, 'jurisprudence'. The same method was adopted by *imām* Muslim b. al-Ḥajjāj al-Naysābūrī (d. 261/875) in his *Ṣaḥīḥ*.[94] These two collections were, and still are, considered by the majority of Muslim scholars to include the most authentic *ḥadīths*. The models of al-Bukhārī and Muslim were in turn followed by Abū Dāwūd (d. 275/888), Ibn Mājah (d. 273/886), al-Tirmidhī (d. 279/892) and al-Nasāʾī (d. 303/916).[95]

While the 3rd/9th century saw the zenith of *Ḥadīth* collecting activities, it took nearly a century for such collections to be widely accepted and circulated. As already hinted, it was also in the 3rd/9th century that *Ḥadīth* collections were exclusively dedicated to the sayings and deeds of the Prophet. This movement towards restriction was highly influenced by the efforts of al-Shāfiʿī (as we shall see shortly) to secure for the *Ḥadīth* a legislative authority beside the *Qurʾān*. In contrast to the more inclusive content of earlier collections such as *muṣannafāt*, collections later to the time of al-Shāfiʿī, and whose compilers were mainly Shāfiʿīs, were restricted to the reports about the Prophet only.

In later centuries *Ḥadīth* scholars contented themselves with commenting on and explaining these compilations, or critiquing chains of

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[94] Ibid, p. 307.

[95] See Ibn Rajab al-Ḥanbalī, *Sharḥ ʿIlal al-Tirmidhī*, ed. by Nūr al-Dīn ʿItr ([n.p.]: Dār al-Mallāḥ, [n.d.]), pp. 37-42; Robson, 'Ḥadīth', p. 24. On the canonical collections of *Ḥadīth*, see also Schoeler, *Genesis*, pp. 79-81.

narrators.[96] In the following years, *Ḥadīth* materialized as a distinct discipline of Islamic studies with branches such as: *'uṣūl al-Ḥadīth*, 'origins and practice of *ḥadīth'*, *musṭalaḥ al-Ḥadīth*, 'terminology (and usage) of *Ḥadīth'*, and *'ilm al-jarḥ wal ta'dīl*, 'the knowledge of evaluating the reliability of *ḥadīth* transmitters'.[97]

A relevant and critical point to discuss here is the early controversy over the *ḥujjiyat*, 'authoritativeness', of the *sunnah* which was interchangeably used with the term *ḥadīth* to refer to the traditions of the Prophet. There is a belief that the Prophet's *sunnah* was not seen peremptory, at the mildest, in the first two centuries AH. Such approach, and the big debate which it later kindled, seems to have been ascribed to the dispute on the genuine attribution of the *sunnah* to the Prophet and that of its authoritativeness.[98] Some sects rebuffed *Ḥadīth* to the hilt,[99] on the grounds that there is no way to make sure that a certain *ḥadīth* (whether *mutawātir* or *aḥād*) is credibly traceable to the Prophet.[100] Others accepted the authoritativeness of the *ḥadīth mutawātir* only.[101] A larger third group, however, accepted both the *mutawātir* and the

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[96] Akram al-ʿUmarī, II, p. 308; ʿAjjāj, 220.

[97] On the latter, see Juynboll, *Muslim Tradition*, pp. 134-7, 161-76; Duri, p. 75. The following are two examples: Jamāl al-Dīn Abū al-Ḥajjāj Yusuf al-Mizzī, *Tahdhīb al-Kamāl fī Asmāʾ al-Rijāl*, ed. by Bashshār ʿAwwād Maʿrūf, 2 edn, 35 vols (Beirut: Muʾassasat al-Risālah, 1987); al-Mizzī, *Tuḥfat al-Ashrāf bī Maʿrifat al-Aṭrāf*, ed. by A. Sharaf al-Dīn, 2 vols (Bombay: al-Dār al-Qaiyyma, 1965); Abū ʿAbd Allāh Muḥammad b. Aḥmad b. ʿUthmān al-Dhahabī, *Mizān al-Iʿtidāl fī Naqd al-Rijāl*, ed. by ʿAlī M. al-Bajāwī, 4 vols (Beirut: Dār al-Maʿrifah, [1963 (?)]).

[98] ʿAbd al-Khāliq, pp. 245-6.

[99] On these sects who were traditionally known as *ahl a-kalām* and *ahl al-raʾy*, see Ibn Qutaybah, *Taʾwīl*, pp. 47-60; al-Sūyūṭī, *Miftāḥ al-Jannah*, pp. 3-4; al-Sibāʿī, pp. 147-64. The most resilient among these were the Muʿtazilah. See Abū Zawu, pp. 316-32.

[100] See Muḥammad b. Idrīs al-Shāfiʿī, *Jimāʿ al-ʿIlm*, ed. by Aḥmad M. Shākir (Giza: Maktabat Ibn Taymiyyah, 1986), pp. 13-22. This view was contested by al-Sūyūṭī. See *Miftāḥ al-Jannah*, pp. 2-5.

[101] See al-Sibāʿī, pp. 165-75.

aḥād,[102] but they differed regarding the standards according to which the latter can be accepted.[103]

There was also controversy over the authoritativeness of *Ḥadīth* even if its reliability was proved by the techniques that were then approved. Some said that it cannot stand for itself – namely without evidence from the *Qurʾān* – as a foundation for legal decisions.[104] Others saw that *Ḥadīth* cannot abrogate whatsoever stated by the *Qurʾān*.[105]

Another problem was that there should be distinction, according some authorities, between what the Prophet said or did as a legislator and what he said and did as an ordinary mortal.[106] The Prophet is reported to have said: 'I am a human being. When I command you to do anything concerning your religion, then accept it; while when I command you to do anything on account of my personal opinion, then you should know that I am also a human being.'[107]

However, according to Sunnī jurists, each *ḥadīth* of 'religious character', and which was proved to meet the standards of genuineness at the time,

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[102] See Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr, *Jāmiʿ Bayān al-ʿIlm*. *ḥadīths* no. 2299-2335, 2369-89.

[103] See Muḥammad b. Idrīs al-Shāfiʿī, *Al-Risālah*, ed. by Aḥmad. M. Shākir (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyyah, [1939 (?)]), 369-470; A. ʿAbd al-Wahhāb al Shanqīṭī, *Khabar al-Wāḥid wa Ḥujjiyyatuh* (Medina: al-Jāmiʿah al-Islāmiyyah, 2002); ʿAbd al-Khāliq, pp. 246-7; M. Nāṣir al-Albānī, *Al-Ḥadīth Ḥujjah be Nafsih* (Riyadh: Maktabat al-Maʿārif, 2005), pp. 49-70.

[104] See al-Suyūṭī, *Miftāḥ al-Jannah*, pp. 5-6; Azami, *Dirāsāt*, pp. 21-2. This view was contested by al-Shāfiʿī. See *Jimāʿ al-Ilm*, pp.120-2; *Risālah*, pp. 53-105.

[105] ʿAbd al-Khāliq, pp. 247-8, 488-94. See also Azami, *Dirāsāt*, pp.29-33. For the *ḥadīths* contesting this opinion, see al-Dārimī, *ḥadīths* no. 606-10.

[106] Ṣiddīqī, p.112.

[107] Muslim, II, 264 (as translated by Ṣiddīqī, p. 112); Dihlawī, *Ḥujjat Allāh al-Bālighah* (Lahore edition, 1351 AH), I, 249-50.

should have been taken into consideration beside the *Qur'ān*.[108] This principle is said to have been consented by both early *ḥadīth* scholars and the *ahl al-ra'y*.[109]

According to ʿAbd al-Khāliq, this assumption of 'general' acceptance of *Ḥadīth* authoritativeness is enhanced by the fact that there is no implication of dispute over such issue in the books of notable *uṣūliyyūn* such as al-Ghazālī, al-Āmidī and al-al-Bazdawī, in spite of what is known about those scholars' keenness to refer to and discuss the opinions of their predecessors.[110] However, we are told about some of the *ahl al-ra'y* and *ahl al-kalām*, such as the Khārijīs, the Niẓāmīs, the Rawāfiḍ, and the Dahriyyah who did not accept the authoritativeness of *Ḥadīth*.[111] Many of these sects rejected all *ḥadīths* but those which were passed down by members of their own sect. For a majority of Sunnī scholars, this opinion is radical and also conflicting with the generally-accepted principle that the Prophet could not have intentionally told lies, especially when things are related to God's commands to the people.[112]

The dilemma emitted from the fact that a group of early jurists in Iraq gave priority to such techniques as *ijtihād*, 'independent judgment', *istinbāṭ*, 'eduction', and *qiyās*, 'analogical induction', over *Ḥadīth*. For such scholars, all *aḥkām* must be subjected to logic as they are issued, first and foremost, for the

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[108] See M. Hashim Kamali, *Principles of Islamic Jurisprudence*, rev. edn (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), p. 48.

[109] Ṣiddīqī, p. 112. *Ahl al-ra'y* is 'the scholars who placed some reliance on independent judgment.'

[110] ʿAbd al-Khāliq, p. 248

[111] See al-Shāfiʿī, *Jimaʿ al-ʿIlm*, pp. 13-46; Ibn Qutaybah, *Ta'wīl*, pp. 61-122. While al-Shāfiʿī did not tell us expressly who developed these views which he contested, he mentioned that it was held by some of the people of Baṣrah and it is known that Baṣrah was a mecca of *ahl al-ra'y* and *ahl al-kalām* who later produced the Muʿtazilah. See al-Shāfiʿī, *Jimāʿ al-ʿIlm*, pp. 13-20.

[112] Al-Shāfiʿī dedicated the major part of his *Al-Risālah* and *Jimāʿ al-ʿIlm* to contest these views. See also, Ibn Qutaybah, *Ta'wīl*, pp. 61-138; al-Baghdādī, *Sharaf*, pp. 74-9; al-Sūyūṭī, *Miftāḥ al-Jannah*.

benefit of people. Therefore, they should be consistent and serve common principles. This group of scholars, accordingly, understood the texts (*nuṣūṣ*), compared them to one another, and assigned priority to some of them over the others. They applied *istinbāṭ* where there was no *ḥadīth* to clearly judge. Their heavy dependence on the *ra'y*, 'own opinion' resulted in neglecting the conspicuous sense of some *ḥadīths* and utterly disregarding others.

Ahl al-ḥadīth, on the other hand, paid attention to maintaining *Ḥadīth* as well as the *fatāwā* of the *ṣaḥābīs*, and were firmly stuck to the conspicuous content of both. However, the remarkable respect which *ahl al-ḥadīth* showed to such heritage made them indisposed to apply their own *ijtihād*, even where no relevant *ḥadīth* was known to them.[113] This school was mostly in Hijāz where, unlike the case in Iraq and other territories, scholars were not faced with many first-time issues – mainly because their cultural life did not experience much change since the time of the Prophet.[114] All the notable Sunnī jurists of the first three generations gave priority to *Ḥadīth* over *qiyās*. The exception was Mālik b. Anas, who regarded the *'amal ahl al-Madīnah*, 'the practices of the dwellers of the Prophetic city', as a considerable legal authority.'[115] According to Abū Ḥanīfah and Mālik, the legal significance of *ḥadīths* of limited weight of authenticity, such as *khabar al-aḥād*, was outweighed by *qiyās*. Nonetheless, while Mālik gave more credibility to *qiyās* over all the *aḥād* which were not seconded by the *sunan* of the *ṣaḥābīs* and the *tābi'īs*, Abū Ḥanīfah considered some of the *aḥād* after being sifted according to his own standards. In this, Abū Ḥanīfah is said to have followed the example

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[113] Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr, *Jāmiʿ Bayān al-ʿIlm*, *ḥadīths* no. 1592-1629. .

[114] See al-Aṣfar's introduction to *Taʾwīl Mukhtalif al-Ḥadīth*, p. 16.

[115] Ṣiddīqī, p. 112.

of ʿUmar b. al Khaṭṭāb.[116]

Of all imams, al-Shāfiʿī is regarded as the most outstanding when the establishment of *Ḥadīth* authoritativeness is concerned. In his remarkable works such as *al-Risālah* and *Jimāʿ al-ʿIlm*, Muḥammad b. Idrīs al-Shāfiʿī (204/820) systematically defended his position which later became the main tendency of *ahl-ḥadīth*.[117] He engaged in a big number of polemics against those who denied the role of *Ḥadīth* as a main source of Islamic jurisprudence beside the *Qurʾān*. The quintessence of al-Shāfiʿī's thesis is that *Ḥadīth*, once proved to be traced back to the Prophet, must be considered. He did not stipulate its agreement with the *ʿamal ahl al-Madīnah* as specified by Mālik,[118] or the many other conditions which were set out by Abū Ḥanīfah.[119] Al-Shāfiʿī's official sources of legislation were: the *Qurʾān*, *Ḥadīth*, *qiyās*, and *ijmāʿ*, 'consensus'.[120] His reliance on *Ḥadīth* was significantly heavier than that of Mālik and Abū Ḥanīfah; he accepted the *aḥād* and gave it priority over methods like *ijtihād*,[121] but he was cautious to deal with the *mursal* unless it was passed down through notable *tābiʿīs* such as the like of Saʿīd b. al-Musayyab.[122] Al-Shāfiʿī was thus called by *ahl al-ḥadīth* as the campaigner or advocate of *Ḥadīth*, (*nāṣir al-ḥadīth*).[123] In addition to al-Shāfiʿī, the views of *ahl al-Kalām* and *ahl al-raʾy* were challenged by many of *ahl al-ḥadīth* such as ʿAbd Allāh b. Muslim b. Qutaybah al-Dīnawrī (d. 276/889), a disciple of al-Shāfiʿī's comrade

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[116] Ibid.

[117] On al-Shāfiʿī's role in defending *Ḥadīth*, see al-Suyūṭī, *Miftāḥ al-Jannah*, pp. 3, 9-11, 28-9; Schacht, pp. 6-20; al-Sibāʿī, pp. 478-9; ʿAbd al-Khāliq, pp. 250-77; Burton, 153-6.

[118] See al-Shāfiʿī, *Jimāʿ al-ʿIlm*, pp. 67-8.

[119] Al-Suyūṭī, *Miftāḥ al-Jannah*, p. 31; al-Sibāʿī, p. 479.

[120] See al-Shāfiʿī, *Jimāʿ al-ʿIlm*, p. 40; Burton, p.153.

[121] Al-Shāfiʿī, *Jimāʿ al-ʿIlm*, pp. 75-78.

[122] See al-Sibāʿī, pp. 479-80; Burton, pp.153-68.

[123] Al-Sibāʿī, pp. 479-80.

Isḥāq b. Rāhwayh (d. 238/852).[124]

In spite of the above stances which reflect a real dispute on the standing of the Prophet's model during the first two centuries of Islam, there are significant indications that the *sunnah* of the Prophet was seen much valued by his followers – both immediate and later. It is reported on the authority of Sulaymān b. Mahrān al-Aʿmash (d. 148/765) , for instance, that while the Companion Ibn Masʿūd had a meeting one day with some of his comrades, a Bedouin passed by and asked: 'for what reason do these gather?' He was answered by Ibn Masʿūd: '[they gather] for the legacy of Muḥammad, peace be upon him, to allocate it.'[125]

In spite of the few reports that some of the Companions were exclusively interested in the *Qur'ān*, it was not until the second century AH that the question of *Ḥadīth* authoritativeness began to be really strenuous. For example, while ʿImrān b. Ḥuṣayn (d. 52/672) was telling *Ḥadīth* to a group of people, a man asked: 'O Abū Nujayd [en epithet of ʿImrān], tell us about the *Qur'ān*.' ʿImrān replied: 'you and your companions read the *Qur'ān*; could you tell me about the *ṣalāt* and its details and regulations? Could you tell me about the *zakāt* of gold, camels, cows, and the different types of wealth? […].' The man then commented: 'you have granted me life; may Allāh grant life to you!'[126] Also, an attempt to investigate all legal and theological issues exclusively from the *Qur'ān* was made by Umayyah b. Khālid. Yet, when he was confronted with difficulties, he asked ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿUmar. ʿAbd Allāh who replied: 'Allāh dispatched to us Muḥammad, peace be upon him, while we were

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[124] See Ibn Qutaybah, *Ta'wīl Mukhtalif al-Ḥadīth*, pp. 61-127.

[125] Al-Baghdādī, *Sharaf*, p. 45.

[126] Muḥammad b. ʿAbd Allāh al-Ḥākim, *Al-Mustadrak*, 4 vols (Hyderabad: [n.pub.], [n.d.]), I, 109-10.

acquainted with nothing. Therefore, we do as Muḥammad, peace be upon him, does.'[127] A similar situation is said to have faced Ayyūb al-Sikhtiyānī (d. 131/749).

Yet, such episodes seem to have been the exception which was particularly held by some of the Iraqians; both ʿImrān b. Ḥuṣayn and Ayyūb al-Sikhtiyānī were from Baṣrah.[128] The general tendency in the first century AH, however, seems to have valued the authority of *Ḥadīth*. There is evidence from the *Qurʾān* that Muslims are advised, or indeed commanded, to follow the model of the Prophet:[129]

> O ye who believe! Obey Allāh, and obey the Messenger, and those charged with authority among you. If ye differ in anything among yourselves, refer it to Allāh and his Messenger, if ye do believe in Allāh and the Last Day: that is best and most suitable for final determination.[130]

> 'Ye have indeed in the Messenger of Allāh an excellent exemplar for him who hopes in Allāh and the Final Day, and who remember Allāh much.[131]

> So take what the Messenger gives you, and refrain from what he prohibits you.[132]

> He who obeys the Messenger, obeys Allāh: but if any turn away, we have not sent you to watch over them.[133]

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[127] Al-Ḥākim, *Mustadrak*, I, 258.

[128] Azami, *Dirāsāt*, pp.21-2.

[129] On Quranic evidence for the authoritativeness of the Prophet's sayings and actions, see al-Shāfiʿī, *Risālah*, pp. 73- 87; Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr, *Jāmiʿ Bayān al-ʿIlm* , pp. 1181-98.

[130] *Qurʾān*, IV, 59.

[131] *Qurʾān*, XXXIII. 21.

[132] *Qurʾān*, LIX. 7.

[133] *Qurʾān*, IV. 80.

And we have sent down unto thee (also) the Message; that thou mayest explain clearly to men what is sent for them, and that they may give thought.[134]

Say: 'If ye do love Allāh, follow me: Allāh will love you and forgive you your sins: For Allāh is Oft-forgiving.'[135]

But no by thy Lord, they can have no (real) faith. Until they make thee judge in all disputes between them. And find in their souls no resistance against thy decisions, but accept them with the fullest convictions.[136]

In al-Dārimī, there is a chapter called: 'accelerating the punishment of whomsoever told of a *ḥadīth* of the Prophet and did not dignify and respect it' (*bāb: taʿjīliu ʿuqubat man balaghahū ʿan al-Nabīy ṣalla Allāhu ʿalayhī wa sallam ḥadīthun falam yuʿaẓẓimhu wa lam yuwaqqirhu*). Under this, al-Dārimī reported a number of *ḥadīths* which asserts the importance of considering and complying to *Ḥadīth*. According to one of these, Saʿīd b. Jubayr (d. 95/714) ostracized a man because he told him a *ḥadīth* of the Prophet, but the man neglected it and acted differently.[137] Similar attitudes of resentment to people who flouted *Ḥadīth* or preferred to it opinions of *faqīhs* are attributed to ʿAbd Allāh b. Mughaffal (d. 60/680), Ibn Sirīn, ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿUmar (d. 74/693), ʿUbādah b. al-Ṣāmit (d. *ca.* 34/655) and Saʿīd b. al-Musayyab (d. 94/715).[138] The limited number of such incidents could be attributable to the possibility that respecting of *Ḥadīth* was the ruling attitude which, when offended, required the response of the contemporary authorities.

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[134] *Qurʾān*, XVI. 44.

[135] *Qurʾān*, III. 31.

[136] *Qurʾān*, IV. 65.

[137] Al-Dārimī, *ḥadīth* no. 453.

[138] Al-Dārimī, *ḥadīths* no. 451-60.

It does not seem practical to say that the life of the Prophet, who is defined by some as 'the most influential single figure of world history',[139] was not closely observed by both his enemies, let alone followers. For the former, it was imperative to watch him carefully and discuss his personality and way of thinking in order to resist his plans and contest his thoughts. For his followers, maintaining his exemplary model was the only way to salvation. They tired to imitate him even in the finest details, such as the way he was drinking, eating or wearing.[140]

The Prophet himself is reported to have stressed the commanding position of the model he established. He is reported to have said: 'adhere to my *sunnah* and the *sunnah* of the righteous and rightly-guided Caliphs. Bite on it with [your] teeth, and leave the views of men [...].'[141] The extent of knowledge of *Ḥadīth* was the standard considered by the Prophet for ambassadors to be dispatched and for rulers to be appointed.[142]

How was the Prophet's paradigm regarded by the earliest caliphs? On the authority of Maymūn b. Mahrān (d. 117/735), on every occasion a legal case faced Abū Bakr, he sought solution for it in the *Qurʾān*. If he did not find any, he considered *Ḥadīth* (which was mainly known at that time as the *sunnah*, 'usage' of the Prophet). If his knowledge of it did not help, he asked the Companions, and if they failed to cite any instance of the Prophet that could help, he asked the notable scholars to formulate an opinion which was

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[139] Ṣiddīqī, p. 3.

[140] See *Ḥadīth* collections, chapters of al-aṭ ʿimah, 'kinds of food', *al-ashribah*, 'kinds of beverage', and *al-libās wal al-zīnah*, 'kinds of apparel and jewllery'.

[141] Al-Dārimī, *ḥadīth* no. 96. On other evidence for the authoritativeness of *Ḥadīth*, see al-Dārimī, *ḥadīths* no. 228-32; al-Shāfiʿī, *Risālah*, p. 87; Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr, *Jāmiʿ Bayān al-ʿIlm*, *ḥadīths* no. 2299-2335.

[142] See al-Dārimī, *ḥadīths* no. 560, 579.

then agreed by him.[143]

A similar attitude to that of Abū Bakr was also attributed to ʿUmar b. al-Khaṭṭāb and Ibn Masʿūd.[144] ʿUmar is also reported to have said: 'there will come people who will argue with you regarding the ambiguities in the Book of God. Take on them [namely contest their argument] by the *sunan*; the people of *sunan* are more acquainted with the Book of God.'[145] Al-Sūyūṭī, reported, on the authority of al-Bayhaqī, that ʿUmar said: 'Be aware of *aṣḥāb al-raʾy*; those are the enemies of *sunan* who, having been overwhelmed by the *ḥadīths* of the Prophet (which are too many to memorize), applied the *raʾy*. So, they went astray and caused [other] people to go astray.'[146]

Nevertheless, there are reports that in some cases, the obvious judgment in *Ḥadīth* regarding certain issues were abandoned by ʿUmar and other *ṣaḥābīs* for the sake of their own *raʾy*.[147] A well-known instance is 'the right to the fifth-part of booty for the relatives of the Prophet'.[148] According to Ṣiddīqī:

> A close scrutiny, however, of all these cases shows that the *ḥadīth* of the Prophet was not rejected tout court; it was either differently interpreted in the light of circumstances and other *ḥadīths*, or the memory and understanding of those who reported it where the subject of doubt among those present.[149]

There are cases where the Companions reconsidered their own

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[143] Al-Dārimī, *ḥadīth* no. 163.

[144] Al-Sūyūṭī, *Miftāḥ al-Jannah*, pp.32-3.

[145] Al-Dārimī, *ḥadīth* no. 121.

[146] Al-Sūyūṭī, *Miftāḥ al-Jannah*, p. 33.

[147] Ṣiddīqī, p.111.

[148] See Ibn Ḥajar's commentary on al-Bukhārī (*kitāb farḍ al-khums, bāb qismat al-imām*).

[149] Ṣiddīqī, p. 111.

opinions in light of *ḥadīths* which they were told about, and of which they were previously ignorant. Companions such as Abū al-Dardāʾ and Abū Saʿīd al-Khudrī are reported to have left some places because some of the people there favoured their views to the relevant *ḥadīths*.[150]

The above discussion shows that in the first-half century AH, the significance of *Ḥadīth*, which was then more frequently known as *sunnah*, was highly considered. In later times, and as a result of the Muslim successive conquests, new cultural perspectives were introduced to the circles of Muslim jurists. This situation produced groups such as *ahl-raʾy* and *ahl-kalām* whose consideration for *Ḥadīth* was a topic of much debate. The most important figure in this context was al-Shāfiʿī, who remarkably succeeded in securing for *Ḥadīth* a notable authoritative character.

2.1.3.　*Ḥadīth* and modern scholarship

Although western scholars have dedicated much time and effort to literary and historical studies of Islam, they came to *Ḥadīth* relatively late.[151] Ignaz Goldziher's *Muhammedanische Studien*, completed in 1890, has been regarded as the basis for *Ḥadīth* studies in the west.[152] Goldziher developed a generally sceptical attitude towards *Ḥadīth*. According to him, the fabrication of *ḥadīths* and attributing them to the Prophet was the most effective way of legitimatizing the views of conflicting parties.[153] Goldziher's theory exempted neither rulers nor pious jurists. According to

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[150] ʿAbd al-Khāliq, p. 285; Ṣiddīqī, p. 111. For more on how *Ḥadīth* was regarded by the *ṣaḥābīs* and early *tābiʿīs*, see al-Sūyūṭī, *Miftāḥ al-Jannah*, pp. 20-4; ʿAbd al-Khāliq, pp. 283-

[151] Azami, *Dirasāt*, p. x.

[152] Ignaz Goldziher, *Muhammedanische Studien*, 2 vols (Halle: 1888-90), ed. by S. M. Stern, trans. by C. R. Barber and S. M. Stern as: *Muslim Studies*, 2 vols (Chicago: Aldine, 1971). On the significance of Goldziher's studies, see Guillaume, p. 5.

[153] Goldziher, *Muslim Studies*, I, 44.

him, they all fabricated *ḥadīths* to reinforce their legal views or to validate already-existing practices.[154]

Similar views were held by David Samuel Margoliouth,[155] Henri Lammens,[156] and Leone Caetani.[157] The sweeping views of Goldziher were further developed some fifty years later by Joseph Schacht.[158] Schacht's *Origins of Muhammadan Jurisprudence* assimilated Goldziher's overall thesis and applied it to legal issues with more criticism of *Ḥadīth*. Schacht's epilogue was that *isnād*, which had knowingly been regarded and utilized as a weapon of debate, was spurious.[159]

For decades, it proved very difficult to find a middle ground between these views and the traditional Islamic perspective. With the exception of John Wansbrough[160] and his two disciples, Patricia Crone[161] and Michael Cook,[162] the tone of sheer skepticism waned in the subsequent research. One of those who did respond to Goldziher and Schacht was John Burton, who admitted that in addition to Muslim conservatives, 'some Western scholars, too, have expressed reservations about these non-exempting hypotheses of Goldziher and

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[154] Burton, p. xvi.

[155] D. S. Margoliouth, *Lectures on Arabic Historians* (Calcutta: 1930; repr. New York, 1972).

[156] Henri Lammens, *Islam: Belief and Institutions*, trans. by E. Denison Ross (London: Methuen, 1929).

[157] Leone Caetani, *Annali dell'Islam*, 10 vols (Milan: 1905-1926).

[158] Joseph Schacht, *The Origins of Muhammadan Jurisprudence* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1950).

[159] Burton, p. 148.

[160] John Wansbrough, *The Sectarian Milieu: Content and Composition of Islamic Salvation History*, London Oriental Series, 34 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1978).

[161] Patricia Crone and Michael Cook, *Hagarism: The Making of the Islamic World* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1977); Patricia Crone, *Meccan Trade and the Rise of Islam* (Princeton: Princeton University Press. reprint. by Gorgias Press LLC, 2004).

[162] Michael Cook, *Early Muslim Dogma: a Source-Critical Study* (Cambridge: 1982).

Schacht.'[163] In spite of praising Goldziher's insight and critical method, Burton points to a deficit in the former's thesis:

> Unease remains about acquiescing wholeheartedly in the suggestion that devout and pious men, conscious of the sacred nature of the source materials with which they worked, would engage in a policy of widespread deception and fraud on behalf of their own opinions while themselves sadly pointing out the approach adopted by the less scrupulous among them. For many of these scholars were men of deep piety and undoubted probity who saw themselves as engaged in mapping out in exquisite detail a statement of the revealed will of God, and charting what they viewed as the uniquely valid path to their (and their community's) eternal salvation.[164]

Burton accordingly concluded that the wholesale rejection of *Ḥadīth* misses the point, namely that *Ḥadīth*, or part of it, would preserve some material on the thinking of Muslims, if not precisely in the age of the Prophet, then very soon after, in what he called the age of the *Qur'ān*.[165]

A growing number of modern scholars believe that it is imprudent and prejudicial to assume that Arabic *akhbār*, 'reports or annals' and traditions lack any genuine core.[166] Scholars, such as Wilfred Madelung,[167] Fred M. Donner,[168] Harald Motzki,[169] and Gregor Schoeler[170] disagree with the absolutism of Goldziher and

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[163] Burton, p. 181.

[164] Burton, p. xvii.

[165] Burton, p. 181.

[166] On that see Schoeler, *Genesis*, pp. 1-12.

[167] *The Succession to Muhammad: a Study of the Early Caliphate*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997; repr. 1997 and 2001]).

[168] *Narratives of Islamic Origins: The Beginnings of Islamic Historical Writing*, Studies in Late Antiquity and Early Islam, 14 (Princeton: Darwin Press, 1998).

[169] *Hadith: Origins and Developments* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004); *The Biography of Muhammad: The Issue of the Sources*, ed. by Harald Motzki (Leiden, Boston, Köln: Brill, 2000).

[170] See his *Oral and the Written*. The same views are held by Khalidi, p. 25.

Schacht. Others who reacted against early western skepticism are Nabia Abbott, who maintains a theory of early continuous written tradition, and Fuat Sezgin who has made a remarkable contribution in the cataloguing of early texts.[171] Some scholars, having examined certain texts, have concluded that *Ḥadīth* was indeed subjected to a high degree of scrutiny and criticism very early in Islamic history.[172]

The methods and source-critical standards of Goldziher, Schacht and their exponents have also been reassessed by a number of modern Muslim revisionists.[173] Today's scholarship is influenced by the two extremes represented in Goldziher-Schacht's theory on one side and the modern Muslim scholars' on another.[174] Meanwhile, new discoveries have been considerable. Khalidi, for example states: 'within the last half century or so, a lot of early *Hadith* texts have come to light, often necessitating modification or rejection of existing theories or views.'[175] M. Azami has declared that he has identified original copies for twelve *Ḥadīth* manuscripts dated to the second century AH. He has edited and published the smallest of them, namely, the *Ṣaḥīfah* of

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[171] Herbert Berg, *The Development of the Exegesis in Early Islam*: *the Authenticity of Muslim Literature from the Formative Period*, pp. 18-21.

[172] As an example, see Eerik Dickinson, *The Development of Early Sunnite Ḥadīth Criticism*: *The Taqdima of Ibn Abī Ḥātim al-Rāzī* (240/854-327/938), Islamic History and Civilization: Studies and Texts, ed. by Wadad Kadi (Leiden, Boston, Köln: Brill, 2001).

[173] See M. Muṣṭafā al-Aʿẓamī, *On Schacht's Origins of Muhammadan Jurisprudence*, Islamic Texts Society (Chichester, John Wiley, 1996), first published in Riyadh, King Saud University, 1985; M. Muṣṭafā al-Aʿẓamī, *Studies in ḥadīth Methodology and Literature*, (Indianapolis: American Trust Publications, 1992); Saʿd al-Marṣafī, *Al-Mustashriqun wal Sunnah*, Silsilat Difāʿ ʿan al-Ḥadīth al-Nabawī, 1 (Kuwait: Maktabat al-Manār al-Islāmiyya; Beirut: Muʾsast al-Riyān, 1990); M. Abū Shuhbah, *Difāʿ ʿan al-Sunnah wa Rad Shubah al-Mustashriqīn wal Kuttāb al-Muʿāṣirīn* (Cairo: Maktabat al-Sunnah, 1989); Talal Maloush, 'Early Ḥadīth Literature and the Theory of Ignaz Goldziher' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Edinburgh, Faculty of Arts, 2000).

[174] Juynboll, *Muslim Tradition*, p. 1.

[175] Khalidi, p. 17.

Suhayl b. Abī Ṣāliḥ.[176]

Another example of early writing of *Ḥadīth* is the *Ṣaḥīfah* of Hammām b. Munabbih (d. 110/719) who was a disciple of the Companion, Abū Hurayrah (d. 58/677).[177] The original manuscripts are extant in the libraries of Berlin, Beirut and Damascus.[178] This *ṣaḥīfah*, 'script' which is believed to have been written around the mid-first /seventh century,[179] evidences the early writing of *Ḥadīth*.[180]

While 98 of the *Ṣaḥīfah's* 138 *ḥadīths* are found in the two *Ṣaḥīḥs* of al-Bukhārī and Muslim, 136 of these *ḥadīths* are included in the *Musnad* of Aḥmad. This means that canonical books of *Ḥadīth* only digested what was regarded as authentic according to the standards of each of the compilers. Meanwhile, the fact that not all *ḥadīths* of the *Ṣaḥīfah*, in spite of their authenticity, were selected by al-Bukhārī and Muslim would imply that both subjected the *ḥadīths* they collected to a high degree of scrutiny. After comparing the *ḥadīths* of the *Ṣaḥīfah* with the 1500 variant readings of the same *ḥadīths* in the 3rd/9th century compilations,[181] Speight concludes:

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[176] The book of Azami includes a sixth-century copy (written in AH 598) of Suhayl's manuscript. Azami, *Dirāsat*, pp. 471-585.

[177] Muhammad Hamidullah, *An Introduction to the Conservation of Hadith: In the Light of the Sahifah of Hammam ibn Munabbih*, (Islamic Book trust, 2003). We are told about other students of Abū Hurayrah, such as Bashīr b. Nahīk, who also set the latter's *ḥadīths* down to writing. Al-Dārimī, *ḥadīth* no. 511; al-Baghdādī, *Taqyīd*, p. 129.

[178] M. Ḥamīdullāh, *Ṣaḥīfa Hammām Ibn Munabbih: The Earliest Extant Work on the Ḥadīth*. (Centre Cultural Islamique, 1979); Speight, 'A Look at Variant Readings in the *Ḥadīth'*, in *The Ḥadīth*: *Critical Concepts in Islamic Studies*, ed. by Mustafa Shah (Abingdon: Routledge, 2010), pp. 79-89 (p. 79).

[179] According to Ibn Saʿd, Hammām died in 101/720.

[180] *Arabic Literature to the End of Umayyad Period*, ed. by A. F. L. Beeston, T. M. Johnstone, , R. B. Serjeant and G. R. Smith (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), p. 272.

[181] Speight, 'Variant Readings', p. 79.

> [...] the texts in HAMMĀM and those recorded in IBN ḤANBAL, AL-BUKHĀRĪ and
> MUSLIM with the same *isnād* show almost complete identity, except for a
> few omissions and interpolations which do not affect the sense of the
> reports. On the other hand, the same *ḥadīths* as told by other transmitters
> in the three collections studied show a rich variety of wording, again
> without changing the meaning of the reports.[182] [...] Based on this
> evidence I have found practically no sign of careless or deceptive practices
> in the variant texts common to the *Ṣaḥīfa* of HAMMĀM B. MUNABBIH.[183]

Another example of early *Ḥadīth* writing is the *Muṣannaf* of ʿAbd al-
Razzāq al-Ṣanʿānī which has been carefully studied by Harald Motzki. In his
resulting article in the *Journal of Near Eastern Studies*, Motzki concludes:

> While studying the Muṣannaf of ʿAbd al-Razzaq, I came to the conclusion
> that the theory championed by Goldziher, Schacht, and in their footsteps,
> many others - myself included - which in general, reject hadith literature as
> a historically reliable sources for the first century AH, deprives the historical
> study of early Islam of an important and a useful type of source.[184]

A great deal of the earlier skepticism has thus been moderated or
reversed.[185] Gregor Schoeler states:

> In her *Studies in Arabic Literary Papyri*, Nabia Abbott advocated an early
> and incremental written tradition, based on a plethora of evidence such as
> Umayyad papyri fragments. Fuat Sezgin proposed in his *Geschichte des
> arabischen Schrifttums* a method for the reconstruction of the (as he
> maintains, exclusively written) sources of these compilations. He further
> maintained that he had discovered a number of early source texts on which
> the late compilations were based. With the works of these two scholars,

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[182] Ibid, pp. 79-80.

[183] Ibid, p. 85.

[184] H. Motzki, 'The Musannaf of ʿAbd al-Razzaq al-Sanʿani as a Source of Authentic Ahadith of the
First Century A.H.', *Journal of Near Eastern Studies*, 50 (1991), 1-21 (p. 21.)

[185] Azami, *Dirāsāt*, I, p. x, xi.

earlier claims about the largely oral transmission of Arabo-Islamic sciences up to the time of the major compilations seemed to have been laid to rest.[186]

To conclude on the early transmission of *Ḥadīth*, we find that neither of the radical perspectives, whether dismissive or susceptible, properly fits the case. *Ḥadīth* was not systematically documented from the very beginning, but there is evidence that the compilations we possess today are the upshot of an early organic phase where oral traditions juxtaposed, and then exclusively evolved into, written ones.[187]

2.2.   Sources for the study of early mosques

Before Islam, the Arabs did not show much interest in recording their history.[188] Apart from some ancient poems, prose and genealogies, our information about the history of pre-Islamic Arabia is mainly based on the works of early Muslim historians like Wahb b. Munabbih (d. *ca.* 114/732) and Hishām b. al-Kalbī (d. 204/819). With the rise of Islam, the reports about the Prophet, in addition to other sources such as tribal memory, recollections of the conquests and the influence of the Syriac historical tradition, provided the foundation of Islamic history. This is one reason why the above discussion about *Ḥadīth* historiography is relevant to the following discussion about the historical sources of the study. Another reason is that the earliest books of *Sīrah* from the time of Ibn Isḥāq (d. *ca.* 151/768) down to Ibn Saʿd (d. 230/845) and al-Ṭabarī (d. 310/923) depended in many respects on older informants of *Ḥadīth* such as ʿUrwah b. al-Zubayr (d.

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[186] Schoeler, *Oral and Written*, p. 28.

[187] The same standpoint is held by Khalidi, pp. 25-30

[188] For recent investigation of the literary environment and history of pre-Islamic Arabia, see M. C. A. McDonald, *Literacy and Identity in Pre-Islamic Arabia*, Variorum Collected Studies Series (Surrey: Ashgate, 2008). See also Duri, pp. 14-20. Schoeler, *Genesis*, pp. 16-24.

94/712) and al-Zuhrī (d. 124/741-2).[189] Even the works of later historians such as Ibn Sayyid al-Nās (d. 734/1334) and Ibn Kathīr (d. 774/1373) not only reproduced the materials of early historians, but in many cases they relied on some of the earlier accounts of *Ḥadīth* scholars which were not included in the works of early historians.[190]

The same authenticating technique of *isnād*, which was used by the *muḥaddithūn*, 'scholars of *Ḥadīth*', was also used by historians at Mecca and Madīnah until the time of al-Ṭabarī.[191] However, according to Ibn Khaldūn (732-808/1332-1406), this had led some historians to transmit many unrealistic reports on account of the fact that they mentioned their *isnāds*.[192] The sheer reliance on *isnād* was also criticized by Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ (577-643/1181-1245).[193] Later historians such as al-Yaʿqūbī (d. *c.* 292/905) and al-Masʿūdī (d. 346/957) freed themselves from attributing their reports to previous authorities.[194]

Before discussing the historiographical issues of Arabic writings and reviewing scholars' different stances therein, it is important to note that dispute here is less heated than in relation to *Ḥadīth*. This might be explained by the fact that the existence of flawed or misleading historical accounts is not regarded by Muslim scholars to be as detrimental to Islam as it is in relation to

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[189] On the role of ʿUrwah and al-Zuhrī in preserving *Ḥadīth* and *Sīrah*, see Schoeler, *Genesis*, pp. 41-50; Duri, pp. 25-30, 76-121; Khalidi, 30-4.

[190] Duri, pp. 7-8.

[191] Al-Sayyid ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz Sālim, *Al-Tarīkh wal Muʾarrikhūn al-ʿArab*, (Beirut: Dār al-Nahḍah al-ʿArabiyyah, 1981). pp. 53, 75.

[192] On Ibn Khaldūn's critique on early Arabic writing, see *Muqaddimah*, (Cairo: al-Maktabah al-Tijāriyyah, [1900 (?)]), pp. 3-34.

[193] Ibn al-Ṣalāḥ, pp. 14-7. See also Schoeler, *Genesis*, p. 124.

[194] M. ʿAbd al-Ghanī Ḥasan, *ʿIlm al-Taʾrīkh ʿInda al-ʿArab* (Cairo: 1961), p. 162.

Ḥadīth.[195]

Nevertheless, the fact remains that the study of Islamic history has been afflicted since its beginning by uncertainty about the reliability of its written sources.[196] This criticism goes back to the time of Ibn Khaldūn and al-Sakhāwī.[197] The straightforward reason why the first western historians of early Islam did not mount an earnest defence of their sources was their generally poor grasp of the historiographical tradition and how it evolved.[198]

In response to such criticism, some scholars tried to take steps towards a better understanding of how the tradition evolved. Some of them studied thoroughly some specific examples of early Arab historians. Examples are C. H. Becker,[199] Josef Horovitz,[200] and Johann Fück.[201]

In spite of their significance, the early exclusively historiographical studies such as David Margoliouth's *Lectures on Arabic Historians*, had only very nebulous and broad-spectrum views about the development of the

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[195] This is not to say that for these scholars history is unimportant for the image of Islam. In fact, some of them regard the early history of Islam as part of *Ḥadīth*. Al-Sakhāwī, *Al-Tibr al-Masbūk fī Dhayl al-Sulūk* (Cairo: Bulāq, 1896), p. 2.

[196] An example for early sceptic is M. J. de Goeje, *Mémoire sur la conqête de la Syrie*, 1st edn (Leiden: [no pub.], 1864).

[197] Ibn Khaldūn, *The Muqaddimah: An Introduction to History*, trans. by F. Rozenthal, abridged and ed. by N. J. Dawood, with new introduction by Bruce B. Lawrence, Bollingen Series (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005); al-Sakhāwī, *Al-Iʿlān bil Tawbīkh liman Dhamma Ahla al-Taʾrīkh*, ed. by Rozenthal (Damascus: 1930).

[198] Fred M. Donner's Introduction to Duri's *The Rise of Historical Writing Among the Arabs*, pp. vii, x-xi.

[199] C. H. Becker, *Papyri Schott- Reinhardt I* (Heidelberg, 1906).

[200] Horovitz, 'Alter', 39-47.

[201] Johann Fück, *Muhammed ibn Ishaq: literarischistorische Untersuchungen* (Frankfurt am Main, 1925).

tradition.[202] It was not until 1938 when H. Gibb provided his 'Taʾrīkh' in the Supplement to *The Encyclopaedia of Islam* that a new and more progressive departure was made.[203] It might have been Gibb's article which stimulated Franz Rosenthal to write his *A History of Muslim Historiography*.[204] Rosenthal provided more thorough handling of the origins of Arabic historiography than did Gibb's concise feature.

The previously mentioned works of Nabia Abbott and Fuat Sezgin in addition to ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz al-Duri's *Baḥth fī Nashʾat ʿIlm at-Tāʾrikh ʿInda l-ʿArab* (*The Rise of Historical Writing Among the Arabs*)[205] have removed and clarified the greater part of earlier concerns about the evolution of the sources. This has strongly challenged the previous sceptical arguments. The debate now turns rather on how we can differentiate between what is tendentious and what is genuine. Stephen Humphreys, for example, states that:

> Islamists like to complain about the state of their sources, but in fact what
> they have is extraordinarily rich and varied, far surpassing the miserable

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[202] D. S. Margoliouth, *Lectures on Arabic Historians* (Calcutta, 1930).

[203] H. A. R. Gibb, 'Tāʾrīkh', in *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, Supplement to 1st edn (Leiden: Brill, 1938), pp. 233ff. See also Gibb, *Mohammedanism: An History Survey* (London, Oxford University Press, 1970).

[204] Franz Rosenthal, *A History of Muslim Historiography*, 1st edn (Leiden, 1952).

[205] Other examples of Arab critiques include: A. A. Ḥajjī, *Naẓariyyāt fī Dirāsat al-Tarīkh al-Islāmī*, revised 3rd edn (Naqra: Maktabat al-Ṣafwa, 1979); R. A. Tawwāb, *Manāhij Taḥqīq al-Turāth Bayna al-Qudāma wal Muḥdathīn* (Cairo: Maktabat al-Khangī, 1985); A. Diyāb, *Taḥqīq al-Turāth al-ʿArabī: Manhajuhū wa Taṭawwuruhū* (Cairo: Dar al-Maʿārif, 1993); J. A. Masʿūd and W. Jumʿa, *Akhṭāʾ Yajib an Tuṣaḥaḥ fīl Tārīkh: Manhaj Kitābat al-Taʾrīkh al-Islāmī Limādha wa Kayf* (Manṣūra: Dār al-Wafāʾ, 1994); A. Khiḍr, *Al-Muslimūn wa Kitābat al-Tarīkh: Dirāsa fīl Taʾṣīl al-Islāmī li ʿIlm al-Tarīkh*, 2nd edn (Mūṣil [?]: al-Maʿhad al-ʿĀlamī lil Fikr al-Islāmī, 1995); A. Harun, *Taḥqīq al-Nuṣūṣ wa Nashruhā*, 7th edn (Cairo: Maktabat al-Khangī, 1998); S. Z. al-Maḥāsinī, *Dirasāt fī al-Makhṭūṭāt al-ʿArabiyyah* (Riyadh: Maktabal al-Malik Fahd, 1999); Ḥasan ʿUthmān, *Manhaj al-Baḥth al-Tārikhī*, 8th edn (Cairo: Dār al-Maʿārif, 2000).

fragments which challenge the student of the late Roman Empire or early medieval Europe. The real problem is to use this patrimony effectively. To a large degree that is a matter of asking good questions, but good questions in turn depend on understanding the character of one's sources.[206]

This tendency which is equally held by other scholars like Wilfred Madelung, [207] Gregor Schoeler[208] and Hugh Kennedy,[209] represents the approach towards early sources that is adopted here in the course of sources criticism. Things like the author's personal tendencies, extent of knowledge, sources, method of writing, relation with contemporary authorities, religious views, sectarian and political trends as well as the religious, political and social conditions of his time must all be taken into consideration.

With this said, some are still reluctant to accept such sources as reliable for the study of early mosques on the grounds that they were written a century or two after the buildings they described (see charts 1 and 2). According to Fred M. Donner,

> The relatively late date of the sources does not necessarily make them fraudulent, of course, and it became generally accepted by modern historians that some of the information in these sources – perhaps most of it – is considerably older material that was preserved and transmitted until it found its way into the library compilations now available to us.[210]

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[206] Stephen Humphreys, *Islamic History: A Framework for Inquiry*, rev. edn (London & New York: I. B. Tauris & Co LTD, 1991), p. 25.

[207] Madelung, p. xi.

[208] Schoeler, *Genesis*, p. 12.

[209] *The Armies of the Caliphs: Military and Society in the Early Islamic State*, Warfare and History (London: Routledge, 2001), pp. xi-xvi. See also his *The Great Arab Conquests: How the Spread of Islam Changed the World We Live in* (Cambridge MA: Da Capo Press, 2008) pp. 12-33.

[210] Fred M. Doner's Introduction, p. viii.

While the sources must not be treated uncritically, they should be neither rejected outright nor taken as *topoi*, on the only grounds that the information they provide coincides with what we conceive as a formulaic history of the mosque or a 'linear evolution' of its architectural type. Rather, epistemic questions should be posed and strategies should be developed to make judicious use of them for the study of early mosques where archaeological evidence is scanty, problematic or entirely missing.

For example, the credibility of the sources will be discussed in an archaeological sense: that is, it will be asked whether their content is consistent with the logical evolution of early mosques in terms of structures and materials. Likewise, Arabia's geology, geomorphology and the prevalent vernacular customs of building in pre- and early Islam will be taken into consideration.[211] In some cases, where it is workable, the veracity of early accounts will be judged through considering other better-documented scripture, namely, the *Qurʾān* (see 3.6).

The authority of an early account about a missing structure could also be assessed by considering the extent to which the account given by the same historian or geographer concurs with archaeological evidence that is now available. At Wāsiṭ for example (figure 23), the excavation (1936-42) is believed to have 'brought to light confirmation of literary evidence for the design of the early Islamic courtyard mosque'.[212] While such finds do not allow us to relax standards of critical judgment when dealing with early accounts, they provide a tantalizing guide.

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[211] See chapters 4 and 6.

[212] *Islam: Art and Architecture*, ed. by Markus Hattstein and Peter Delius (Köln: Könemann, 2004), p. 68. See also F. Safar, *Wāsiṭ*, pp. 20, 34.

In addition to archaeology,[213] the reliability of *Ḥadīth* and other historical writings can be tested through the examination of the surviving early documents (including evidence from contemporaneous non-Muslim writings[214] and *waqf* deeds),[215] and the comparative study of material evidence found in decoration, epigraphy, numismatics and papyrology.[216]

A good example for the latter are the Aphrodito papyri, discovered in 1901 at a place known as Kom Ishgauh, 30 miles north of Sohag, Egypt. As Creswell tells us, it 'consists of the official correspondence of Qurrah b. Sharīk, Governor of Egypt from 90 to 96 H. (709-14), with Basilius, the prefect [...], of the District of Aphrodito in Upper Egypt.'[217] The significance of this document for our study is that it provides valuable information about the builders of the Kaʿbah in the time of Ibn al-Zubayr (64-5/684), the builders of the Umayyad mosque of Damascus (87/706), and the builders of the mosque of ʿAmr when it was rebuilt by Qurrah b. Sharīk in 92/710. About this manuscript, van Berchem says:

> The discovery of the Fayyum papyri has allowed us to check the accuracy
> of some information provided by the Arab writers which has been called

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[213] See Jeremy Johns, 'Archaeology and the Early History of Islam: The first Seventy Years', *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient*, 46 (2003), 411-36.

[214] See Andrew Marsham, *Rituals of Islamic Monarchy: Accession and Succession in the First Muslim Empire* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2009), pp. 12, 84.

[215] Robert G. Hoyland, 'The Earliest Christian Writings on Muhammad: An Appraisal', in *The Biography of Muhammad: The Issue of the Sources*, ed. by Harald Motzki (Leiden, Boston, Köln, Brill, 2000).

[216] On how these could be approached, see Jean Sauvaget and Claude Cahen. *Introduction to the History of the Muslim East: A Bibliographical Guide* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1965), pp. 52-60. See also *Papyrology and the History of Early Islamic Egypt*, ed. by Petra M. Sijpesteijn and Lennart Sundelin, Islamic History and Civilization, 55 (Leiden: Brill, 2004).

[217] Creswell, *Early Muslim Architecture*, I. I, 151.

into question by European critiques. These kinds of counter-proofs are an excellent touch-stone to test the truthfulness of the written document, giving a precise definition of the extent to which one can have confidence in them; they constitute an important task for archaeology.[218]

2.2.1. Examples of primary sources

Muḥammad b. Isḥāq (d. 151/761) is regarded as the most resourceful amongst all those who wrote about the *Sīrah*, 'life' of the Prophet.[219] It seems that Ibn Isḥāq assimilated the experiences of his predecessors such as ʿUrwah b. al-Zubayr (d. 94/712), Wahb b. Munnabih (d. 114/732) and Muḥammad b. Muslim b. Shihāb (d. 124/741), and rephrased their works in light of his appreciation of the political significance of the image of Islamic history.[220] However, some of Ibn Isḥāq's narratives were approached with a measure of critical caution by later historians like Ibn Hishām (d. 218/833) and al-Ṭabarī (d. 311/923). Both might have been right in their conservatism, but in fact Ibn Isḥāq himself stated that his ardency to collect all the available reports about the Prophet overweighed his efforts in examining their genuineness.[221] Ibn Isḥāq's work reached us through the recensions of Ziyād b. ʿAbd Allāh al-Bakkāʾī (d. 183/799) and Salāmah b. Faḍl al-Anṣārī (d. 190/806).[222] Both works perished and while the former's accounts are kept in the *Sīrah Nabawiyyah* of ʿAbd al-Mālik b. Hishām,[223] the latter's reached us

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[218] Max van Berchem, 'Notes on Arab Archaeology', in *Early Islamic Art and Architecture*, ed. by Jonathan M. Bloom, the Formation of the Classical World, 23 (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2002), pp. 1-6 (p. 5).

[219] On Ibn Isḥāq and his book, see also J. M. B. Jones, 'Ibn Isḥāḳ', in *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd edn, III (1971), pp. 810-1; Schoeler, *Genesis*, pp. 71-2; Duri, pp. 33-7.

[220] See Khalidi, p. 34.

[221] See Duri, pp. 32-7; Schoeler, *Genesis*, pp. 71-2

[222] See Schoeler, *Genesis*, pp. 71-2.

[223] Ibn Hishām, *Sirat Rasūl Allah* (*Das Leben Muhammed's*), ed. by Ferdinand Wüstenfeld, 2 vols (Göttingen, 1858-60).

in the form of quotations by al-Ṭabarī[224] whose *Tārīkh al-Rusul wal Mulūk* is generally regarded as the most significant universal history in Islam.[225] Nonetheless, a problem of al-Ṭabarī is that some of his informants like Abū Mikhnaf (d. 157/774) and Sayf b. ʿUmar (d. *ca* 180/796) combined historical reports with folkloric storytelling.[226]

It was not until the 2nd/8th century that a new kind of historical writing emerged, namely the histories of Islamic cities. Of course, priority was given to the two holy cities, Mecca and Madīnah. More writings were dedicated to the latter since it was the first capital of the Islamic empire, the home of the Prophet and the place where his houses and mosque stood in their earliest forms.[227] The manuscripts of some of these early books have been found, edited and published. The book of *Tarīkh al-Madīnah* of Ibn Shabbah (d. 262/876) is a good example.[228] Few modern works have set out to collect and verify the sporadic accounts of some of the missing early books. A good example is *Akhbār al-Madīnah* of Ibn Zabālah (d. 199/814) which is regarded as the first comprehensive study of Madīnah.[229] On this book Sauvaget states:

> This work is for us of capital importance. Its interest lies (1) in the
> personality of the author, a disciple of the great *Medinian* doctor Mālik b.

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[224] See Fred. M. Donner, *Narratives of Islamic Origins* (The Darwin Press, 1998), p. 132.

[225] *The History of al-Ṭabarī*, ed. by Ihsan Abbas, C.E. Bosworth Fanz Rosenthal and others, Series in Near Eastern Studies, 38 vols (Albany: State university of New York Press).

[226] R. S. Humphreys and others, 'Tāʾrīkh', *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd edn, X (2000), pp. 257-302 (p. 273). On both savants, see also Duri, pp. 43-4, 46-7, 144; Schoeler, *Genesis*, p. 74-5.

[227] Examples are the early missing works of Ibn al-Muthannā (d. 210/825) and al-Madāʾinī (d. *ca*. 228/842).

[228] ʿUmar b. Shabbah, *Tarīkh al-Madīnah al-Munawwarah*, ed. by Fahīm M. Shaltūt (Medina: Al-Sayyid H. M. Aḥmad, 1979).

[229] Ibn Zabālah, *Akhbār al-Madīnah*, ed. by Ṣalāḥ ʿAbd al-Azīz Salāma (Medina: Markaz Buḥūth al-Madīnah, 2003).

> Anas [...] Ibn Zabāla was in a position to assemble *on the spot*, in the best
> conditions for both transmission and criticism, the local tradition relating to
> the ancient history of the Mosque [of Madīnah]; (2) in his date. This gives
> us the assurance that the evidence of contemporaries could have been
> noted down without an excessive number of intermediaries [...].[230]

It seems that the methodology and content of Ibn Zabālah's book inspired many of the later chroniclers of Madīnah. Examples are *al-Manāsik* by Abī Isḥāq al-Ḥarbī (d. 285/898), *Taḥqīq al-Nuṣrah* by Zayn al-Dīn al-Marāghī (d. 816/1413) Albeit, the *Wafāʾ al-Wafa* of al-Samhūdī (d. 911/1505) is the most important among these,[231] for it contains a lot of valuable contextual information about Madīnah, its history, topography, urban plans, landmarks and the systems of agriculture and irrigation in its heydays. It is described by H. Gibb as 'a work of extraordinary erudition'.[232] Al-Samhūdī quoted more than 360 texts from Ibn Zabālah. Even the methodology and structure of the latter's book could to a large extent be deduced from that of al-Samhūdī.

It is worth noting that scholars contemporary to and later than Ibn Zabālah accepted his historical accounts and amply quoted them. They, however, were cautious in their dependence on the *ḥadīths* he transmitted. As we have seen (2.1), the criteria for scrutinizing *ḥadīths* were much stricter than those used in the case of historical accounts.

Much information about early mosques can be found in books of

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[230] Jean Sauvaget, *La Mosquée Omeyyade de Médine: Études sur les Origines Architecturales de la Mosquée et de la Basilique* (Paris, 1947), p. 26, quoted and trans. by Hamilton A. R. Gibb, 'Arab-Byzantine Relations under the Umayyad Caliphate', *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, 12 (1958), 219-33 (p. 228). On Ibn Zabālah, see also Rosenthal, p. 475, n.6; Sezgin, II, 201-2.

[231] Al-Samhūdī, *Wafāʾ al-Wafa bī Akhbār Dār al-Muṣṭafā*, ed. by M. Muḥyī ad-Dīn, 4 vols (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyyah, 1955).

[232] Gibb, 'Arab-Byzantine Relations', pp. 228-9.

history, geography and travel.[233] While the earliest available to us were written several decades after the buildings they described (see charts 1 and 2), many of these were recensions of earlier missing written works or based on orally-transmitted knowledge. Some scholars have recently tried to investigate the sources of those earlier collections of Islamic annals.[234] According to Nigosian, their 'accuracy', despite being unascertainable, is generally accepted by a majority of scholars.[235] Humphreys believes that they 'were certainly heavily redacted in the early 3rd /9th century'.[236]

The *Futūḥ al-Buldān* (Conquests of the Provinces) of Yaḥya b. Jābir al-Balādhurī (d. 279/892) is one of the most outstanding works of the 3rd/9th century.[237] It, along with al-Ṭabarī's *History*, will be a basic source for study of the earliest mosques of Baṣrah I (? 14/635), Kūfah I (17/638), Fusṭāṭ I (21/641-2), Baṣrah II (45/665), and Qayrawān I (50/670). About al-Balādhurī's approach of writing, Duri says:

> Al-Balādhurī took his material from books specifically pertaining to the conquests in each province, from materials he was able to collect during

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[233] On these books, see Duri, p. 61. The majority of these have been edited and put in a modern form with glosses and indices. Some have been translated into English and other languages.

[234] For an example of these efforts, see Martin Hinds who tried to specify Sayf b. ʿUmar's sources about Arabia. Martin Hinds, *Studies in Early Islamic History*, ed. by J. Bacharach, Lawrence I. Conrad and Patricia Crone, with an introduction by G. R Hawting, Studies in Late Antiquity and Early Islam, 4 (Princeton: The Darwin Press, 1996), pp. 143-60. See also Montgomery Watt, 'The Materials Used by Ibn Ishaq', in *Historians of the Middle East*, ed. by Bernard Lewis and P. M. Holt (London, 1962).

[235] See S. A. Nigosian, *Islam: Its History, Teaching and Practices*, (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2004), 6.

[236] R. S. Humphreys, 'Taʾrīkh', p. 273.

[237] Aḥmad b. Yaḥya b. Jābir al-Balādhurī, *Futūḥ al-Buldān*, ed. and annotated by A. Anīs al-Ṭabbāʿ and U. Anīs al-Ṭabbāʿ (Beirut: Dār al-Nashr lil Jamiʿyyīn, 1957).

his travels to these regions, and from other sources available to him. His method of writing consisted of selecting material after he had sifted and criticized it, and presenting a balanced image of events while refraining from citing multiple accounts of the same event. He relied heavily on the accounts of Medina, which were known, more than others, for their impartiality and accuracy, and likewise used primary regional accounts. In this book, al-Balādhurī offers much valuable information on cultural, economic, and administrative affairs.[238]

Despite his apparent tendency to deal critically with his sources, sometimes al-Balādhurī cites conflicting accounts. According to Duri, al-Balādhurī, despite his affiliation to the ʿAbbāsids, is impartial and balanced in the *akhbār* he gives.[239]

Also important is al-Muqaddasī's *Aḥsan al-Taqāsīm fī Maʿrifat al-Aqālīm* (*the Best Divisions for the Knowledge of the Regions*) (375/985-380/990),[240] regarded by many western scholars as reliable for archaeological purposes. This might be attributed to al-Muqaddasī's ability in giving adequate architectural description of the structures about which he wrote.[241] Al-Muqaddasī implemented what seems to be a workable scientific method depending mainly on personal observation and consultation of trustworthy sources. In this sense, he says: 'Among its supports and pillars, moreover, in the establishing of which I sought assistance, was my putting questions to men

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[238] Duri, pp. 61-2.

[239] Ibid, pp. 63-4. See also C. H. Becker and F. Rosenthal, 'al-Balādhurī', in *Encyclopaedia of Islam* 2nd edn, I (1960), pp. 971-2.

[240] Al-Muqaddasī, *The Best Divisions for Knowledge of the Regions: a Translation of Aḥsan al-Taqāsīm fī Maʿrifat al-Aqālīm*, trans. by Basil Anthony Collins, reviewed by Muhammad Hamid al-Tai (Doha: Centre for Muslim Contribution to Civilization; Reading: Garnet, 1994).

[241] For more information, see Basil Antony Collins, *Al-Muqaddasī, the Man and his Work : with Selected Passages Translated from the Arabic* (Michigan, University of Michigan, 1974)

of intelligence whom I knew to be neither careless nor confused, about the districts and the areas in the border territories distant from me, which it was not possible for me to reach. For that on which they agreed, I accepted as authentic: that on which they differed, I rejected.'[242] He accordingly divided his accounts into three categories: what he saw, what he took from reliable authorities, and what he found in the authentic sources.

Examples of other sources that will be considered in this study of early mosques are: *Maghāzī* (*Military expeditions of the Prophet*) by al-Wāqidī (130-207/748-823),[243] *Ta'rīkh* (*History*) of al-Yaʿqūbī (d. 284/897),[244] *Murūj al-Dhahab* (*Meadows of Gold*) by al-Masʿūdī (283-346/896-956),[245] *al-Ṭabaqāt al-Kabīr* (*Great Book of Classes*) by Ibn Saʿd (168-230/784-844),[246] *Futūḥ Miṣr* (*Conquests of Egypt*) of Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam (d. 257/870),[247] *Ta'rīkh Wāsiṭ*, (*History of Wāsiṭ*) by Bahshal (d. 288/900),[248] and *Ta'rīkh Dimashq* (*History of Damascus*) by Ibn ʿAsākir (499-571/1106-1175).[249]

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[242] Al-Muqaddasī (Collin's trasl.), p. 3.

[243] Al-Wāqidī, *Kitāb al-Maghāzī*, ed. by Marsden Jones, 3rd edn ([Cairo (?)]: ʿĀlam al-Kutab, 1984), Manuscript edition, ed. by Marsden Jones, 3 vols (London: Oxford University Press, 1965-6).

[244] Al-Yaʿqūbī's *Tārīkh* and *Kitāb al-Buldān* represent an invaluable source for the chronicles and description of the countries he visited. See al-Yaʿqūbī, *Kitāb al-Buldān*, ed. by M. J. De Goeje (Leiden:1892), *Ta'rīkh*, ed. by M. T. Houtsma, 2 vols (Leiden: 1883). On al-Yaʿqūbī and his historical works, see Duri, pp. 64-7.

[245] Al-Masʿudi, *Murūj al-Dhahab wa Maʿādin al-Jawhar* (Les Prairies d'or), ed. and trans. by Barbier de Meynard and pavet de Courteille. 9 vols (Paris: 1891-77).

[246] On Ibn Saʿd, see J. W. Fück, 'Ibn Saʿd', in *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd edn, III (1971), pp. 922-3.

[247] Ibn Abd al-Ḥakam, *Futūḥ Miṣr wa Akhbāruhā (The History of the Conquests of Egypt, North Africa and Spain)*, ed. by Charles C, Torrey (New Haven, 1922).

[248] Bahshal, *Ta'rīkh Wāsiṭ*, ed. by Gurgīs ʿAwwād (Baghdad: 1967).

[249] Ibn Asākir, *Tārīkh Madīnat Dimashq: wa Dhikr Faḍllihā wa Tasmiyat man Ḥallahā min al-Amāthil aw Ijtāza bi Nawāḥīhā min Wāridīhā wa Ahlihā*, ed. by Muḥib al-Dīn ʿUmar Gharāmah al-ʿAmrawī, 80 vols (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, 1995-2000).

Some of these books, which usually contain some geographical and topographical content, were authored in the context of regional studies of *Ḥadīth*. These were spun around the biographies of *muḥaddithūn*, 'Ḥadīth scholars', who either grew up or lived for a term in cities. These works were largely presented in the form of *ṭabaqāt* (classes, or generations of *Ḥadīth* scholars and biographers), while some were written out of a sense of devotion and pride for the city or province.[250]

This may help us investigate whether, and how, the *Ḥadīth* scholars who lived in these cities were involved in building their congregational mosques. Such sources could also provide the study with some discussions about the legitimacy of the architectural inventions done to early mosques.

Travellers and pilgrims provide a further seam of written evidence. Many writings were intended to describe and talk about the early mosques because of their sanctity and high status. Whether in his time or in the time of his caliphs, the mosque of the Prophet, for instance, was copiously described in the books of, *Maghāzī, Sīrah, Ḥadīth*, geography, travel and history. Among other things, these sometimes enable us to observe the architectural evolution of early mosques.

Writings by later historians, geographers and travellers will also be taken into account. This is not only because they are better-documented sources, but also because their writers had the chance to see the remnants of what are now vanished buildings and because they might have taken knowledge from those who had seen the buildings in a better condition.

To recapitulate, *Ḥadīth* and other early Arabic writings can, if appropriately handled, provide an historically valuable source for the study of

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[250] Duri, pp. 71-2.

early Islam. This is not to say that doing so is easy or safe, but the other option – that is of wholesale dismissal – would deprive us of an important and near-unique source for the study of the period. In many cases, it seems more feasible, still, that the positivist question regarding the historical genuineness of *Ḥadīth* – 'authentic' vs. 'inauthentic' – be replaced with more historicist approach to the relevant material, with *Ḥadīth* included. On dealing with the reports *à propos* the preference of simplicity or elaborateness of early mosques, for instance, the vista should be extended to take into consideration how the memory of predecessors was formulated and disseminated. The way in which their legacy is memorised, and the nature of the later related polemics and debates, could tell us a lot about the social and political trends of the later generations, and their approaches of constructing, organizing and deploying such memory in the different periods.

Also, the source itself, being historical evidence, could provide a reliable medium to conceive how the memory was shaped by the array of changing circumstances. How was it to be approached, selected, emendated, and invented? How could the variations and contradiction in the sources be approached? Should such inquiries be dealt with successfully, they would be of great help for us in dealing with the thorny question of evaluating and sifting *Ḥadīth* and early Arabic accounts.[251]

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[251] On this approach and how the 'linguistic turn' could be applied, see U. Rubin, *The Eye of the Beholder: the Life of Muhammad as Viewed by the Early Muslims, a Textual Analysis*, Studies in Late Antiquity and Early Islam, 5 (Princeton: the Darwin Press, 1955); Tayeb el-Hibri, *Reinterpreting Islamic Historiography: Hārūn al-Rashīd and the Narrative of the ʿAbbasid Caliphate* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999); el-Hibri, *Parable and Politics in Early Islamic History: the Rashidun Caliphs* (Columbia: Columbia University Press, 2010); T. Sizgorich, 'Narrative and Community in Islamic Late Antiquity', *Past & Present*, 185 (2004), 9-42.

Years AH
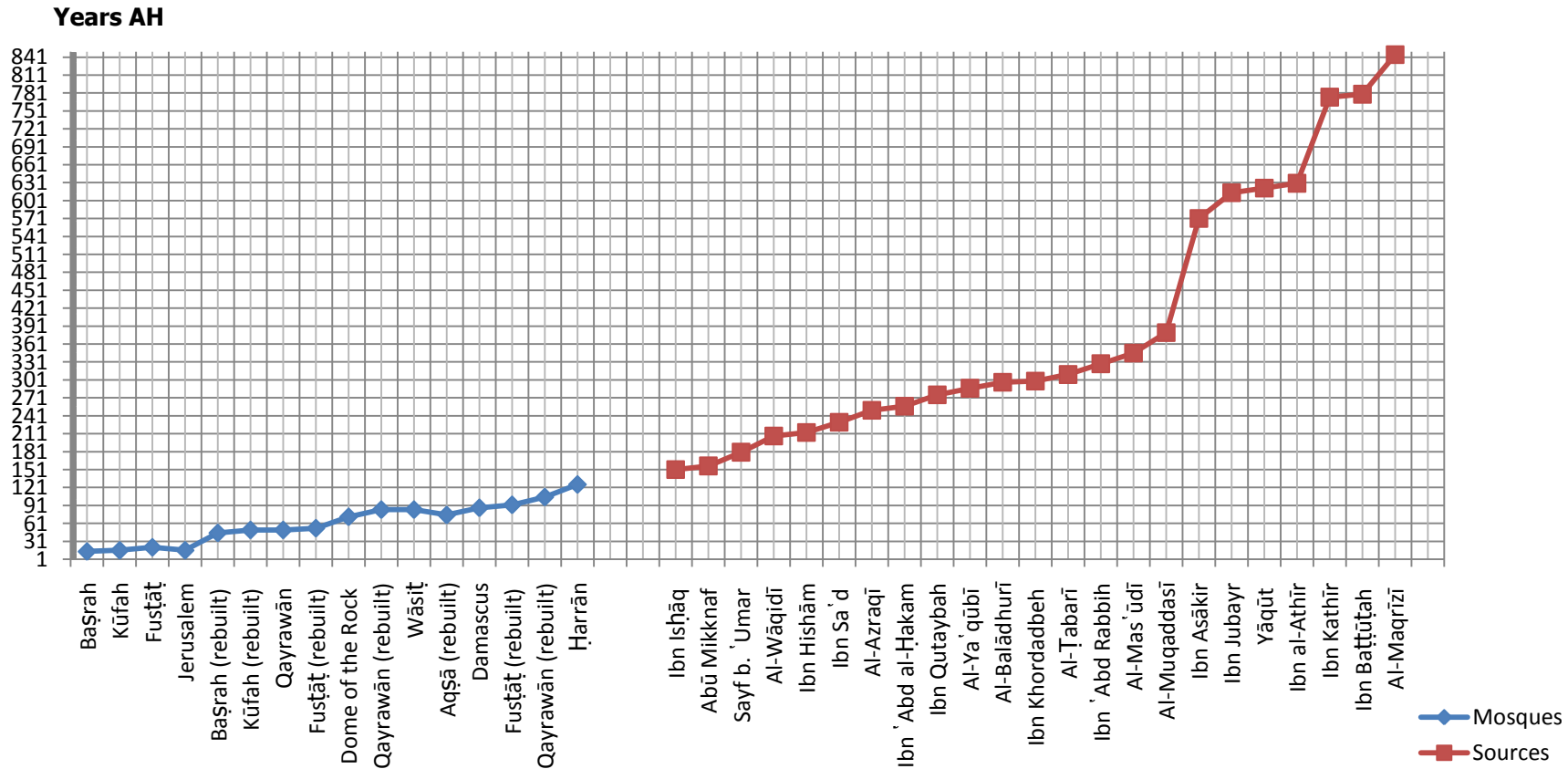
Chart 1: Dates of main mosques and sources[1]

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[1] The dates given for the sources denote the years of the authors' deaths.

Chapter 3: The 'house of the Prophet' or the 'mosque of the Prophet'?

Chapter 3: The 'house of the Prophet' or the 'mosque of the Prophet'?

3.1. Introduction

Islamic culture is represented by different types of architecture: religious, domestic, military and funerary. Of all these, the mosque is regarded as the supreme type. It has gained this prestige not only because of its distinctive appearance, but also because of the influence it has had on the architectural features of other religious and domestic buildings in Islam. This is in addition to its superlative spiritual and social influence on the Islamic community as a whole. Thus, the history of the mosque, and its architectural evolution, has been the subject of much research since the study of Islamic art and architecture began more than a century ago. Although the Islamic style of architecture borrowed much from the architectural heritage of newly Islamized territories, the structure built by the Prophet at Madīnah is widely accepted to have had a decisive role in the subsequent shaping of mosque architecture and, in turn, Islamic architecture in its formative years (see 4.1). According to Hillenbrand:

> The matter of origins is surprisingly straightforward. Islamic tradition champions the decisive impact of a single building on the evolution of the mosque: the house of the Prophet. Nor is this emphasis misplaced.[1]

However, while this hypaethral building has received much scholarly attention – particularly in terms of its significance to mosque architectural evolution, there is disagreement about what function it was mainly set to serve.

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[1] For more details, see Hillenbrand, p. 33-9.

3.2. Two main views

Dissent about the original purpose of the Prophet's building mainly clusters around two opposing views. The first tendency considers the building to have been deliberately designed by the Prophet as a mosque from the first day he migrated to Madīnah. The second argues that it was originally intended to serve as an abode for the Prophet, that it gained a communal character later in his lifetime, and that it was not until the period of the caliphate that this structure assumed the sacred form of a mosque.

The first opinion represents the traditional point of view of Muslim scholars and a growing number of western academics, the second reflects traditional opinion in western scholarship and has only recently come under critical scrutiny.[2] Significantly, the bone of contention is neither the plan nor the constituent parts of the building, but its main function or functions.

The first view held sway until Islamic cultural heritage began to be studied by western scholars in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. According to this theory, which is built on primary sources (see chapter 4) no sooner had the Prophet migrated to Madīnah, than he and his Companions began to establish a new Islamized community. In this climate, building of the mosque was inevitable to accommodate rituals as well as other religious and secular affairs (see 4.3).

The second view was first advanced by Caetani whose reading of Arabic traditions led him to argue that this building could not have been a mosque in the time of the Prophet because the activities performed in it

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[2] Departing from the demolition of Caetani-Creswell theory, Jeremy Johns suggests that the type or types that became the mosque could have been adopted, and not created, by the Muslim aristocracy after the departure of the Prophet and that the history of the mosque was retrospectively written by the 2nd or the 3rd century traditionists who were inspired by the type of mosques they haunted. See Johns, 'House of the Prophet', pp. 71, 109.

could not have taken place in a sacred edifice.[3] Caetani's opinion developed into a canon for later relevant research. It was accepted and developed by exponents such as Creswell.[4] Its strong and lasting influence can be realized when even those later scholars who deal with the building as a mosque produce such paradoxical phrases as: 'the first mosque was the house of the Prophet Muhammad in Medina',[5] 'the Prophet's house in Medina – the primordial mosque of Islam'.[6] More recently, some have even preferred to refer to it as 'the house-mosque'.[7] This sidesteps the issue. As we shall see, the building, and particularly its courtyard, could not have served the two functions; it was either a mosque or a house.

The thrust of Caetani's argument is based on: extreme scepticism towards the sources; exclusion of the possibility that anyone could have foreseen the future requirements of a layout before the rituals it would accommodate had taken shape; an assumption that some of the activities that did take place in the building were profane, and thus could not have been performed in a mosque; and an assumption that the system of house building observable in Arabia in his own day had also existed, in the same way, in the early middle ages.[8]

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[3] Caetani, *Annali*, I, 437-8.

[4] Creswell, *Early Muslim Architecture*, I. I, 6-10.

[5] Andrew Petersen, *Dictionary of Islamic Architecture* (London: Routledge, 1996; repre. 1999), p. 195.

[6] Robert Hillenbrand, *Islamic Art and Architecture* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1999), p. 25.

[7] Richard Ettinghausen and Oleg Grabar, *The Art and Architecture of Islam: 650-1250*, new edn (New Haven; London, Yale University Press, 1994), p. 40; M. Bloom, 'Mosque', *EQ*, III, pp. 426-37 (p. 428). See also Richard Ettinghausen, Oleg Grabar and Marilyn Jenkins-Madina, *Islamic Art and Architecture: 650-1250*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001), p. 5; Robert Irwin, *Islamic Art* (London: Laurence King, 1997), p. 59.

[8] See Caetani, *Annali*, I, 437-8, quoted by J. Johns, 'House of the Prophet', p. 72. See also K. A. C. Creswell, *Early Muslim Architecture: with a Contribution on the Mosaics of the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem and the Great Mosque in Damascus by Marguerite Gutier-van Berchem*, 2nd

Chapter 3: The 'house of the Prophet' or the 'mosque of the Prophet'?

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3.3. On the sources

The same sources upon which Caetani drew to argue the building as a house deal with it as a mosque (see chapter 4). The building is also referred to as a mosque in earliest extant *Ḥadīth* collections such as the *Jāmiʿ* of Muʿammar b. Rāshid,[9] the *Muwaṭṭaʾ* of Mālik b. Anas,[10] and the *Sunan* of Saʿīd b. Manṣūr.[11] It is also called a 'mosque' by Ibn Isḥāq.[12] There is no need to dilate on how it would have been if these sources lack any genuine core, because then the whole debate would be rootless. Caetani's reliance on these sources shows that he accepted them as a ground for further discussions. Caetani's perspective implies that the early Arab historians and Prophet's biographers, while assuming a history for the first mosque, had retained a number of historical accounts that, from Caetani's point of view, could reveal that it was a house and not a mosque. A key question is: should this be true, why did they include those *ḥadīths* which talk about activities that are presumed to have contradicted the sacred character of the mosque? It is difficult to believe that such *ḥadīths* were passed down, by mistake. If we presume that such a mistake was made by early scholars who were in charge of deliberately inventing an exemplary, and supposedly consistent, history for the first mosque, the notion is yet more implausible. It becomes more dubious still when we know that such early historians and *Ḥadīth* writers lived in a time when allegedly 'profane' activities were no longer taking place at mosques.

A worked example is instructive. According to one tradition, when

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rev. edn, 2 vols, 3 parts (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1969; repre. New York: Hacker Art Books, 1979), I. I, 6-7.

[9] As an example, see *ḥadīths* no. 19801, 19886.

[10] As an example, see *ḥadīth* no. 458, 463, 517.

[11] Saʿīd b. Manṣūr, *Sunan*, ed. by Ḥabīb al-Raḥmān al-Aʿẓamī, 2 vols (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyyah, [1967 (?)]), *ḥadīths* no. 2169, 2321, 2410.

[12] See, for example, Ibn Isḥāq, *Al-Sīrah al-Nabawiyyah*, ed. by A. Farīd al-Mazīdī, (Beirut: Dār al-Kutb al-ʿIlmiyyah, 2004), pp. 651; 655.

one of the Prophet's wives, Umm Salamah, felt uncomfortable about the lack of privacy, she built a mud-brick screen wall in front of her house to obstruct the gaze of others.[13] This implies that the sizable court built by the Prophet was not a place for the Prophet's wives. Rather, it should have been, at least occasionally, frequented by people from the Muslim community. The fact that this *ḥadīth* serves principally as a vehicle for the Prophet's condemnation of building may give an inkling that the historical evidence of the existence of the first mosque,[14] found scattered in divergent texts from traditions and early Arabic sources, is difficult to conceive as having been written retrospectively.

3.4.   On 'profane' behaviours

Among those behaviours considered by Caetani as inappropriate for a mosque, we should differentiate between the acts condemned by the Prophet and those of which he approved. For example, in one *ḥadīth* the Prophet warns against spitting towards the *qiblah*.[15] This is included in a group which regulate what may or may not be done in the mosque. Perceptibly, this *ḥadīth*, and its cluster, is not against the reverence of the mosque of the Prophet in his time. Indeed, they enhance it.[16] More conjecturally, it might have been that the unassuming form of the first mosque, whose floor scarcely differed from any spot in the outside desert, encouraged some of those who frequented it to deem that such activities might be allowed. The first mosque was used to accommodate many of the nomads who had recently embraced Islam and who had been

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[13] Ibn Saʿd, I, 429; Ibn al-Najjār, p. 153.

[14] Johns, 'House of the Prophet', p. 74.

[15] *Ṣaḥīfat Hammām b. Munabbih: ʿan Abī Hurayrah Raḍiya Allāhū ʿanh*, ed. by R. Fawzī ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib (Cairo: Maktabat al-Khānjī, 1985), *ḥadīth* no. 120; Mālik, *Muwaṭṭaʾ*, *ḥadīths* no. 544-5; al-Bukhārī *ḥadīths* no. 405-17.

[16] See al-Bukhārī, *ḥadīths* no. 423, 439-41, 445, 451-75; Zayn al-Dīn Abū al-Faraj b. Rajab al-Ḥanbalī, *Fatḥ al-Bārī: Sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukāhrī*, ed. by M S. ʿAbd al-Maqṣūd, M. A. al-Shāfiʿī, I. I. al-Qāḍī and others, 10 vols (Medina: Maktabat al-Ghurabāʾ al-Athariyyah, 1996), III, 105-40.

accustomed to life in the desert where such acts were not at all constrained. An important further twist in this discussion is that there is no historical evidence that such unbecoming behaviour was frequent at the mosque. Hence, the fact that such acts were addressed by the Prophet could be attributed not to their frequency but simply to his keenness to put an end to them. In sum, the addressing of inappropriate behaviour is not evidence that it was not a place of prayer, and it is equally hard to believe that they would have been tolerated in a 'house', especially if that was of the master.

The other group of acts which were approved by the Prophet, and which are seen as profane by Caetani, likewise provide no evidence that the structure was a house. Rather, they denote the many functions which the mosque was intended to perform. For instance, the tradition about the Prophet receiving gifts and distributing them among the Companions[17] is not an indication of a secular edifice. The mosque at that time held many functions whose nature can be called 'secular' according to non-Muslim lexicons.[18] One of these functions, for example, was to welcome the delegates of both converts, who came to the Prophet to declare their faith and loyalty, and non-converts who came out of political concern or for theological discussions.[19]

It is true that some traditions can give one the impression of a headquarters of an army.[20] In one sense this is right, for being a headquarters was one of the functions of the earliest mosques. Here, we should bear in mind that warfare was of religious as well as military

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[17] Al-Bukhārī, *ḥadīth* no. 421. See also Pedersen, 'Masdjid', p. 646.

[18] For examples of such functions, see al-Bukhārī, *ḥadīths* no. 421-3, 439-40, 454-7, 461-4, 472, 475; Abū Bakr Muḥammad b. Isḥāq b. Khuzaymah, *Ṣaḥīḥ*, ed. by M. Muṣṭafā al-Aʿẓamī, 4 vols (Beirut: al-Maktab al-Islāmī, 1980), *hadiths* no. 1328-42.

[19] See Ibn Isḥāq, pp. 615-65; Ibn Hishām, *Al-Sīrah al-Nabawiyyah*, ed. by ʿUmar A. Tadmurī, 3rd edn, 4 vols (Dār al-Kitāb al-ʿArabī, 1990), IV, 210-39; Ibn Saʿd, I, 252-309.

[20] Pedersen, 'Masdjid', p. 646.

significance. Such activities used to take place side by side with the main function of providing a place for prayers and proselytizing.[21] This multi-functional nature of the mosque was not denied by early Muslim historians and *Ḥadīth* compilers. The misunderstanding arises from viewing these activities, when secular functions were combined with devotion, in contrast with later times when mosque functions have undergone a substantial degree of specialization.

Further, many of these activities took place in the *raḥbah* which does not seem, particularly initially, to have been regularly used for prayer. On the authority of ʿĀʾishah, when women who stayed at the mosque to observe the rite of *iʿtikāf*[22] underwent menstruation, 'the Prophet ordered them to be taken out of the mosque and stay at tents in the *raḥbah* of the mosque until they purified [again]'.[23] We shall see that later in the lifetime of the Prophet the *raḥbah* was used for prayers on a frequent basis as the number of congregation was rapidly increasing. We are told that even with this overflow, the Prophet enlarged the mosque on a number of occasions to accommodate the growing congregation.

3.5. Architectural points to consider

The sizable area of the structure is not comparable to any of the Arab houses of the time,[24] as described by Caetani. This in itself implies that it was not a private dwelling.[25] Also, the assumption that it was the Prophet's house clashes

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[21] See Pedersen, 'Masdjid', pp. 645-77 (p. 646). On the multiple functions of the mosque in early Islam, see Guillaume, p. 39. See also 6.5.1.

[22] *Iʿtikāf* is the ritual of dedicating sometime to staying in the mosque and worship Allah by offering *ṣalāt*, reciting and studying

[23] Al-Zarkashī, p. 383.

[24] On the dimensions of this structure, see chapter 4.

[25] Hillenbrand, *Islamic Architecture*, p. 39; Johns, 'House of the Prophet', p. 74.

with the reports about the Prophet's simple life and the many *ḥadīths* which praise simplicity and lay emphasis on the transitory nature of this life.[26]

Unlike Caetani's perception of the Prophet's *dār*, 'house', which usually had one entrance, the Prophet's structure was provided with three gates, most probably to assist the ingress and egress of the big number of attendants.[27]

The above-mentioned *ḥadīth* about the Prophet's wife complaining of lack of privacy suggests that 'the dwellings of the Prophet's wives were opened directly onto the courtyard, which was the public space of the structure'.[28] According to Ibn Kathīr, these apartments were low structures with near courts, (*masākin kaṣīrat al-bināʾ ḳarībat al-fināʾ*). That is, they were provided with their own courts for the private use of the Prophet's wives.[29] This implies another function for the walled court to which the houses were attached. In other words, the large-sized court was not for the Prophet and his wives. Rather, it was for the Prophet and the Muslim community. It is important to note that in such a community this communal part of the building could not have served both functions simultaneously as according to the *Qurʾān*, the wives of the Prophet enjoyed a high degree of privacy:

> O Consorts of the prophet! Ye are not like any of the (other) women: If ye do fear (Allah), be not too complaisant of speech, lest one in whose heart is a disease should be moved with desire: but speak ye a speech (that is) just. And stay quietly in your houses, and make not a dazzling display, like that of the former times of ignorance; and establish regular

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[26] Hillenbrand, *Islamic Architecture*, pp. 39, 42. On these *ḥadīths*, see 5.8 and 5.10.

[27] Johns, 'House of the Prophet', p. 74.

[28] Ibid.

[29] Ibn Kathīr, *al-Bidāya wa al-Nihāya*, ed. by ʿAbd Allāh A. al-Turkī, 21 vols ([Giza (?)]: Dār Hajr, 1997), IV, 545.

prayer [...].[30]

According to Ettinghausen and Grabar: 'more recent historiography has argued that its [namely the Prophet's building's] growth, as told in the hadith, is one of a public space acquiring private functions rather than the other way around.'[31] Hillenbrand also states:

> In other words, the evidence suggests that Muhammad's 'house' was intended from the first to serve as the focal point of the new Islamic community. That definition also includes its role as a mosque. It did not become the first mosque as it were by accident. Consequently the traditional interpretation which emphasises the origin of the mosque in domestic architecture is erroneous. The mosque was custom-built from the very beginning, though it is important to remember that the precise meaning of 'mosque' in the 620s is not readily definable today [...] There is no need to try to discredit these statements, but they fail to invalidate the assertion that the building was primarily intended as the focus of the new community and only secondarily intended as Muhammad's house. The latter assertion, moreover, coincides with the Islamic tradition itself.[32]

Another point that betrays the weakness of Caetani's theory is the placement of the apartments of the Prophet's wives against the exterior of the enclosure wall. For Johns, 'this is architectural nonsense: the structures surrounding the courtyard should be built against the inside, not the outside, of the enclosure wall'.[33] In fact, the location of these apartments on the outer side of the wall implies that it was a house only fortuitously.[34]

Further, as we shall see (4.5.2), no sooner had the *qiblah* changed from Bayt al-Maqdis at Jerusalem to the Kaʿbah at Mecca, than a new

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[30] *Qur'ān*, XXXIII. 32,33.

[31] Ettinghausen, Grabar and Jenkins-Madina, p. 5.

[32] Hillenbrand, *Islamic Architecture*, pp. 39-40.

[33] Johns, 'House of the Prophet', p. 74.

[34] Hillenbrand, *Islamic Architecture*, p. 39.

shelter (*ẓullah*) was added to the southern part of the mosque. The most persuasive explanation for this is the frequent use of the building for worship.[35]

There are a number of considerable indications that the mosque, on both institutional and architectural levels, was known in the time of the Prophet.[36] The Prophet and his followers are reported to have occasionally performed congregational prayers at the *muṣallā al-ʿīd*. Some *ḥadīths* in al-Bukhārī state that the Prophet performed some congregational prayers at the open desert *muṣallā* or at Qubāʾ.[37] Some have interpreted this as meaning that the Prophet used usually to perform the congregational prayers at one or other of these places. Yet, were this valid, we would then have to believe that the Prophet and the Muslim congregation had to walk this long distance from his house at Madīnah to Qubāʾ or to the desert at least once a week, if not five times every day, and ignore, for no apparent justification, a far nearer and more accessible substitute – the spacious court of the structure built by him and the faithful.

In envisaging how the typical mosque evolved from the Prophet's structure, commentators such as Creswell and Briggs have noted signs which would imply this building being used for prayer in the time of the Prophet.[38] For example, the *ẓullah*, 'shelter' which represented the prototype of the later *bayt al-ṣalāt*, 'prayer hall' was added to the mosque when the faithful complained of the burning sun heat during prayers, and the *ṣuffah*,

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[35] Ibid, p. 42.

[36] The same opinion is held by Pedersen ('Masdjid', p. 647) and Ettinghausen, Grabar and Jenkens-Madina (pp. 5-6). In his *The Formation of Islamic Art*, Grabar adds: 'But recent work based on a small number of poetic fragments has raised doubts about the traditional explanation that the house of the Prophet was transformed into a masjid and, as suggested, that a separate building was in fact built.' p. 103.

[37] A mosque founded by the Prophet while he was approaching Madīnah.

[38] See also Jonathan Bloom and Sheila Blair, *Islamic Arts* (London: Phaidon, 1997), p. 23.

'portico' which was dedicated to the poor *ṣaḥābīs* developed into the later

riwāq (see also p. 4).[39] It is apparent that if such developments occurred in

the lifetime of the Prophet, it must have been used as a mosque. While

Creswell attributed the architectural evolution of mosques to such events, he

preferred to call them 'trivial facts' (see 6.4). The prerequisite of having the

mosques orientated towards the *qiblah* is not trivial, but emerged from the

ḥadīths about the necessity of facing the *qiblah* during prayer. Similarly, the

need for a high place for the Prophet's muezzin is a result of prophetic

command of *adhān*, 'call to prayers'.[40] We begin to see that the architectural

elements of the mosque would have been prompted by a number of

devotional requirements.

3.6. *Qurʾān* and the 'mosque of the Prophet'

Many reasons coalesce to necessitate a discussion of the mosque in the

Qurʾān.[41] First, the inaccessibility of archaeological evidence makes literary

sources, of which *Qurʾān* is one, our primary (if not the only) way to investigate

the topic of this chapter. Second, *Qurʾān* is regarded as the 'only fully

acceptable source for the period [namely the early years of Islam]'.[42] Finally,

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[39] Creswell, *Early Muslim Architecture*, I. I, 7, 9. See also Briggs, *Muhammadan Architecture*, p. 22; Johns, 'House of the Prophet', p. 85.

[40] For *ḥadīth* about *adhān*, see al-Bukhārī, *Book of Adhān*, *ḥadīths* no.603-873. This theory of Creswell has also been contested by Johns: 'House of the Prophet', pp. 85-8.

[41] See Robert Schick, 'Archaeology and the Qurʾān', *EQ*, I, pp. 148-57.

[42] Ettinghausen, Grabar and Jenkins-Madina, p. 5. On the historiographical appraisal of the *Qurʾān* and how it was collected, see Frederik Leehmuis, 'Codices of the Qurʾān', in *Encyclopaedia of the Qurʾān*, I (2001), pp. 347-51; John Burton, 'the Collection of the Qurʾān', in *Encyclopaedia of the Qurʾān*, I (2001), pp. 351-61; G. H. A. Juynboll, 'Ḥadīth and the Qurʾān', in *Encyclopaedia of the Qurʾān* , II (2002), pp. 376-97; François Déroche, 'Manuscripts of the Qurʾān ', in *Encyclopaedia of the Qurʾān* , III (2003), pp. 254-75; F. E. Peters, 'The Quest of the Historical Muḥammad', *The international Journal of Middle East Studies*, 23 (1991), 291-315.

the main ground for those who suspect the existence of a mosque in the time of the Prophet is the *Qur'ān's* 'non-specific' use of the word '*masjid*'.[43]

The word '*masjid*', is used twenty eight times in the *Qur'ān* to refer to the *Masjid al Ḥarām* or the sanctuary of Mecca,[44] and once to specify the *Masjid al-Aqṣā* in Jerusalem.[45] The same word is used to refer to houses of prayers of older nations.[46] Such usage does not necessarily mean that the mosque, as either an institution or a building, was not yet established in the time of the Prophet. Rather, it could imply that the term had been used to refer to any house of worship where God was to be praised.[47] This could be attributed to fact that Islam considers itself as the legitimate and last heir of the previous monotheistic religions.[48] Indeed, the word '*masjid* remained in use to refer to houses of worship of other faiths from the 8th to the 14th century: a period when mosques, as traditionally defined, had appeared as a specific type.[49] Further, '*masjid* is used in the *Qur'ān* to refer to every act of worship.[50] In the following Meccan passage,[51] the word '*masjid*' could be used in this sense: Say: "My Lord hath commanded justice; and that ye set your whole selves (to Him) at every time and place of prayer (masjid) [...].[52]

This 'general' meaning of '*masjid* as an act of worship, which does

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[43] Pedersen, 'Masdjid', pp. 644-5; Johns, 'House of the Prophet', pp. 88-93; Oleg Grabar, 'Art and Architecture and the Qur'an', pp. 161-75.

[44] *Qur'ān* II. 144; II. 149, II.150; II. 191; II. 196; II. 217; VIII. 34; IX. 7; IX. 28, XXII.25, XLVIII.25, XLVIII.27. For a detailed discussion on the mosque in the *Qur'ān*, see Johns, 'House of the Prophet', pp. 88-93.

[45] *Qur'ān* XVII.1.

[46] *Qur'ān* XXII. 40. See also, M. Bloom, 'Mosques', *EQ*, III, 427.

[47] See, M. Bloom, 'Mosques', *EQ*, III, 427.

[48] For more details about Islam's appreciation to other celestial religions, see 5.10.

[49] Johns, 'House of the Prophet', p. 89.

[50] *Qur'ān* VII. 29; LXXII. 18.

[51] 'Meccan' means that it is a part of the revelation which was in the period before the emigration to Madīnah and, in turn, before the mosque of the Prophet was erected.

[52] *Qur'ān* VII. 29.

not collide with its meaning as a mosque, is confirmed by the following verse: 'And [know] that places of worship (*masjids*) due to God [alone]: hence, do not invoke anyone side by side with God!'[53] Although this verse was revealed in Mecca, it could still refer to the mosque in its technical meaning. The mosque was known to the Muslim community before the Hijrah represented in the Masjid al-Ḥarām of Mecca along with other pre-Hijrah mosques (see below). [54]

Caetani and those who had followed him argue that a mosque could not have been formed in the time of the Prophet while many Islamic rituals, particularly *ṣalāt*, had not yet to develop. However, many passages in the *Qurʾān* deal with the *ṣalāt* and underscore its obligatory nature.[55] There are verses that give details about *ṣalāt* and its form and times.[56] Much detail is applied to the pertinent ritual of *wuḍūʾ*, 'ablution', an indispensable procedure for a Muslim before performing *ṣalāt*.[57] The *Qurʾān* also refers to another requirement for *ṣalāt*, namely *adhān*, 'call to prayer'.[58] It is not surprising, then, that the Prophet and followers of the new religion would make a place for prayers when this became possible: and of course, it was not until the Prophet's emigration to Madīnah that such a place was secured.[59] According to Pedersen, 'When in Medina he [namely the Prophet] was able to do as he pleased, it must have been natural for him to create a place where he could be undisturbed with his followers and where they

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[53] *Qurʾān* LXXII. 18.

[54] See *The Holy Quran: English Translation of the meanings and Commentary*, ed. by the presidency of Islamic Researches, Iftāʾ, Call and Guidance (Medina: King Fahd complex for the printing of the Holy Quran, 1992), p. 1834.

[55] *Qurʾān* II. 238; XXIII. 9; LXX. 34.

[56] *Qurʾān* IV. 103; II. 43; XXV. 60. Two of the five daily obligatory prayers are mentioned in the *Qurʾān*. These are *Fajr* and *ʿIshāʾ Qurʾān* XXIV. 58.

[57] *Qurʾān* V. 6. See Marion Holmes Katz, 'Cleanliness and Ablution', *EQ*, I, 314-4.

[58] *Qurʾān* V. 58.

[59] *Qurʾān* II. 125.

could perform the ritual *ṣalāt* together.'[60]

The *Qurʾān* refers to the event of changing the *qiblah*, towards which Muslims were ordered to be orientated during their prayers:

> Thus have We made of you an *Ummat* justly balanced. That ye might be witnesses over the nations, and the Messenger a witness over yourselves; and we appointed the Qibla to which thou wast used, only to test those who followed the Messenger from those who would turn on their heels (from the Faith). Indeed it was (a change) momentous, except to those guided by Allāh. And never would Allāh make your faith of no effect. For Allāh is to all people most surely full of kindness, most Merciful. We see the turning of thy face (for guidance) to the heavens: now shall we turn thee to a Qibla that shall please thee. Turn then thy face in the direction of the Sacred Mosque: wherever ye are, turn your faces in that direction. The people of the Book know well that that is the truth from their Lord, nor is Allāh unmindful of what they do.[61]

Clear references to the role of the Prophet as *imām*, 'prayer leader' imply that congregational prayers were familiar in his time.[62] According to Ettinghausen and Grabar:

> On certain occasions however, such as Fridays at noon, it should take place in the *masajid* Allah (Qurʾan 9: 17-18, 'the mosques of God'), because, from the time of Muḥammad on, a sermon (*khutba*) [...] formed an integral part of the ceremony.[63]

Mosques are described as: 'houses [of worship] which God has allowed to be raised so that His name be remembered in them, there [are

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[60] Pedersen, 'Masdjid', p. 645.

[61] *Qurʾān* II. 143-4.

[62] *Qurʾān* IV. 101; IV. 102; *Qurʾān* IX. 18. See also Patrick D. Gaffney, 'Friday Prayer', in *Encyclopaedia of the Qurʾān*, II (2002), pp. 271-2.

[63] Ettinghausen, Grabar and Jenkins-Madina, p. 5. See also M. Bloom, 'Mosque', *EQ*, III, 428. Friday sermon is dealt with in verses 9, 11 of the sixty second *sūrah* of the *Qurʾān* which bears the title of al-Jumuʿah, 'the Friday [sermon]'.

such as] extol His limitless glory at morn and evening.'[64] The *Qur'ān* also mentions that mosques served, in addition to *ṣalāt*, functions such as *dhikr*[65] and *i'tikāf*[66] in the time of the Prophet.

The domestic apartments of the Prophet, on the other hand, are dealt with in the *Qur'ān* as private premises. The verse reads:

> O ye who believe! Enter not the Prophet's houses – until leave is given you [...] but when ye are invited, enter [...]. And when ye ask (his ladies) for anything you want, ask them from before a screen [...].[67]

It is notable that the verse talks about 'the houses', and not 'the house', of the Prophet. This arguably applies to the small dwellings attached to the mosque.[68]

Perhaps the most telling verse is that of *masjid al-ḍirār*.[69] Here, there is a clear reference to a mosque built by some hypocrites to be a base for their malevolent plans. They came to the Prophet and asked him to perform prayers at it so that it should be legitimized and blessed. As the Prophet was about to do so, he received a revelation telling him about the reality of this mosque and its refractory founders.

> And there are those [namely hypocrites] who put up a mosque by way of mischief and infidelity [...]. Never stand thou forth therein. There is a mosque whose foundation was laid from the first day on piety; it is more worthy of thy standing forth (for prayer) therein. In it are men

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[64] *Qur'ān* XXIV. 36.

[65] *Dhikr* is the mentioning and remembrance of the name and attributes of Allāh in a state of reverence and meditation. The same word is used to refer to the act of studying the religious sciences.

[66] *Qur'ān*, etc. *Qur'ān* II. 114; II. 187.

[67] *Qur'ān* XXXIII. 53.

[68] See also Ettinghausen, Grabar and Jenkins-Madina, p. 5.

[69] See Michael Lecker, *Muslims, Jews, and Pagans: Studies on Early Islamic Medina*, Islamic History and Civilization, 13 (Leiden: Brill, 1995), pp. 74-146.

Chapter 3: The 'house of the Prophet' or the 'mosque of the Prophet'?

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> who love to be purified; and Allāh loveth those who make themselves
> pure.[70]

This passage clearly states that there was a mosque frequently attended by the Prophet in his time. It also connotes that other mosques were erected in the time of the Prophet, and that the mosque was a religious and political nucleus of the community.

3.7.   Other mosques in the time of the Prophet

The reported existence of other mosques in the time of the Prophet – some of them even anteceded his emigration – makes it more plausible that the structure he built served as the central mosque for the Muslim community. On the authority of Anas b. Mālik,[71] Muṣʿab b. ʿUmayr,[72] the Prophet's envoy to Madīnah, was praying at the place where the mosque of the Prophet was later built. He was leading a group of Muhājirūn and Anṣār in prayers a year before the Prophet came to Madīnah. Muṣʿab is said to have been the first to conduct, at the Prophet's command, the Friday prayer in congregation.[73] On the authority of Yaḥya,[74] when Muṣʿab left Madīnah, the people were led by Asʿad

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[70] *Qurʾān* IX. 107-8. This verse is also taken by Fr. Buhl as evidence that a mosque should have been built in the time of the Prophet. Fr. Buhl, 'Art. al-Madina', in *The Encyclopaedia of Islam* , 1st edn III (1936), p. 90.

[71] On him see chapter 5.

[72] On Muṣʿab, see Ibn Saʿd, III, 107-13.

[73] Zayn al-Dīn Abū Bakr b. al-Ḥusayn al-Marāghī, *Taḥqīq al-Nuṣrah bi Talkhīṣ Maʿālim Dār al-Hijrah*, ed. by M. al-Aṣmaʿī (Medina: al-Maktaba al-ʿIlmiyyah, 1955), p. 42. See also Ibn Rustah, VII, p. 194.

[74] Yaḥya b. al-Ḥasan al-Ḥasanī al-ʿAlawī (d. 277/890) was an early *Ḥadīth* narrator. Al-Samhūdī mentioned that he was one of the first to write a history of Madīnah. Although his work did not survive, Yaḥya was amply quoted by later chroniclers of Madīnah. See al-Samhūdī, *Wafāʾ*, I, 352; F. Rosenthal, *A History of Muslim Historiography*, 2nd edn (Leiden: Brill, 1968), p. 475, n. 8.

b. Zurārah.[75] Al-Samhūdī relates that, on the authority of Ibn Abī Shabbah, Jābir said: 'We have spent two years at Madīnah, before the Prophet's advent, building mosques and performing [congregational] prayers.'[76] According to Ibn Hishām, however, the first to have built a mosque was ʿAmmār b. Yāsir.[77] Abū Bakr is also reported to have adopted a mosque 'for himself' at the courtyard of his house at Mecca before the Hijrah.[78] Al-Balādhurī tells us about another pre-Hijrah mosque where the Prophet led the first congregational Friday. According to him it belonged to Banū Sālim b. ʿAwf.[79] The Prophet is also said to have built, or according to other traditions founded,[80] the mosque of Qubāʾ while he was approaching Madīnah.[81] Even this one of Qubāʾ is said to have been preceded by an older one of Kulthūm b. al-Hadm who is said to have been leading the people of Qubāʾ at his *mirbad* which the Prophet later purchased and enlarged before leaving Qubāʾ.[82] Al-Samhūdī explains that the mosque of

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[75] Al-Marāghī, p. 42. Asʿad b. Zurārah (d. nine months after the Hijrah) was the chief of Banū al-Najjār and one of the first Anṣār to embrace Islam. See Ibn Saʿd, III, 562-5; Ibn Ḥajar, *Al-Iṣābah fī Tamyīz al-Ṣaḥābah*, 9 vols, (repr. Calcutta: [n. pub.], 1853), I, 32-3.

[76] Al-Samhūdī, *Wafāʾ*, I, 250.

[77] Ibn Hishām, II, 139. The same thing is mentioned by Ibn Rustah: p.195. On ʿAmmār, see Ibn Saʿd, III, 227-45.

[78] Al-Bukhārī, *ḥadīth* no. 476; Ibn Ḥajar, *Fatḥ*, II, 110; A. J. Wensinck, *A Handbook of Early Muhammadan Tradition: Alphabetically Arranged*, (Leiden: Brill, 1960), p. 155.

[79] Al-Balādhurī, p. 12. See also al-Ṭabarī, II, 394. Ibn Sayyid al-Nās mentioned that the mosque of Banū Sālim was located in a valley called Wādī Rānūnāʾ. Ibn Sayyid al-Nās, *ʿUyūn al-Athar Fī Funūn al-Maghāzī wal Shamāʾl wal Siyar*, ed. by M. al-ʿīd al-Khaṭrāwī and Muḥyī al-Dīn Mistū, 2 vols (Medina: Maktabat Dār al-Turāth, [n.d]), I, 313. On Wādī Rānūnāʾ, see Majd al-Dīn al-Fayrūzabādī, *Al-Maghānim al-Muṭābah fī Maʿālim Ṭābah*, ed. by Ḥamad al-Jāsir, Nuṣūṣ wa Abḥāth Jughrāfiyyah wa Tārīkhiyyah ʿan Jazīrat al-ʿArab, 11 (Riyadh: Manshūrāt Dār al-Yamāmah, 1969), p. 150.

[80] Ibn an-Najjār, p. 112.

[81] Al-Samhūdī, *Wafāʾ*, I, 252.

[82] Abū Muḥammad ʿAbd Allah b. ʿAbd al-Malik al-Murjānī, *Bahjat al-Nufūs wal-Asrār fī Tarikh Dār Hijrat al-Nabayī al-Mukhtār*, Maktabat al-Ḥaram al-Makkī, no. 13, p. 113; al-Marāghī, p. 18; al-Samhūdī, *Wafāʾ*, I, 256.

Qubāʾ was the first to be built for the Prophet and the whole Muslim community.[83]

Such narratives about earlier mosques seem to have confused some medieval historians. Al-Suhaylī (1114 – 1185), for example, in his commentary on the *Sīrah* of Ibn Hishām, wondered how the building of the mosque of Madīnah could be attributed to ʿAmmār who only participated in it, just as many other Companions. He explained that Ibn Hishām refers here to the mosque of Qubāʾ.[84] According to al-Suhaylī, Ibn Hishām attributed it to ʿAmmār because he was the one who suggested building it,[85] collecting stones for it and completing its building after the Prophet laid it out.[86] It is also of interest that during the time of the Prophet, a number of mosques were attributed to tribes and others were attributed to individuals.[87]

To conclude, many factors combine to support the view that the hypaethral structure built by the Prophet was indeed a mosque. Apart from the traditions that so refer to it, the nature of the actions it accommodated and the Quranic use of the word accord with its function as a mosque. There is thus no reason to search for an era to locate the existence of the

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[83] Al-Samhūdī, *Wafāʾ*, I, 250.

[84] Al-Suhaylī, *Al-Rawḍ al-Unuf fī Tafsīr 'al-Sīrah al-Nabawiyyah li Ibn Hishām'*, ed. by Magdī Manṣūr al-Shūrā, 2 vols (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyyah, [n.d]), II, 339.

[85] When the Prophet arrived at Qubāʾ, ʿAmmār said: 'The Prophet must take a place to shade him when he wakes up, and to pray at.' Then, he collected stones and built the mosque of Qubāʾ. Al-Samhūdī, *Wafāʾ*, I, 250.

[86] Al-Suhaylī, II, 339.

[87] An example for the former is the mosque of Banū Zurayq (Saʿīd b. Manṣūr [al-Aʿẓamī's ed.], *ḥadīth* no. 2956; al-Bukhārī, *ḥadīth* no.420), and for the latter is the mosque of al-Barāʾ b. ʿĀzib which was located at his house (al-Bukhārī, *ḥadīth* no. 425) and that of Ibn ʿAbbās. The Prophet is also reported to have founded a tribal mosque for Banū ʿAmr b. ʿAwf. See Ibn Sayyid al-Nās, I, 313. According to al-Balādhurī, they built it first and then the Prophet led them in prayers at it. Al-Balādhurī, p. 9.

first congregational mosque in Islam or the emergence of the concept of the mosque.[88] The assumption that the history we know about the mosque of the Prophet was invented *ex nihilo* is challenged by the fact that the sources did not claim that it was architecturally a grandiose achievement and thus wanted to attribute it to the Prophet. Nor did they state that the first mosque ever was created by the Prophet. As we have just seen, mosques used to be erected before the *Hijra* and the history of the mosque may be traceable to the time of Abraham.

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[88] See Johns, 'House of the Prophet', pp. 109-22; Grabar, *Formation*, p. 111.

Chapter 4: The mosque of the Prophet in his time – an embodiment of *Ḥadīth* regarding mosques

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4.1. Introduction

However simple the first mosque of the Prophet was, most scholars believe that it provided the prototype not only for later mosques but also for all types of Islamic houses of prayers.[1] Nonetheless, this primeval mosque has been mainly studied in a brief way and in an introductory context. There has always been an emphasis on its ephemeral material and simple form. Only few works have tried to indicate the different stages of building the mosque in the time of the Prophet on a chronological basis, and yet fewer amongst these have paid attention to the material, plan and constituents of the mosque in each of these stages.[2]

This might be due to the fact that for many, and particularly for western scholars, this hypaethral building was set originally to serve as the Prophet's abode and not his mosque.[3] Such slight treatment of the Prophet's mosque could equally be attributed to the traditional views about its evanescent character.[4] In spite of its acknowledged influence on the

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[1] See Hillenbrand, *Islamic Architecture*, p. 33; Hillenbrand, *Islamic Art and Architecture*, p. 25; Hillenbrand, 'Masdjid', *EI2*, VI, pp. 677-88 (p. 678); Pedersen, 'Masdjid', p. 648; Farīd Shāfiʿī, *al-ʿImārah al-ʿArabiyyah fī Miṣr ʿAṣr al-Wulāh* (Cairo: General Egyptian Organisation for Publishing and Distribution, 1970); A. Petersen, pp. 195- 6; ʿĀṣim M. Rizq, *Khanqawāt al-Ṣūfiyyah fī Miṣr*, 2 vols (Cairo: Madbūlī Press, 1994); Irwin, p. 58; M. Bloom, 'Mosque', *EQ*, III, 428.

[2] See Fikrī, *Madkhal*, 163-97; Ḥasan al-Pāshā, *Mawsūʿat al-ʿImārah wa al-Āthār wal Funūn al-Islāmiyah*, 5 vols (Beirut: Awrāq Sharqiyyah, 1999); M. Hazzāʿ al-Shihrī, *ʿImārat al-Masjid al-Nabawī; Mundhū Inshāʾihī Ḥattā Nihāyat al-ʿAṣr al-Mamlūkī*, (Cairo: Dār al-Qāhirah lil Kitāb, 2001).

[3] This is the main discussion of the previous chapter.

[4] These views were first put forward by Caetani and then adopted and expatiated by Creswell. Caetani, *Annali*, I, 374- 80; Creswell, *Early Muslim Architecture*, I. I, 6-16.

architecture of early congregational mosques,[5] in relation to the genesis of mosque architecture, it is considered by many scholars to be secondary in importance to the mosques built under the Umayyads and the ʾAbbāsids.[6]

It is of interest to note that, unlike what became the traditional concept of the mosque, that of the Prophet was void of any minaret, dome, decorated façade, concave prayer niche, or elevated pulpit. Yet, as we shall see, the mosque of the Prophet was not such a primitive structure when related to its geomorphological and topographical context.

Another, and possibly a more important, reason for the mosque of the Prophet to have been dealt with in a relatively superficial way is that Islamic architecture has been usually studied from a cultural, rather than a religious, perspective. For the present study, a close consideration of the Prophet's mosque is essential. As already argued, a mosque of the Prophet would, by definition, represent an embodiment of his *Ḥadīth* about mosques.

Study of the mosque of the Prophet, and attempts to reconstruct it, have been *in toto* based on literary evidence, for the original building was overwritten by many later rebuildings. In addition, the whole area is now occupied by the huge and sacred modern building of the mosque of the Prophet and thus denied to archaeology 'even were it to be permitted'.[7]

Study of the Prophet's mosque is challenged by the nature of the literary sources which include much anecdotal, hagiographic, and sometimes topological, detail.[8] While, at a stroke, this is a problem for source criticism, the copiousness of the writings by traditionists, historians, geographers, travellers and pilgrims provides scope for cross-checking and incidental

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[5] Rivoira, p. 1.

[6] As an example, see Briggs, *Muhammadan Architecture*, p. 28.

[7] See Johns, 'Archaeology', p. 433.

[8] See Ettinghausen, Grabar and Jenkens-Madina, pp. 5-6; Antun, pp. 87-8.

detail which could, if critically dealt with, represent a good source of information.

The aim in this chapter is to show how the sources could be approached to produce a more convincing reconstruction of the mosque of the Prophet. The early phase of the mosque, in particular, has always been superficially dealt with. Here, we will apply critical treatment to the sources with the aim of exploring what the mosque looked like in this period.

In fact, some of those who wrote about Madīnah and its mosque seem to have applied an accepted methodology. A good example is al-Samhūdī (844/1440-911/1506) who was born in Cairo and, later, moved to Madīnah, settled there and wrote his well-known *Wafāʾ al-Wafa bī Akhbār Dār al-Muṣṭafā (Doing Justice with the Chronicles of the Home City of the Prophet)*.[9] This book is an abridged version of a larger one called *Iqtifāʾ al-Wafa bī Akhbār Dār al-Muṣṭafā* which was burned as a result of the fire of 886/1481 which destroyed many parts of the mosque of the Prophet.[10] Al-Samhūdī also wrote a yet-more abridged version of his book and called it: *Khulāṣat al-Wafa bī Akhbār Dār al-Muṣṭafā*.[11] He was one of the few scholars who paid attention to the different building phases of the mosque. The significance of al-Samhūdī's work is due not only to the fact that he collected a large number of older writings whose originals did not survive, but also to the somewhat critical treatment that he applied to them. According to Lecker, 'al-Samhūdī is an outstanding scholar; he not only quotes his predecessors, but often also adds his own illuminating observations and critical remarks.'[12] He gauged what he believed to be the

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[9] More on al-Samhūdī and his book is discussed in chapter 2. See also See C.E. Bosworth, 'al-Samhūdī', in *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd edn, VIII (1995), p. 1043

[10] Fikrī, *Madkhal*, p. 168; Antun, p. 88.

[11] Ed. by M. M. al-Jaknī, 2 vols (Medina: Ḥabīb M. Aḥmad, 1997).

[12] Lecker, *Muslims, Jews and Pagans*, p. xii.

borders of the original building of the Prophet,[13] and compared the results of his 'archaeological' investigations to those of earlier scholars like Ibn Zabālah, Ibn al-Najjār (d. 643/1245), al-Maṭarī (d. 741/1340) and al-Marāghī (d. 816/1413).

It may also add to our optimism that the later designers and builders were reputedly always keen to place any new structure in the same position as its predecessor. This tradition can, according to al-Samhūdī, be traced back to the time of ʿUthmān b. ʿAffān, the first to use stones in building the mosque. On the authority of Khārijah b. Zayd,[14] the task of positioning the new stone columns, in the time of ʿUthmān in the same place where the old trunks of palm-trees were standing, was assigned to the former's father Zayd b. Thābit (who had been fostered at the adjacent house of the Prophet and under his custody).[15]

This could help us determine the positions of the main elements of the Prophet's building. According to Sauvaget, whenever the mosque was to be renewed or expanded, there was always a desire to retain the old form.[16]

4.2. Madīnah in pre- and early Islamic times

Madīnah is located in the eastern part of Hijāz, between central Arabia where building with *labin*, 'mud brick or unbaked brick' is traditional, and the highlands of western Hijāz where the traditional building material is stone. (In case of Madīnah, stone was brought from the vast lava-fields outside the town.) This would make it plausible to have had a vernacular building tradition that

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[13] Al-Samhūdī, *Wafāʾ*, II, 689.

[14] Khārijah (d. 99-100/717-718) was the son of Zayd b. Thābit. He was one of the seven, or ten, chief *faqīhs* of Madīnah. See Ibn Saʿd, VII, 158-9; Ibn Khallikān, *Wafayāt al-Aʿyān wa Anbāʾ Abnāʾ al-Zamān*, ed. by Iḥsān ʿAbbās, 8 vols (Beirut: Dār Ṣādir, [1969-94 (?)]), II, 223; Veccia Vaglieri, 'Ḥafṣa', p. 65; Welch, pp. 404-5.

[15] Al-Samhūdī, *Wafāʾ*, II, 505.

[16] Sauvaget, *La Mosquée Omeyyade de Médine*, pp. 117-8, 120. See also Fikrī, *Madkhal*, p. 187.

employed both mud brick and stone. It is noted that such a way of building is still in practice to the present day.[17] Arabia in general,[18] and Madīnah in particular, had many *uṭum* and fortresses in pre- and early Islam.[19] These *uṭum* or *aṭām* were usually built near springs and other water resources which were mainly located on the trade roads. Mostly, they were multi-tiered quadrangular structures including open yards (*riḥāb*), enclosed by walls and had fortified entrances. The *uṭum* were frequently built with stone blocks, dressed stones and bricks. Their walls were mainly coated with stucco and adorned with various images and inscriptions. Sometimes, these *uṭum* were populated by tribes and Arab families that were responsible for guarding the caravan roads, in other cases they were used as trade centres, depositories of military provisions and hoards, watchtowers or meeting places.[20] According to al-Pāshā, there were 198 of these *uṭum* and fortresses at Madīnah in the time of the Prophet. The ruins of some of them have survived to the present.[21] The last to be built was an *uṭum* called Muʿarraḍ which the Prophet allowed Banū Sāʿidah

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[17] See G. R.D. King, *The Traditional Architecture of Saudi Arabia* (London, 1998); King, 'Creswell's Appreciation of Arabian Architecture', in *Muqarnas* 8 (1991), 94-102 (p. 99); King, 'Building Methods and Materials in Western Saudi Arabia', in *Proceedings of the Seminar for Arabian Studies*, 14 (1989), pp. 71-78. See also Antun, pp. 113-5.

[18] Sigrid Hunke, *Allahs Sonne über dem Abendland*, trans. by Fuʾād Ḥasanīn, (Cairo: Dār al-ʿĀlam al-ʿAraī, [n.d]), p. 349.

[19] Marco Schöller, 'Medina' in the *Encyclopaedia of the Qurʾān*, III (2003), pp. 367-71 (pp. 367-8). For more about Madīnah's architectural heritage in pre- and early Islam, see W. M. Watt, 'Al-Madīnah' in *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd edn, V (1986), pp. 994-8; Fahd al-Harigi, 'The Relationship Between the Prophets' Mosque and the Physical Environment: al-Medina, Saudi Arabia', (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Edinburgh, 1989), pp. 6-11.

[20] See Shāfiʿī, *ʿImārah ʿArabiyyah*, p. 63; H. al-Pāshā, *Madkhal ilā al-Athār al-Islāmiyyah*, (Dār al-Nahḍah al-ʿArabiyyah, 1990), pp.17- 8.

[21] Al-Pāshā, *Madkhal*, pp. 16-8. See also King, 'Creswell's appreciation', pp. 98- 9; A. ʿUbayd Madanī, 'Uṭūm al Madinah al-Munawwarah', *Mijallat Kuliyyat al-Ādāb bī Jamiʿat al-Riyadh*, III, pp. 217-24; ʿAbd al-Quddūs al-Anṣārī, *Athār al-Madīnahh al-Munawwara* (Medina, 1973), pp. 51ff, 72-7.

to complete after he migrated to Madīnah.[22] Al-Fayrūzabādī also told us about Uṭum al-Ḍaḥyān which survived to his time (729-823/1329-1415).[23]

4.3. History

Repeated in many collections of *Ḥadīth*, there is a somewhat long tradition about the story of building the Prophet's mosque:

> Narrated Anas b. Mālik: When the Prophet arrived at Madīnah he alighted at ʿAwālī al-Madīnah amongst a tribe called Banū ʿAmr b. ʿAwf. He stayed there for fourteen nights. Then he sent for Banī al-Najjār and they came armed with their swords. As if I am looking [just now] while the Prophet was on his mount with Abū Bakr riding behind him and all Banū al-Najjār around him until he dismounted at the courtyard of Abū Ayyūb's house. [Formerly], the Prophet loved to pray wherever the time for a prayer was due, even at sheep-folds. Later on, he ordered that a mosque should be built and sent for some people of Banū al-Najjār and said, 'O Banū al-Najjār, ask me a price of this [walled] piece of land of yours. They replied: 'No, by Allāh. We do not ask for its price except from Allāh' [...].[24]

After preparing the site,[25] the Companions brought stones while reciting some poetic verses. The Prophet loved to partake and kept on saying: 'There is no goodness except that of the Hereafter! O Allāh! I beg you to forgive the *Anṣār*, 'Muslim community of Madīnah' and the *Muhājirūn*, 'Muslim emigrants from Mecca'.'[26] According to Abū Saʿīd al-Khudrī, the Companions were carrying one mud brick at a time while ʿAmmār, one of

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[22] Al-Samhudi, *Wafāʾ*, I, 208-9.

[23] *Maghānim*, p. 457.

[24] Al-Bukhārī, *ḥadīth* no. 428; Khan's tranl. *ḥadīth* no. 428; Muslim, *ḥadīth* no. 1173; Abū Dāwūd, *ḥadīth* no. 453. See also al-Ṭabarī, II, 397; al-Dhahabī, *Al-Sīrah al-Nabawiyyah*, ed. by Ḥusām al-Din al-Qudsī (Beirut Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyyah, [1927 (?)]), pp. 232-3; al-Suhaylī, II, 336; Ibn Kathīr, IV, 530-1; Wensinck, p. 154; Juynboll, *Canonical Ḥadīth*, p. 487.

[25] See al-Nawawī, *Sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, V, 7; al-Marāghī, p. 42.

[26] Al-Bukhārī, *ḥadīth* no. 428; Muslim, *ḥadīth* no. 1173; Ibn Hishām, II, 138; al-Suhaylī, II, 337.

the closest comrades to the Prophet, was carrying two. The Prophet saw him and removed the dust that was on ʿAmmār's body and said: 'May Allāh be Merciful to ʿAmmār'.[27] The Prophet stayed at the house of Abū Ayyūb, an Anṣārī Companion, until he built his houses and mosque.[28] On the authority of Umm Salamah, one of the Prophet's wives, when the Prophet was building his mosque at Mirbad al-Tamr, he brought the *labin*, 'unbaked brick', and all that would be needed near to him, and took off his *ridāʾ* 'the upper part of his clothes' [as a sign of getting ready for work]. When the first *Muhājirūn* and *Anṣar* saw that, they likewise took off theirs and began working and saying *rajz*, 'poem'.[29] Ibn Kathīr added that the Prophet was working with his Companions until his chest was covered in dust.[30]

4.4. Site

On the authority of Anas b. Mālik, the land whereon the Prophet ordered his mosque to be built was occupied with *gharqad*, 'boxthorn', *khirab*, 'dilapidated structures', palm trees, other trees, and pre-Islamic graves. The Prophet ordered the graves to be dug up, the unlevelled land to be levelled and the date-palm trees to be cut down.[31] Formerly used as a drying-floor for dates, this piece of land had been known as Mirbad al-Tamr. It was said to have been owned by two orphans, Sahl and Suhayl, who were from Banū al-Najjār and under the guardianship of a Companion from Anṣar called Muʿādh b. ʿAfrāʾ.[32]

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[27] Al-Bukhārī, *ḥadīth* no. 447; Ibn Hishām, II, 138. See also Maʾmūn M. Yāssīn, *Al-Riḥlah Ilā al-Madīnah al-Munawwarah*, ([Damascus (?)]: [n. pub], 1987), pp. 118-20.

[28] Al-Ṭabarī, II, 296; Ibn Rustah, 64.

[29] Ibn Rustah, pp.64-5, Ibn Zabālah, p. 75; al-Diyārbakrī, I, 344.

[30] Ibn Kathīr, IV, p. 532.

[31] Al-Bukhārī, *ḥadīth* no. 428; Muslim, *ḥadīth* no. 1173; Abū Dāwūd, *ḥadīth* no. 453; al-Ṭabarī, II, 397; Ibn Ḥajar, *Fatḥ*, II, 71-2; Ibn Rajab, III, 211; Ibn Kathīr, IV, 531; Ibn Sayyid, al-Nās, I, 315; al-Suhaylī, II, 337; Ibn al-Najjār, p. 146; al-Marāghī, p. 42.

[32] *The History of aṭ-Ṭabarī*, trans. by M. V. McDonald, annotated by W. Montgomery Watt (New York: State University of New York Press, 1987), VII, 5-6. See also Ibn Hishām, II, 137-8; al-

As already noted (see 4.3), the Prophet said to Banū al-Najjār, while offering a price for their piece of land to build his mosque: 'O Banī al-Najjār! Ask me a price for *ḥāʾiṭikum hādhā*, 'this walled piece of land of yours'. The word '*ḥāʾiṭikum*' which the Prophet uses in this *ḥadīth* means a wall or a walled garden.[33] Does this mean that the whole area of the *mirbad* was enclosed by a wall? According to historians, this place had already been partially occupied by the mosque of Asʿad b. Zurārah.[34] On the authority of al-Nawwār bt. Mālik: 'the Prophet first prayed at this mosque [namely the mosque of Asʿad for a while], and [later on] he built it, so it became his mosque today.'[35] Al-Balādhurī explained that the Prophet used to pray at the mosque of Asʿad b. Zurārah, and then he asked Asʿad to sell him the adjacent *mirbad*, presumably to build a larger mosque for the new bigger Muslim community which had been composed of the Muhājirūn and the Anṣār.[36] We do not have an adequate description of Asʿad's mosque, but a number of scholars argue that its form and material should not have been much different from those mosques which were built at Madīnah before the Prophet's arrival (see 3.7). According to Rifʿat and Fikrī,[37] these were simply open areas demarcated by stones to denote their sanctity. Traditions tell more. According to Ibn Saʿd (d. 230/845), it was '*jidāran mujaddaran*'. The word '*mujaddaran*' is either derived from the verb *jadara*, meaning *ḥawwaṭa*, 'to enclose', or from the verb *ijtadara* which means 'to build'.[38] Ibn

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Suhaylī, II, 336. Some said the two orphans were under the custody of Asʿad b. Zurārah. See al-Balādhurī, p. 12; al-Samhūdī, *Wafāʾ*, I, 322; Ibn al-Qayyim, III, 62.

[33] Ibn Rajab, III, 206-7.

[34] The accounts of these historians are mentioned by al-Samhūdī, *Wafāʾ*, I, 325-26.

[35] Al-Samhūdī, *Wafāʾ*, I, p. 325.

[36] Al-Balādhurī, p. 12. See also Ibn Sayyid al-Nās, I, 316.

[37] Ibrāhīm Rifʿat, *Mirʾāt al-Ḥaramayn: al-Riḥlāt al-Ḥijāziyyah wal Ḥajj wa Mashāʾiruhū al-Dīniyyah*, 2 vols (Cairo: Maṭbaʿat Dār al-Kutub al- Miṣriyyah, 1925), I, 461; Fikrī, *Madkhal*, p. 169.

[38] Ibn Manẓūr, I, 566.

Saʿd's use of the word 'jidāran' implies that it was a structural wall and not simply a shelter of wood and twigs or even aligned stone pieces as suggested by al-Shihrī.[39] Ibn Saʿd added that this mosque, which was orientated towards Bayt al-Maqdis, had no roof and that it was 'built' by Asʿad to conduct the congregational prayers and the Friday sermons before the Prophet came to Madīnah.[40]

Did the Prophet's selection of the mirbad to be the site of his mosque imply any preferences? Considering this selection, Johns argued a relation between the mosque and the celebration of the fruit of this land, a convention which he attributes to pre-Islamic religions.[41] To consider this, we need to know what mirbad means. The meanings given by Arabic lexicons include: a pen for livestock, a threshing-floor, and a place where dates are dried by the sun. In fact all these can be pared back to one origin, that is a piece of wood or a rod preventing camels or the like to go outside.[42] The word 'mirbad' accordingly, can be defined as an enclosed piece of land; whether this mirbad is a pen, a threshing-floor or a space behind the house is judged by a particularizing genitive, such like mirbad al-tamr, 'the mirbad of the dates' or the mirbad al-ghanam, 'the mirbad of the sheep'. The word 'mirbad' is derived from the verb 'rabad' which means 'to confine'. It is a mirbad for camels as they are confined in it as it is a mirbad for dates, as they are kept in it to be dried.[43] Quoting Lane, who cited Abū ʿUbayd al-Qāsim, Johns says that 'both mirbad and jarīn are the Ḥijāzī equivalents for the andar of Syria and the baydar of Iraq. The primary meaning of andar, baydar and jarīn is a threshing-floor for wheat and other

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[39] Al-Shihrī, ʿImārat al-Masjid al-Nabawī, p. 27.

[40] Ibn Saʿd, I, 205.

[41] Johns, 'House of the Prophet', pp. 81-5.

[42] Ibn Manẓūr, III, 1555-56.

[43] Abu al-Qāsim Jārallah al-Zamakhsharī, Asās al-Balāghah, ed. by Muhammad B. ʿUyūn al-Sūd, 2 vols (Beirut, Dar al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyya, 1998) I, 329.

grains.' Johns, then, comes to the conclusion that there should be a tentative link between the *mirbad* and the threshing-floor. Indeed this link, as explained by Arabic dictionaries, is not for the same use of *mirbad* and *baydar*, for example. It might be ascribed to the form and openness of each. The passage in *Lisān al-ʿArab* in which these terms are mentioned together can be translated as follows:

> Abū ʿUbayd said; *mirbad* is also the place of dates, like *jarīn*. [While] *mirbad* and *jarīn* is familiar for the Ḥijāzis, the *andar* is familiar for the Syrians. Al-Jawharī said that: 'the place where dates are dried is called *mirbad* by the people of Madīnah, and it is the *misṭaḥ* and *jarīn* for the people of Najd. The *mirbad* for dates is like the *baydar* for wheat.'[44]

The last sentence is of special significance for this discussion; it states that the similarity between *mirbad* and *jarīn* lies in the fact that both are levelled pieces of land used for keeping two different kinds of crops. While the former is for dates, the latter is for wheat. There is nothing in this passage to say that *mirbad* is for wheat. Rather, it says that *misṭaḥ*, *andar* and *jarīn* could be used to refer to *mirbad*, or rather a place for drying dates, according to other Arab dialects. Moreover, the *mirbad* of Sahl and Suhayl where the Prophet built his mosque was expressly defined by al-Samhūdī as a place where dates were to be dried.[45]

Johns further argues, based on al-Bukhārī and Wensinck, that the Prophet is said to have used to pray in *marābid* before his mosque was built. The word used in al-Bukhārī and other Ḥadīth collections is not *marābid* but *marābiḍ* which means sheep-folds (see 5.6).

Arguably, the site of the *mirbad* was chosen simply because it was a reasonably level piece of land that would need less labour to prepare, especially that it was partially occupied by an already-existing mosque. The

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[44] Ibn Manẓūr, p. 1556.

[45] Samhūdī, *Wafāʾ*, I, 324.

same assumption was noted by Johns himself: '*marābid* [plural of *mirbad*] were particularly well-suited as places of prayer because, they had clean, level floors.'[46] Nonetheless, Johns, while advancing a further step in his argument, has forced a relation between *mirbad* and the high places where threshing-floors are always situated to catch the breeze. More to the point, he advanced with that: 'high places were often sacred sites in ancient Semitic religion.'[47] Yet, the *mirbad* of Sahl and Suhayl was not a high place as it contained what was called by Ibn Saʿd as '*māʾ mustanjal*',[48] which means the water that exudes from the earth and forms a swamp. This implies that it could not have been a high place.[49] It is true that Madīnah is a relatively high place [elevation 608 m (1,995 ft)], but the spot on which the mosque was built was not higher than the vicinity.

4.5. Stages of building the mosque

There is historical evidence that the mosque of the Prophet underwent a number of expansions in his lifetime and under his supervision, and that new elements were added to it whenever there was a need to do so. Seemingly conflicting accounts about the mosque's size, form and material could be reconciled (understood) in this context, as such accounts refer to constructional phases in different periods during the life of the Prophet.

Al-Samhūdī surmised that the dimensions of the mosque changed in the lifetime of the Prophet. In the first stage, he took some of the *mirbad*.

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[46] Johns, 'House of the Prophet', p. 82.

[47] Ibid.

[48] Ibn Saʿd, I, p. 205.

[49] I have been kindly told by Dr Andrew Marsham that springs often occur on high places. Examples are Lansdown (above Bath in England) and the wells of Dee (on the top of mountain in the Cairngorms).

The Prophet later took another area to expand it.[50] Considering the reports about Abū Hurayrah participating in building the mosque, Ibn Rajab and al-Samhūdī argued that this must have been the second building of the mosque because it was late when Abū Hurayrah embraced Islam.[51]

Based on his reading of earlier sources, al-Samhūdī concluded that the Prophet built his mosque twice. When he first came to Madīnah, he built it on an area of less than 100×100 cubits. The second time was when he conquered Khaybar (*wa zāda ʿalayhī mithlahū fil dūr*).[52] Many scholars regard the narratives which mention different measures and materials of the mosque as divergent. Modern scholars usually adopt the measures mentioned by one account and dismiss the others.[53] A close look at *Ḥadīth* and historical accounts may help us place the different phases of the mosque in chronological order.

While the successive modifications and rebuildings in the time of the Prophet would reflect a flexible attitude, for this study it will be particularly useful to determine the final form which the mosque had taken after the expansion of 7/628 (see figures 1-5).

4.5.1.   Early stages of building the mosque

First, the area was prepared; graves were exhumed, ruins were levelled to earth and trees were cut,[54] ponds of stagnant water were emptied and land

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[50] Al-Samhūdī, *Khulāṣat al-Wafā bī Akhbār Dār al-Muṣṭafā*, ed. by M. M al-Jaknī, 2 vols (Medina: Ḥabīb M. Aḥmad, 1997), p. 209. On other grounds for such theory about the multiple rebuildings of the mosque in the time of the Prophet, see Ibn Rajab, III, 302-3.

[51] Al-Samhūdī, *Wafāʾ*, I, 337-8; Ibn Rajab, III, 307-8.

[52] Ibn Zabālah, p. 78; Ibn Rustah, p. 64; Ibn al-Najjār, p. 147; al-Marāghī, p. 44; Al-Samhūdī, *Wafāʾ*, I, 338.

[53] A good example is Sūʿād Māhir, *Masājid Miṣr wa Awliyāʾuha al-Ṣāliḥūn*, 5 vols (Cairo: al-Majlis al-Aʿlā lil Shuʾūn al-Islāmiyyah, 1971), I, 36; see also Creswell, *Early Muslim Architecture*, I. I, 7-8.

[54] Al-Bukhārī, *ḥadīth* no. 428; Ibn al-Najjār, p. 146.

was made even.[55] Then, the work began by bringing stones from the adjacent hills of Madīnah and moulding *labin* 'unbaked brick' in a place called Baqīʿ al-Khabkhabah.[56] The smaller pre-exiting mosque of Asʿad b. Zurārah was seemingly merged in the new mosque. The first mosque of the Prophet was mainly an enclosure open to the sky. The *qiblah* was first set towards Bayt al-Maqdis.[57]

According to *Ḥadīth*, the Prophet ordered the cut palm-trees to be arranged in rows at, or towards, the *qiblah* of the mosque. Al-Samhūdī argued that the trunks of these palm-trees were arranged towards the *qiblah* so that a shelter should rest upon them.[58] But, if this is right, why did the Companions later ask for the mosque to be roofed? The phrase in the *ḥadīth* reads: 'faṣaffū al-nakhla qiblat al-masjid'. It could be translated as: 'they put the [cut] palm-trees in rows "towards" the *qiblah* of the mosque'. If so, this would mean, as suggested by al-Samhūdī and agreed by almost all modern scholars, that the palm trees were set in rows at the *qiblah* area, namely in the mosque front, so as to support the roof of a simple shelter (see figure 5). Yet, this reading would leave the previous question unanswered unless we assume that the shelter was awkwardly made and insufficient to protect the people from the sun heat, and this is why they, later on, asked the Prophet to roof it (in a better way). Otherwise, it would mean that a greater area of the mosque was later on roofed, as according to many accounts when the Muslims increased in numbers they asked the Prophet to roof the mosque. And so he did.[59] Nonetheless, according to

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[55] Ibn Saʿd, I, 205; al-Diyārbakrī, I, 343.

[56] Al-Samhūdī, *Wafāʾ*, I, 334. According to other historians, this place is called Baqīʿ al-Khabjabah, a place in the outskirts of Madīnah near al-Manāṣiʿ. See Ibn Zabālah, p. 74; al-Fayrūzabādī, *Maghānim*, pp. 63-4.

[57] Ibn Saʿd, I, 206; Ibn al-Qayyim, III, 63.

[58] Al-Samhūdī, *Wafāʾ*, I, 327.

[59] See Ibn Zabālah, p. 77; Ibn al-Najjār, p. 147.

most accounts, the mosque as first built did not have a shelter of any kind.

The same phrase in the above *ḥadīth* could rather be translated: 'they put the [cut] palm trees 'as' the *qiblah* of the mosque.' This would then mean that they were used to make up what was later known as the *qiblah* wall. It is also noteworthy that being put 'towards' the *qiblah* does not conflict with the possibility that these trunks could have formed the *qiblah* wall.

The following phrase of the same *ḥadīth* reads: '*wa jaʿalū ʿiḍadatayhī al-ḥijārah*', 'they made 'its' two *ʿiḍādah* of stone'. According to Ibn Manẓūr, the word, *ʿiḍādah* can mean the side (of a house), or the jamb of a door. *ʿAḍud al-binā'* is what is put around a building or anything by which it is tightened and buttressed.[60] Accordingly, if the cut palm-trees were forming the piers of a shelter, *ʿiḍadatayhī* could refer to the two side walls whose base were made of stone or the two jambs of its door. While the latter explanation was adopted by scholars such as al-Nawawī,[61] the word '*ʿiḍadatayhī*' refers to a 'singular' possessive adjective and it is known that the mosque had three doors in the time of the Prophet. Could it be taken to refer to the 'main' entrance? Equally, if the palm trunks formed the *qiblah* wall, the word '*ʿiḍadatayhī*' would be taken to represent two buttresses of stone rubble which flanked and strengthened the '*qiblah* wall' which was presumably composed of compact row of palm trunks. If such struts were made of monolithic stones, they should have survived until later times and must have been seen and described by the writers of the Prophet's biography.

What makes both interpretations equally plausible is that, according to Arabic grammar, the possessive adjective, 'its' can, here, refer to either

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[60] Ibn Manẓūr, IV, 2983-4.

[61] Al-Nawawī, *Sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, V, 8.

the cut palm-trees or the mosque proper. Yet, considering the sense of the Arabic language, the suffix *hī* is more likely to refer to the first (main) subject, here the cut-palm trees. According to Ibn al-Najjār,[62] the Prophet commanded: '*ṣuffū al-nakhala qiblatan lahū, wajʿalaū ʿiḍādatayhī ḥijārah*'.[63] This could be translated, on firmer ground, as 'arrange the cut palm trees 'as' its *qiblah*'.[64] Quṭb al-Dīn (d. 988/1580) says: '*wa jaʿalū sāriayatī al-masjid min al ḥijārah wa banaū bāqīhī min al-labin*', 'they made the two pillars of the mosque of stone and they made the rest of it of *labin*'.[65]

Al-Marāghī (d. 816/1413) relates, on the authority of Ibn Zabālah, that the mosque at first had no roof, and then the Muslim congregation complained to the Prophet of the hot weather. [When he agreed,] they built its columns with splits of palm trunks.[66] The Prophet built a wall and made the columns, *shiqqan shiqqa*, 'composed of palm splits', and made a *raḥbah*, 'wide yard' in the middle of his mosque.[67] According to al-Marāghī, it is very likely that this was the first form of the mosque in the time of the Prophet.[68] However, a careful look at the account of Ibn Zabālah, who lived six

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[62] Ibn al-Najjār (b. 578/1182) is the author of *Al-Durrah al-Thamīnah fī Tārīkh al-Madīnah*. For more on him see C. E. Farah, 'Ibn al-Najjār', in *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd edn, III (1971), pp. 896-7.

[63] Ibn al-Najjār, p. 146

[64] The word *qiblah*, here, could also refer to the *qiblah* wall or the *qiblah* area which could have been formed of a roofed area.

[65] Quṭb al-Dīn al-Ḥanafī, *Tārīkh al-Madīnah*, ed. by M. Zeinhum M. ʿAzab (Cairo: Maktabat al-Thaqāfah al-Dīniyyah, [1998 (?)]), p. 93. 'Column' is the only meaning mentioned by Ibn Manẓūr for the word *sāriyah*. *Lisān*, III, 2004. See also al-Zamakhsharī, *Asās al-Balāghah*, ed. by M. Bāsil ʿUyūn al-Sūd, 2 vols (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyyah, 1998), I, 453; Muḥammad b. Abī Bakr al-Rāzī, *Mukhtār al-Ṣiḥāḥ*, ed. by Dāʾirat al-Maʿājim fī Maktbat Lubnān, rev. edn (Beirut: Maktabat Lubnān, 1989), p. 261.

[66] Al-Marāghī, p. 44

[67] Al-Marāghī, p. 44. Ibn al-Najjār mentioned a *ḥadīth* of the same meaning. Ibn al-Najjār, p. 147.

[68] Al-Marāghī, p. 45.

centuries before al-Marāghī and on whose statement the latter built his conclusion, implies that this was not a description the first phase of the mosque. Ibn Zabālah said: '[...] and made a *raḥbah*, 'wide yard' in the middle of his mosque.'[69] Being 'in the middle' would thus mean that it was flanked, from at least two sides, by *ẓullahs*, 'shaded places.' It is traditionally known that it was not until AH 2 that the mosque had two *ẓullahs*, one in the south and the other in the north, after changing the *qiblah*.

According to tradition,[70] the [walls of the] mosque of the Prophet was first built using a technique called *al-ṣāmit*. It was a *labinah*, 'one brick' above the other. As the Muslims increased in number, the Prophet rebuilt it using another technique, called *al-saʿīdah*. This made the thickness of the wall composed of one brick and a half. As the size of the congregation increased further, they asked the Prophet to enlarge it and he agreed. This time he built it in a way called (*al-dhakar wal unthā*), that is making the thickness of the wall courses of two (pairs of) transverse bricks (see figure 10). They made the base courses (*asāsahū*) of stone to the height of three cubits. After this latter expansion, the mosque was a square 100 cubits per side.[71] Then the weather became exceedingly hot. So, they asked the Prophet to roof it and the Prophet agreed. The columns, which were made of palm stems, were stretched across with *ʿawāriḍ*, 'beams' [covered] with thatches [composed of] *khaṣaf*, 'fronds'[72] and *idhkar*, 'an aromatic herb which grows in the desert of Madīnah'.[73] They lived in it and when it was raining, they got wet, so they asked the Prophet to treat it with mud, but he

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[69] Ibn Zabālah, p.79; See also Ibn al-Najjār, p. 147.

[70] Ibn Zabālah, p. 77; Ibn al-Najjār, p. 147; al-Samhūdī, *Wafāʾ*, I, 335-36; Shams al-Dīn al-Sakhāwī, *Al-Tuḥfah al-Laṭīfah fī Tārīkh al-Madīnah al-Sharīfah*, 3 vols (Cairo: Asʿad Ṭarabzūnī al-Ḥusaynī, 1979), I, 45; Quṭb al-Dīn, p. 93; al-Diyārbakrī, I, 346.

[71] According to Jaʿfar's account, it was not roofed. Ibn Zabālah, p. 77.

[72] Ibn Manẓūr, II, 1175.

[73] Ibn Manẓūr, III, 1490-1.

disagreed and said: 'No, I want it [in the form of] *ʿarīsh*, 'shelter or arbour', as that of Moses.'[74] The mosque retained this form until the Prophet died. Before it was roofed, the wall of the mosque was as high as an upright [medium-built] man.[75]

It may well have been that all the above-mentioned stages of building occurred in a relatively short period. Such a statement as: 'when it became hotter' and 'when it rained' may even imply that these were the first weather extremes to have been experienced after the mosque was built.

According to other accounts, the mosque was first made in the form of *ʿarīsh*. On the authority of Ibn ʿĀʾidh, the Prophet prayed in the mosque while it was in the form of *ʿarīsh* for twelve days, and then he built and roofed it.[76] Ibn Zabālah recounts, on the authority of Anas b. Mālik, that the mosque, when it was first built by the Prophet, was built of *jarīd*, 'stalks of palm-leaves' and it was not until the year 4/625 that it was built with *labin*.[77] Al-Samhūdī, however, commented that this is either not authentic or misinterpreted as it collides with what is commonly agreed.[78] According to sound *ḥadīths*, stone and *labin* were used in the first building of the mosque.

There were other practical reasons to compel the use of stone for the first building of the mosque. On the authority of Ibn Saʿd, the base

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[74] See M. J. Kister, '"A Booth Like the Booth of Moses...": A Study of an Early Ḥadīth', in *Bulletin of the Society of Oriental and African Studies*, 25 (1962), 150-155. See also Johns, 'House of the Prophet', p. 82. According to the narration of Jaʿfar, the Companions were permitted to cover the roof with mud. Al-Samhūdī, *Wafāʾ*, I, 335.

[75] Ibn Zabālah, p. 77; Ibn al-Najjār, p. 147; al-Samhūdī, *Wafāʾ*, I, 335-36; al-Sakhāwī, *Tuḥfah*, I, 45; Quṭb al-Dīn, p. 93; al-Diyārbakrī, I, 346.

[76] Al-Samhūdī, *Wafāʾ*, I, 327. This could designate the mosque of Asʿad where the Prophet was praying for the first days after he came to Madīnah.

[77] Ibn Zabālah, p.79

[78] Al-Samhūdī, *Wafāʾ*, I, 327.

courses were made of stone to the height of three cubits and the rest of the walls were made of *labin*.[79] This seems logical; the use of stone in the lower part of the wall was indispensible in a site where water was standing.[80] Al-Samhūdī mentioned that the eastern wall of the mosque was made thicker so as to stand firm against floods.[81] This account of al-Samhūdī may be pertinent to the architectural works which were made at the mosque of the Prophet in the time of the ʿAbbāsid Caliph al-Mahdī (158-68/775–85), but in either case this would mean that the area of the mosque was vulnerable to inundation or episodes of ponding in wet weather.[82] The use of stone implies that the Prophet adopted a responsive attitude towards the existing geological and climatic conditions of the mosque site.

Al-Shihrī, one of the few scholars to have paid close attention to the architecture of the mosque over its long history, has observed three stages of construction in this early stage. This would imply a building that was repeatedly modified, strengthened and improved. Al-Shihrī argues that the mosque underwent these three stages during a period of seven months especially because the number of prayers was burgeoning. His hypothesis is seconded by the historical accounts which state that the Prophet stayed in the house of Abū Ayyūb for seven months until his mosque and houses were built.[83] These stages are:

1. In the first stage, the mosque was a rectangle 63 X 54.33 cubits.[84] The

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[79] Ibn Saʿd, I, 206.

[80] Al-Shihrī, *ʿImārat al-Masjid al-Nabawī*, p. 35.

[81] Al-Samhūdī, *Wafāʾ*, II, 683.

[82] See Ibn Saʿd, I, 205; al-Diyārbakrī, I, 343; al-Shihrī, *ʿImārat al-Masjid al-Nabawī*, p. 35.

[83] Al-Balādhurī, p. 12; Ibn al-Najjār, p. 145. According to other accounts, the Prophet stayed at the house of Abū Ayyūb for ten months. See al-Samhūdī, *Wafāʾ*, I, 265.

[84] These dimensions were given by Ibn Isḥāq al-Ḥarbī, on the authority of Muḥammad b. Yaḥya: *Kitāb al-Manāsik wa Amākin Ṭuruq al-Ḥajj wa Maʿalim al-Jazīrah*, ed. by Ḥamad al-Jāsir, (Riyadh: Dār al-Yamāmah, 1969), p. 359; al-Samhūdī, *Wafāʾ*, I, 341.

walls whose base courses were built of stone were higher than a *qāmah*,[85] 'the height of an upright man', or *basṭah*,[86] 'an upright man stretching his arms up'. The mosque area was entirely uncovered. The technique used in building was *al-ṣamīṭah*. This modest structure seems to have been suitable for the size of congregation in the early months of the first year of Hijrah. Al-Samhūdī mentioned that the number of those who welcomed the Prophet to Madīnah was about 500.[87]

2. In the second stage, the mosque was approximately 70 X 60 cubits.[88] The height of the walls was slightly more than that of an upright man. The whole area of the mosque was still open to the sky and the technique of building used was *al-saʿīdah*.

3. In the third stage, the mosque was a square of side less than 100 cubits.[89] Its roof was made of thatch supported on piers of palm trunks. Later, it was treated with mud. The introduction of a roof, seemingly for the first time, dictated that the wall should have been elevated.[90] According to some narratives, the mosque was 7 cubits high.[91] This time the wall courses were formed of two (pairs of) transverse bricks.[92] This technique, which would have made the walls thicker and more robust, seems to have

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[85] Al-Samhūdī, *Wafāʾ*, I, 335.

[86] Ibn al-Najjār, p. 147; Ibn Zabālah; Qutb al-Dīn, p. 93.

[87] Al-Samhūdī, *Wafāʾ*, I, 255.

[88] These dimensions were mentioned by Zayd b. Thābit (d. 45/665) who was a personal scribe of the Prophet. See al-Samhūdī, *Wafāʾ*, I, 334; al-Sakhāwī, *Tuḥfah*, I, 45; al-Marāghī, p. 44. On Zayd, see L. Veccia Vaglieri 'Ḥafṣa', in *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd edn, III (1971), p. 65; A. T. Welch, 'al-Ḳurʾān', in *Encyclopaedia of Islam* 2nd edn, V, 1986, pp.404-5. The above dimensions are close to those mentioned by Ibn al-Najjār (p. 146) according to whom the mosque was a square of side 70 cubits.

[89] Al-Samhūdī, *Wafāʾ*, I, 336.

[90] Ibid, I, 335.

[91] Al-Samhūdī, *Khulāṣat*, II, p. 15.

[92] Ibn al-Najjār, p. 70; al-Samhūdī, *Wafāʾ*, I, 346.

been suitable for supporting the roof.[93] Al-Shihrī suggests that this building might have been retained until the *qiblah* was changed and the mosque area was enlarged in 7/628.[94]

This chronology for the stages of building assumes that in its first two stages, the mosque did not have a roof. Such a theory could only be valid if we accept that the cut palm-trees, referred to by *ṣaḥīḥ ḥadīths*, were, as already argued, aligned to form the *qiblah* wall. If not, then palm trees could have been cut and kept aside to be used in the third stage when there was a need to roof the mosque. Nevertheless, the latter assumption seems to conflict with *ḥadīth* which connotes that the cut palm-trees were promptly arranged as (or towards) the *qiblah*. The relevant phrase reads: '*fa ṣaffū al-nakhala qiblat al-masjid*'. According to Arabic grammar, the preposition '*fa*' is used to refer to an action that happens quickly after another. The account would then be translated: 'No sooner had they cut the palm trees than they aligned them.'

We thus posit that the palm trees which were cut in preparation of the site were used in the first two early phases to form the *qiblah* wall.

4.5.2.   The mosque after changing the *qiblah*

After a period of sixteen or seventeen months of praying at the mosque of the Prophet towards Bayt al-Maqdis, the *qiblah* was changed to the Kaʿbah, the Holy sanctuary in Mecca. This event must have had significant architectural consequences for the mosque (see 5.7.5.1).[95] The *ẓullah*, 'shaded place', which had been made in the northern front of the mosque to protect worshippers from hot weather, was retained to provide a shelter for the *ahl al-ṣuffah*, 'the

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[93] Al-Shihrī, *ʿImārat al-Masjid al-Nabawī*, p. 40.

[94] Ibid.

[95] See al-Bukhārī, *ḥadīths* no. 399, 403, 4488, 4490-1, 4493, 7251; J. Chabbi, 'Mecca', in *Encyclopaedia of the Qurʾān*, III, 2003, pp. 337-41.

people of the portico' (figures 1, 3 and 5).[96] It may be telling, here, to say that the word 'ṣuffah' is derived from the verb 'ṣaffa' which means 'to put in rows'. This could also imply that they were given this name after their shelter which was in the form of a roof supported upon parallel columns.[97] A new ẓullah, however, was added to the southern part of the mosque where the new qiblah was moved. The area between the two shelters was left open to the sky taking the form of a wide raḥbah.[98]

4.5.3.   The expansion of 7 AH

The previous form of the mosque was probably retained until 7/628 after the Prophet returned triumphant from the battle of Khaybar; there was no need to change it before that time, and we have already argued that the mosque was not to be changed unless there was a need to do so. The only account which seems to conflict with this is that which claims that the Prophet built his mosque with mud in 4/625 for the first time.[99]

According to Ḥadīth, when the mosque no longer gave enough room for the worshippers, the Prophet enlarged it by adding an adjacent piece of land whose price was paid by ʿUthmān b. ʿAffān.[100]

Scholars at different times have attempted to work out the dimensions of the mosque after this expansion (see figures 1-5).[101] Drawing mainly on the accounts of al-Samhūdī,[102] Fikrī, for example, argued that the mosque was enlarged after the conquest of Khaybar from the east by 10

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[96] More on them is in chapter 2.

[97] Al-Samhūdī, Wafāʾ, II, 453.

[98] Al-Barzanjī, p. 10; Fikrī, Madkhal, p. 171.

[99] Ibn Zabālah, P. 74; Ibn al-Najjār, p. 152; al-Marāghī, p. 20; al-Ḥarbī, p. 403. Attention to the weakness of this account has already been drawn.

[100] Al-Tirmidhī, ḥadīth no. 2703. See also al-Samhūdī, Wafāʾ, I, 338. This ḥadīth is regarded as ḥasan by Ibn Rajab, III, 300-2

[101] See al-Samhūdī, Wafāʾ, I, 340-59; Akkoush, pp. 387ff.; Antun, pp. 115-7.

[102] Al-Samhūdī, Wafāʾ, I, 340-59.

cubits or an *isṭiwānah*, 'the space between two columns', from the east by 20 cubits or two *isṭiwānas*,[103] and from the north by 40 cubits. According to al-Sakhāwī, the mosque after these works attained 7 cubits in height,[104] equal to 3.5 meters according to Fikrī.[105]

The technique of using two (pairs of) transverse bricks, of different sizes, was seemingly retained. Al-Samhūdī told us that he saw a number of antique bricks of two different sizes taken out from the walls of the houses of the Prophet during the restoration works of the Mamlūk sultan Qaytbāy in AH 879. According to him, these might have been some of the mud bricks which were used in the time of the Prophet, as they were fitted in a later wall made wholly of kiln-baked bricks, and they were kept there to invoke benedictions.

No changes were reportedly made at the mosque in the lifetime of the Prophet after these works. Our most authentic source for the description of the final form which the mosque took in the time of the Prophet is a sound *ḥadīth* narrated by ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿUmar (d. 73/692).[106] The same *ḥadīth* also describes the forms of the mosque in the time of the Prophet's first successors. On the authority of ʿAbd Allāh, 'in the life-time of the Prophet the mosque was built with *labin*; its roof was of the leaves of date-palms and its pillars were of palm-trees.'[107]

However simple this form might seem, we shall see below (5.11)

[103] Fikrī, *Madkhal*, p. 171.

[104] Al-Sakhāwī, *Tuḥfah*, I, 45.

[105] Fikrī, *Madkhal*, p. 171.

[106] ʿAbd Allāh, a close Companions who narrated a large number of *ḥadīths*, is said to have been the last Companion to die at Mecca. Veccia Vaglieri, 'ʿAbd Allah b. ʿUmar b. al-Khaṭṭāb', in *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd edn, I (1960), pp. 53-4.

[107] Al-Bukhārī, *ḥadīth* no. 446; Ibn Ḥanbal, *ḥadīth* no. 6139; al-Bayhaqī, *Al-Sunan al-Kubrā*, ed. by M. ʿAbd al-Qādir ʿAṭā, 3rd edn, 11 vols (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyyah, 2003), *ḥadīth* no. 4294; Ibn Rustah, p. 66

that it best fitted the functions of the mosque at that time and the setting in which it was placed.

4.6. Components of the mosque

After the works of 7/628, we are on firmer ground in ascertaining the main components of the mosque and their positions. This is thanks to the many historical accounts that dealt with them for the events they witnessed in the time of the Prophet and afterwards. In addition to the *raḥbah*, the front *ẓullah* and the rear *ṣuffah*, these components were: the famous *isṭiwānāt*, 'columns'; the pulpit; the *miḥrāb* (or rather the *qiblah* sign); and the doors of the mosque.

4.6.1. *Isṭiwānāt*

The *isṭiwānāt* were some of the piers that supported the roof of the mosque's front *ẓullah* in the time of the Prophet (see figure 4). They were given names, traditionally inspired by the events they witnessed in the time of the Prophet. The most famous of them are: *isṭiwānat al-wufūd*,[108] 'the column of delegates' (also known as *isṭiwānat al-qilādah*), *isṭiwānat al-tawbah*,[109] 'the column of repentance, and *isṭiwānat ʿĀʾishah*, 'the column of ʿĀʾishah'.[110] The latter was the one towards which the Prophet is said to have prayed some of slightly more than ten *furūḍ* (enjoined prayers) before shifting to the *muṣallā*. One of the most famous is the *isṭiwānat muṣalla rasūl Allāh*, 'the column towards which the Prophet used to face during prayers'.[111] According to al-Shihrī, its position implies that it was not one of the piers on which the roof rested in the time of the Prophet. This is because the arcade in which it is included and the arcade next to it were made after the first *qiblah* wall was demolished in the caliphate

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[108] See Ibn Zabālah, p. 103; Ibn al-Najjār, p. 169; Jamāl al-Dīn Abū ʿAbd Allah Muḥammad al-Maṭarī, *Al-Taʿrīf bimā Anisat al-Hijrah min Maʿālim Dār al-Hijrah*, ed. by A. al-Khayyāl (Damascus: Asʿad Ṭarabzūnī, 1953), p. 27; al-Marāghī, p. 60.

[109] On it See Ibn Zabālah, pp. 101-2; Ibn al-Najjār, pp. 167-8.

[110] See Ibn Zabālah, pp. 100-1.

[111] See Ibn Zabālah, p. 99-100; Ibn al-Najjār, p. 169; Qutb al-Dīn, p. 97.

of ʿUmar b. al-Khaṭṭāb.[112] It seems, as Ibn al-Najjār implies, that this *istiwānah* was later constructed in the same place of the palm stem upon which the Prophet used to lean. *Istiwānat al-tahajjud*, 'the column of the supererogatory late-night prayers' was located, according to Ibn al-Najjār, behind the house of Fāṭimah, the Prophet's daughter, and it contained a *miḥrāb*.[113] According to tradition, the Prophet is also reported to have prayed towards this *istiwānah*. Although this would suggest that it was included in the mosque in the time of the Prophet, al-Samhūdī argued that it was neither a part of the Prophet's mosque nor of his house. It might have been set in the place where the Prophet used to pray in Ramadan. According to one tradition, while there were people in the mosque, the Prophet *iʿtakafa*, 'remained in one place for prayer' in a dome made of fronds and its door was made of mats.[114]

4.6.2. *Miḥrāb*

As far as literary investigation can establish, the mosque of the Prophet had no *miḥrāb* (concave prayer niche) in his time.[115] Rather, the *muṣallā* of the Prophet was, and is known to us, by a number of other marks, like the *minbar* and the above mentioned *istiwānāt*.[116]

4.6.3. *Minbar*

In tradition, the first *minbar* in Islam was adopted by the Prophet himself. According to Ibn al-Najjār, the *minbar* was made for the Prophet in 8/629 to replace the trunk of a palm-tree upon which he used to lean. It was no more

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[112] Al-Shihrī, *ʿImārat al-Masjid al-Nabawī*, p. 65.

[113] Ibn al-Najjār, p. 155. It might have been that this *miḥrāb* was engraved in the *istiwānah* when it was included in the mosque after the architectural works of the Caliph al-Walīd b. ʿAbd al-Malik in 91/710.

[114] Al-Samhūdī, *Wafāʾ*, II, 452.

[115] F. Shafiʿī, however, argues that the *qiblah* direction was marked in the time of the Prophet by means of a simple niche (see 5.7.5.1).

[116] More on that will be discussed in the next chapter.

than a seat of three steps.[117] It seems that there was no need for the Prophet to have a *minbar* before the time when the number of the congregation increased, the area of the mosque was enlarged and the Prophet became old and gained weight.[118] It is telling, here, that according to Ibn Saʿd's account when the Prophet was offered a *minbar*, he consulted his Companions before he agreed.[119] The measurements which are passed down on the authority of Ibn Zabālah, reveal that it was of a small size and that it had a back and two armrests.[120]

4.6.4.   Doors

Before the change in *qiblah* direction, the mosque had three entrances, one in the rear wall and two in the side ones.[121] These entrances were in the form of simple openings in the wall (*furajun la aghlāqun ʿalayhā*).[122] After changing the *qiblah*, the entrance in the southern wall was moved to the northern one which had, by then, become the back wall of the mosque. The other two entrances remained as they were.[123] According to Ibn Zabālah, the mosque had three entrances; one in the rear wall, and another one called *Bāb al-Raḥmah*, 'the gate of mercy' or Bāb ʿĀtikah, and Bāb Āl ʿUthmān or Bāb Jibrīl, 'the gate of Gabriel'.[124] The latter is said to have been the entrance which the Prophet used to enter the mosque.[125]

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[117] Ibn al-Najjār, pp. 79-80.

[118] Ibn Saʿd, I, 215.

[119] Ibid.

[120] Ibn al-Najjār, p. 160; Quṭb al-Dīn, p. 102. More on the *minbar* is in next chapter.

[121] Ibn al-Najjār, p. 146.

[122] Ibn al-*Maḥjūb, Qurrat al ʿayn fī Awṣāf al-Ḥaramayn*, leaf 65 A.

[123] Al-Maṭarī, P. 31; al-Samhūdī, *Wafāʾ*, I, 336.

[124] Ibn al Najjār, p. 146; al-Barzanjī, p. 10.

[125] Ibn Rajab, III, 209.

4.6.5.   Apartments of the Prophet

After the first phase of the mosque was finished, two apartments for the Prophet's wives were built outside of the enclosure wall, that is those of ʿĀʾishah and Sawdah bt. Zamʿah.[126] Some of these apartments, which later increased to nine,[127] were made of *labin* and had *ḥujar* of fronds. Others were made of fronds coated with mud (akin to wattle and daub). They had on their doors *musūḥ*[128] of black hair. Some of them were made of rubble (*ḥijāratun marḍūmah*). Others were made of hair fastened to *ʿarar*, 'prickly cedar'. The door of the Prophet was to be knocked with fingernails, which means that it had no ring knockers.[129] The roof was covered by *jarīd*, 'palm stalks and fronds'. Al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī said that he used to enter the houses of the Prophet, in the caliphate of ʿUthmān, when he was a boy and that he could touch the roof with his hand.[130] According to Ibn Rustah, the Prophet built *ḥijāb*, 'a screen wall' between these houses and the *qiblah*. They were set outside the mosque, but their doors opened to the mosque interior.[131]

To recapitulate, the mosque of the Prophet, especially when conceived in its temporal and geomorphologic context, was not so 'primitive' structure as many scholars have depicted.[132] It is true, based on the sources, that the Prophet built his mosque in a simple way, but he was keen to build it properly. Whenever there was a need, the mosque was modified,

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[126] Al-Ṭabarī, II, 398-400; Ibn Saʿd, I, 206; Quṭb al-Dīn, p. 94; Ibn Rajab, III, 209; al-Barzanjī, pp. 10-1; Ibn al-Qayyim, III, 63.

[127] Ibn al-Najjār, p. 152.

[128] *Musūḥ* is the plural of *misḥ* which means a rough fabric made of hair. Ibn Manẓūr, VI, 4198.

[129] Ibn Saʿd, I, 206, 429-31; al-Suhaylī, II, 339-40; Ibn Kathīr, IV, 545. See also Ibn al-Najjār, p. 152-3; al-Samhūdī, *Wafāʾ*, II, 517; Quṭb al-Dīn, pp. 95-6.

[130] *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Adab al-Mufrad lil Imām al-Bukhārī*, ed. by M. Nāṣir al-Albānī, 4th edn (Jubeil: Maktabat al-Dalīl, 1994), *ḥadīth* no. 351. See also *ḥadīth* no. 352.

[131] Ibn Rustah, p. 64.

[132] Briggs, *Muhammadan Architecture*, pp. 18-22, 28; Creswell, *Early Muslim Architecture*, I. I, 6-16.

enlarged or rebuilt, and each time a better technique and materials were applied.

Years AH
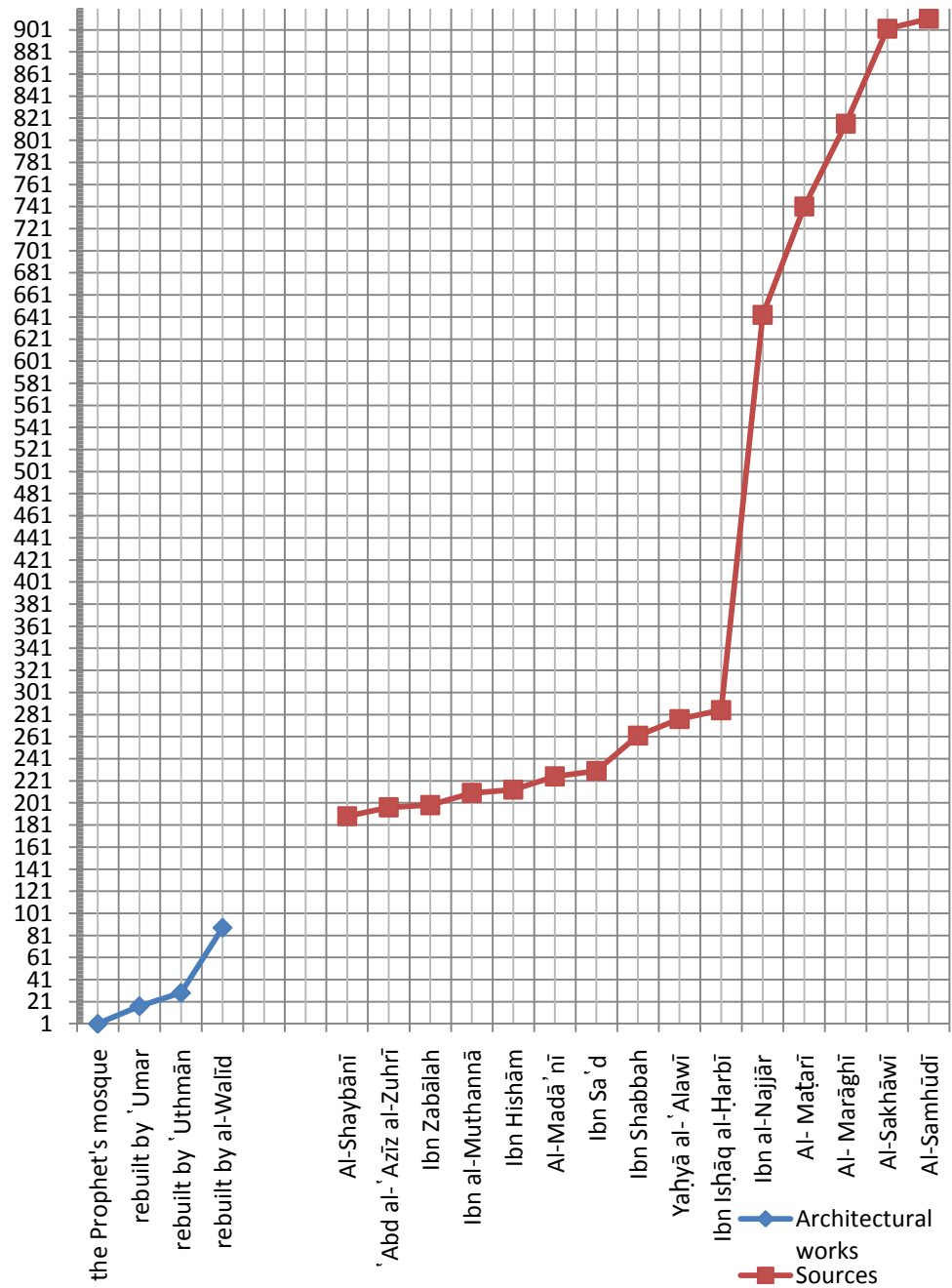
Chart 2: The dates of the architectural works at the mosque of the Prophet and the main sources about them[1]

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[1] The dates given for the sources denote the years of the authors' deaths.

Chapter 5: Specifications of mosque architecture according to *Ḥadīth*

Chapter 5: Specifications of mosque architecture according to *Ḥadīth*

5.1. Introduction

Although the exterior of the mosque and its internal arrangement vary from one place to another, it can be argued that the mosque has what can be called universally recognized schema (see pp. 4-5). No matter to which style it belongs, a number of architectural elements give the mosque its unique contour. These are the minaret, the dome, and the decorated facade. It may seem surprising, however, that the mosque of the Prophet and those built in the time of the Rāshidūn caliphs (11-40/632-61) were void of these most characteristic architectural elements of today's mosques (see 4.1).[1]

The persistent questions of when and how these and other elements were added to mosque architecture have been dealt with by a large number of scholars,[2] and do not form the topic of this chapter.[3] Nor will this chapter discuss the paradox of the existence of massive and decorated mosques while that of the Prophet set an example of simplicity and functionality.[4] Rather, what will be discussed here is whether there is an accredited form of the mosque according to *Ḥadīth*. If the answer is 'yes', there will be ensuing

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[1] Pedersen, 'Masdjid', pp. 646-8; Hillenbrand, *Islamic Architecture*, p. 31.

[2] Examples are: Robert Irwin, *Islamic Art in Context: Art, Architecture, and the Literary World* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1997); Farīd Shāfiʿī, 'West Islamic Influences on Architecture in Egypt', *Bulletin of the Faculty of Arts, Cairo University*, 16 (1954), 115-43; *Architecture of the Islamic World: Its History and Social Meaning*, texts by Ernst J. Grube and others, ed. by George Michell (London: Thames and Hudson, 1995); *The Mosque: History, Architectural Development and Regional Diversity*, ed. by, Martin Frishman, and others (London: Thames and Hudson, 1994); Banister Fletcher, *A History of Architecture*, rev. by J.C. Palmes, 18th edn (London: Athlone Press, 1975).

[3] This will be discussed later, since it is important to know whether these elements were formed in a way consistent with *Ḥadīth*.

[4] This will be discussed later in this study (see chapter 7).

discussion about what features make up this form and whether the form is compulsory or only recommended. A further important question is what Islam says about the elements which were not adopted by the Prophet in his mosque and were introduced in later times.

Mainly, three types of *Ḥadīth* will be considered to deal with this discussion: the form of the mosque of the Prophet in his lifetime, *ḥadīths* about mosques and their ordinances, and *ḥadīths* which address other topics but have incidental bearing on the architectural specification of mosques.

As for those elements which were neither included in the first mosque of the Prophet nor referred to by any of his *ḥadīths*, such as the concave prayer niche and the *maqṣūrah*,[5] two things will be taken into consideration. The first is the opinions of the Companions and early Muslim *faqīhs*,[6] as they either lived in the time of the Prophet and saw his mosque, or had knowledge from those who had seen it. Most importantly, they might have established their views regarding mosque architecture according to *ḥadīths* with which they were acquainted but whose texts have not reached us. The second is the general principles of *sharīʿah*, 'Islamic law'. The same sources will be consulted when dealing with elements such as the portico and the minaret which were accredited by the Prophet only in their primitive forms and which were later considerably developed. This is in addition to a number of late medieval books dealing with mosques and their regulations, such as: *Iʿlām al-Sājid bi Aḥkām al-Masājid* (*Informing the Worshipper with the Regulations of Mosques*) by al-Zarkashī (d. 794/1392),[7] and *Tuḥfat al-Rākiʿ wal Sājid bī Aḥkām al-Masājid* (*The Trophy of the Kneeler and the*

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[5] On the *maqṣūrah*, see below.

[6] A *faqīh* is an Islamic scholar of jurisprudence.

[7] Muḥammad b. ʿAbd Allāh al-Zarkashī, *Iʿlām al-Sājid bī Aḥkām al-Masājid*, ed. by M. Marāghī, 5th edn (Cairo: Ministry of Waqfs, 1999).

Worshipper on the Regulations of Mosques) by al-Jurāʿī (d. 883/1478).[8]

This discussion requires, at least, a rudimentary understanding of some of the *aḥkām* of Islamic jurisprudence, as not all of these *aḥkām* are of the same weight of strictness.[9] *Aḥkām*, 'ordinances or regulations' is the plural of *ḥukm* which is literally defined as a religious judgement or decision. According to Islamic law, there are five kinds of *aḥkām*: *wājib*, 'compulsory'; *mustaḥab*, 'order without obligation'; *muḥarram* or *ḥarām*, 'forbidden'; *makrūh*, 'disliked but not forbidden' and *ḥalāl*, 'legal and allowed'.[10]

It is important to note that different views were, and still are, held by Islamic schools of jurisprudence. These are attributed to many reasons (see 6.3) such as the grade of *ḥadīths* considered to enact a religious opinion. The *mursal*,[11] for example, while rejected by many early Ḥadīth scholars such as Saʿīd b. al-Musayyab, al-Zuhrī and al-Shāfiʿī who regarded it as a kind of *ḍaʿīf*, was taken into account by legalists such as Abū Ḥanīfah, and Ibn Ḥanbal.[12]

Before dealing with each of the mosque's architectural elements, discussing its *ḥukm* according to Ḥadīth, a number of basic points must be dealt with: the definition of the mosque, its status in the Muslim community,

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[8] Abū Bakr Ibn Zayd al-Jurāʿī, *Tuḥfat al-Rākiʿ wal Sājid bi Aḥkām al-Masājid*, ed. by Ṣāliḥ Sālim al-Nahām, Muḥammad Bānī al-Maṭayrī, Ṣabāḥ ʿAbd al-Karīm al-ʿAnzī and others (Farawāniya: Wazārat al-Awqāf wal Shuʾūn al-Islāmiyya, 2004). See also Jamāl al-Dīn al-Qāsimī, *Iṣlāḥ al-Masājid min al-Bidaʿ wal ʿAwāid*, ed. by M. Nāṣir al-Dīn al-Albānī 5th edn (Beirut: al-Maktab al-Islāmī, 1983).

[9] These categories of *aḥkām* appeared with the emergence of the schools of jurisprudence in the second century AH and developed on into the third and fourth centuries.

[10] See *Bulūgh al-Marām*, p. 549.

[11] On *mursal*, see Ḥākim (Robson transl.), p. 21.

[12] See Ibn Rajab, *Sharḥ ʿIlal al-Tirmidhī*, pp.278-97. See also how Ibn Rajab tried to reconcile these views: p. 297. Abū Ḥanīfah is reported to have relied on the *ḍaʿīf*. See also Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah, *Iʿlām al-Muwaqqiʿīn ʿan Rab al-ʿĀlamīn*, ed. by Mashhūr b. Ḥasan and Abū ʿUmar Aḥmad ʿAbd Allāh, 7 vols (Dammam: Dār Ibn al-Jawzī, 2002), II, 145.

the virtue of building it, and the *aḥkām* of its builders and sites. Then, there will be discussion about what *Ḥadīth* has to say about mosque decoration. This will be followed with how *Ḥadīth* perceives spolia and the practice of converting other faiths' places of worship into mosques. Next will be an investigation into the attitude of *Ḥadīth* towards visual and plastic arts. A conclusion will discuss whether there is an 'orthodox' form of the mosque according to *Ḥadīth* and if so, what were its features.

The chapter thus aims to explore the paradigm of mosque architectural features according to *Ḥadīth*. This is to be used as a benchmark to help figure out how far the early mosques followed the model which had been set out by *Ḥadīth*. This may explain why some aspects of the structure of the present chapter – that is the discussion on each of the mosque architectural features – will recur in the following ones.

5.2.   What is the mosque?

Discussion about the orthodox form of the mosque invokes the question of what a mosque is. According to Hillenbrand:

> The mosque in its simplest form is a wall correctly orientated towards the *qiblah*, namely the black Stone within the *Kaʿbah* in Mecca. No roof, no minimum size, no enclosing walls, no liturgical accessories are required. Indeed, it might very properly be argued that even the single wall is unnecessary.[13]

This intrinsic simplicity seems compatible with linguistic and religious definitions. The word 'mosque' is the English equivalent for the Arabic *masjid*[14] which designates the place where a worshipper prostrates, '*yasdjud*'.[15] It is the attitude in which he casts himself down with his limbs,

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[13] Hillenbrand, *Islamic Architecture*, p. 31.

[14] Other archaic pronunciations are *Masjad* and *Masyid*. Al-Jurāʿī, p. 47.

[15] Ibn Manẓūr, III, 1941. See also al-Zarkashī, pp. 26-8.

knees, nose and forehead resting flat on the ground.[16] From the religious point of view, the Prophet is reported to have said: 'the whole land is made a mosque [...].'[17] Traditionally, *masijid* is the place or building where five daily prayers are regularly performed. According to some scholars, this last definition excludes the *muṣallā al-ʿīd*, 'the place where the people pray on feasts' as well as the *rubuṭ*[18] and *madrasas*,[19] as they were mainly arranged to serve different functions.[20]

Although it could be argued that the term *masjid* does not necessarily connote a building of any kind,[21] some of the Mālikīs[22] stipulated a roofed mosque for the Friday sermon.[23] Their justification for this *ḥukm* is

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[16] See al-Dārimī, *ḥadīths* no. 1357-8. The Arabic '*masjid*' could have been derived from the Aramaic '*msgd*', which designated a place of worship, stele or a sacred pillar. It is found in Aramaic as early as the Jewish Elephantine Papyri, of the fifth century BC. However, the Syriac form *msgd'* and Amharic *masged* are 'late loans from Arabic'. The form *msʿgd*, 'oratory or place of prayer' is also found in Epigraphic South Arabian. Before the Prophet migrated to Madīnah and erected his mosque, the word *masgid* was used to refer to sanctuaries, especially the Meccan Sacred Mosque, *al-Bayt al-Ḥarām*, while the term, *al-Masdgid al-Aqṣā*, or 'the further mosque' was, and still, used to refer to the Jerusalem sanctuary. See A.F.L. Beeston, M. A. Ghul, W. W. Muller and J. Ryckmans, *Sabaic Dictionary* (Beirut: Louvain, 1982), p. 125; A. Jeffery, *The Foreign Vocabulary of the Qur'an* (Paroda, 1938), pp. 263-4; Pedersen, 'Masdjid', p. 644; Johns, 'House of the Prophet', p. 89; M. Bloom, 'Mosque', *EQ*, II, 426-7.

[17] Al-Bukhārī, *ḥadīth* no. 438; Muslim, *ḥadīths* no. 1161-7; al-Dārimī, *ḥadīth* no. 1429; Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal, *ḥadīths* no. 11858, 11727. See also al-Nawawī, *Sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, V, 2-5.

[18] On definition, function and architectural form of *ribāṭ*, see Jacqueline Chabbi, 'La fonction du ribat à Bagdad du Ve siècle au début du VIIe siècle', Revue des Études Islamiques 42 (1974), pp. 101-21.

[19] On *madrasas*, see J. Pedersen [G. Makdisi], Munibur Rahman and R. Hillenbrand, 'Madrasa', in *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd edn, V (1986), 1123-54.

[20] Al-Jurāʿī, p. 49; al-Zarkashī, p. 386.

[21] Hillenbrand, *Islamic Architecture*, p. 31.

[22] Representing one of the four main orthodox schools of Islamic law, the Mālikīs are the disciples and followers of imam Mālik b. Anas.

[23] Ibrāhīm b. Ṣāliḥ al-Khuḍayrī, *Aḥkām al-Masājid fī al-Sharīʿah al-Islāmiyyah: al-Juzʾ al-Thānī*, ([Riyadh (?)]: Wazārat al-Shuʾūn al-Islāmiyyah wal Awqāf wal Daʿwah wal Irshād, 1998), p. 18.

a verse that reads: 'in the houses [of worship] which Allāh has allowed to be raised so that His name is remembered in them'.[24] Most expositors agree that what is meant by 'house' here is the mosque. The Mālikīs argue that being a house requires that it should have walls and a roof. However, the opinion of the *jumhūr*[25] who do not make such a stipulation seems more compatible with the above *ḥadīth*.

5.3.   Mosque status

The canonical collections preserve numerous *ḥadīths* emphasizing the high status of mosques in the Muslim community.[26] In such *ḥadīths*, the Prophet, in order to urge people to attend mosques, designates the great reward that could be gained if one attends them regularly.

> Narrated Abū Hurayrah: The Prophet said, 'The prayer offered in congregation is twenty five times more superior (in reward) to the prayer offered alone in one's house or in his place of work, because if one performs ablution and does it perfectly, and then proceeds to the mosque with the sole intention of praying, then for each step which he takes towards the mosque, Allāh upgrades him a grade in reward and forgives one sin until he enters the mosque. When he enters the mosque he is considered in prayer as long as he is waiting for prayers and the angels keep on asking for Allāh's forgiveness for him and they keep on saying: 'O Allāh! Be Merciful to him, O Allāh! Forgive him'.[27]

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[24] *Qurʾān*, XXIV, 36.

[25] *Jumhūr* is a majority of the scholars in the field of *sharīʿah* and *fiqh*, 'Islamic law and jurisprudence'.

[26] For example, see Muʿammar (in *Muṣannaf* ʿAbd al-Razzāq), *ḥadīths* no. 20584-5.

[27] Al-Bukhārī, *ḥadīth* no.647; Khan's transl; Ibn Ḥanbal, *ḥadīths* no. 7542, 9422. See also Mālik, *Muwaṭṭaʾ*, *ḥadīths* no. 322-5, 527-30; Abū Yaʿlā, *ḥadīths* no. 1011, 1361, 5076, 6156; al-Dārimī, *ḥadīths* no. 1312-3; Ibn Ḥajar, *Fatḥ*, II, 271-76; Muḥammad b. Mufliḥ, *Kitāb al-Furūʿ: wa Maʿahū Taṣḥīḥ al-Furūʿ wa Ḥāshiyat Ibn Qundus*, ed. by A. A. al-Turkī, 13 vols (Beirut: Muʾssasat al-Risālah; Riyadh: Dār al-Muʾayyad, 2003), II, 419; Wensinck, pp. 155,192-3. See also Hammām b. Munabbih, *ḥadīth* no. 9.

The high reverence that a Muslim should show towards mosques is not confined to attending them. It also includes building and cleaning them. Some *ḥadīths* even talk about the merit of living near to them.[28] In early Islam, the mosque played vital religious, political and social roles in Muslim communities. The mosque of the Prophet, for example, was the focal point in the Madīnah community. It was not only a place for prayers, but also the headquarters and the meeting-place for the Prophet and his disciples.[29]

Given their high status, mosques were to be preserved from animals, boys who do not act properly, insane people, fights, loud voices, unsheathed swords, executing penalties and poetry.[30] We have already referred (see 3.4) to the fact that there is a long list of restrictions, according to *Ḥadīth*, on conduct which was freely tolerated elsewhere.

Some have argued that early mosques were not revered places because all of them, the first mosque of the Prophet included, were later pulled down.[31] In fact, this was not a sign of humiliation; they were demolished to be rebuilt in a better form, on a grander size and using more durable materials. Rebuilding was in any case mostly unavoidable as the originals (many of which were built of ephemeral materials) were damaged by passage of time (more on that is in 6.4).

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[28] Ibn Ḥanbal, *ḥadīths* no. 23180, 23278.

[29] For more information about the mosque status and its role in the Muslim community, see Ḥusayn Muʾnis, *Al-Masājid*, (Kuwait: al-Majlis al-Waṭanī lil-Thaqāfah wa-al -Funūn wal Adāb, 1981), pp. 27-40.

[30] Al-Bukhārī, *ḥadīth* no. 451, 457; al-Tirmidhī, *ḥadīth* no. 322; Ibn Mājah, *ḥadīth* no. 748-50; al-Zarkashī, p. 312; Wensinck, p. 154.

[31] As an example, see Johns, 'House of the Prophet', p. 108

5.4. The virtue of building mosques

Many *ḥadīths* state that building, or taking part in building, mosques is a virtuous deed whose *thawāb*, 'reward', is not less than a house in *Jannah*, 'paradise'.[32]

> Narrated Anas b. Mālik: The Prophet said: 'whoever builds a mosque, no matter small or big, asking by that Allāh's pleasure, Allāh will build him a house in Paradise.'[33]

> The Prophet is reported to have said: 'Allāh's most blessed (favoured) places in the regions (*al-bilād*) are their mosques and his most abhorred are their markets.'[34]

Such *ḥadīths* encouraged believers to build as many mosques as they could, an aspect which itself should have accelerated the evolution of mosque architecture. Mainly considering the *ḥadīth*'s use of the word 'build', al-Shawkānī (1173/1759- 1250/1834) argued that the reward mentioned in the *ḥadīth* above can only be obtained by actually building the mosque, and not by simply dedicating a piece of land as a mosque site. Al-Shawkānī added that it is not even enough just to demarcate it.[35]

In addition to the many *ḥadīths* which urge Muslims to build or participate in building mosques, there is another practical reason that could have helped the number of mosques to multiply. This is the permission, or rather command, of the Prophet for people to build mosques in small communities. It seems that the Prophet wanted to make it easy for all

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[32] Ibn Hubayrah, *Al-Ifṣāḥ ʿan Maʿānī al-Ṣiḥāḥ: Sharḥ li 'al-Jamʿi Baynal al-Ṣaḥīḥayn li Abī ʿAbd Allāh al-Ḥumaydī al-Andalusī' (d. AH 488)*, ed. by Fuʾād ʿAbd al-Munʿim, 8 vols (Riyadh: Dār al-Waṭan, 1996), I, 232; Ibn Ḥajar, *Fatḥ*, II, 90-1.

[33] Al-Tirmidhī, *ḥadīths* no. 318-9. See also al-Bukhārī, *ḥadīth* no. 450; Muslim, *ḥadīths* no. 1189-90; al-Dārimī, *ḥadīth* no. 1432; Ibn Khuzaymah, *ḥadīths* no. 1291-2; Wensinck, p. 155.

[34] See Ibn Khuzaymah, *ḥadīth* no. 1293.

[35] Al-Shawkānī, *Nayl al Awṭār min Asrār Muntaqā al-Akhbār*, ed. by M. Ṣubḥī Ḥallāq, 8 vols (Dammam: Dār Ibn al-Jawzī, 2006), II, p. 213.

people, no matter where they lived, to attend mosques. According to a number of *ḥadīths*, the people were not obliged to attend the mosque of Madīnah every day if this was difficult for them. Instead, they could build their own mosques and perform the five daily prayers at them. On the authority of ʿĀʾishah: 'the Prophet ordered mosques to be built in *dūr*, 'communities of kinships', and he commanded them to be cleaned and scented.'[36]

ʿItbān b. Mālik**,** an *Anṣārī* Companion, came to the Prophet [one day] and asked him to come to his house and conduct prayers at it so that he, namely ʿItbān, could take it as a *muṣallā*, 'place for congregational prayers'. ʿItbān, a man of weak eyesight, asked so because he used to lead his people in prayers and when it rained heavily the water flowed into the valley between him and his people and prevented him from going to their mosque.[37] Thus, the Prophet came accompanied by Abū Bakr and prayed two *rakʿas* in congregation at ʿItbān's house.[38]

With this allowed, it was not preferable to build more than one Friday mosque in one town as to do so would fragment the Muslim community, a tendency which would directly conflict with mosque's primary role as a meeting-place for Muslim individuals.[39] On the authority of Anas b. Mālik, the Prophet said: 'a prayer of a man at his house is [counted with] one prayer; his prayer at the tribal mosque is counted with twenty five

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[36] Al-Tirmidhī, *ḥadīth* no. 594; Abū Dāwūd, *ḥadīth* no. 455; al-Bayhaqī, *ḥadīth* no. 4308; Ibn Mājah, *ḥadīth* no. 758-8; al-Baghawī, *Sharḥ al-Sunnah*, ed. by Zuhayr al-Shāwīsh and Shuʿayb al-Arnāʾūṭ, 2nd edn, 16 vols (Beirut: al-Maktab al-Islāmī, 1983), II, 399; Abū Sulaymān Aḥmad b. Muḥammad al-Khaṭṭābī, *Maʿālim al-Sunan: Sharḥ ʿSunan al-Imām Abī Dāwūd (d. AH 275)ʿ*, ed. by M. Rāghib al-Ṭabbākh, 4 vols (Aleppo: al-Maṭbaʿah al-ʿIlmiyyah, 1933), I, 142; Wensinck, p. 154.

[37] Al-Bukhārī, *ḥadīth* no. 425.

[38] Mālik, *Muwaṭṭaʾ*, *ḥadīth* no. 572; Muslim, *ḥadīth* no. 1496.

[39] Al-Zarkashī, pp. 18-20.

prayers; and his prayer at the congregational mosque (*alladhī yujammaʿū fīhi*) is counted with five hundred prayers [...].'[40] The greatest four Sunnī imams[41] argued that it is not a religiously acceptable practice to have more than one mosque in a town on the grounds that there was only one Friday mosque in the time of the Prophet[42] who commanded: 'pray [just] as you have seen me praying.'[43] It is also reported of Ibn ʿUmar to have said: 'Friday [prayer] is not to be performed except in the mosque where the *imām* [usually] prays.'[44] On the significance of the *masjid al-jāmiʿ*, Grabar states: 'only the latter [namely the Friday mosque] was directly supervised and paid for by the central Muslim authority [...].'[45]

Few conditions would permit another 'Friday mosque' to be built beside an existing one, for instance when the main mosque no longer gave enough room for worshippers,[46] or if the town had expanded to such an extent that it was becoming difficult for some inhabitants to attend it.[47] According to some scholars, it was advisable to enlarge the already-existing

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[40] Ibn Mājah, *ḥadīth* no. 1413; Ibn Mufliḥ, II, 454. On the merit of performing prayers at al-*masjid al-jāmiʿ*, 'congregational mosque', see Abū Zakariyyā Muḥyī al-Dīn b. Sharaf al-Nawawī, *Kitāb al-Majmūʿ: Sharḥ al-Muhadhdhab lil Shirāzī*, ed. by M. Nagīb al Muṭīʿī, 23 vols (Jeddah: Maktabat al-Irshād, 1980), IV, 92; al-Zarkashī, p. 376; Shams al-Dīn al-Sarkhasī, *Kitāb al-Mabsūṭ*, 31 vols (Beirut: Dār al-Maʿrifah, [n.d.]), II, 120-1.

[41] These are Abū Ḥanīfah, Mālik, al-Shafiʿī and Aḥmad. See al-Sarkhasī, II, 120-3.

[42] Al-Sarkhasī, II, 121; al-Khuḍayrī, p. 19; M. al-Jadīd, p. 105.

[43] Al-Albānī, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Jāmiʿ*, *ḥadīth* no. 893.

[44] Muwaffaq al-Dīn b. ʿAbd Allāh b. Aḥmad b. Qudāmah al-Maqadisī, *Al-Mughnī*, ed. by A. ʿAbd al-Muḥsin al-Turkī and ʿAbd al-Fattāḥ al-Ḥulw, 3rd rev. edn, 15 vols (Riyadh: Dār ʿĀlam al-Kitāb, 1997), III, 212.

[45] Grabar, *Formation*, p. 107. See also P. L. Baker, p. 82.

[46] This opinion is attributed to Ibn Ḥanbal. See al-Jurāʿī, p. 366; M. ʿAbd al-Sattār ʿUthmān and ʿAwaḍ M. al-Imām, 'Imarat al-Masajid fī Ḍawʿ al-Aḥkām al-Fiqhiyyah: Dirāsah Taṭbīqiyyah Athariyyah', in *Sijil Buḥūth Nadwat ʿImārat al-Masājid*, ed. by M. A. Ṣāliḥ and A. al-Qūqānī (Riyadh: Kulliyyat al-Imārah wal Takhṭīṭ, 1999), VIII, pp. 133-60 (p. 135).

[47] Ibn Qudāmah, III, 212; al-Khuḍayrī, pp. 18-20.

mosque instead of building a new one.[48] In fact this opinion is supported by a *ḥadīth* according to which the Prophet passed by a group of Anṣār while they were building a mosque. So, he said to them: 'make it large [so that] you should have it full [with worshippers]'.[49]

According to Anas b. Malik, the people of Banū Salimah, who lived in the outskirts of Madīnah, wanted to leave their houses and move to a place near to the Prophet (and his mosque), but he disliked the idea of leaving their houses uninhabited.[50]

> Narrated Anas: The Prophet said: 'O Banū Salimah! Do not you calculate [consider] your footprints (or traces)?' [This means: 'Do not you think that for every step that you take towards the mosque there is a reward?]. Regarding the verse: 'We record that which they have sent before [them], and their traces', [51] Mujāhid said: '"their traces" means their steps.'[52]

> Narrated Jābir b. ʿAbd Allāh: Our houses were far from the mosque, therefore we wanted to buy houses near the mosque, but the Prophet forbad us from so doing and said: 'You are rewarded a [higher] grade (*darajah*) for each of your steps [to the mosque].'[53]

> Narrated Abū Mūsa: the Prophet said: 'The people who get tremendous reward from prayers are the farthest [from the mosque], and then

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[48] See Ibn Mufliḥ, III, 133-64; Abū Muḥammad ʿAlī b. Aḥmad b. Saʿīd b. Ḥazm, *Al-Muḥallā*, ed. by M. Munīr al-Dimashqī and A. Muḥammad Shākir, 11 vols (Cairo: Idārat al-Ṭibāʿah al-Munayriyyah, 1933), IV, 43.

[49] Al-Bayhaqī, *ḥadīths* no. 4305-6; Ibn Khuzaymah, *ḥadīth* no. 1320.

[50] Al-Bukhārī, *ḥadīth* no. 656; Muslim, *ḥadīth* no. 1518-20; Ibn Ḥajar, *Fatḥ*, II, 280; al-ʿAynī, *ʿUmdat al-Qārī: Sharḥ ʿṢaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, ed. by ʿAbd Allāh Maḥmūd ʿUmar, 25 vols (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-Ilmiyyah, 2001), VI, 252.

[51] *Qurʾān*, XXXVI, 12.

[52] Al-Bukhārī, *ḥadīth* no. 655; Khan's transl.

[53] Muslim, *ḥadīth* no. 1518. See also Ibn Ḥajar, *Fatḥ*, II, 280.

those who are next farthest and so on [...].'[54]

We shall see in what follows how such a status of mosques and the virtue of building them influenced their architectural evolution. They encouraged both polity and subjects to build, or take part in building, as many mosques as they could (see 7.5).

5.5. Craftsmen and workers

There are reports that the Prophet was keen to entrust the work at his mosque to those who had adequate experience. Under the heading of 'being helped by carpenters and craftsmen in making the *minbar* and (building) the mosque', al-Bukhārī narrates the *ḥadīth* about making the *minbar* of the Prophet (see 5.7.7 and 6.4). Ibn Ḥajar commented that the help of carpenters could be sought to make the pulpit and that masons could be hired to build the mosque.[55] Ibn Ḥajar believed that al-Bukhārī, having chosen such rubric for the *ḥadīth* about the *minbar* maker, might have hinted at the *ḥadīth* of Ṭalq b. ʿAlī who narrated:

> I built the mosque with the Prophet, and he was saying: 'Let the Yamāmī, 'an epithet of Ṭalq, the narrator' be close to the clay; he is the best amongst you at handling and moulding it (*aḥsanukum lahū massan wa ashaddukum lahū sabkan*).'[56] The same *ḥadīth* is reported by Ibn Ḥanbal but in other words: Narrated Ṭalq: I took the shovel and mixed the mud in a way that satisfied the Prophet, so he said: 'leave the mud to the *Ḥanafī*, 'another surname of the narrator'; he is the most skilful of you in dealing with it'.[57]

On the authority of al-Samhūdī, a man from Ḥaḍramawt came

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[54] Al-Bukhārī, *ḥadīth* no. 651; Muslim, *ḥadīth* no. 1513,

[55] Ibn Ḥajar, *Fatḥ*, II, 89.

[56] Aḥmad b. Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī, *Aṭrāf Musnad al-Imām Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal al Musamma Iṭrāf al-Musnid al-Mʿtalī bī Aṭrāf al-Musnad al-Ḥanbalī*, ed. by Zuhayr al-Nāṣir, 10 vols (Damascus, Dār Ibn Kathīr, 1993), *ḥadīth* no. 2948; Ibn Ḥajar, *Fatḥ*, II, 89-90; Ibn Rajab, III, 303-4.

[57] According to al-Samhūdī, the same *ḥadīth* is reported on the authority of al-Zuhrī. Al-Samhūdī, *Wafāʾ*, II, 333-34; al-Diyārbakrī, I, 344.

[while the mosque was being built], and he was skilled in dealing with mud. The Prophet was content with him and said: 'May Allāh be merciful to whomsoever does his work in a proper way.' Then, the Prophet said to him: 'Keep on doing this work as I see you do it well.'[58]

As we shall see in the following two chapters, this prophetic attitude legitimized the hiring of practised masons and craftsmen and validated the wish for building mosques in good forms.

5.6. Site

We have noted that the whole land could be regarded as a mosque. But what does that mean? And could such a concept have influenced the architectural evolution of the mosque?

According to Islamic law, prayers are allowed to be conducted on any given spot of land after ensuring that it is free from impurity. According to a number of Muslim legalists, this tolerance in choosing a mosque location is because land is originally clean by the act of the natural cleansers: the sun, the air and the rains.[59] As a corollary, unless a place is known for sure to be impure, it should be apposite for prayers to be conducted upon it.[60] According to one *ḥadīth*, one of the five privileges which had not been endowed to any prophet before Prophet Muḥammad is that land has been made a mosque for him and his nation, and that sand has been made a pure material to do *tayammum*.[61] Therefore, a Muslim can pray whenever the time of prayer is due. This principle is believed to have

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[58] Al-Samhūdī, *Wafā'*, I, 333-34; al-Diyarbakir, I, 344.

[59] Ibn Ḥajar, *Fatḥ,* I, 534; al-Shawkānī, II, 233; Ibn Taymiyyah, *Fatāwā*, XXI, 347-8. This opinion is based on a *ḥadīth* of Ibn ʿUmar. See al-Ṭabarānī, *Al-Muʿjam al-Awsaṭ*, ed. by Ṭāriq b. ʿAwaḍ Allāh and ʿAbd al-Muḥsin al-Ḥusaynī (Cairo: Dār al-Ḥaramayn, 1995), *ḥadīth* no. 1181.

[60] Ibn Ḥajar, *Fatḥ*, II, 79.

[61] It is the rite of using clean sand, only in case of water unavailability, to do ablution before prayers.

given builders of mosques a large degree of freedom to choose whatever the site they deemed convenient in accordance with other temporal and spatial conditions. It could have been for the sake of this freedom that the Prophet allowed prayers to be conducted at sheepfolds.[62] He himself is reported to have prayed at sheepfolds,[63] but Abū al-Tayyāḥ (d. 128/647 or 130/648), on whose authority the above *hadīth* is reported, states that this was only applied before the Prophet built his mosque.[64] Anas, who also reported the *hadīth* above, relates: 'He [namely, the Prophet] loved to pray whenever a prayer is due, and he would pray at sheepfolds.'[65] Ibn Ḥajar[66] commented that this was a temporary measure, and that the Prophet was not reported to have prayed at sheepfolds after the mosque was built.[67] Thus, the main implication of this *hadīth* is that a prayer should be performed once it is due. This assumption seems to be supported by the wording of another *hadīth* in which the Prophet says: 'If you do not find [a place to pray] except sheepfolds (*marābiḍ al-ghanam*) and kneeling places of camels (*aʿṭān al-ibil*), then pray at sheepfolds and do not pray at kneeling places of camels.'[68] Some scholars restrict this permission to old sheepfolds which should have been dried and purified.[69] According to a number of early

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[62] Ibn Mājah, *hadīths* no. 769-70.

[63] Al-Bukhārī, *hadīth* no. 429; al-Ṭabarī, II, 397.

[64] Al-Bukhārī, *hadīth* no. 429; al-ʿAynī, IV, 265-6.

[65] Al-Bukhārī, *hadīth* no. 428.

[66] Shihāb al-Dīn Aḥmad b. Ḥajar al-ʿAsqalānī was born at Fusṭāṭ in 773/1372. His father was a well-off Palestinian scholar. He travelled in seek of knowledge to a number of Islamic learning centres such as: Mecca (AH 785), Syria, Hijāz, Yemen, and Palestine. He became a well-reputed *Shāfiʿī* legalist and *Hadīth* scholar. He died in 852/1448.

[67] Ibn Ḥajar, *Fatḥ*, II, 72-3.

[68] Ibn Mājah, *hadīth* no. 769; Ibn Ḥanbal, *hadīths* no. 20409, 20434; Ibn Khuzaymah, *hadīth* no. 795; Abū al-Ḥasan ʿAlāʾ al-Dīn al-Muttaqī al-Hindī, *Kanz al-ʿUmmal fī Sunan al-Aqwāl wal Afʿāl*, ed. by Isḥāq al-Ṭībī, 2nd edn, 2 vols (Beirut: Bayt al-Afkār al-Duwaliyyah, 2005), *hadīth* no. 19169. See also Ibn Mufliḥ, II, 105.

[69] On these views, see Ibn Ḥajar, *Fatḥ*, II, 72-3.

legalists, the reason of this differentiation was that the latter are usually contaminated due to the camels' behaviour. According to others, there is no difference between both animals.[70] It is true that the Prophet is also reported to have taken his camel as a *sutrah* while praying,[71] but a number of early legalists argued that this does not apply to places where a group of camels usually kneel as they habitually scuffle and this would distract the person at prayer.[72] According to traditions,[73] the site where the Prophet's mosque and houses were built was chosen by letting his she-camel kneel freely.[74] Yet, there is nothing in tradition to imply that it was its usual kneeling place. While the above discussion has dealt with the places where prayers are permitted to be performed, the only type of place where the Prophet is reported to have preferred to pray at is *ḥīṭān*, 'orchards'.[75] Yet, he is not reported to have advised that mosques should be built in them.

We next deal with places where prayers were, and still are, not allowed to be performed. *Ḥadīth* puts restrictions on certain places. Narrated Abū Saʿīd al-Khudrī, the Prophet said: 'the whole land is a mosque except the tomb and the bathroom (*al-ḥammām*), in a narration, the lavatory (*al-*

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[70] Ibn Ḥajar, *Fatḥ*, II, 72-3; al-ʿAynī, IV, 268. See also al-Khaṭṭābī, I, 148-9. For more on this discussion, see Ibn Rajab, III, 217-26.

[71] Al-Bukhārī, *ḥadīth* no. 430; Ibn Khuzaymah, *ḥadīths* no. 801-2; Wensinck, p. 223. The same thing was also reported about ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿUmar when he was on travel. See Mālik, *Muwaṭṭaʾ*, *ḥadīth* no. 418; al-Dārimī, *ḥadīth* no. 1452.

[72] Ibn Ḥajar, *Fatḥ*, II, 73, and references are therein. See also al-ʿAynī, IV, 266.

[73] Ibn Hishām, II, 135; al-Ṭabarī, II, 396; al-Masʿūdī, *Murūj al-Dhahab wa Maʿādin al-Jawhar*, ed. by M. Muḥyī al-Dīn ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd, 4th edn, 4 vols (Cairo: al-Maktabah al-Tijāriyyah al-Kubrā, 1964-7), II, 286; al-Samhūdī, *Wafāʾ*, I, 323-4; al-Dhahabī, *Sīrah*, p. 233; Ibn Sayyid al-Nās, I, 313; al-Suhaylī, II, 334-6; Ibn al-Najjār, p. 145; al-Barzanjī, pp. 9-10.

[74] According to Johns, this story about the prophet's she-camel choosing the site for the mosque could be compared to the Biblical tradition that the site of the Temple was chosen by the angel. See Johns, 'House of the Prophet', pp. 103, 106.

[75] Al-Tirmidhī, *ḥadīth* no. 334; Wensinck, p. 191. See also Ibn Mājah, *ḥadīth* no. 744.

ḥashsh).'[76] Other places which *Ḥadīth* specifies as not permitted for

mosques to be built on include the kneeling places of camels, and the places

that witnessed Allāh's punishment to unbelievers.[77] In addition to these, the

Prophet is also reported to have banned the performance of prayers on

graves (or rather cemeteries), slaughter-houses (abattoirs), rubbish dumps,

roads,[78] and the roof of the Kaʿbah.[79] According to Ibn Qudāmah and

others, the rationale behind this listing (with the exception of the last), is

avoidance of prayers on unclean spots and to avoid the emulation of non-

Muslims who prayed at the tombs of their dead.[80]

Briefly, there is nothing in *Ḥadīth* to say that mosques must or

should be built on certain places, but there are places where prayers are not

to be performed. Some places are mainly judged by the opinion of the

Companions or early scholars. For instance, Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal[81] discouraged

building a mosque on a *qanṭarah*, (bridge) on the grounds that Ibn Masʿūd[82]

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[76] Al-Dārimī, *ḥadīth* no. 1430; al-Tirmidhī, *ḥadīth* no. 317; Abū Dāwūd, *ḥadīth* no 492; Ibn Mājah, *ḥadīth* no. 745; Ibn Ḥanbal, *ḥadīth* no. 11858; Ibn Khuzaymah, *ḥadīth* no. 791; al-Baghawī, II, 409.

[77] Abū Dāwūd, *ḥadīth* no. 490. According to al-Albānī, this *ḥadīth* is *ḍaʿīf*.

[78] According to al-Baghawī, it is allowed if a mosque was built on the street in a place that does not harm the people. Al-Baghawī, II, 412.

[79] Al-Tirmidhī, *ḥadīths* no. 346, 347; Ibn Mājah, *ḥadīths* no. 746,7; al-Baghawī, II, 410; Ibn Mufliḥ, II, 107; ʿAlāʾ al-Dīn Abū al-Ḥasan al-Mirdāwī, *Al-Inṣāf Fī Maʿrifat al-Rājiḥ min al-Khilāf ʿalā Madhhab al-Imām al-Mubajjal Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal*, ed. by M. Ḥāmid al-Faqī, 12 vols ([n.p.]: King Suʿūd, 1956), I, 489-91; Wensinck, p. 191. This *ḥadīt* was regarded by al-Tirmidhī himself as *ḍaʿīf*. For a discussion on the places where *ṣalāt* is not allowed to be performed, see also Ibn Mufliḥ, II, 105-13.

[80] Ibn Qudāmah, II, 470-5; Ibn Taymiyyah, *Fatāwa*, XXII, 99. See also Ibn Mufliḥ, II, 106.

[81] Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal (780-855) was one of the prominent early legalists and *Ḥadīth* scholars. He was the founder of the Ḥanbalī School of jurisprudence and the collector of the *Musnad*.

[82] ʿAbd Allah b. Masʿūd b. Ghāfil (d.*ca*. 652) was one of the earliest to embrace Islam and one of the most knowledgeable Companions who also narrated a large number of *ḥadīths*. On him, see Ibn Ḥajar, *Iṣābah*, IV, 129-30.

did not like doing so.[83]

5.6.1.   Building mosques on or at tombs

Islamic teaching embodies a clearly deprecatory attitude towards funerary architecture, enhanced by a large number of *ḥadīths* which state that a grave must not be treated in a way that would confer any significance upon it. Practices such as *tajṣīṣ*, 'treating the tomb with lime mortar', *taṭyīn*, 'covering the tomb with clay' and *kitābah*, 'inscribing tombs' are all prohibited according to *Ḥadīth*.[84] First and foremost, mosques must not be built on a tomb or at a gravesite.[85]

Islam's disapproval of building structures, especially religious ones, over tombs is traditionally understood to reflect a resistance to idolatry which originally evolved from eulogizing the graves of departed ancestors, particularly the pious amongst them.[86] Al-Qurṭubī (d. 672/1274) relates, on the authority of Muḥammad b. Kaʿb (d. 108/726),[87] that the people of previous nations made images for the pious departed and put them near their graves in the belief that such images would be an instrument of remembrance and an incentive for religious zeal. These people were succeeded by later generations who forgot the original wisdom behind these images; it was believed that the Satan whispered to them that their

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[83] Al-Jurāʿī, P. 366.

[84] Al-Tirmidhī, *ḥadīth* no. 1052. See also Abū Yaʿlā, *ḥadīth* no. 1020; al-Khaṭṭābī, I, 319. Such *ḥadīths* are always found included in Bāb al-Janāʿiz, 'chapter of obsequies', in *Ḥadīth* collections. See also Ibn al-Qayyim, I, 542. However, al-Tirmidhī reported that some early scholars like al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī (21/642-110/728) said that it is *jāʿiz* to treat the graves with mud. Al-Tirmidhī, *ḥadīth* no. 1052.

[85] See Ibn Taymiyyah, *Fatāwa*, XXIV, 177-8; al-Mirdāwī, II, 249-50.

[86] See Ibn Qudāmah, *Mughnī*, II, 474.

[87] Muḥammad b. Kaʿb al-Qurazī was born in 40/660. His father was a captive from Banū Qurayẓah. He was a renowned scholar in *Ḥadīth* and *Qurʾān* exegesis. See al-Dhahabī, *Siyar*, p. 3647.

predecessors had worshipped such images, and so they in turn did so.[88] It seems that the Islamic conception of this sequence represented a real threat and challenge for early Muslim religious authorities who were afraid that the same would happen to followers of the new religion. Leisten assumes that the abundance of disapproving religious texts (including *Ḥadīth*), commentaries and pious tracts, was in reaction to an already existing and widely practised cult of the dead in Arabia before Islam.[89] Indeed, most of the Arab idolaters before Islam worshipped and offered sacrifices to idols without knowing the stories of these idols or the people whom they represented. According to the *Qurʾān*, they were seen as a means to get nearer to Allāh.[90] The Prophet was thus keen from the outset to abolish this infidel practice and warned against it even during the last moments of his life.[91] According to Pedersen, this opposition is clearly mirrored in many *hadīths* which were 'certainly in the spirit of the Prophet'.[92] Later, when the Companions absorbed the Prophet's grave into the mosque in order to enlarge it, they surrounded it with high walls so that the people should not reach it.[93] On the authority of Jurayj, the Companions were uncertain where to inter the corpse of Prophet, until Abū Bakr said: 'I heard the Prophet saying: "A prophet is to be buried nowhere other than where he dies."

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[88] Abū ʿAbd Allah Muḥammad b. Abī Bakr al-Qurṭubī, *Al-Jami lī Aḥkām al-Qurʾān: wal Mubayyin lima Taḍammanahū min al-Sunnah wa Āy al-Furqān*, ed. by A. ʿAbd al-Muḥsin al-Turkī, 24 vols (Beirut: Muʾsasat al-Risālah, 2006), XXI, 261-5; Aḥmad b. ʿAbd al-Ḥalīm b. Taymiyyah, *Iqtiḍāʾ al-Sirāṭ al-Mustaqīm li Mukhālafat Aṣḥāb al-Jaḥīm*, ed. by Nāṣir al-ʿAql, 2 vols (Riyadh: Maktabat al-Rushd, [n.d.]), II, 679-80; Ibn Ḥajar, *Fatḥ*, II, 71; Ibn Rajab, III, 203-4,

[89] Thomas Leisten, 'Between Orthodoxy and Exegesis: Some Aspects of Attitudes in the Sharīʿa toward Funerary Architecture', *Muqarnas*, 7 (1990), pp. 12-22.

[90] *Qurʾān*, XXXIX, 3.

[91] On such *hadīths*, see Mālik, *Muwaṭṭaʾ*, *hadīth* no. 571; al-Dārimī, *hadīth* no. 1443; Ibn Ḥajar, *Fatḥ*, II, P.78; Ibn Taymiyyah, *Iqtiḍāʾ*, I, 298-303.

[92] Pedersen, 'Masdjid', p. 651.

[93] Al-Nawawī, *Sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, V, 13-4; al-ʿAynī, IV, 257; Ibn Taymiyyah, *Iqtiḍāʾ*, II, 677. For more information about this incident, see chapter 7.

Then, they took his *firāsh*, 'bed' out and dug [a grave] under it'".[94]

5.6.1.1.   The meaning and *ḥukm* of 'taking graves as mosques'

According to scholars of Islamic *sharīʿah*, there are three ways of taking graves as mosques: praying and prostrating on them, prostrating and supplicating towards them, and building mosques over them. Al-Albānī argues that the prohibition of each of the three cases is enhanced by *Ḥadīth* and the opinions of early legalists.[95] Nonetheless, according to *Ḥadīth* it is allowed to exhume the graves of unbelievers to build mosques in their place (see 4.4). Ibn Ḥajar explains that it is *jāʾiz*, 'allowed' to do so with the graves of the pagans because they were not revered and it was thus unlikely that this would lead to any cult. On the other hand, it was not allowed to do likewise with the graves of the Prophets or their followers as it would be insulting to disinter their graves.[96] Al-ʿAynī assumes that it is not only the graves of the prophets and their followers which were not allowed to be unearthed; but also the graves of Muslim individuals.[97]

The following *ḥadīths* mainly represent the vehicle for a majority of Muslim authorities, both in the past and the present, to say that a mosque must not be built on a tomb or a grave:[98]

> Narrated ʿĀʾishah: Umm Ḥabībah and Umm Salamah [two of the Prophet's wives] mentioned a church they had seen in Abyssinia, in which there were pictures. They told the Prophet about it and he said: 'If any pious man dies amongst those people they would build a place of worship at his grave and make such pictures in it. Those will be the

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[94] Al-Albānī, p. *Taḥdhīr*, 7. See also al-Hindī, *Kanz*, *ḥadīths* no. 32235-8.

[95] Al-Albānī, *Taḥdhīr*, pp. 10- 14.

[96] Ibn Ḥajar, *Fatḥ*, II, 69-70.

[97] Al-ʿAynī, IV, 253-4. According to al-Albānī, this *ḥukm* applies to building a mosque on a grave and including the latter in a mosque: *Taḥdhīr*, p. 12.

[98] According to Ibn Taymiyyah, all imams agreed that a mosque must not be built on a tomb or a grave. Ibn Taymiyyah, *Fatāwā*, XXII, p. 119.

worst creatures in the sight of Allāh on the Day of Judgment.'[99]

ʿĀʾishah commented that this was the only reason why the grave of the Prophet had not been made visible for the mobs; the Companions had feared it would have been taken as a mosque.[100] According to Ibn Baṭṭāl (d. 449/1957), this *ḥadīth* proscribes two acts: building mosques at tombs and making, or having, images of animals and people, especially pious people.[101]

According to Ibn Ḥajar, such *ḥadīth* is a testimony that building mosques on the graves of the pious dead and making anthropomorphic images for them are both proscribed transgressions. According to him, the act of making images of the departed prophets and the pious dead to incur blessings or in search of intercession is *ḥarām*, since it represents an aspect of paganism. It is, equally, *ḥarām* to make these images to remind later generations of their devout ancestors and their good deeds. It is also *ḥarām* to make such images for entertainment. In all of these cases, the craftsmen are to suffer the direst woe on the Day of Judgment because they have compared themselves to the Creator.[102] There are a number of *ḥadīths* which reflect the Prophet's keenness to preclude such practice:

> Narrated Ibn ʿAbbās: the Prophet cursed those females who visit the graves and those [both males and females] who adopt (namely build) mosques and (put) *suruj*, 'oil lamps or lanterns', on them.[103]

> Narrated Abū Marthad al-Ghanawī: the Prophet said: 'Do not sit on the

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[99] Al-Bukhārī, *ḥadīth* no. 427; Muslim, *ḥadīth* no. 1183-4; Ibn Abī Shaybah, *ḥadīth* no. 7629; al-Hindī, *Kanz*, *ḥadīths* no. 19186-197. See also *Muslim*, *ḥadīth* no. 1188; Wensinck, p. 154. Ibn Ḥajar argued that the images, mentioned by Umm Salamah and Umm Ḥabībah, were only mural drawings and not a relief, (*lam yakun lahā ẓill*, literally means 'had no shadow').

[100] Al-Albānī, *Taḥdhīr*, p. 7.

[101] Al-ʿAynī, IV, 257.

[102] Al-Albānī, p. 8. See also Ibn Taymiyyah, *Iqtiḍāʾ*, II, 659-740.

[103] Al-Tirmidhī, *ḥadīth* no. 320; al-Baghawī, II, 417.

graves and do not pray while facing them.'[104]

Narrated ʿAṭāʾ b. Yāsir: the Prophet said: 'O Allāh! Do not let my grave be worshipped as an idol. Allāh is very angry with those who took the graves of their prophets as mosques.'[105] [In another narration: 'as idols'].[106]

On the authority of Ibn ʿUmar, the Prophet said: 'Perform some of your prayers at your homes and do not take them [namely your homes] as graves.[107]

On the authority of Jābir, it was disapproved [namely by the Prophet] that a grave be coated with lime-mortar (*taqṣīṣ* or *tajṣīṣ*), inscribed, topped by a structure or trodden.[108]

Narrated ʿAbd Allāh b. Masʿūd: the Prophet said: 'Among the evil people are those who would be alive when the Day of Judgment comes and those who take the graves as mosques.'[109]

According to Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal, prayers must not be conducted at graves whether they are exhumed, covered by something to avoid impurity, included in a cemetery or standing alone.[110] This opinion of Ibn Ḥanbal was

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[104] This *ḥadīth* is reported by all the compilers of *Ṣaḥīḥs* except al-Bukhārī and Ibn Mājah. See, for example, Muslim, *ḥadīths* no. 2250-1; al-Tirmidhī, *ḥadīth* no. 1050.

[105] Ibn Abī Shaybah, *ḥadīth* no. 7626; Mālik, *Muwaṭṭaʾ*, *ḥadīth* no. 570; Abū ʿUmar Yusuf b. ʿAbd Allah b. ʿAbd al-Barr al-Andalusī, *Al-Tamhīd lima fil 'Muwaṭṭaʾ' min al-Maʿānī wal Asānīd*, ed. by Muṣṭafā al-ʿAlawī and Muḥammad al-Bakrī, 26 vols ([n.p.]: [n.pub.], 1967), V, 41-2.
[106] Al-Albānī, *Taḥdhīr*, p. 9.

[107] Al-Bukhārī, *ḥadīth* no. 432. On this *ḥadīth* and the different opinions of early scholars of Islamic jurisprudence regarding performing prayers on or at mosques, see Ibn Rajab, III, 193-204, 232-4.

[108] Al-Tirmidhī, *ḥadīth* no. 1052; Abū Dāwūd, *ḥadīth* no. 3225; Ibn Mājah, *ḥadīth* no. 1562-5.
[109] Al-Albānī, *Taḥdhīr*, p. 9.

[110] Al-ʿAynī, IV, 255; al-Shawkānī, III, 498-9. See also Ibn al-Qayyim, I, 512.

agreed by the Ẓāhirīs.[111] Al-Rāfiʿī, for example, believed that the wisdom behind forbidding the conduct of prayers on a tomb was to avoid the impurity beneath it, and this impurity cannot be avoided simply by putting a mat or something similar on a tomb. According to him, prayers would be acceptable, but it is still *makrūh* as the thing for which it is banned, namely impurity, is still there.[112]

On the other hand, there are a number of *ḥadīths* which state that the Prophet and some of his Companions prayed on a grave. According to one of these *ḥadīths*, the Prophet prayed on the grave when he missed a funeral of a Muslim female. Likewise, when ʿUmar saw Anas praying on a grave he said (presumably shouted): '[beware of] the grave! The grave!', but he did not ask him to repeat his *ṣalāt* (which means that it was right). Such *ḥadīths* come under the heading of *bāb ma jāʾa fī al-ṣalāt ʾlā al-qabr*, 'the chapter about what has been narrated regarding praying on the grave'.[113]

The Shāfiʿīs, accordingly, argued that if someone finds a clean place on a grave, he would be allowed to pray on it.[114] A much more permissive opinion was adopted by Mālik who argued that prayers are generally

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[111] Ibn Ḥazm, *Muḥallā*, IV 27-33. The Ẓāhirīs are the disciples and followers of imam Ibn Ḥazm al-Ẓāhirī al-Andalusī. On him see R. Arnaldez, 'Ibn Ḥazm', in *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd edn, III (1971), pp. 790-9.

[112] Al-ʿAynī, IV, 256.

[113] See al-Tirmidhī, *ḥadīth* no. 1037; Abū Dāwūd, *ḥadīth* no. 3203; Ibn Mājah, *ḥadīths* no. 1527-33; al-Mirdāwī, II, 531.

[114] Al-Nawawī, *Majmūʿ*, III, 164-5; al-Khaṭṭābī, I, 147; al-ʿAynī, IV, 255; al-Shawkānī, III, 499.

allowed to be conducted on a tomb or at cemeteries.[115] In this, Mālik was followed by some of the Mālikīs such as Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr (368-463/979-1071) and Ibn Qudāmah (541-620/1147-1223).[116] However, some of the exponents of Mālik said that, later on, he reconsidered this opinion; Abū Muṣʿab reported that Mālik believed that it is *makrūh* to offer prayers on a tomb.[117] In all cases, Mālik's lenient attitude was resisted by notable scholars like al-Rāfiʿī, al-Thawrī, al-Awzāʿī and Abū Ḥanīfah. According to them it is *makrūh* to conduct prayers on or at tombs, regardless of conditions.[118]

According to Ibn Taymiyyah, a corpse must not be buried in a mosque, and if a corpse was found buried beneath a mosque, some procedures ought to be taken: if the mosque precedes the grave, the latter must be destroyed and levelled or exhumed if it was new, whereas if it was the grave which precedes the mosque then either the mosque or the grave structure (*ṣūrat al-qabr*) is to be removed.[119]

Ibn Ḥazm (d. 456/1064) reported that five of the prominent Companions are said to have forbidden praying on a tomb (these are ʿUmar b. al-Khaṭṭāb, ʿAlī b. Abī Ṭālib, Abū Hurayrah, Anas b. Mālik and ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿAbbās). Ibn Ḥazm added that he knew none of the Companions that held a divergent opinion.[120] Al-ʿAynī disagreed with this generalization of Ibn

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[115] Mālik b. Anas al-Aṣbaḥī, *Al-Mudawwanah al-Kubrā*, 4 vols (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyyah, 1994), I, 182. See also al-Baghawī, II, 411. Yet, al-Ṣanʿānī argues that the above *ḥadīth* signifies that prayers are not acceptable on or between graves, no matter to whom these graves belong, believers or unbelievers. Al-Ṣanʿānī, *Subul al-Salām al-Mūṣilah ilā Bulūgh al-Marām*, ed. by M. Ṣubḥī Ḥasan Ḥallāq, 2nd rev. edn, 8 vols (Dār Ibn al-Jawzī, 2000), II, 92.

[116] Ibn ʿAbd al-Barr, V, 220, 234; Ibn Qudāmah, *Mughnī*, II, 468.

[117] Al-ʿAynī, IV, 255.

[118] Al-Shawkānī, III, 500.

[119] Ibn Taymiyyah, *Fatāwa*, XXII, 119.

[120] Al-ʿAynī, IV, 255. See Ibn Ḥazm, *Muḥalla*, IV, 30-1.

Ḥazm. He relates, on the authority of al-Khaṭṭābī (d. 388/998),[121] that ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿUmar allowed praying at tombs, and that al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī was also reported to have prayed at them.[122] Nonetheless, the generalization seems to persist to the present. Al-Albānī, for example, has argued that all schools of Islamic law agree that it is *ḥarām* to build mosques over tombs.[123]

To finish, the above discussion on the attitude of *Ḥadīth* and the resultant opinions of early *faqīhs* regarding praying, and building mosques, on tombs suggests that it was interdiction – and not allowance – which was meant. This is not only because it has been affirmed by the large number of early as well as modern legalists but also because it is more attuned with *ḥadīths* –whether relevant ones or those which generally convey the principles of Islamic law. As far as literature can tell, prayers on tombs could be valid only if there was no other option.

5.7.　Components of the mosque

Before the general influence of *Ḥadīth* on mosque architecture is discussed, we will examine how it influenced the main components that make up the architectural form of a typical congregational mosque in the Umayyad period (40/661-132/750).

5.7.1.　*qiblah* wall

Although there is no predetermined outer shape of the mosque, according to a number of *ḥadīths* it is a prerequisite for worshippers to be orientated towards the *qiblah* and to be arranged in straight lines (see 6.5.4). This would entail the correct layout of *qiblah* wall to keep the rows of the worshippers evenly

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[121] Al-Khaṭṭābī, I, 147-8. See also pp. 141, 315.

[122] Al-ʿAynī, IV, 255. It was reported of the Prophet to have prayed on the grave on some occasions. See al-Tirmidhī, *ḥadīths* no. 1037-8.

[123] Al-Albānī, *Taḥdhīr*, p. 15.

aligned,[124] and this dictated that the quadrangular plan best fitted the mosque. Others, such as the circular and the triangular, were not preferred (see figure 9). Some even said that it is *makrūh* to build or perform prayers at such mosques for their outlines would negatively affect the straightness of the worshippers' lines.[125] According to *Ḥadīth*, it could safely be argued that having the *qiblah* wall correctly orientated towards the *Kaʿbah* is the most decisive, if not the only, requirement for mosque structural design. The *qiblah* wall was the first part to be laid out by the Prophet when he built his mosque.[126] It is, *par excellence*, the ruling element of mosque architecture, by which its usually-quadrangular schema is governed. This may explain why it was always the Prophet, and later on his *ṣaḥābīs*, who were in charge of laying out the *qiblah* wall of the mosques which were built in their times.[127] This may also well explain why the reconstruction of plan put forward by Pauty for the mosque of the Prophet (figure 1a) cannot be accepted.

5.7.2.   Enclosure wall

After marking out the *qiblah*, the Prophet ordered a wall to be built, presumably to demarcate the mosque area and keep it clean and protected from profane actions. It has already been noted that according to some, particularly a group of the Mālikīs, the sense of 'mosque' involves a building which, in turn,

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[124] Ibn Ḥajar, *Fatḥ*, II, 348-53; Ṣāliḥ ʿAbd al-Samīʿ al-Ābī, *Jawāhir al-Iklīl: Sharḥ Mukhtaṣar al-Shaykh Khalīl fī Madhhab al-Imam Mālik Imam Dār al-Tanzīl*, 2 vols (Beirut: al-Maktbah al-Thaqāfiyyah, [n.d.]), I, 55.

[125] Muḥammad ʿArafah al-Dusūqī, *Ḥāshiyat al-Dusūqī ʿala al-Sharḥ al-Kabīr*, ed. by Muḥammad ʿUlaysh, 4 vols (Cairo: Dār Iḥiyāʾ al-Kutub al-ʿArabiyyah, [n.d.]), I, 255; al-Ābī, *Jawāhir al-Iklīl*, I, 55.

[126] Whether the palm trees were arranged in rows at the *qiblah* or they were used to make it up, the Prophet was reportedly keen to make the *qiblah* wall evenly straight and correctly aligned.

[127] On laying out the *qiblah* at Madīnah and Qubāʾ, see Ibn Saʿd, I, 210; al-Suhaylī, II, 332, 336; al-Samhūdī, *Wafāʾ*, I, 332.

necessitates a wall.[128] However, this does not seem to have applied to the first mosque of Kūfah which was reportedly only delimited by means of a ditch.[129] This, should it be true, would imply that the builders of the mosque who were amongst the Prophet's close Companions understood that it is not necessary for the mosque to have a wall. The influence of the liturgical needs of the mosque on its structural requirements has been best explained by Hillenbrand who argues that:

> The fact of the matter is that the Muslim liturgy does not demand any man-made structure for its celebration. [...]. The various prescribed movements of prayer, involving as they did outstretched arms. Kneeling and prostration meant that each worshipper ideally required a minimum space of 1 X 2 meters. Moreover, prayer was communal. It was thus clearly desirable that its constituent movements should be synchronized. The alternative would be visually chaotic and might even suggest spiritual discord. The functions of the imam included the leading of communal prayer, and to this end it was important that he should be as widely visible as could be. Thus there developed the custom of disposing the worshippers in long lines parallel to the qiblah. In this way it was possible for hundreds, not scores, of people to follow the movements of the imam. By contrast, the disposition of worshippers within most Christian churches in lines perpendicular to the altar. [...]. These remarks are not intended to suggest that the imam was visible in a large mosque to a congregation of, say, several thousands. But the grouping of worshippers in comparatively few long and well-spaced lines, rather than in many short lines close together, did ensure the easy intervisibilty of worshippers and thus facilitated precise timing in the movements prescribed for prayers. [...] This lateral grouping of worshippers, which might fairly be termed a liturgical convenience, but was in no sense a doctrinal imperative, proved to be the single vital factor in the layout of future mosques.[130]

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[128] Al-Khuḍayrī, p. 18.

[129] Al-Balādhurī, p. 348.

[130] Hillenbrand, *Islamic Architecture*, pp. 36-8.

This argument of Hillenbrand properly explains why the quadrangular layout with – or even without – a simple enclosure and a porticoed open space was adopted as fitting by early mosque builders.

5.7.3.   *Ẓullah*

According to tradition, the mosque of the Prophet did not have a *ẓullah*, 'shaded place' when it was first built, but when the Companions complained of the sun heat, the Prophet ordered it to be added. It was simply supported on palm trunks, and the roof covering was made of dried tree branches, rushes and fronds.[131] This simple arbour is generally believed to develop in later times into *riwāqs* and *līwāns*.[132]

5.7.4.   *Raḥbah*

The word *raḥbah* in Arabic designates the yard of the mosque, or rather any 'wide' area attached to it. It is derived from the verb '*raḥuba*' which means 'to widen'.[133] Many definitions are put forward for the word '*raḥbah*', for which a *ḥukm* will be issued accordingly. Ibn Ḥajar argued that it is a structure attached to the mosque, particularly in front of its entrance,[134] while according to al-Zarkashī it refers to whatever built next to the mosque.[135] Some scholars say that it is the *ṣaḥn*, 'court' of a congregational mosque.[136] Having applied a more general perspective, Muḥammad b. ʿAbd al-Ḥakam and Abū Yaʿlā argued that it is any area attached to the mosque.[137]

Apparently, there was no restriction on the adoption of the *raḥbah*,

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[131] Ibn Zabālah, p. 77; al-Samhūdī, *Wafāʾ*, I, 335-36.

[132] See Briggs, *Muhammadan Architecture*, (p. 21) as an example.

[133] Al-Azharī, V, 18; Ibn Manẓūr, III, 1606.

[134] Ibn Ḥajar, *Fatḥ*, XIII, 155.

[135] Al-Zarkashī, p. 346.

[136] Al-Khuḍayrī, p. 51.

[137] See Ibrahim b. Ṣāliḥ al-Khuḍayrī, 'Aḥkām Bināʾ al-Masājid fil Sharīʿah al-Islāmiyyah' in *Sijil Buḥūth Nadwat ʿImārat al-Masājid*, ed. by M. A. Ṣāliḥ and A. al-Qūqānī (Riyadh, Kulliyyat al-Imārah wal Takhṭīṭ, 1999), VIII, 33-60 (pp. 46-7).

in its general meaning; as we have seen the major area of the mosque of the Prophet himself was reported to have been an open space. What scholars have disputed is whether it should be legally treated as a part of the mosque.[138] The significance of such discussions is to specify the nature of the acts which a *raḥbah* would accommodate.

5.7.5. The *miḥrāb*, 'concave prayer niche'

5.7.5.1. Definition and Origin

In Arabic, the word *miḥrāb* means the front part of a house and the most respected place in it.[139] It was used in early Arabic poetry to refer to the building of a king or a prince.[140] In pre-Islamic times, the Arabs used the word '*miḥrāb*' to refer to palaces. It was also used to designate the lion's lair,[141] and the communal meeting-place. The *maḥārīb* of Banū Isrāʾīl were their places of worship where they used to gather (*yajlisūn fīhā*).[142] According to al-Azharī (282-370/895-980), they were the places where they prayed.[143] According to al-Zajjāj (241-311/923), *miḥrāb* is the most important place in the mosque for it represents the mark of the *qiblah*.[144] However, al-Azharī tells us that what is traditionally meant by *miḥrāb* in Islam is the place where the *imām* stands to lead the congregation in prayers.[145] *Miḥrābs* are usually set in the mosque front

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[138] See Ṣāliḥ b. Ghānim al-Sadlān, 'al-Ḍawābiṭ al-Sharʿiyya liʿimārat al-Masājid', in *Sijil Buḥūth Nadwat ʾImārat al-Masājid*, ed. by M. A. Ṣāliḥ and A. al-Qūqānī (Riyadh, Kulliyyat al-Imārah wal Takhṭīṭ, 1999), VIII, pp. 1-32 (p. 11-2); al-Khuḍayrī, 'Aḥkām', pp. 46-8.

[139] Al-Azharī, V, 17; Ibn Manẓūr, II, 817.

[140] Theodor Nöldeke, *Neue Beiträge zur Semitischen Sprachwissenschaft*, (Strasbourg: Neudr. d. Ausg, 1904-10), p. 52, n. 3.

[141] Al-Azharī, V, 17; Ibn Manẓūr, II, 818.

[142] Ibn Manẓūr, II, 817.

[143] Al-Azharī, V, 17.

[144] Al-Azharī, V, 17; Ibn Manẓūr, II, 817.

[145] Al-Azharī, V, 17; Ibn Manẓūr, II, 817; Majd al-Dīn Muḥammad b. Yaʿqūb al-Fayrūzabādī, *Al-Qāmūs al-Muḥīṭ*, 4 vols (Cairo: al-Hayʾah al-Miṣriyyah al-ʿĀmmah lil Kitāb, 1978-80), I, 53; al-Rāzī, *Mukhtār*, p. 128.

to indicate the *qiblah*, towards which a worshipper must be orientated whilst offering his *ṣalāt*.[146]

Although there are many references to *miḥrāb* in the *Qurʾān*, *Ḥadīth* and early accounts, there are good reasons to think that the word was originally used to refer to something other than the concave prayer niche, which is rather referred to in early sources as '*ṭāq*'. In a *ḥadīth*, the Prophet sent ʿUrawah b. Masʿūd to his kin in Yemen. So, he went to them and entered his *miḥrāb*. At dawn, he got out of it (*ashraf ʿalayhim*) and called for Fajr prayer.[147] Al-Zajjāj commented that this implies that a *miḥrāb* is an elevated chamber (*ghurfah*).[148] Al-Azharī states, on the authority of Ibn al-Anbārī, that a *miḥrāb* was given this name because it designates the place where the *imām* stands isolated – that is distinguished – from other people.[149] This last explanation seems to relate to most of the above definitions of *miḥrāb*.

Having discussed the derivation and early use of the word *miḥrāb* from the *Qurʾān*, early sources and poems, Serjeant came to this conclusion: 'I prefer to regard all meanings here as secondary to the basic sense of *miḥrāb* as a row of columns with their intervening spaces. From this basic sense one might render *miḥrāb* as 'niche', but more likely as the side of the monk's cell, or the side of the chancel, i.e. a wall linking columns […].'[150]

Scholars of Semitic languages such as Littman, Theodor

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[146] Ibn Ḥajar, *Fatḥ*, II, p. 48.

[147] It is the Dawn prayer.

[148] Al-Azharī, V, 17; Ibn Manẓūr, II, 817.

[149] Ibid; al-Zarkashī, p. 364.

[150] R. B. Serjeant, 'Miḥrāb', *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, 22 (1959), pp. 439-53 (p. 450).

Nöeldeke,[151] and Jackob Horowitz[152] see that the word '*miḥrāb*' is Himyarite. It was introduced along with Christianity from Abyssinia to Yemen in the form of '*mikrab*'. Its Abyssinian form was '*mekurab*' and it meant a church, temple or the apse where the statue of a saint was placed.[153] The word was used by the Christians of Najrān to particularly refer to the apse (*ḥanyah*) in the wall of the church. There is also evidence that the use of *miḥrāb* was common in the churches of Egypt.

Many are accordingly inclined to connect the *miḥrāb* at mosque to the apse at church.[154] Others, such as Creswell, went so far as to specify that it was derived from the *haykal* of Coptic churches.[155] Nonetheless, some scholars have contested such views on the grounds that they do not pay adequate attention to the etymological origin of the term '*miḥrāb*'.[156] Sauvaget, for example, states: 'the mihrab cannot have been a simple, literal copy of the niche used in Coptic liturgy.'[157] Briggs went further to consider the early Muslims' keenness to resist emulation as the grounds to contest the theory about the foreign origin of the *miḥrāb* in Islam. Briggs says:

> [...] as the niche is a very elementary feature in architectural
> development, and as the early Muslims were careful not to imitate

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[151] Theodor Nöeldeke, *Neue Beiträge zur Semitischen Sprachwissenschaft*, (Strasbourg: Neudr. d. Ausg, 1904-10), p. 40.

[152] *Islam*, VL, 1937.

[153] This idea was adopted and even expatiated by Lammens in his *Ziyād ibn Abīh*. Sauvaget argues that the word '*miḥrāb*' was used in the (Near) East in Late Antiquity to refer to 'semi-circular recess or rounded niche'. *Mosque and the Palace*, p. 134.

[154] See, for example, G. Fehérvári, 'Miḥrāb', in *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd edn, VII (1993), pp. 7-15 (p. 9).

[155] Creswell, *Early Muslim Architecture*, I. I, 148.

[156] Jean Sauvaget, 'The Mosque and the Palace', in *Early Islamic Art and Architecture*, ed. by Jonathan M. Bloom (Hampshire: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2002), pp. 109-47 (p. 133).

[157] Sauvaget, 'Mosque and Palace', p. 143-4, n. 185.

Christian or other infidel ritual for their worship, it seems more likely

that they adopted the niche-form for its simplicity rather than because

it was an established characteristic of a Christian church or of a

Buddhist temple.[158]

Unlike the altar, the apse is not a main component of church architecture as many churches are lacking it. The main difference between the *miḥrāb* and the altar or the apse lies in the function of each of them.[159]

Is there any possibility that the *miḥrāb* was inspired from any of the Prophet's acts or sayings? For what reason was it introduced? Was this reason compliant with *Ḥadīth*? Talking about the mosque of the Prophet, al-ʿUmarī (*ca.* 740/1340) related: '[...] and its *qiblah* was made of *labin*. Some say: "from stones built on accretion (*ḥijārah manḍūdah baʿḍuhā ʿalā baʿḍ*) [...].'"[160] Also, speaking of the mosque of Qubāʾ, al-ʿUmarī reported, on the authority of Abū Khaythamah: 'when the Prophet laid its foundations (*assasahū*), he was the first to put a stone in its *qiblah*. Then, Abū Bakr brought a stone and put it [...].'[161] Shāfiʿī commented that there is a possibility that the word *qiblah*, here, is used to refer to the *miḥrāb* and not only the *qiblah* wall.[162] Al-Samhūdī also said: 'They put the palm trunks in

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[158] Briggs, *Muhammadan Architecture*, p. 59. For a detailed discussion about the origin of *miḥrāb*, see G. Fehérvári, 'Miḥrāb', in *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd edn, VII (1993), pp. 7-15; Serjeant, 'Miḥrāb', pp. 439-53; Estelle Whelan, 'The Origins of the *Miḥrāb Mujawwaf*: a Reinterpretation' in *Early Islamic Art and Architecture*, ed. by Jonathan M. Bloom, The Formation of the Classical Islamic World, 23 (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2002), pp. 373-91; George C. Miles, *Miḥrāb* and *ʿAnaza* : A study in Islamic Iconography', in *Early Islamic Art and Architecture*, ed. by Jonathan M. Bloom, The Formation of the Classical Islamic World, 23 (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2002), pp. 149-65.

[159] See Muʾnis, p. 68.

[160] Al-ʿUmarī, *Masālik al-Abṣār fī Mamālik al-Amṣār*, ed. by Aḥmad Zakī Pāsha, (Cairo: Dār al-Kutub al-Miṣriyyah, 1924), I, 124. The same account is also mentioned by al-Suhaylī on the authority of Ibn Isḥāq. Al-Suhaylī, II, 339.

[161] Al-Diyārbakrī, I, 344; al-ʿUmarī, I, 107. See also al-Suhaylī, II, 332. Ibn Kathīr mentions a similar *ḥadīth* about the laying out of the *qiblah* of the Madīnah mosque. Ibn Kathīr, IV, 539.

[162] Shāfiʿī, *ʿImārah ʿArabiyyah*, p. 598.

rows at the *qiblah* and made its two sides of stone, (*faṣṣaffū al-nakhla qiblatan lahū wa jaʿalaū ʿiḍādatayhī min ḥijārah*).'[163] Shāfiʿī commented that as 'ʿiḍādaḥ' means a side of a niche-shaped [architectural element],'[164] a *miḥrāb mujawwaf* might have been employed. Shāfiʿī continued to argue that the alcove of such early *miḥrābs* (which were built in the time of the Prophet) was made from the difference between the thicknesses of two *labin* walls, one protruding and the other receding. He argued that these primitive *miḥrābs* could have taken the same form of that of the mosque at Qaṣr al-Ukhayḍar (figure 42).[165] Shāfiʿī, subsequently, assumes that *miḥrābs* were known as early as the second year AH at the mosque of the Prophet at Madīnah and that of Qubāʾ. According to him, the *miḥrābs* in early mosques might have taken the form of a simple sign in the *qiblah* wall, and that they were developed in Iraq, Syria, Egypt and North Africa to suit the relatively advanced arrangement of the mosques in these places.[166]

Whether the *miḥrāb*, as known in later times, was derived from any of the Prophet's acts and sayings or not, his keenness to lay out the *qiblah* wall for the mosques he attended should have inspired his Companions and the later generations with the inevitability of marking the *qiblah* out. In fact, all accounts and *ḥadīths* which talk about the Prophet marking out the *qiblah* give an impression that the term 'qiblaḥ', designates the front wall of the mosques. This seems understandable, as this wall, or rather the straight line it represents, is the direction to which worshippers must be orientated. Even in later times, the *miḥrāb* was not significant for itself; prayers are not requested to face the central point of the *miḥrāb* but the straight line on which it is located. This might explain why the Prophet, and later on the

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[163] See also al-Bukhārī, *ḥadīth* no. 428; Abū Dāwūd, *ḥadīth* no. 453.

[164] For a detailed discussion on how this statement could be interpreted, see chapter 4.

[165] Shāfiʿī, *ʿImārah ʿArabiyyah*, pp. 599-600.

[166] Shāfiʿī, *ʿImārah ʿArabiyyah*, p. 611.

Companions, was ardent to lay out the *qiblah* wall properly. In this sense, the *miḥrāb* seems a superfluous element. However, the interest of defining the central point in the *qiblah* wall (or rather line), and which could have led to the adoption of the traditional *miḥrāb*, might also have been inspired by some of the Prophet's acts. Many *ḥadīths* in al-Bukhārī and other compilations state that the Prophet used to plant a spear (ʿ*anazah* or *ḥarbah*) in front of him when he went out to the *muṣalla al-ʿīd*.[167] According to *Ḥadīth* commentators, the function of this ʿ*anazah* was to mark the *qiblah* and to serve as a *sutrah*[168] for the Prophet and the congregation. In another *ḥadīth*, the Prophet treated this central point of the *qiblah* wall with some measure of interest. On the authority of Jābir b. Usāmah al-Jahmī, the Prophet marked a mosque out for a group of Companions and pierced a piece of wood in the *qiblah*, [and] he put it upright.[169]

The importance of having a sign indicating the *qiblah* direction can be realized by knowing the importance of being orientated towards it. According to one *ḥadīth*, the act of facing the *qiblah*, during prayers, is calculated as one of three actions by which a man could be defined as a Muslim.[170]

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[167] Al-Bukhārī, *ḥadīths* no. 494-5, 489-500; al-Dārimī, *ḥadīths* no.1449-50; Ibn Khuzaymah, *ḥadīths* no. 798-9; Ibn Saʿd, III, 216-7; Wensinck, p. 223. *Muṣallā* is a given spot in the desert, usually unenclosed, where prayers of annual feasts or those offered to invite rains were frequently performed.

[168] It is a mark that defines the front limit of the spot of land on which a prayer performs *ṣalāt*. On *sutrah*, see also chapter 7.

[169] Abū al-Qāsim Sulaymān b. Aḥmad al-Ṭabarānī, *Al-Muʿjam al-Kabīr*, ed. by Ḥamdī A. al-Salafī, 25 vols (Cairo: Maktabat Ibn Taymiyyah, 1983), *ḥadīths* no. 1786-7. According to al-Albānī, this *ḥadīth* is of a good weight of authenticity. Muḥammad Nāṣir al-Dīn al-Albānī, *Silsilat al-Aḥādīth al-Ḍaʿīfah wal Mawḍūʿah wa Atharuha al-Sayyiʾ fī al-Ummah,* 14 vols (Riyadh, Maktabat al-Maʿārif, 1992), I, p. 646.

[170] Al-Bukhārī, *ḥadīths* no. 391-3; Ibn Ḥajar, *Fatḥ*, II, p.42; Ibn Rajab, III, 51-8. See also Ibn Khuzaymah, *ḥadīth* no. 454.

According to both *Qurʾān* and *Ḥadīth*,[171] it was not until the second year AH that the *qiblah* of Muslim people was diverted from Bayt al-Maqdis at Jerusalem to the Kaʿbah at Mecca. The event of change of the *qiblah* is of a special importance for this discussion about the influence of *ḥadīth* on mosque architecture. When the *qiblah* was first set towards Bayt al-Maqdis,[172] an arbour was set at the front of the Prophet's mosque, which had been located in the north. After changing the *qiblah* direction to Mecca, another arbour was added at the southern part of the mosque.[173] It is believed by some that these two arbours represented the embryo of the later *riwāq*, while the remaining open area they flanked, namely the *raḥbah*, served as the origin of the later *ṣaḥn*.[174]

5.7.5.2.   The *ḥukm* of its adoption

Two divergent views about the *ḥukm* of adopting *miḥrābs* at mosques developed for as early as the time of the *ṣaḥābīs* and early *tābiʿīs*. A group of them argued that the adoption of *miḥrābs* is *makrūh*, 'detested but not prohibited'.[175] The other group believed that it is religiously-accepted.

The former opinion is said to have been adopted by Companions like ʿAbd Allāh b. Masʿūd, Abū Dharr al-Ghifārī[176] and ʿAlī b. Abī Ṭālib.[177] The latter, for instance, is reported to have disliked praying in the *ṭāq* 'an early

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[171] Mālik, *Muwaṭṭaʾ*, *ḥadīth* no. 546; al-Bukhārī, *ḥadīths* no. 403, 4488-94; al-Dārimī, *ḥadīth* no. 1270; Ibn Rajab, III, 99-102. See also Ibn Khuzaymah, *ḥadīths* no. 430-6; Abū al-Walīd Sulaymān b. Khalaf b. Saʿd al-Bājī, *Al Muntaqā: Sharḥ 'Muwaṭṭaʾ Mālik'*, ed. by M. ʿAbd al-Qādir ʿAṭā, 9 vols (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyyah, 1999), II 398-9.

[172] The Prophet is said to have prayed facing Bayt al-Maqdis for sixteen or seventeen months.

[173] Al-Barzanjī, p. 10; Fikrī, *Madkhal*, p. 171.

[174] Al-Pāshā, *Mawsūʿat*, I, 49.

[175] For more details, see Ibn Ḥazm, *Muḥallā*, IV, 239-40.

[176] Abū Dharr (d. 31/652) was one of the closet Companions to the Prophet.

[177] Ibn Abī Shaybah, *ḥadīths* no. 4727-38. ʿAlī b. Abī Ṭālib (23 before Hijrah/599-40/661) was the cousin of the Prophet, the first boy to embrace Islam and the fourth caliph in Islamic history. For 7er and 12er Shīʿīs, ʿAlī is the first imām.

term of concave prayer niche'.[178] Likewise, Anas b. Mālik is said to have disliked the adoption of *maḥārīb* (plural of *miḥrāb*). However, early lexicographers, such as al-Azharī and Ibn Manẓūr, having interpreted the term '*miḥrāb*' as the front of a gathering place, attributed the attitude of Anas to his unwillingness to draw attention to himself with a special place amongst other people.[179] Some of the *ṣaḥābīs* and *tābiʿīs* in this group disliked the adoption of the *miḥrāb* at mosques on the grounds that it is an emulation of a practice which belonged to the followers of other faiths.[180]

In fact, most of the prohibiting *ḥadīths*, which are mainly attributed to *ṣaḥābīs* and not to the Prophet, can be found in a treatise of al-Sūyūṭī called 'Iʿlām al-Arīb bī Ḥudūth Bidʿat al-Maḥārīb'. They are also included in *Muṣannaf* of ʿAbd al-Razzāq,[181] *Muṣannaf* of Ibn Abī Shaybah,[182] and *Sunan* of al-Bayhaqī.[183] The authenticity of many of these *ḥadīths* has also been advocated by some modern *Ḥadīth* scholars such as al-Albānī.[184] Apart from the reported reproachful attitude of some *ṣaḥābīs* and *tābiʿīs* to praying in the *miḥrāb*, there is only one *ḥadīth* (of the Prophet) to say that it is not accepted to adopt it in mosques. This *ḥadīth* is reported by al-Bayhaqī who deemed it as *ḥasan*.[185]

According to Ibn Kathīr, the *salaf*, 'the ancients', denounced the adoption of *miḥrābs* on the grounds that they were invented after the departure of the Prophet.[186] Another reason behind the resentment of early

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[178] Ibn Abī Shaybah, *ḥadīth* no. 4727.

[179] Al-Azharī, V, 17; Ibn Manẓūr, II, 817.

[180] See Ibn Taymiyyah, *Iqtiḍāʾ*, I, 349, 351.

[181] ʿAbd al-Razzāq, *ḥadīths* no. 3899-3903.

[182] Ibn Abī Shaybah, *ḥadīths* no. 4727-38.

[183] Al-Bayhaqī, *ḥadīth* no. 4304.

[184] Al-Albānī, *Daʿīfah*, *ḥadīth* no. 448. See I, pp. 639- 47.

[185] Al-Bayhaqī, *ḥadīth* no. 4304.

[186] Ibn Kathīr, XII, 565-6.

scholars might have been the fact that in most cases *miḥrābs* were lavishly decorated.[187] Al-Albānī, having contested the only *ḥadīth* relating a *miḥrāb* to the Prophet, believes that the adoption of *miḥrābs* is religiously rootless. He argues that the adoption of *miḥrābs* cannot be regarded as one of the *maṣāliḥ mursalah*[188] as its function can be achieved by other orthodox substitutes. According to him, the direction of the *qiblah* can either be indicated by the *minbar* or a small *miḥrāb* set in the *qiblah* wall. Al-Albānī added that should it be true that the adoption of *miḥrābs* is a Christian practice, then it should be replaced by another device such as a column set where the *imām* usually stands.[189]

Many of the early scholars, however, refer to *miḥrābs* as an accepted sign for the *qiblah*, an indispensible feature at any mosque.[190] Some of them even say that it is *wājib*, 'compulsory' to be guided by them in big cities.[191] However, they stipulated that such *miḥrābs* should not be higher than the lines of the congregation behind the *imām*.[192] This last statement implies that what is here meant by *miḥrāb* is a sort of platform at the mosque front. As already hinted, the *miḥrāb* as we know it today was rather called *ṭāq*, 'niche' or *madhbaḥ*, 'altar' in early Islam.[193] In his early *Muṣannaf*, Ibn Abī Shaybah (d. 235/849) mentioned eighteen *ḥadīths* about

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[187] See al-Qazwīnī, *Athār al-Bilād wa Akhbār al-ʿIbād* (Beirut: Dār Ṣādir, [n.d.]), p. 108.

[188] It is one of the main principles of Islamic jurisprudence. According to which new practices, whose *ḥukm* are not clearly found in Islamic teachings, can be allowed if they would bring a benefit for the Muslim community.

[189] Al-Albānī, *Ḍaʿīfah*, I, pp. 643-7. Based on the *ḥadīth* in which the Prophet fixed a piece of wood in the *qiblah* of a mosque, al-Albānī suggests the latter device to denote the *qiblah* direction.

[190] See, for example, Ibn ʿĀbidīn, *Ḥāshiyat Radd al-Mukhtār ʿalā al-Durr al-Mukhtār: Sharḥ Tanwīr al-Abṣār Fiqh Abī Ḥanifah*, 8 vols (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, 2000), I, 433-4,658.

[191] Al-Mirdāwī, II, 298; Ibn Mufliḥ, II 126.

[192] Mālik, *Mudawwanah*, I, 175; Ibn Qudāmah, *Mughnī*, III, 47-9.

[193] See: Ibn Abī Shaybah, *ḥadīths* no. 4727-44.

the *ṣaḥābīs'* divergent attitude towards praying in what we know as *miḥrāb*. In these the word '*ṭāq*' was used twelve times, '*madhbaḥ*' was used five times while '*miḥrāb*' was used only twice. The heading he chose for these *ḥadīths* is: 'praying in the *ṭāq*'. The use of the preposition 'in' here connotes that what was being referred to in these *ḥadīths* was truly a niche. For a majority of scholars, it is *jāʾiz*, 'allowed' to perform prayers in it.[194] Ibn Abī Shaybah told us of quite a number of *ṣaḥābīs* and *tābiʿīs*, such as al-Barāʾ b. ʿĀzib,[195] Suwayd b. Abī Ghaflah[196] and Saʿīd b. Jubayr[197] who are said to have prayed in the *ṭāq*.[198] What makes the act of these personages significant to our discussion is that they are traditionally known as trustworthy narrators of *Ḥadīth*. On top of that, the Prophet himself was said to have prayed in what the narrator called '*miḥrāb*'. Narrated Wāʾil b. Ḥajar: 'I attended the Prophet when he went to the mosque and entered the *miḥrāb* and then raised his hands and said: "Allāhu Akbar, 'God is the Greatest'."'[199]

It seems that the previous divergent attitudes attributed to Companions regarding the willingness to pray in *miḥrāb*, and which could also reflect later polemics, did not preclude agreement among early *faqīhs*

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[194] Only few scholars disagree. We are told, on the authority of ʿAbd al-Razzāq, that al-Ḥasan [al-Baṣrī], for example, avoided praying in the *miḥrāb*. ʿAbd al-Razzāq, *ḥadīth* no. 3901.

[195] He was a prominent Companion and a trustworthy narrator of *Ḥadīth*.

[196] Suwayd b. Ghaflah learned *Ḥadīth* from the rightly-guided caliphs and some others. His transmitted *ḥadīths* are regarded as trustworthy by al-Nakhʿī and al-Shaʿbī. Suwayd died in 81/700. See: Ibn Saʿd, VI, 76.

[197] Saʿīd b. Jubayr (665-714) is a prominent *tābiʿī* and one of those who transmitted the largest number of *ḥadīths* in the second generation after the Companions.

[198] Ibn Abī Shaybah, *ḥadīths* no. 4739-44; ʿAbd al-Razzāq, *ḥadīth* no. 3898.

[199] Al-Bayhaqī, *ḥadīth* no. 2335. The *miḥrāb* referred to here is not a concave prayer niche, but presumably the front of the mosque. The authenticity of this *ḥadīth*, however, is disputed. According to al-Kawtharī, it is authentic (*Iʿlām al-Arīb*, p. 6), while al-Albānī sees it as weak (al-Albānī, *Ḍaʿīfah*, I, 643).

that prayer is valid if conducted in it, mainly because the whole land is originally a place where a Muslim could pray. Also, the *miḥrāb* was, and still is, generally accepted to be adopted at mosques. After reviewing the opinions of earlier scholars, al-Zarkashī (d. 794/1392), who wrote the most important book about the religious ordinances of mosques, stated: 'it is well-known that it is allowed – with no detestation at all – to adopt the *miḥrāb*.' Al-Zarkashī also told us that people until his time had adopted it without any objection.[200] In the same way, *miḥrābs* are still used to the present with common acceptance, even in the most sacred mosques such as those of Mecca and Madīnah.

5.7.6. The minaret

The word 'minaret' is the English equivalent of the Arabic '*manārah*'. The latter is derived from '*manār*' which means banner, and possibly beacon, by which the people are guided during wars or parades.[201] Since these are usually high symbols that could be seen from a far distance, the term '*manārah*' is derived to designate the minaret.[202] Traditionally, a minaret is an elevated structure used by muezzins to call to prayers. It is known to the Muslim people as: '*miʾzanah*', '*manārah*' or '*ṣawmaʿah*'. While the first two terms were common in Egypt and Syria, the third was dominant in North Africa.

While for many scholars the origin of the minaret is to be sought in pre-Islamic architectural types (see 7.9.2), there is a possibility that it was inspired by the fact that the Prophet's muezzin used to call for prayers from the highest spot in the mosque vicinity.[203] While we possess no historical or archaeological evidence to suggest that the mosque of the Prophet had a minaret, as it is definable today, before the works of al-Walīd, there are

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[200] Al-Zarkashī, p. 364.

[201] Ibn Manẓūr, VI, 4572.

[202] Al-Rāzī, *Mukhtār*, pp. 602-3; al-Zamakhsharī, II, 307-8.

[203] Briggs, *Muhammadan Architecture*, p. 22.

reports that in the Prophet's time the muezzin used an *istiwānah*, 'column' (some said *manārah*) at the adjacent house of his wife Ḥafṣah.[204] It is reported that a quadrangular *istiwān*, at the house of ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿUmar which was located in front of the mosque, was used for *adhān*.[205] Bilāl is said to have used *aqtāb*[206] to mount it. It was seen by al-Aqshahrī[207] who said that it was located at the house of ʿUbayd Allāh b. ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿUmar.[208] It was quadrangular and called al-Miṭmār. Sauvaget believed that this primitive upper platform was the forerunner of later minarets.[209] Ibn Isḥāq al-Ḥarbī (d. 285/898) said: 'we have not been told that the mosque [of the Prophet] had a minaret (*manārah*) [to be] used for *adhān* other than that *istiwān* and the *aqbāb*. [Yet], when ʿUmar b. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz [re-]built [it], he made for the mosque four *manarāt*, one in each corner.'[210]

It is also said that prayers were called for from the roof of a house owned by a woman from Banū al-Najjār.[211]

> Narrated ʿUrwah b. al-Zubayr: A woman of Banū al-Najjār said: 'My house was one of the tallest around the mosque, so Bilāl, [the Prophet's muezzin] used to mount it to call for the prayers of al-Fajr [...].'[212]

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[204] Ibn al-Najjār, p. 164; al-Samhūdī, *Wafāʾ*, II, 530. This primitive minaret is said to have had *aqtāb* mounted by Bilāl, the Prophet's muezzin.

[205] Al-Samhūdī, *Wafāʾ*, II, 530.

[206] *Aqtāb* is the plural of *qitb* or *qatab*. It is a small gear (saddle) in the size of a camel hump usually put on its back. Ibn Manẓūr, V, 3523-4.

[207] Aqshahrī (731/1330, 737/1336, or 739/1338) was the author of *Al-Rawḍah al-Firdawsiyyah*. See Rosenthal, *A History of Muslim Historiography*, p. 476, n.7.

[208] Ibn al-Najjār, p. 164; al-Samhūdī, *Wafāʾ*, II, 530.

[209] Sauvaget, p. 156.

[210] Ibn Isḥāq al-Ḥarbī, *Kitāb al-Manāsik*, p. 368; Ibn Rustah, p. 70; al-Maṭarī, p. 81; al-Samhūdī, II, 526. On these minarets, see Ibn Jubayr, *Al-Riḥlah* (Beirut: Dār Ṣādir lil Ṭibāʿah wal Nashr, [1964 (?)]), p. 173.

[211] Al-Samhūdī, *Wafāʾ*, II, 529. See also Wensinck, p. 12.

[212] Abū Dāwūd, *ḥadīth* no. 519; al-Bayhaqī, *ḥadīth* no. 1995.

Further, Ibn Saʿd said: 'Bilāl was calling to the prayers on it [namely the woman's house] as early as he began to call for the prayers and until the Prophet built [a roof for] his mosque. After the Prophet built [a roof for] his mosque Bilāl used its roof to call for the prayers. An elevated place had been set for him.'[213] Al-Shihrī suggested that the roofs of the adjacent houses and the roof of the mosque itself might have been used for the purpose of calling to prayers.[214] Yet, there should have been thinking that minarets must be added to the mosque of the Prophet, particularly after the adjacent houses were demolished. The expansion of the towns and the increase of their populations might have prompted the erection of minarets.[215]

While such reports imply that the minaret derived from a prophetic prototype, the later foreign architectural influences it received are almost incontrovertible. More importantly, the group of *ḥadīths* about *adhān*, 'call to prayers', must have inspired the early believers to adopt a high structure, of no specific form, for the muezzin so that his voice could reach as many people as possible.

As for the *ḥukm* of building minarets and attaching them to mosques, a majority of Muslim scholars have agreed that it is *jāʾiz*, 'allowed' to do so on the account that similar procedures were approved by the Prophet.[216] Ibn Abī Shaybah narrates on the authority of Hishām b. ʿUrwah: 'the Prophet ordered Bilāl to call for the prayers on the Kaʿbah on the day of Mecca conquest.'[217] ʿAbd Allāh b. Shaqīq al-ʿAqīlī[218] said that it is of the

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[213] Ibn Saʿd mentions that the woman was al-Nawwār bt. Mālik, the mother of Zayd b. Thābit to whom the task of collecting the *Qurʾān* was consigned. Ibn Saʿd, V, 306. See also al-Samhūdī, *Wafāʾ*, II, 529.

[214] Al-Shihrī, *ʿImārat al-Masjid al-Nabawī*, p. 121.

[215] See al-Shihrī, *ʿImārat al-Masjid al-Nabawī*, p. 122.

[216] See al-Khuḍayrī, pp. 49-51; al-Sadlān, pp. 12-3.

[217] Ibn Abī Shaybah, *ḥadīth* no. 2344; Ibn Saʿd, III, 215.

Prophet's *sunnah* to call for the prayers in the *manārah* and to do *iqāmah*, 'the second call for prayer' in the mosque.[219] This *ḥadīth* implies that the *salaf* regarded a practice to be of the *sunnah* if it had evolved from any of the Prophet's acts or sayings. While according to traditions, the mosque had no minaret (as later defined) in the time of the Prophet, the narrator deemed it a part of the *sunnah* perhaps on the grounds of the above *ḥadīths*. These *ḥadīths* are reported by Abū Dāwūd under the heading of 'calling for prayers on the *manārah*', by al-Bayhaqī under 'calling for prayers in the *manārah*',[220] and by Ibn Abī Shaybah under 'the muezzins calling for prayers on an elevated place, a *manārah* and the like'. Ibn Sirīn (33-110/ 653–728) criticized the muezzin moving his body around while calling for prayers in the *manārah*,[221] but he, like other early scholars,[222] is not reported to have condemned its adoption.

However, some Muslim authorities in the present denounce minarets, especially when they are lofty and decorated, on the basis that they are pretentious, superfluous and similar to church towers.[223] They have argued that there might have been a need to adopt them in the past before

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[218] He is a trustworthy narrator of *Ḥadīth* according to a majority of early Muslim scholars.

[219] Ibn Abī Shaybah, *ḥadīth* no. 2345.

[220] Al-Bayhaqī, I, 625-6.

[221] Ibn Abī Shaybah, *ḥadīth* no. 2190.

[222] Some early religious authorities such as Ibn Jurayj and Abū Ḥanīfah said that it is allowed to pray in the *miʾdhanah*, 'minaret'. Ibn Abī Shaybah, *ḥadīths* no. 6221-2.

[223] For these views, see, Khayr al-Dīn al-Wānilī, *Al-Masjid fil Islām*, 2nd edn (Kuwait: al-Dār al-Salafiyyah, 1980), pp. 18-20. For example, the mosques built by the late orthodox Wahhābīs (18th century onwards) in Arabia were void of minarets for the same approach. See R. Hillenbrand, 'Manāra, Manār', in *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd edn, VI (1991) pp. 361-8, (p. 361). Some scholars, while accepting the adoption of minarets, criticize elevating and decorating them. See al-Sadlān, p. 13; al-Khuḍayrī, 'Aḥkām', p. 51; Manṣūr al-Jadīd, 'al-Masjid fil Islām, Ḥudūd Tarīkh: Abraz al-Ḍawābiṭ al-Sharʿiyya al-Mutaʿalliqa bi ʿimārahtih', in *Sijil Buḥūth Nadwat ʿImārat al-Masājid*, ed. by M. A. Ṣāliḥ and A. al-Qūqānī (Riyadh, Kulliyyat al-Imārah wal Takhṭīṭ, 1999), VIII, pp. 89-132 (pp. 125-7); ʿUthmān and al-Imām, pp. 145-7.

the speakers are employed for *adhān*, but now this need no longer exists.[224] Others, on the other hand, have argued that even today, minarets are still doing their function because they help the speakers do their job more efficiently, and because they have become an unmistaken mark for mosque existence.[225] It is argued by Ettinghausen and Grabar that the early minarets, which were built in the newly conquered towns where Muslim dwellers were only a minority, had two functions: conveying *adhān* to the scattered Muslim individuals, and announcing the presence of an Islamic centre.[226] It should be noted, however, that the minaret was not a standard component of mosque architecture; some mosques had no minarets while others had four or more.[227]

5.7.7.   *Minbar*, 'pulpit'

The word *minbar* in Arabic is derived from the verb '*nabara*' which means 'to raise (something)', especially one's voice.[228] Technically, the *minbar* is the place from which the *khaṭīb*, 'preacher' delivers the *khuṭbah*, 'a religious talk at the Friday sermon',[229] usually with a loud voice. According to Ibn Manẓūr, it was called a *minbar* because of its elevation.[230] According to traditions, the first *minbar* in Islam was adopted by the Prophet himself. The Prophet is reported to have preached while standing on it, and also used to sit on it between the two *khuṭbahs*.[231] The story of making the *minbar* of the Prophet is mentioned in al-Bukhārī as well as other *Ṣaḥīḥ* books of *Ḥadīth*:

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[224] For these views, see al-Wānilī, pp. 18-20.

[225] Al-Khuḍayrī, p. 62.

[226] Ettinghausen and Grabar, p. 36-7.

[227] Fikrī, *Madkhal*, p. 276.

[228] Ibn Manẓūr, VI, 4323; al-Zamakhsharī, II, 242, al-Rāzī, *Mukhtār*, p. 565.

[229] *Khuṭbah* is a religious talk at the Friday sermon. In many cases, it deals political and social concerns.

[230] Ibn Manẓūr, VI, 4323.

[231] Al-Bukhārī, *ḥadīths* no. 917-20, 928; Muslim, *ḥadīths* no. 1994-6.

Chapter 5: Specifications of mosque architecture according to Ḥadīth

It is narrated on the authority of Sahl [b. Saʿd al-Sāʿidī] that the Prophet sent someone to a woman telling her: 'Order your slave carpenter to make a wooden pulpit (*aʿwādan*) for me to sit on.[232]

Narrated Jābir: a woman said: 'O Allāh's Apostle! Shall I get something constructed for you to sit on as I have a slave who is a carpenter?' He replied, 'Yes, if you like.' So, she had that pulpit constructed.[233]

Ibn Ḥajar commented that it might have been that the women first offered a pulpit to be made for the Prophet and that he agreed. Therefore, when the work delayed the Prophet asked her to accelerate it.[234] This assumption is backed by another *ḥadīth* in al-Bukhārī:

Narrated Abū Ḥāzim b. Dinār: some men came to Sahl b. Saʿd al-Sāʿidī while they were disputing on what thing the *minbar* [of the Prophet] was made of. When they asked him about that, he replied: 'By Allāh! I do know what thing it was made of [in another narration, 'there is no one left who knows more about this than I do'],[235] and I saw it the first day it was set, and the first day the Prophet sat on it. The Prophet sent to so and so, a woman from Anṣār who was named by Saʿd [the sub-narrator was not certain of her name]: "Order your slave carpenter to make a wooden pulpit (*aʿwādan*) for me to sit on when I speak to people [namely preach]." So, she ordered him [namely her slave carpenter]. So, he made it of tamarisk wood (*ṭarfāʾ*) from the forest and brought it. Then, she sent it to the Prophet and it was placed here. Then, I saw the Prophet while praying on it and saying: "Allāhū Akbar" and then bowing (*rakaʿa*) while he was on it. Then, he stepped down off it and prostrated in the *aṣl al-minbar* and then returned. When he was finished, he addressed the people and said: "O people! I did that

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[232] Al-Bukhārī, *ḥadīth* no. 448; Wensink, p. 198.

[233] Al-Bukhārī, *ḥadīth* no. 449; Khan's transl.; Wensinck, p. 198.

[234] Ibn Ḥajar, *Fatḥ*, II, p. 90.

[235] Ibn Mājah, *ḥadīth* no. 1416; al-Bayhaqī, *ḥadīths* no. 5229-30; Juynboll, *Canonical Ḥadīth*, p. 584.

so that you should take me as a model and learn my prayer.'"[236]

According to other reports, the *minbar* was made for the Prophet by Tamīm al-Dārī after he gained weight (see also 4.6.3).[237] According to another the Prophet complained of some weakness in his feet. Therefore, Tamīm, having been from Palestine, said: 'O Allāh's Apostle! I shall make a *minbar* for you just as I saw [the people do] in Sham.' The idea put forward by Tamīm was discussed by the chief *ṣaḥābīs* who then agreed.[238] Then, it was made by a servant of al-ʿAbbās, a Muslim uncle of the Prophet, called Kulāb. According to other reports he was called Mīnā or Ṣabāḥ.[239] According to another, it was a Roman convert called Bāqūm or Bāqūl.[240] Yet, another account argued that the adoption of the *minbar* was suggested by an unnamed Companion so that the Prophet would be easily seen and his *khuṭbah* would be clearly heard at the Friday sermon.[241]

Ibn al-Najjār, on the authority of al-Wāqidī, relates that the *minbar* was made for the Prophet in 8/629 to replace the stem of palm-tree upon which he had been accustomed to lean.[242] The Prophet's *minbar* was no more than a seat of three steps. The Prophet used to sit on its upper step with his feet resting on the second, upon which Abū Bakr later sat on when he succeeded the Prophet as the first caliph in Islam. Later, ʿUmar b. al-Khaṭṭāb, the second caliph, used to sit on the lower step and put his feet

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[236] Al-Bukhārī, *ḥadītha* no. 917, 2094, 2569; Muslim, *ḥadīth* no. 1216; Abū Dāwūd, *ḥadīth* no. 1080; al-Bayhaqī, *ḥadītha* no.5697; Wensinck, p. 198.

[237] Abū Dāwūd, *ḥadīth* no. 1081, al-Samhūdī, *Wafāʾ*, II, 391.

[238] Ibn Rajab, III, 315. According to Ibn Saʿd, it was the Prophet who asked them about their opinions: *Ṭabaqāt*, I, 216.

[239] Ibn Saʿd, I, 215; Ibn al-Najjār, 157-8; Quṭb al-Dīn, p. 101; Ibn Rajab, III, 315. Other reports, according to al-Samhūdī, indicate that he was the slave of Nuṣaybah al-Makhzūmī. Al-Samhūdī, *Wafāʾ*, II, 391.

[240] ʿAbd al-Razzāq, *ḥadīth* no. 5244; Ibn Rajab, III, 316.

[241] Ibn Saʿd, I, 217.

[242] Al-Bayhaqī, *ḥadīth* no. 5696; Ibn al-Najjār, pp. 155-60; al-Samhūdī, *Wafāʾ*, II, 388.

right on the ground.[243] The above *ḥadīth*, according to which the Prophet prayed on the *minbar*, would imply that it was a flat wide structure. Yet, the fact that the Prophet stepped down off it to prostrate himself can also support the idea that it was a simple three-stepped seat.

Having been derived from prophetic conduct, the adoption of *minbars* is hence seen by most Muslim scholars,[244] past and present, to belong to the *sunnah* of the Prophet. Nonetheless, many early medieval Muslim authorities condemned the high and lavishly decorated ones because they distracted the worshippers, disrupted their front lines and occupied an unacceptably big area of the mosque front.[245]

5.7.8.   Doors

The installation of doors in mosques is advisable, if not binding, since they would keep their interior clean and protected. We have already seen (4.6.4) that the mosque of the Prophet had three doors in his lifetime.[246] According to traditions, mosques were usually provided with doors in the time of the Prophet and the Companions. On the authority of al-Bukhārī, Ibn Abī Mulaykah said to Ibn Jurayj: 'I wish you had seen the mosques of Ibn ʿAbbās and their doors.'[247]

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[243] Ibn al-Najjār, p. 159.

[244] Ibn Hubayrah, I, 233; al-Zarkashī, p. 373; Ibn Mufliḥ, III, 175; Shihāb al-Dīn Muḥammad Abū ʿAbd al-Raḥmān Abū Shāmah al-Shāfiʿī, *Al-Baʿith ʿalā Inkār al-Bidaʿ wal Ḥawādith*, 2nd edn (Mecca: Maṭbaʿat al-Nahḍah al-Ḥadīthaḥ, 1978), p. 21; al-Sadlān, p. 10; al-Khuḍayrī, 'Aḥkām', pp. 51-2; M. ʿUthmān and ʿAwaḍ al-Imām, p. 143.

[245] See al-Zarkashī, p. 374-5; Ibn al-Ḥājj, *Al-Madkhal*, 4 vols (Cairo: Maktabat Dār al-Turāth, [n.d]) II, 212-3. Becker argues that in early Islam, the *minbar* was simply a throne and that it lacked religious significance. According to him, the Prophet did not adopt a *minbar* until he became a great man receiving envoys and that this tradition was followed by his caliphs. See Becker, *Die Kanzel im Kultus des Islam*, quoted by Creswell, *Early Muslim Architecture*, I, I. This theory however, has been challenged by a number of later scholars such as Sauvaget, Fikrī, Shāfiʿī and al-Shihrī. The latter for example, argues that such assumption contradicts what is known about the Prophet's modesty.

[246] Ibn Saʿd, I, 206.

[247] Al-Bukhārī, *ḥadīth* no. 81.

5.7.9. *Khawkhah*, 'wicket'

This is a small door set in the wall; the original function of *khawkhah* was illumination. Technically, it is an aperture set in a wall between two adjacent houses.[248] The mosque of the Prophet was abutted by many houses owned by his Companions. Some of these houses, namely those of Abū Ayyūb al-Anṣārī and ʿUthmān b. ʿAffān were still standing and seen by al-Batanūnī (d. 1357/1938).[249] These houses had *khawkhas* onto the mosque. Later in his lifetime, the Prophet ordered the *khawkhas* to be closed except that of Abū Bakr. According to *ḥadīth*, opening such 'doors' into the mosque is banned; Abū Saʿīd al-Khudrī narrated that the Prophet, after praising his comrade Abū Bakr, said: 'Close all these *khawkhas* in the mosque except that of Abū Bakr'.[250]

5.7.10. *Maqṣūrah*

The *maqṣūrah* is a chapel-like structure dedicated for the *imam* to pray inside. The mosque of the Prophet in his time had no *maqṣūrah*. The question to whom the introduction of *maqṣūrah* is attributed is a moot point.[251] As in the case of the *miḥrāb*, a number of late *ṣaḥābīs* and *tābiʿīs* are reported to have prayed at the *maqṣūrah* and others are reported to have refrained from doing so or criticised such act. The first group includes names such as: Anas, al-Ḥasan [al-Baṣrī], Sālim and al-Qāsim,[252] while the other includes al-Aḥnaf b. Qays and al-Shaʿbī.[253] Some of the latter group disliked praying in the *maqṣūrah* because it was introduced after the departure of the Prophet.[254] While there are reports

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[248] Ibn Manẓūr, II, 1284.

[249] M. Labīb al-Batanūnī, *Al-Riḥlah al-Ḥijāziyyah*, 2nd edn (Cairo: [Matbaʿat al-Jammāliyyah (?)], 1911), p. 243

[250] Al-Bukhārī, *ḥadīth* no. 467; Ibn Isḥāq, pp. 706-7; Ibn al-Najjār, p. 161; Quṭb al-Dīn, p. 105; Juynboll, *Canonical Ḥadīth*, p. 306.

[251] See 7.9.6.

[252] Ibn Abī Shaybah, *ḥadīths* no. 4642-9.

[253] Ibn Abī Shaybah, *ḥadīths* no. 4650-3.

[254] Al-Zarkashī, p. 375; al-Samhūdī, *Wafāʾ*, II, 512.

that the *maqṣūrah* served other functions at the mosque rather than providing a shelter to the ruler, for many of the strict it is against the spirit of Islam to adopt a device that would segregate the ruler from other people though.[255] Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal is reported to have disliked praying in the *maqṣūrah*.[256] Ibn ʿAqīl explained that Aḥmad disliked it because it was usually related to the tyrants and the lovers of this world. It is also reported that Aḥmad disliked it because it was exclusively set for the sultans and their entourage, while the commons were not permitted to pray in it. [257] Such case of preferential segregation was the main reason for a majority of scholars to dislike the adoption of the *maqṣūrah*.[258] Yet, others, such as Ibn Mufliḥ (d. 763/1362), disliked it, whether attended by guards preventing the mob from praying in it or not, on the grounds that it usually cut the lines of worshippers.[259]

As a result, the dispute on the lawfulness of the adoption of the *maqṣūrah* seems to have ingrained the idea that it should not be adopted by pious rulers unless there was a substantial risk of not so doing. For example, al-Mahdī, the ʿAbbāsid caliph, considered removing the *maqāṣīr* from all congregational mosques in 161/778.[260] A majority of recent scholars, however, see that it is *jāʾiz* to build the *maqṣūrah* and pray in it on the grounds that there is no religiously-fixed form of the mosque.[261] Some have even compared it to the partition of *ḥaṣir*, 'mat', which the Prophet reportedly took in the mosque to seclude himself for night prayers during the month of Ramadan (see 4.6.1).[262]

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[255] Ibn al-Ḥājj, II, 204-5. See also Pedersen, 'Masdjid', p. 662.

[256] Ibn Mufliḥ, II, 117.

[257] Ibid.

[258] See al-Zarkashī, 375.

[259] I Ibn Mufliḥ, II, 117.

[260] Al-Ṭabarī quoted by Pedersen, 'Masdjid', p. 662.

[261] Al-Khuḍayrī, 'Aḥkām', P. 52; al-Sadlān, p. 15.

[262] See Sauvaget, 'Mosque and Palace', pp. 139, and references are therein. On this partition, see 4.6.1.

5.7.11. Floor coverings

The floor of the mosque in the time of the Prophet and his Companions was not covered by fabrics like mosques today. *Ḥadīth* indicates that in the lifetime of the Prophet, the floor of the mosque was covered by sand. This seems later to have been replaced with pebbles.

> Narrated Muʿayqīb: The Prophet talked about [presumably blamed] the one who evens the sand where he prostrates. He said: 'If you necessarily do it, then do it only once.'[263]

> On the authority of Abū Dharr, the Prophet said: 'If one of you intends to pray, he should not scrub the pebbles, since he is in front of Mercy.'[264]

> Ibn ʿUmar reported: 'One night, we became wet by rains, insomuch that each one [of us] began to collect pebbles in his clothes and strew them beneath himself. The Prophet then applauded: 'How good this is!'[265]

However, the Prophet is reported to have prayed on more comfortable floor coverings, such as a mat, rug and tanned pelt.[266] In spite of not having been used to cover the floor of his mosque, such coverings were occasionally used by the Prophet to prostrate himself.[267] For example, it is narrated by Maymūnah that he prayed on a *khumrah*, 'a small mat only sufficient for one's face and hands.'[268]

Narrated Anas b. Mālik: His grand-mother, Mulaykah, treated the

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[263] Muslim, *ḥadīth* no. 1219.

[264] Ibn Ḥanbal, *Musnad*, V, 150,

[265] Abu Dāwūd, *ḥadīth* no. 458-60.

[266] Al-Bayhaqī, *ḥadīths* no. 4190-200; Ibn Khuzaymah, *ḥadīths* no. 1004-8; Ibn Qudāmah, II, 479-8; al-Khaṭṭābī, I, 183. See also Patricia L. Baker, *Islam and the religious Arts*, (London: Continuum, 2004), pp. 78-80.

[267] See M. Bloom, 'Mosque', *EQ*, III (2003), 431.

[268] Al-Bukhārī, *ḥadīth* no. 381. See also al-Dārimī, *ḥadīths* no. 1413-4.

Prophet to a meal which she herself had prepared. He ate from it and said, 'Get up! I shall lead you in prayer.' Anas added: 'I took my *ḥaṣīr*, 'mat', washed it with water, as it had become dark because of long use, and the Prophet stood on it.'[269]

Narrated Anas b. Mālik: While we were praying with the Prophet, some of us used to place the ends of their clothes at the place of prostration because of the scorching heat.[270]

Generally, such *ḥadīths* were used in later times to enhance the idea that the floor of the mosque can be covered with different types of covering as long as they do not include ornaments that would distract the worshippers.[271]

5.8. Decoration

Traditions imply a clear contrast between the simple form that was adopted for the mosque of the Prophet in his time and the pompous mosques that were erected in the Umayyad era. However, the quite big number of paradoxical *ḥadīths* about the acceptability of decorating mosques could be indicative of another context for the shaping of *Ḥadīth*, mirrored in the later relevant discussions between the holders of different views.

Mainly depending on relevant *ḥadīths* and resultant discussions of early legalists, we will try in this part of the study to examine Islam's original attitude towards the decoration and elaboration of mosques.

Decoration is the English equivalent for the Arabic '*zakhrafah*'. According to Ibn Manẓūr, it is derived from the word, '*zukhruf*' which originally means 'gold', but later came to be applied to all sorts of

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[269] Al-Bukhārī, *ḥadīth* no. 380.

[270] Al-Bukhārī, *ḥadīth* no. 382. See also Ibn Rajab, III, 12-29

[271] Ibn Ḥajar, *Fatḥ*, II, pp. 28-9.

ornamentation.[272] However, for al-Khaṭṭābī and others, *zakhrafah* is also applied to heightening and perfecting a building and furnishing it with luxurious objects.[273]

There are two main bodies of opinion on the question of decorating mosques. The first is adopted by the *jumhūr* who see that decorating mosques is at least *makrūh*, if not *ḥarām*.[274] Their argument mainly depends on a *ḥadīth* narrated by Anas b. Mālik in which the Prophet warns: 'The Day of Judgment will not come until the people boast at mosques.'[275] The same *ḥadīth* was reported by Ibn Abī Shaybah, but in different words: 'A time will come to the people when they build mosques so as to boast about them and hardly attend them.'[276]

> Narrated Abū Qilābah: having accompanied by Anas b. Mālik, we moved early in the morning (*ghadawnā*) towards the (*zāwiyah*). Then, the Ṣubḥ prayer became due. Anas suggested that we would pray it at this mosque [referring to a mosque they passed by], but the other people said: 'not until we reach the other mosque'. Anas wondered: 'what mosque?' They replied: 'a mosque that has been erected recently.' Then, Anas reprimanded: "the Prophet said a day would come to my *ummah* when they boast at mosques and scarcely attend them."'[277]

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[272] Ibn Manẓūr, p. 1821. See also Abū Bakr Muḥammad b. al-Walīd al-Ṭarṭūshī, *Al-Ḥawādith wal Bidaʿ*, ed. by ʿAlī b. Ḥasan b. ʿAlī al-Ḥalabī, 3rd edn (Dammam: Dār Ibn al-Jawzī, 1998), p. 105.

[273] See al-Khaṭṭābī, I, 140; al-Atharī, *Taḥdhīr al-Rākiʿ wal Sājid min Bidʿat Zakhrafat al-Masājid*, (Beirut: Dār al-Jīl, 1991), p. 15.

[274] Al-Zarkashī, pp. 335-37.

According to Ibn Ḥazm, the act of adorning mosques, except that of Mecca, with gold and silver is *ḥarām*. Ibn Ḥazm, *Muḥallā*, IV, 247.

[275] Abū Dāwūd, *ḥadīth* no. 449; Ibn Mājah; *ḥadīth* no. 739; al-Nasāʾī, *ḥadīth* no. 690; al-Bayhaqī, *ḥadīth* no. 4299; Abū Yaʿlā, *ḥadīth* no. 2798; al-Dārimī, *ḥadīth* no. 1448; Wensinck, p. 154. In another *ḥadīth*, the Prophet says:' I see that you will heighten (*satushrrifūnā*) your mosques after my departure just as how the Jews heightened (*sharrafat*) their synagogues (*kanāʾisihā*) and the Christians heightened their convents (*biyʿahā*). Ibn Mājah, *ḥadīth* no. 740.

[276] Ibn Abī Shaybah, *ḥadīth* no. 3163.

[277] Al-Baghawī, II, 351; al-ʿAynī, IV, 302.

Abū Nuʿaym explained: 'They (will) boast about the multitude of mosques.'[278] According to al-Ṣanʿānī, boasting about mosques can be by saying: 'my mosque is better than yours' or by exaggerating in elevating and decorating them.[279] The meaning of this *ḥadīth* is seconded by Ibn ʿAbbās who emphasized: '[Surely], you will decorate them exactly as what the Jews and the Christians did'.[280] Accordingly, the *jumhūr* assumed that decorating and elevating mosques are objectionable because they are linked with intolerable matters. First, it would happen towards the Day of Judgment; it is known according to other *ḥadīths* that the Day of Judgment will come while the earth is populated by depraved people.[281] Second, adornment and decoration of mosques imitate what had been done by other nations from whom Muslims must differentiate themselves in religious matters.[282] According to Ibn Taymiyyah and al-Dhahabī, imitating other nations in fields like industry and construction is *jāʾiz*, but imitating them in worship and its correlates (like mosques) is *ḥarām*.[283] For example, we are told that the Prophet did not like to use the Jewish shofar or the church bell to gather the congregation for prayer.[284]

These views seem to be backed by a *ḥadīth marfūʿ*,[285] according to which the Prophet says: 'I have not been commanded to do *tashyīd* to

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[278] Ibn Ḥajar, *Fatḥ*, II, 85-6.

[279] Al-Ṣanʿānī, p. 154.

[280] Al-Khaṭṭābī, I, 140-2; Ibn Ḥajar, *Fatḥ*, II, 85-6.

[281] Muslim, *ḥadīth* no. 7373; Abū Yaʿlā, *ḥadīth* no. 5248. See also footnote 109.

[282] Ibn Taymiyyah dedicated his *Iqtiḍāʾ al-Sirāṭ al-Mustaqīm* to discuss this subject. See also al-Khuḍayrī, p. 42.

[283] Ibid.

[284] Ibn Hishām, II, 150.

[285] This *ḥadīth* is also reported by al-Baghawī (*Sharḥ al-Sunnah*, II, 348) and referred to by al-Albānī as *Ṣaḥīḥ*.

mosques.'[286] However limpid the meaning of the word 'tashyīd is, early

jurists and ḥadīth scholars paid much attention to its semantic significance,

for a ḥukm, 'ordinance' would be enacted accordingly. They agreed that

what is meant by tashyīd is not the act of building itself. Rather, it is

heightening and perfecting in one sense,[287] and coating the building with

shīd in another. According to Arabic lexicons, 'shīd' is 'all [materials] that a

wall would be coated with, like stucco and lime-mortar'.[288] However, most

legalists agreed that what is meant by 'tashyīd' in this ḥadīth is heightening

the mosque structure.[289] Commenting on this ḥadīth, Ibn Ḥajar argued that

the Prophet was not commanded to do tashyīd, lest it should be taken as a

pretext for decoration in later times.[290] Al-Ṣanʿānī argues that should the

Prophet not be commanded to do something, this would mean that this

thing is not good; had it been good, Allāh would have commanded his

Messenger to do it.[291] The structure of a mosque, consequently, must not be

high to such extent as it would obstruct breeze or sun from reaching the

neighbours or make it difficult for them to have access to their houses.[292]

The Prophet is reported to have said: 'there should be neither unintentional

nor intentional damage [to others] (lā ḍarara walā ḍirār).'[293] This ḥadīth is

regarded by Ibn al-Rāmī (late 7th/early 8th centuries AH) as a principle of

governing the rights and dues of neighbours in terms of building their

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[286] Abu Dāwūd, ḥadīth no. 448; ʿAbd al-Razzāq, ḥadīth no. 5127; Ibn Abī Shaybah, ḥadīth no.
3164; al-Bayhaqī, ḥadīth no. 4298; al-Ṭarṭūshī, p. 104; Wensinck, p. 155.

[287] al-Baghawī, II, 349; al-Zamakhsharī, P. 529; Ibn Ḥajar, Fatḥ, II, p.86.

[288]Ibn Manẓūr, IV, 2374; al-Fayrūzabādī, I, 303.

[289] Al-Baghawī, II, 349; al-Khaṭṭābī, I, 140; al-ʿAynī, VI, 302; al-Shawkānī, III, 557-8.

[290] Ibn Ḥajar, II, 86.

[291] Al-Ṣanʿānī, 155.

[292] See al-Sadlān, pp. 8-9.

[293] Ibn Mājah, ḥadīths no. 2340-2.

houses.[294]

Another backing for the views of prevention is reported on the authority of Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal who states that the people asked the Prophet to adorn the mosque (*yukaḥḥil*), but he said: '[make it] *ʿarīsh*, 'shelter or arbour' as that of Moses'.[295] Abū ʿAbd Allāh said that they only wanted to paint the mosque with some thing like *kohl*, but the Prophet did not agree.[296] According to another *ḥadīth*, which is also reported by Ibn Ḥanbal and regarded as *mawqūf* by Ibn Abī Shaybah, destruction is the corollary of decorating mosques; 'If you decorate your mosques and adorn your *maṣāḥif*, 'Qurʾān books', then you will be destroyed.'[297] A third *ḥadīth* which the *jumhūr* deemed to second the *ḥukm* of prevention was narrated by Anas. In this, the Prophet said: 'Build mosques and make them *jumman*.'[298] The meaning of 'make them *jumman*' is 'make no *shuraf* at them', and '*shuraf* is what is put on top of a building to decorate it.'[299] ʿAbd Allāh b. Shaqīq who died in 108/726 reported that in his time mosques were built *jumman* and towns (*madāʾin*) were heightened and [adorned with *shurufāt*] (*tusharraf*).[300] On the authority of Ibn Abī Shaybah, Ibn Shaqīq added: 'what

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[294] See Abū ʿAbd Allāh al-Lakhmī (Ibn al-Rāmī al-Bannāʾ), *Al-Iʿlān bī Aḥkām al-Bunyān*, ed. by Farīd b. Sulaymān (Tunisia: Markaz al-Nashr al-Jāmiʿī, 1999), pp. 57-102.

[295] Al-Diyārbakrī, I, 346. More on *ʿarīsh* is found in 5.11.

[296] Ibn Rajab, III, 282; al-Zarkashī, pp. 335-7.

[297] Saʿīd b. Manṣūr, *Sunan*, ed. by Saʿd b. ʿAbd Allah Āl Ḥumayyid, 5 vols (Riyadh: Dār al-Ṣumayʿī, 1993), *ḥadīth* no.165; al-Hindī, *Kanz*, *ḥadīth* no. 23125. This saying is attributed by al-Ṭarṭūshī (p. 105), al-Baghawī (II, 350), and al-Zarkashī (p. 337) to Abū al-Dardāʾ.

[298] Al-Bayhaqī, *ḥadīth*s no. 4300-1.

[299] Al-Nawawī, *Majmū*, II, 183. *Shuraf* is derived from the verb 'sharufa' which has a primary meaning of 'to rise and become salient'. Ibn Manẓūr, IV, 2241.

[300] ʿAbd al-Razzāq, *ḥadīth* no. 5126. The same meaning is reported on the authority of Ibn ʿAbbās who said: 'we have been commanded to build the mosques *jumman* and the towns *shurrafan*.' Ibn Abī Shaybah, *ḥadīth* no. 3169; al-Bayhaqī, *ḥadīth* no. 4303; al-Hindī, *Kanz*, *ḥadīth* no. 23076.

the people have heightened (*sharrafa*) [of mosques] are recent.'[301]

This disapprobatory attitude towards decorating mosques seems to have been retained by the Companions. ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿUmar who, along with Anas, narrated most of the significant *ḥadīths* about mosques said that they, namely Companions, were commanded (by the Prophet) not to pray in a *musharraf*, 'heightened', mosque.[302] Al-Nawawī explains that they thought that such *shuraf*, 'presumably crenellations', would distract the people during prayers.[303] On the authority of Muslim al-Baṭīn, when ʿAlī b. Abī Ṭālib passed by a *musharraf* mosque belonging to [the tribe of] Taym, he said: 'this is the church (*bīʿah*) of Taym.'[304] Also, when ʿAbd Allāh b. Masʿūd passed by a decorated mosque, he said: 'May Allāh curse the one who decorated it; the poor are in more need for the money he spent on that.'[305] The last statement, however, implies that the acceptability of spending money on the elaboration of mosques was subject to the change in the people's cultural life. It is also telling, here, that some of the Companions are reported to have left new mosques to pray in older ones, lest the way of building the former should have had any sort of *bidʿah*. Thābit al-Bunānī recounts: 'Usually, I was walking with Anas b. Mālik, and when we were approaching a mosque and a prayer was due, he asked: "is this new?" If they said: "yes", he was leaving it for another [apparently older] one.'[306] The same attitude is also attributed to such an authority as Mujāhid,[307]

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[301] Ibn Abī Shaybah, *ḥadīth* no. 3168.

[302] Ibn Abī Shaybah, *ḥadīth* no. 3172. Here, the meaning of *musharraf* is 'heightened'. Ibn Manẓūr, IV, P.2242.

[303] Al-Nawawī, *Majmū*, II, 183.

[304] ʿAbd al-Razzāq, *ḥadīth* no. 5128; Ibn Abī Shaybah, *ḥadīth* no. 3167; Ibn Ḥazm, *Muḥallā*, IV, 248. The same attitude is reported to have been adopted by Ibn ʿUmar. See Ibn Taymiyyah, *Iqtiḍāʾ*, I, 348-9.

[305] Al-Zarkashī, p. 336.

[306] Ibn Abī Shaybah, *ḥadīth* no 6300.

[307] Ibid, *ḥadīth* no. 6301.

According to al-Layth, Abū Wāʾil missed prayers at the mosque of so and so, and left many new mosques so as to pray at the mosque of so and so [an old one].[308]

However, for other scholars this *ḥukm* is mitigated to *makrūh karāhat taḥrīm*, 'an abominable action more inclined to *ḥarām* than to *ḥalāl*',[309] while for others it is even *makrūh karāhat tanzīh*, 'an act which is disliked but not forbidden'. They argued that many of the above *ḥadīths* are *ḍaʿīf*, and they, by their text, do not say that decorating mosques are *ḥarām*.[310] Some of the Ḥanafīs,[311] however, said that it is *jāʾiz* and some of them said that it is even *mustaḥab*, 'recommended, but not obligatory'.[312] They assumed that as mosques are prestigious buildings in Islam, they should not be of less majesty and charm than the houses of some Muslim individuals. This group of scholars believed that decoration and adornment would make the mosque a more favoured place, and that would match its grandeur and high status. They added that since God permitted mosques to be *turfaʿ*,[313] 'raised', mosques should be raised in every way that would render them dignified, and decoration is one of these ways. In addition, this group of scholars argued that when al-Walīd decorated the mosque of Damascus, the Muslim scholars by that time did not criticize him.[314]

However well-argued this permissive opinion of the Ḥanafīs seems, it is challenged by a number of *ḥadīths* of higher degree of authenticity

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[308] Ibid, *ḥadīth* no. 6299.

[309] Al-Nawawī, *Majmūʿ*, II, 183; Abū al-Layth Naṣr b. Muḥammad al-Ḥanafī al-Samarqandī, *Tanbīh al-Ghāfilīn*, ed. by al-Sayyid al-ʿArabī (Mansura: Maktabat al-Imān, 1994).

[310] Al-Zarkashī, pp. 336-7; al-Shawkānī, II, 255-60.

[311] The followers of *imām* Abū Ḥanīfah (80/699-148/765) who was the founder of one of the four main orthodox schools of Islamic jurisprudence.

[312] See Ibn ʿĀbidīn, *Ḥāshiyat*, I, 658.

[313] *Qurʾān*, XXIV, 36.

[314] On these views, see al-Khuḍayrī, 'Aḥkām', p. 38.

which, in spite of mainly tackling other issues, seem to enhance the deprecatory *ḥukm* regarding the practice of decorating mosques. In addition to the above *ḥadīth* of the Abyssinian church (see 5.6.1.1) these are:

> Narrated ʿĀʾishah: The Prophet prayed [while clad] in a *khamīṣah*, 'a square garment having marks'. During the prayer, he looked at its marks. So, when he finished the prayer he said, 'Take this *khamīṣah* of mine to Abū Jahm [a Companion] and bring me his *inbijāniyyah*, 'a woollen garment without marks', because it [namely the *khamīṣah*] has diverted my attention during prayers.'[315]

> ʿĀʾishah bought a *numruqah*, 'cushion' including some images (*taṣāwīr*). When the Prophet reached the door, (*faqāma al-nabīyu bil bāb*) he did not enter. So, she said: 'I repent to Allāh from what I have done of sins.' The Prophet said: 'What is this *numruqah*?' She said: 'It is for you to sit on and rest your head on.' He said: 'Verily, the people of these images (*inna aṣḥāba hādhihī al-ṣuwar*) will be agonized (*yaʿadhdhabūna*) on the Day of Judgement; it will be said to them: "Give life to what you had created."' [The Prophet added]: 'angels do not enter a house including images.'[316]

> Narrated ʿĀʾishah: the Prophet came back from travelling while I covered *sahwatan*, 'the interior of a chamber'[317] of mine with *qirām*, 'a garment, usually of wool, or a piece of cloth with marks'[318] including figures of statues (*tamāthīl*). When the Prophet saw it, his face reddened (*talawwana wajhuh*) and said: 'O ʿĀʾishah, the people who have the direst agony from Allāh on the Day of Judgment are those

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[315] Al-Bukhārī, *ḥadīth* no. 373; Khan's transl. See also al-Bukhārī, *ḥadīths* no. 752, 5817; Wensinck, p. 108.

[316] Al-Bukhārī, *ḥadīths* no. 5957, 5961. See also al-Bukhārī, *ḥadīths* no. 5949-51;Muslim, *ḥadīths* no. 5514-19, 5533-45; Abu Dāwūd, *ḥadīths* no. 4152-58; Ibn Mājah, *ḥadīths* no. 3649-51; Ibn Ḥanbal, *ḥadīths* no. 632, 815, 16297-8, Wensinck, p. 108; Juynboll, *Canonical Ḥadīth*, pp. 539. Grabar, *Formation*, p. 82.

[317] Ibn Manẓūr, III, 2137-8.

[318] Ibn Manẓūr, V, 3605.

who imitate God's creation (creatures) (*yuḍāhi'ūna bi khalqillāḥ*).' She said: 'We have torn it and made of it a cushion or two.'[319]

Narrated ʿĀʾishah: the Prophet came back from travelling while I was putting on my door *durnūkan* including [images of] winged horses. He then ordered me to take it off. So I did.[320]

Narrated Jābir: the Prophet forbade having an image at one's house and he forbade [us] to do so.[321]

Based on such *ḥadīths*, most scholars assumed that having the mosques decorated is at least *makrūh*, as it would lead to distraction.[322] The opinion of the *jumhūr* was later advocated by some of the twelfth and thirteenth century AH (eighteenth and nineteenth century AD) legalists. Two of the most renowned of these were al-Ṣanʿānī (1099-1182/1777-1850) and al-Shawkānī (1173-1250/1759-1834). According to the latter, it is erroneous to validate this '*bidʿah*' on the grounds that it would make the mosque a more desirable place. Al-Shawkānī argued that this assumption collides with the *ḥadīths* which specify that decorating mosques was not a part of the *sunnah* of the Prophet, rather it is one of the observances of the non-Muslim nations, a kind of boasting and a precursor of the Day of Judgment.[323] According to the *jumhūr*, the holders of the permissive attitude are also mistaken when saying that decorating mosques should be allowed since it was not condemned by the Companions and early scholars. The *jumhūr*

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[319] Al-Bukhārī, *ḥadīths* no. 5954, 2479, (see also no. 374); Muslim, *ḥadīths* no. 5520, 5524, 5528-33; Muʿammar (in *Muṣannaf ʿAbd al-Razzāq*), *ḥadīth* no. 19484; Ibn Mājah, *ḥadīth* no. 3653; Juynboll, *Canonical Ḥadīth*, p. 617. See also Richard Yeomans, *The Art and Architecture of Islamic Cairo* (Reading: Garnet, 2006), pp. 17-8. On the *ḥadīths* of prohibition, see Ibn Mājah, *ḥadīths* no. 3649-52; Wensinck, p. 108.

[320] Muslim, *ḥadīth* no. 5523; Ibn Ḥanbal, *ḥadīth* no. 26287.

[321] Al-Tirmidhī, *ḥadīth* no, 1749.

[322] See al-Shawkānī (III, 560) and references are therein. See also Wensinck, p. 189.

[323] Al-Shawkānī, III, 559.

argued that the precedent of decorating the two holy mosques of Mecca and Madīnah was a heresy that was not endorsed by the contemporaneous scholars who kept silent so as not to make *fitnah*, 'tribulation', albeit they were not satisfied.[324] According to Mālik, the people resented the decoration which was applied to the *qiblah* of the mosque of Madīnah when al-Walīd made it because it distracted them during prayers (see 7.9.10). Al-Shawkānī explained that some of the early scholars denounced that and expressed their objection to the rulers who commanded mosques to be decorated.[325] According to al-Shawkānī, it could not be an agreeable innovation, '*bidʿah mustaḥsanah*', as claimed by the other scholars, because the Prophet said: 'whosoever innovates something which does not belong to [namely, is not attuned to] our affair [namely Islam]; this thing is rejected.'[326] The *jumhūr* also argued that it is not practical to say that decoration would make the mosque a more desirable place, because it would make it so for those who come to look at such decorations, while those who attend mosques for worship would be distracted.[327] Al-Ṣanʿānī assumed that Allāh does not want mosques [as structures] to be perfected and exalted. Rather, he wants them, as [institutions] to be dignified by attending and showing obedience to Him at them.[328] Al-Shawkānī added that mosques should be *turfaʾ*, 'raised', as *Qurʾān* states, by protecting them from heinous talks and all sorts of impurities.[329]

The reproachful attitude seems also to be backed by the reports which indicate that the mosques built by the Prophet and his rightly guided

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[324] Ibn Ḥajar, *Fatḥ*, II, 86-7; al-Ṣanʿānī, p. 155; al-Shawkānī, III, 559-60.

[325] Al-Shawkānī, III, 560.

[326] Al-Bukhārī, *ḥadīth* no. 2697.

[327] Al-Shawkānī, III, 560.

[328] Ibid.

[329] Al-Shawkānī, III, 558.

successors were void of decoration.[330] The simplicity adopted by the Prophet was held on to by ʿUmar, during whose reign many conquests were achieved and money was, accordingly, abundant. Yet, he renewed the mosque and changed nothing in its form or material.[331] Likewise, ʿUthmān who bequeathed a wealthier kingdom improved the form of the mosque using better materials, but he did not apply what could be called decoration or embellishment.[332] According to Ibn Baṭṭāl, two reasons prevented ʿUmar and ʿUthmān from re-building the mosque of the Prophet in the utmost elegant form available by their time. The first was that the Prophet would not have been pleased; the second was that they wanted to give a good example to later people to apply an economical attitude in this life.[333]

Many scholars condemned the decoration of mosques on the grounds that it would be better if the huge amounts of money involved had been used to pave roads, build houses for the homeless or provide medicine for the patient.[334] On the authority of al-Qāsimī (14th century AH), some of the *fuḍalāʾ* 'people of wisdom' said: '[There were days when] competition reached the culmination in erecting walls and domes, decorating them and spending huge amounts of money on furnishing mosques. Who amongst the people of Baṣrah would have dared [in such days] to say to those *mubtadiʿīn*, 'heretics': "you have erected [such] structures to engage the common people in the *bidaʿ*, 'heresies' and spent your money to convert the religion [namely monotheism] into paganism?"' Al-Qāsimī added: 'this is what happened to the previous nations when they replaced the beauty of religion with the beauty of temples, and the light of faith with the lights of chapels. As a result, they made the rites of Islam similar to the parties of

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[330] See chapters 4 and 6.

[331] This will be discussed in more detail in the next chapter.

[332] Ibn Ḥajar, *Fatḥ*, II, 86-7.

[333] Al-ʿAynī, IV, 304.

[334] See al-Muqaddasī (Collin's transl.), p. 146.

banquets and social meetings. In such extravaganzas, minds would usually become preoccupied by the inscriptions and decorations on walls, the soffits of the windows and the beauty of the minarets. This is in spite of the fact that such [religious] gatherings were originally arranged to free minds from the distractions of this materialistic world and disengage them from the beauties of the mud-made objects.'[335]

Mosques, according to the *jumhūr*, should be built in a simple form sufficient only to shelter the worshippers from weather extremes.[336] It seems that the polemics regarding decorating mosques is old. Al-Jurāʿī reported a relevant conversation between two notable scholars: al-Marūdhī and Abū ʿAbd Allāh. The former told the latter that some people argued that it was allowed to treat the walls of the mosque with stucco on the grounds that the group of *ḥadīths* which forbid graves to be coated with stucco do not say that this prevention should also be applied to the walls of other buildings.[337] Abū ʿAbd Allāh answered that this lacked evidence. Then, al-Marūdhī told the former that imām Abū Aslam al-Ṭūsī (born *ca.* 180/796) did not coat the walls of his mosque with stucco and that he used to remove any stucco on the walls of all the mosques of Tarsus. Abū ʿAbd Allāh agreed and commented that coating the walls with stucco is a manifestation of worldly vanity '*min zīnat al-dunyā*'.[338] Al-Baghawī argued that if decoration was voluntarily subsidized by an individual in appreciation of the rites of Islam, then it is not to be seriously condemned. It is tolerated by some scholars and allowed by others.[339] Al-ʿAynī, on the other hand, said that it is

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[335] Al-Qāsimī, *Iṣlāḥ al-Masājid*, pp. 95-6.

[336] Al-Ṣanʿānī, p. 155.

[337] Muslim, *ḥadīth* no. 2245. For the text of this *ḥadīth*, see 5.6.1.

[338] Ibn Rajab, III, 282, 284; al-Jurāʿī, p. 358.

[339] Al-Zarkashī, p. 336. In another position, al-Baghawī argues that if decoration was funded by the money of the *waqf*, it would be *ḥarām*, and if it was funded by an individual's money then it would be *makrūh* for it usually distracts the worshippers. Al-Baghawī, p. 336.

makrūh in all cases, because it either distracts the worshipper or wastes the money of the Muslim community.[340]

A relevant moot point is the *ḥukm* of using silver and gold to adorn mosques. According to a group of the Ḥanafīs, it is acceptable to do so, while some of them recommend it. The Mālikīs,[341] on the other hand, argue that it is *makrūh* since the mosque should be kept away from extravagance.[342] Al-Jurāʿī added that it is *makrūh*, and if this was done using the money of the *waqf*, then it is even *ḥarām*.[343]

The topic of decorating the *miḥrāb* had a special treatment in the disputation over decorating mosques. On the authority of ʿUthmān b. Ṭalḥah, the Prophet called him after he entered the Kaʿbah and said: 'I have seen the two sheep horns when entering into the House [namely, the Kaʿbah] and I forgot to command you to cover them (*tukhammiruhā*), so go and do that [now], as there should not be, in the *qiblah* of the house, something that would distract the prayer.'[344] According to al-Shawkānī, such *ḥadīth* testifies that it is *makrūh* to decorate the *miḥrāb*.[345] Mālik is said to have condemned writing verses of the *Qurʾān* on the *qiblah* wall. His objection was based on the possibility that it would distract the

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[340] Al-ʿAynī, IV, 302.

[341] A good example of the Mālikīs who detested the use of gold and silver to adorn the mosque are Aḥmad al-Dardīr (d. AH 1201) and al-Dusūqī (finished his *Ḥāshiyat* in AH 1219). See *Ḥāshiyat al-Dusūqī ʿala al-Sharḥ al-Kabīr*, I, 255.

[342] Al-Jurāʿī, p. 360. It is worth noting that the first to use gold to adorn the Kaʿbah was the Caliph al-Walīd b. ʿAbd al-Malik when he commanded the ruler of Mecca by that time, Khālid b. ʿAbd Allāh al-Qasrī, to apply gilding to it.

[343] Al-Jurāʿī, pp. 359-60.

[344] Ibn Abī Shaybah, *ḥadīth* no. 4621; al-Azraqī, *Akhbār Makkah wamā Jāʾa fīhā min al-Āthār*, ed. by ʿAbd al-Malik Duhaysh, (Mecca: Maktabat al-Asadī, 2003), p. 322. According to al-Shawkānī, the phrase: 'the horns of the *kabsh*' refers to those of the sheep of Abraham which he had slaughtered to save the life of Ishmael. Al-Shawkānī,III, 599.

[345] Al-Shawkānī, III, 599.

worshippers.[346] Al-Suyūṭī said: 'our friends [namely a group of contemporary Shāfiʿī scholars] said that it is *makrūh* to write any of the verses of the *Qurʾān* on the walls and it is much more *makrūh* to write any of them on the ceiling as the roof is usually trampled on.' [347] According to Abū ʿUbayd, ʿUmar b. al-ʿAzīz said: 'Do not write the *Qurʾān* where it might be trampled.'[348] ʿUmar himself is seen punishing one of his sons for writing on the wall '*Bism Allāh al-Raḥmān al-Raḥīm*', 'In the Name of Allāh, the Most Gracious and Most Merciful'.[349] Al-Atharī explains that these mural decorations would be damaged and fall down one day and the result would be that the holy writings will be demeaned.[350]

Finally, while the Prophet disliked pride and extravagance, he supported building mosques in a proper way. Narrated Samurah b. Jundub: 'the Prophet commanded us to build, (*naṣnaʿ*) the mosques in our communities, and to build them properly, (*nuṣliḥ ṣanʿtaha*)'.[351]

Accordingly, a worker is urged to search for appropriate materials and techniques to build a mosque in a proper way as long as he observes a list of interdictions. This list includes: boasting, distracting worshippers, imitating non-Muslims and wastefulness.

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[346] See Ibn al-Ḥājj, II, 214.

[347] Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī, *Al-Itqān fī ʿUlūm al-Qurʾān*, ed. by S, Arnāʾūṭ and M. Shaykh Muṣṭafā, rev. edn (Beirut: Muʾssasat al-Risālah, 2008), pp. 753-4.

[348] Abū ʿUbayd al-Qāsim b. Sallām al-Harawī, *Faḍāʾil al-Qurʾān*, ed. by M. al-ʿAṭiyyah, M. Kharābah and W. Taqyī al-Dīn (Damascus: Dār Ibn Kathīr, [AH 1420 (?)]), p. 121.

[349] Ibn Abī Shaybah, *ḥadīth* no.4623. Other authorities allowed it. Ibn Abī Shaybah, *ḥadīth* no. 4621.

[350] Al-Atharī, p. 27.

[351] Abu Dāwūd, *ḥadīth* no. 456; Ibn Ḥanbal, *ḥadīth* no. 20060; al-Bayhaqī, *ḥadīth* no. 4309; Ibn Khuzaymah, *ḥadīth* no. 1294; Wensinck, p. 154. According to al-Khuḍayrī, the *isnād* of this *ḥadīth* is *ḍaʿīf*, but its meaning is backed by other *ḥadīths* of more authenticity.

5.9. Spolia and the conversion of the places of worship of other faiths into mosques

According to Islamic teachings, this practice seems to be governed by two aspects: the validity of conducting prayers at houses of worship of non-Muslims, and that of converting such places into mosques. The discussion between the Muslim schools of law regarding the first aspect seems to be well presented by Ibn Taymiyyah. According to him, there are three opinions *a propos* conducting prayers at churches and monasteries. The first of these was developed by Ibn Ḥanbal and Mālik who said that it is entirely forbidden.[352] The second was adopted by some of the Ḥanbalīs who argued it was entirely allowed. A seemingly moderate opinion had been adopted by ʿUmar b. al-Khaṭṭāb who is reported to have said: 'We, namely Muslims, do not enter their churches as long as they include images.'[353] ʿUmar's attitude seems to have been based on a *ḥadīth* stating that angels do not enter a house that contains images,[354] and on that in which the Prophet refrained from entering the Kaʿbah until the images inside it were eliminated.[355] Some of the Companions are said to have prayed at churches which did not include pictures.[356] Ibn ʿAbbās is said to have prayed at such *biyaʿ* except those which had statues or images.[357]

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[352] This opinion was later held by al-Nawawī, *Majmūʿ*, III, 165.

[353] When he came to Shām, a Christian of their nobles made food for him and invited him to it, and ʿUmar answered him with the above statement.

[354] Muʿammar (in *Muṣannaf* ʿAbd al-Razzāq), *ḥadīth* no. 19483; Mālik, *Muwaṭṭaʾ*, *ḥadīth* no. 2033; al-Bukhārī, *ḥadīths* no. 3224-27, 3322, 4002, 5939, 5958; Muslim, *ḥadīth* no; Ibn Ḥanbal, *ḥadīth* no. 11797.

[355] Muʿammar (in *Muṣannaf* ʿAbd al-Razzāq), *ḥadīth* no, 19485; al-Azraqī, pp. 248, 252.

[356] Ibn Taymiyyah, *Majmūʿ*, XXII, 101. See also Ibn Rajab, III, 240-4. Al-Nawawī and Ibn Qudāmah mentioned that a number of *tābiʿīs*, such as ʿUmar b. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz, saw that it is allowed to pray at churches. *Majmūʿ*, III, 165; *Mughnī*, II, 478;

[357] Al-Bukhārī, *ḥadīth* no. 434; Muʿammar (in *Muṣannaf* ʿAbd al-Razzāq), *ḥadīth* no. 19486. See also Wensinck, p. 191.

Accordingly, later scholars such as al-Baghawī argued that it is tolerable to pray in *biyaʿ*, 'cells or churches'.[358]

Does *Ḥadīth* say any thing about the lawfulness of the conversion of houses of worship of other faiths into mosques? *Ḥadīth* gives no indication that the Prophet encouraged, or even authorized, such practice, but some scholars depended on the two following *ḥadīths* to validate it.

> The Prophet commanded ʿUthmān b. Abī al-ʿĀṣ to make the mosque of Ṭāʾif in the place where their *ṭawāghīt*, 'idols' stood.[359]

> Narrated Ṭalq b. ʿAlī: We went to the Prophet as a group and acknowledged him as a prophet [namely embraced Islam], performed prayers with him and told him that we had a *bīʿah* in our home [place], and asked him to give us the water which remained from his ablution. Then, he asked for some water, conducted ablution, rinsed his mouth with water and poured it into an *idwāh* [presumably a vase or flask] and commanded us: 'Go and when you reach your home, demolish your *bīʿah* and splash this water in the site and then take it as a mosque.'[360]

It could be argued, however, that such *ḥadīths* do not present enough justification to convert non-Muslim places of worship into mosques. The first one is *ḍaʿīf*. It is reported that the Prophet ordered the idols around the Kaʿbah and all pagan sanctuaries to be demolished. In some cases, mosques were built instead,[361] but this does not seem to have been a general procedure; the mosques referred to by Ibn al-Kalbī to stand in place

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[358] Al-Baghawī, II, 413.

[359] Abū Dāwūd, *ḥadīth* no. 450; al-Bayhaqī, *ḥadīth* no. 4307; Ibn Mājah, *ḥadīth* no. 743. According to al-Shawkānī, *ṭawāghīt* is the plural of *ṭāghūt* which is the shrine of an idol, and the place where pagans used to conduct their rites: III, 542.

[360] Al-Nasāʾī, *ḥadīth* no. 702. This *ḥadīth* is regarded by M. S. Ḥallāq, the editor of *Nayl al-Awṭār*, as *ṣaḥīḥ*.

[361] Ibn al-Kalbī, *Kitāb al-Aṣnām*, ed. by Aḥmad Zakī Pāshā, 2nd edn (Cairo: Dār al-Kutub al-Miṣriyyah, 1924), pp. 16, 36; Johns, 'House of the Prophet', p. 96.

of these idols seem to be of later date than the time of the Prophet.

In the second *ḥadīth*, the church seems to have been owned by the speakers; 'we had a *bīʿah* in our home'; it was the people, not the Prophet, who proposed to take the church as a mosque. They only asked the Prophet about the legal way to do so. According to Islamic teachings, the sanctuaries of the *ahl al-kitāb*, 'the people of the scripture, namely the Jews and the Christians' should be treated with more respect than houses of prayers of other faiths.

Further, a number of *ḥadīths* could imply that conversion could not be done forcefully. This would explain why early Muslims, especially in places which were subdued according to a treaty, always needed permission from the Christian authorities before they could convert their church into a mosque.[362] According to the Ḥanbalīs, prayers would not be valid if they were performed in a usurped place.[363]

There are also reports which suggest that Islamic teachings do not recommend the extraction of parts of churches and re-using them in mosques. The Prophet's pledge to the Christians of Najrān stated: 'For Najrān and its outskirts (*ḥāshiyatihā*) are the safe neighbourhood of Allāh and the guarantee (*dhimmah*) of Prophet Muḥammad for their money, religion and churches.'[364] The pledge also included: 'Nothing of their churches should be demolished, and nothing of their buildings should be [re-]used in building any of the mosques or the houses of Muslims. He who does [any of] this would then [be regarded to] break the covenant of Allāh and disobey his Messenger […]. And if they [the Christians of Najrān] needed help and support (*rifd*) from the Muslims to restore (*marammah*)

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[362] Al-ʿUmarī, I, 180.

[363] Al-Mirdāwī, I, 491-2. See also Ibn Mufliḥ, II, 117; Muḥammad b. ʿAlī al-Shawkānī, *Al-Sayl al-Jarrār al-Mutadaffiq ʿalā Ḥadāʾiq al-Azhār*, (Beirut: Dār Ibn Ḥazm, 2004), p. 104.

[364] Ibn Saʿd, I, 308; Ibn al-Qayyim, III, 634-5, 637.

their churches and hermitages or in any of their secular (*maṣāliḥi ʾumūrihim*) or religious concerns, they should be helped and supported. This is not to be considered as a debt which they have to pay, but it is a backing for them in their religious affairs, fulfilment to the pledge of Allāh's Messenger (*mawhibatan lahum*), and an endowment for them from Allāh and his Messenger.'[365]

The Prophet also showed respect to the rites of Christianity. He is reported to have allowed the Christian delegation of Najrān to perform their prayers at his mosque, and when the Companions wanted to stop them, the Prophet said: 'Let them.' So they faced the east and prayed.[366]

It is also the *sunnah* of the Prophet and his Companions to consider the people's houses, the cells of monks and churches as protected places even in warfare. When the Prophet sent the army to Muʾtah, his advice, or rather command, to them included: 'You will find people [namely, monks and recluses] in cells secluding themselves from other people. Do not interrupt [or frighten] them (*falā taʿrraḍū lahum*). [...], do not cut a tree down and do not pull down a house.'[367] Likewise, when Abū Bakr sent Yazīd b. Abī Sufyān to fight in Shām, he said to him: 'You will find some people claiming that they have dedicated themselves to Allāh [namely those in cells]. Leave them for what they claimed they have dedicated themselves to.'[368]

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[365] *Majmūʿat al-Wathāʾiq al-Syāsiyyah lil ʿAhd al-Nabawī wal Khilāfah al-Rāshidah*, ed. by M. Hamidullah, rev. 5th edn (Beirut: Dār al-Nafāʾis, 1985), pp.187-9; M. ʿImārah, *Al-Islām wal Aqaliyyāt: al-Māḍī wal Ḥāḍr wal Mustaqbal* (Cairo: Maktabat al-Shurūq al-Dawliyyah, 2003), pp. 16, 19.

[366] Ibn Hishām relates this story on the authority of Ibn Isḥāq, *Sīrah*, II, 216-7. See also al-Dhahabī, *Tārīkh al-Islām wa Wafayāt al-Mashāhīr wal Aʿlām*, ed. by Bashshār A. Maʿrūf, 17 vols (Beirut: Dār al-Gharb al-Islāmī, 2003), I, 465-6; Ibn Kathir, VII, 271; Ibn al-Qayyim, III, 629.

[367] Al-Wāqidī, II, 758.

[368] See Saʿīd b. Manṣūr (al-Aʿẓamī's ed.), *ḥadīths* no. 2383. The same attitude is also reported about the Prophet. See *ḥadīths*. 2384-6.

This approach of observing the sanctity of the houses of prayers of other monotheistic faiths is also found in the *Qurʾān* which asserts: "[...] Did not Allāh check one set of people by means of another, there would surely have been pulled down monasteries, churches, synagogues and mosques, in which the name of Allāh is commemorated in abundant measure.'[369]

If converting houses of prayers into mosques was indeed a practice, did it endure, or was it only a temporary procedure? Hillenbrand argues:

> At a stroke it [namely, the lateral grouping of worshippers] forbade the simple transformation into Friday mosques of pre-Islamic places of worship. It forced Muslim architects desirous of making such transformation to rearrange the constituent elements of the sequestrated building – lateral thinking, indeed. Such conversions of existing structures, though obviously convenient in the short term, were no adequate solution to the needs of a new, powerful and rapidly growing religious community with its own distinctive forms of worship. Thus the earliest custom-built mosques were erected at the very same time that existing non-Muslim buildings were being converted into mosques and in them the lateral emphasis is already well-marked. From the very beginning Islamic architects rejected the basilica, and with it the standard Christian church of Western type, as a suitable source of inspiration for the mosque. Nevertheless, the idea of a central nave focused on an altar was eventually incorporated, suitably modified, into numerous mosques, and occasionally—as in the Great Mosque of Damascus—an entire basilical form, one shorn of its telltale Christian axiality, could be integrated into a mosque.[370]

Moreover, the usurpation of church columns to reuse of them to support the roofs of mosques was not regarded as an acceptable action by some of the later pious Muslim rulers. Al-Balawī relates that when Aḥmad b. Ṭūlūn, the founder of the Ṭūlūnīd dynasty in Egypt (AD 835 – 884), wanted

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[369] *Qurʾān* XXII. 40.

[370] Hillenbrand, *Islamic Architecture*, pp. 36, 38.

to build his mosque in 263/876-7, he was told that it would need 300 columns and which could be only obtained from dilapidated churches in the rural districts. But Ibn Ṭūlūn regarded that as a disgraceful behaviour and preferred to build it with *ājurr*, 'fired brick'.[371] However, there are reasons to think that this story might be apocryphal. There is a possibility that Ibn Ṭūlūn used *ājurr* not because of that, but because he wanted his mosque, according to another account, to survive if Egypt was burned, and it is well-known that marble columns do not withstand fire.[372] Further, Ibn Ṭūlūn wanted his mosque to be built after the fashion of the mosque of Samarra where he was brought up and which was made of *ājurr*.[373]

5.10. *Ḥadīth* attitude toward visual and plastic arts

How does *Ḥadīth* appreciate visual and plastic arts? Many *ḥadīths* seem *prima facie* to urge Muslims not to pay much attention to such 'worldly' activities. To understand that, we must take into account the fact that, with the exception of few Jewish and Christian communities, Islam arose while idolatry was dominant in Arabia.[374] As we have seen, the most prominent manifestation of such infidel societies was idols which took many shapes and were made of different materials. Thus, the primary task of Islam was to demolish paganism and all of its governing practices and restore the monotheistic religion of Prophet Abraham.[375] Islam's precautionary measures included the prohibition of lauding images, graves, religious structure and indeed any material object, lest such praise should, by passage of time, develop into a sheer cult (see 5.6.1).

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[371] Al-Balawī, *Sīrat Aḥmad Ibn Ṭūlūn*, ed. by M. Kurd (Damascus, 1939), p. 42.

[372] Ibrāhīm b. Muḥammad al-ʿAlāʾī b. Duqmāq, *Al-Intiṣār li Wāsiṭat ʿIqd al-Amṣār* (Cairo al-Maṭbaʿah al-Kubrā al-Amīriyyah, 1891-3), IV, 123; Sūʿād Māhir, I, 144-5.

[373] Shafiʿī, p. 476.

[374] See Gerald R. Hawting, 'Idolatry and Idolaters', *Encyclopaedia of the Qurʾān*, II (2002), pp. 475-80.

[375] See Gerald R. Hawting, 'Idols and Images', *Encyclopaedia of the Qurʾān*, II (2002), pp. 481-4.

According to one tradition, the Prophet ordered all the images that had been accumulated on the walls of *Kaʿbah*, by idolaters of many times, to be eliminated.[376]

Unlike paganism where deities are given materialistic forms, Islam – like previous monotheistic religions, especially Judaism – is highly appreciative of those who believe in the Unseen.[377] This conception may be the cornerstone of Islam's preference for what is non-representational over what is representational. As Kuban puts it, 'a dependence on any implied value in forms is inherently anti-Islamic. Forms are transient. Only Allāh, who is formless, is eternal. Thus the perception of any continuity of form is not a religious but a cultural attitude.'[378] This is not to say that Islamic art and architecture did not develop symbolic dimensions in later times. The minaret, for example, has become more symbolic than functional; its main role now, as already hinted, is visually to announce the presence of a mosque or a Muslim community rather than to be used by muezzins for the call to the prayers (see 5.7.6).[379]

Popular obsession with structures can be understood as an intuitive inclination towards catching hold of a materialistic image of what is believed in or cherished. Therefore, images have been made for deities from the dawn of man's recorded history, and may be earlier. This would give a clue as to why *Ḥadīth* was so strict on this issue, simply because it resisted, especially in early Islam, the long-standing tradition of idolatry. Islam

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[376] See Abū Dāwūd, *ḥadīth* no. 4156.

[377] *Qurʾān*, II, 3; XXIX, 12.

[378] Doğan Kuban, 'Symbolism in its Regional and Contemporary Context', in *Architecture as Symbol and Self-Identity*, ed. by Jonathan G. Katz, Proceedings of Seminar Four in the Series Architectural Transformations in the Islamic World (Philadelphia: the Aǧa Khan Award for Architecture, 1980), pp. 12-7 (p. 13).

[379] This function of the minaret has been approved by some modern Muslim scholars. See al-Sadlān, 'Ḍawābiṭ', p. 3.

wanted to cut all the ways that might lead to idolatry and all of its traditional observances. It is not surprising, then, to see that Islam not only proscribes making or having images, but also asks its followers not to pay much attention to building structures.

Traditions are full of reports about the Prophet's abhorrence, or at least indifference, towards building. Some of these are regarded to possess a good degree of authenticity. Some of them states: 'A Muslim is rewarded for any thing he spends except what he exerts in this sand;[380] according to other narrations: [...] in building'.[381] This *ḥadīth*, however, is not the saying of the Prophet but of Khabbāb, a Companion who according to the same *ḥadīth* was, by then, in a poor health insomuch as he said: 'Unless the Prophet had forbidden us from inviting death, I would have invited it.'[382] It is thus possible that it was the pessimism of Khabbāb which led him to speak in this way. According to Ibn Ḥajar, this saying of Khabbāb is related to what is not needed of building.[383] According to another narration, each building except a mosque is a loss (*wabāl*) for the one to whom it belongs.[384] The Prophet is also reported to have said: 'I am [in another narration,[385] a prophet is] not allowed to enter a decorated house.'[386] According to a third *ḥadīth*, 'God has not commanded us to use what he granted us [of bounties] (*fīmā razaqanā*) in coating stones, *labin* and

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[380] Al-Bukhārī, *ḥadīth* no. 5672; Ibn Mājah, *ḥadīth* no. 4163; al-Tirmidhī, *ḥadīth* no. 2483. This *ḥadīth* is regarded by al-Albānī as *ṣaḥīḥ*. *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Adab al-Mufrad*, *ḥadīth* no. 353. See also Abū Dāwūd, *ḥadīth* no. 5237; Ibn Mājah, *ḥadīth* no. 4161; al-Tirmidhī, *ḥadīth* no. 2482.

[381] Ibn Mājah, *ḥadīth* no. 4163.

[382] See also al-Bukhārī, *ḥadīths* no. 6349-50.

[383] See M. al-Ghazālī, *Al-Sunnah al-Nabawiyyah Bayna Ahliil Fiqh wa Ahlil Ḥadīth*, 6th edn (Cairo: Shurūq, 1996), p. 107.

[384] See Ibn Mājah, *ḥadīth* no. 4161; al-Albānī, *Silsilat al-Aḥadīth al-Ṣaḥīḥah*, 7 vols (Riyadh: Maktabat al-Maʿārif, 1992-2002), VI, 794, *ḥadīth* no. 2830.

[385] Al-Hindī, *Kanz*, *ḥadīths* no. 6355-7.

[386] See Ibn Ḥanbal, *ḥadīths* no. 1269, 9040; Abū Yaʿlā, *ḥadīth* no. 224; Ibn al-Qayyim, III, 458.

mud.'[387]

If taken out of their context, such *ḥadīths* would depict building as a crime.[388] Rather, they are only related to the context in which each was said. During the early days of Islam, there was no time to pay much attention to building and the like, as the whole community was in a permanent state of other more important activities such as *jihād* and *da'wah*.[389] In fact, the generalization of the restrictiveness purveyed by the above *ḥadīths* seems to contradict the *Qur'ān* itself, in which God promises to grant a good life for those who do good deeds.[390] Also according to *Qur'ān*, luxurious dwellings are regarded as great bounty. Speaking of the people of Thamūd, *Qur'ān* states:

> And remember how he made you inheritors after the ʿĀd people and gave you habitations in the land: ye build for yourselves palaces and castles in (open) plains, and carve out homes in the mountains [...].[391]

In fact, the Prophet himself is reported to have had a house of two storeys (ʿuliyyah).[392]

The notion of the Prophet's reluctance towards building was advocated by Creswell who quotes, at length, Ibn Saʿd to support it.[393] In the passage quoted by Creswell, Ibn Saʿd describes the simplicity of the Prophet's houses and mentions that the Prophet blamed one of his wives, Umm Salamah, for building a wall of *labin*, 'adobe'.[394] Indeed, *labin* is

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[387] Muslim, *ḥadīth* no. 5520.

[388] Al-Ghazālī, p. 108.

[389] Al-Ghazālī, p. 110.

[390] *Qur'ān*, XVI, 97.

[391] *Qur'ān*, VII, 74. See also *Qur'ān*, XIV, 45 and XXXII, 26.

[392] Abū Dāwūd narrated this *ḥadīth* under the heading of 'the adoption of *ghuraf*, 'chambers'. Abū Dāwūd, *ḥadīth* no. 5238.

[393] Ibn Saʿd, I, 430. For the text of Ibn Saʿd, see 7.4.

[394] On this incident, see chapter 3. See also Ibn Saʿd, I, 429

reported to have been used for the mosque of the Prophet itself. Further, the same passage of Ibn Saʿd states that some of the houses of the Prophet's wives had already been built of *labin*. Stone and *jiṣṣ* were also applied for the mosque of Ṣanʿāʾ which was built in the time of the Prophet by his command and under supervision of one of his Companions.[395] The Prophet did not prohibit building but rather warned against lavishness. Such discretion seems practical, particularly in the early years of Islam where the main attention, potentials and effort would have been focused on disseminating the new religion. Other 'secondary' matters were deferred until such time as Islam would establish its strong empire.

In tension with this literalist view are a number of reports which imply that the Prophet was not only aware of building, but also receptive to architectural beauty. In one *ḥadīth*, he compares the consolidation of the Muslim community to a building or a wall (*bunyān*) whose constituent parts support one another (*yashuddū baʿḍuhū baʿḍan*). In the *Qurʾān* as well, there is a reference to a wall which is composed of dressed blocks (*bunyānun marṣūṣ*). There are a number of *ḥadīths* which imply that the Muslim inhabitants of Madīnah and other towns of Arabia (*ḥaḍar*) in the time of the Prophet lived in houses of *labin*. The fact that many of these *ḥadīths* address different topics than building ordinances enhaces their reliability. According to one of them, the one who dies because a wall (*jidār*) collapses on him is regarded as a martyr. If people in the time of the Prophet mainly lived in tents or shacks, the *ḥadīth* would have rather addressed the one who died because the tent mast, for example, collapses on him. According to Arabic lexicons, the word '*jidār*' means a wall. It cannot be used to refer to the sides of a shack or a hut.[396] In another *ḥadīth*, the Prophet states that a Muslim individual should not build a higher building than that of his

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[395] Ibn Rustah, p. 110.

[396] Ibn Manẓūr, I. 566; II, 918.

neighbour lest he should prevent breeze reaching the latter's house. In a fourth *ḥadīth*, the Prophet gives example for his position amongst the prophets with 'a man who built a house, and completed and perfected it (*akmalahū wa atmamahū* [in a narration *faḥassanahū*, 'beautified it']), except for the position of a brick (*labinah*). Thus, the people kept entering it and showing their admiration (*wa yataʿajjabūna minhā*), saying: "how beautiful this house is except for the [the vacant] position of the brick." I am the position of the brick as I completed the Prophets.'[397] This *ḥadīth* shows not only the Prophet's awareness of building with *labin*, but also his appreciation of fine buildings. Likewise, the many *ḥadīths* about the exquisiteness of the houses, mansions, rivers and gardens in Paradise reflect the Prophet's awareness and admiration of the beauty of art and architecture.[398] There are whole chapters in *Ṣaḥīḥ* compilations of *Ḥadīth* about Paradise. In Muslim, for example, it is titled 'Paradise, the description of its blissful life and its inhabitants'.

> Narrated Abū Hurayrah: [...] we asked [the Prophet] about Paradise; of what it is built? He replied: 'a brick of silver and a brick of gold. It is plastered (*malāṭuhā*) with musk of the most exquisite quality. It [namely its floor] is strewn with (*ḥaṣbāʾuhā*) pearls and ruby and its soil is made of saffron. He who enters it will have a blissful life and will never slum [...].[399]

> Narrated Sahl b. Saʿd: the Prophet said: 'An apartment in Paradise is seen by the people of Paradise just as a lustrous planet in the sky

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[397] Al-Bukhārī, *ḥadīths* no 3534, 3535; *Muslim*, *ḥadīths* no. 5959-63; Hammām b. Munabbih, *ḥadīth* no. 2.

[398] See Hammām b. Munabbih, *ḥadīth* no. 86; Muʿammar (in *Muṣannaf* ʿAbd al-Razzāq), *ḥadīths* no. 20866-90; Wensinck, p. 181-3. On the visions of Paradise in Islamic art and architecture, see P. L. Baker, pp. 115-38. On how beauty is appraised in the *Qurʾān*, see Rosalind Ward Gwynne, 'Beauty', in *Encyclopaedia of the Qurʾān*, I (2001), pp. 212-4.

[399] Abū Dāwūd, *ḥadīth* no. 2526.

seems to you.'[400]

The Prophet is also reported to have said: 'it is [a manifestation] of one's happiness to have a wide house, a beneficent neighbour and a pleasant mount.'[401] According to a less authentic account, the Prophet said: 'he who builds a structure (*buniyānan*) should build it properly (*falyutqinah*).'[402]

On the other hand, the Prophet reportedly confirmed that spiritual qualities are more important than physical features or material belongings. In a *ḥadīth*, he says: 'Verily God does not look at [namely, consider] your looks or your wealth, but he does with your hearts and your deeds.'[403] Thus, the tendency in *Ḥadīth* to apply simplicity in building could equally be attributed to the fact that Islam does not want to effect any liaison between its followers and any ephemeral matter, here represented in structures. *Ḥadīths* which urge Muslims to conduct prayers at certain mosques[404] denote places and not structures. Islam also does not want his followers to search for pride in such worldly things. The Prophet is reported to have said: 'the Last Day will not come until the people compete in elevating [their] buildings.'[405] When the Prophet wore a silk garment, that he had been gifted, he angrily took it off, after performing prayers in it, and said: 'this is

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[400] Muslim, *ḥadīths* no. 7141-44. On Paradise, see also Ibn Mājah, *ḥadīths* no.4328-41.

[401] Al-Bukhārī, *Al-Adab al-Mufrad*, *ḥadīth* no. 355. According to al-Albānī, the editor of *al-Adab al-Mufrad*, this *ḥadīth* is *ṣaḥīḥ*: p. 175.

[402] Ibn ʿAbd Rabbih, *Kitāb al-ʿIqd al-Farīd*, ed. by Aḥmad Amīn, Ibrāhīm al-Ibiyārī and ʿAbd al-Slām Hārūn, [2nd edn (?)], 7 vols (Cairo: Maṭbaʿat Lajnat al-Taʾlīf wal Tarjamah wal Nashr, 1940-9), VI (1949), 221.

[403] *Muslim*, *ḥadīth* no. 6543.

[404] These are: the Masjid al-Ḥarām at Mecca, the Aqṣā mosque in Palestine and the mosque of the Prophet at Madīnah. See al-Bukhārī, *ḥadīths* no. 1189, 1197, 1846, 1995. See also chapter 7.

[405] Al-Bukhārī, *Al-Adab al-Mufrad*, *ḥadīth* no. 350.

not suitable for the pious."[406]

5.11. Conclusion

Although there is nothing in Islam called a standard mosque, for there is no verse in the *Qurʾān* or a *ḥadīth* to say that mosques must be built after a certain form, some of the universally recognized elements of the mosque, or at least their forerunners, were either adopted by the Prophet at his mosque or judged by his *Ḥadīth*. By the end of the Umayyad period, the main components of the mosque were: the *ṣaḥn*, 'open courtyard', the *riwāqs*, 'arcades', the minaret, the pulpit, the *maqṣūrah*, and the concave prayer niche. These, and other elements,[407] can be categorized into two groups. The first includes those which were judged by the Prophet, either because they, or more commonly their precursor features, were parts of his mosque, or because he wished to warn against their adoption after his departure.[408] The second group, on the other hand, contains the elements which were neither included in the Prophet's mosque nor referred to by any of his *ḥadīths*, such as the central nave and the concave prayer niche.

After discussing each of the mosque components individually, it has become apparent that although the mosque of the Prophet is widely believed to have represented the origin of mosque architecture, the mosque gained the greater part of its architectural character after the departure of the Prophet. This recalls the recurrent question of what methodologies could help us weigh up the acceptability of introducing a new architectural element, or ameliorating one already-authorized. Could these be regarded as natural development of mosque architecture to meet 'changeable

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[406] Ibn Ḥanbal, *ḥadīth* no. 17276.

[407] These include the doors, the *qiblah* wall, the gabled transept and the dome, or domes, over the *miḥrāb*.

[408] A good example is the *ḥadīth* about decorating mosques and building them on graves.

conditions'?[409] These 'changeable conditions', which accompanied the expansion of the Islamic empire, may properly include the different climate and the innate desire to build impressive mosques of no less glory than the worship houses of the conquered territories.

Linguistically, the word *bidʿah*, 'innovation' is used to refer to either a good or a bad act, but traditionally *bidʿah*, 'heresy', is mainly used to designate the bad acts that usually lead to the deformation of the orthodox religion.[410] Yet, according to *imām* al-Shāfiʿī, *et alii*, some religious innovations could be accepted, only if these are compliant with the essence and principles of *sharīʿah*.[411] Some went further to argue that each 'act', presumably religious, which the Prophet did not do (in spite of the fact that there was a need to do it and there was no barrier to prevent him from doing it) must not be done after his death, and that if it were done, this would be a *bidʿah*.

Before applying this concept to mosque architecture, we need to know what type of 'acts' are here meant. According to scholars of Islamic law, a *bidʿah* is an innovated 'way of worship' which is based on neither the *Qurʾān* nor the *Sunnah*. Thus, this does not include other worldly activities like agriculture and construction for instance.[412] According to one *ḥadīth*, the Prophet states that people are more aware of the affairs of their worldly life.[413] What about mosque architecture? Ibn Taymiyyah, for example, dealt

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[409] Such investigation is always challenged by the definition of 'heresy' and 'orthodoxy'. It should always be asked whose orthodoxy? For more on that, see A. Knysh, '"Orthodoxy" and "Heresy" in Medieval Islam: An Essay in Reassessment', *The Muslim World*, 83, 1 (1993), 48-67.

[410] See Ibn Taymiyyah, *Iqtiḍāʾ*, I, 54-5; Wael B. Hallaq, 'Innovation', in the *Encyclopaedia of the Qurʾān*, II (2002), pp. 536-7. See also Ibn ʿĀbidīn who, on discussing the different types of *bidaʿ*, 'plural of *bidʿah*', regarded decorating mosques as *bidʿah makrūhah*. *Ḥāshiyat*, 'detested innovation', I, 560.

[411] Abū Shāmah, *Baʿith*, pp. 20-2.

[412] However, these should be compatible with the general principles of Islam.

[413] It is true that Islam has regulated many of these activities such as agricultural and

with mosques as worship-related objects.[414] This means that the previous definition of *bidʿah* could be applicable to them. This would, in turn, imply that any innovation regarding their form is included as a *bidʿah* unless there was no need for the Prophet to do it, or there was a need but something prevented him from doing it.

We have already seen that when the mosque area had no longer given enough room for the attending congregation, the Prophet enlarged it, and when the Companions complained to him of the hot weather, he roofed it. In a way, this seems to reflect a receptive attitude, but when the Companions wanted to treat the walls of the mosque with a simple kind of paint, he disagreed. This account combines three architectural improvements offered to the Prophet: enlarging the mosque area, roofing it and painting its walls. Of these, he accepted two and denied one. While there was a basic need to do the first two, the third was regarded as relatively secondary, especially given the context of establishing a new religion.

For a further step towards better understanding of the Prophet's perspective regarding the form and material of mosques, we will try to deduce the standard, or standards, he considered to allow or prevent an act regarding mosque's architecture. There is evidence that the Prophet adopted simplicity not because it was the only available option due to technical inexperience, or the limited availability or ephemeral character of materials. According to traditions, the Prophet came while ʿAbd Allāh b. Rawāḥah[415] and Abū al-Dardāʾ[416] were measuring the mosque area using a

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commercial affairs, but that is usually in the context of administering people's dues and rights.

[414] Ibn Taymiyyah, *Iqtiḍāʾ*, II, 348-51.

[415] On ʿAbd Allāh, see Ibn Saʿd, III, 486-91. According to a *ḥadīth* in ʿAbd al-Razzāq, it was Kaʿb b. Ubayy and Abū al-Dardāʾ who were measuring the mosque: *ḥadīth* no. 5135.

[416] On him see A. Jeffery, 'Abū-l Dardāʾ', in *Encyclopaedia of Islam* 2nd edn, I (1960), pp. 113-4

qaṣabah, 'gauging rod'. Then he asked: 'What are you doing?' They answered: 'We want to (re-)build the mosque after the style of the buildings of Shām (Syria); a work that would be shared out between the Anṣār.' The Prophet then said: 'Give me this *qaṣabah*.' He took it from them and walked along with them and when he reached the door of the mosque, he threw it away and said: 'No, I want it in the form of *thumām*, 'dried twigs'.' Explaining *thumām*, he added: 'few pieces of wood and an arbour like that of Moses. The affair, namely this life, is not that long.'[417] They then asked: 'And what is the arbour of Moses?' The Prophet answered: 'When he stood

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[417] Ibn Zabālah, p. 78; al-Samhūdī, I, 339; M. J. Kister, '"A Booth Like the Booth of Moses...": A Study of an Early Ḥadīth', in *Bulletin of the Society of Oriental and African Studies*, 25 (1962), pp. 150-155. Kister, however, argued that this tradition was not reported by any of the orthodox collections of *Ḥadīth*. Yet, in fact, it is included in the recently published *Muṣannaf* of ʿAbd al-Razzāq (*ḥadīth* no. 5135). Al-Samhūdī and others mentioned a similar *ḥadīth* according to which, 'the *Anṣār* collected money and came [with it] to the Prophet and said: "O Prophet of Allāh, build the mosque and adorn it for us; until what will we pray under these palm fronds?" [...].' Al-Samhūdī, *Khulāṣat*, II, 15. According to Ibn Kathīr, this *ḥadīth* is *gharīb*, 'unfamiliar or rare'. Ibn Kathīr, VI, 532-3. On similar narrations, see Ibn Saʿd, I, 206; al-Ṭarṭūshī, p. 104; Ibn Baṭṭūṭah, I, 84; Ibn Rajab, III, 281-2. There is also another *ḥadīth* of the same meaning. Narrated ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿAmr: The Prophet passed by me while I was treating with mud a wall (*ḥāʾiṭan*) of mine of *khuṣ*. He asked: 'what is this ʿAbd Allāh?' I replied: 'a wall which I am restoring.' Then, he said: 'the affair is not that long (*al-amru aʿjalu,* in a narration: *asraʿu, min dhālik*). Al-Bukhārī, *Al-Adab al-Mufrad*, *ḥadīth* no. 354; Abū Dāwūd, *ḥadīths* no. 5235-6; Ibn Mājah, *ḥadīth* no. 4160. Some scholars argue that the Prophet's insistence to build ephemeral structures is due to his belief that either death or the Last Day would soon come. See Rosenthal, 'The Influence of the Biblical Tradition on Muslim Historiography', in *Lewis and Holt* (eds) 1962, pp. 35-45 (pp. 36-9); Antun, p. 102. Kister (pp. 150-55) believes that this 'early' tradition was omitted by the 3rd/9th century compilers of *Ḥadīth* because it includes an unrealized prophecy that the Day of Judgment would come in the lifetime of the Prophet. Indeed, the orthodox collections of *Ḥadīth* include many *ḥadīths* that give clearer references to the 'short' time between the advent of the Prophet and the Last Day, but 'short' here does not necessarily mean months, years or centuries. This 'short' period of time should arguably be seen in relation to the age of this world. Neither the above *ḥadīth* nor any other 'orthodox' one says that the Day of Judgment will come while the Prophet was alive.

up, his head reached the roof'.[418]

The phrase 'life is not that long' is of particular significance for this discussion; it implies one reason for which the Prophet did not want his mosque to be massive and decorated, that is, regarding the transitory nature of this life. In many *ḥadīths*, the Prophet warns against paying much attention to this life, for this would lead to losing sight of the hereafter. According to previously-mentioned *ḥadīths*, the Prophet maintained his persistent reluctance to connect the Muslims with any material object. It could be argued that he wanted the mosque to be praised only for the function, or rather functions, which it was set to serve and not for its charming structural features.

Similarly, *ḥadīths* about detesting the act of decorating mosques imply that the Prophet did not want any worldly object to distract people during prayers. Mosques are places for worship and meditation. Therefore, they should not contain any sort of distraction. The reason for the prohibition against building mosques on graves is much clearer. It was plainly mentioned by the Prophet in many *ṣaḥīḥ ḥadīth*. Here, the tone of prohibition is much stricter. This might be attributed to the 'dire' effect that such practice would beget from an Islamic point of view.

It could, therefore, be argued that the more untoward is the consequence of a transgression, the more plain-spoken is the reason given for its prevention, and the stricter the punishment. When the Companions offered to rebuild the mosque on a larger scale and in a more elegant style, the Prophet was content with refusing and indicating why this is not

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[418] Ibn Zabālah, p. 78; Ibn Rustah, p. 66; al-Samhūdī, *Wafā,'* I, 339; al-Sakhāwī, *Tuḥfah*, p. 43. An abridged form of this account is mentioned in a *ḥadīth* reported by al-Bayhaqī in his *Dalā'l*. Yet, according to Ibn Kathīr, this *ḥadīth* is *mursal*. Ibn Kathīr, IV, 532.

suitable. Yet, he did not mention any punishment.[419] When it came to building mosques on or by graves, on the other hand, the repercussion was nothing less than God's wrath.

With all said, it seems that the Prophet wanted his mosque to be built in a proper way. This is why he assigned the work of moulding adobes to the one who had the most experience amongst the attending Companions (see above). Also, the Prophet praised Tamīm al-Dārī, a Companion, for illuminating the mosque in spite of that he was not commanded to do so and that it was an unprecedented habit in Islam.[420] Such *ḥadīths* suggest that the Prophet wanted the work of building the mosque to be properly done and that he allowed useful improvements which had not been previously prescribed. This interpretation conforms to the general Islamic approach of praising perfection of work. Narrated ʿĀʾishah, the Prophet says: 'Verily, Allāh loves that when anyone of you does a work to do it perfectly'.[421] It is also known that the Prophet built his mosque a number of times, and each time he added a new part or used a better technique of building.[422]

To sum up, there are two groups of *Ḥadīth* which may reflect divergent perspectives regarding mosque architecture, and thus explain a lot of the relevant later debates. The first group seems generally to adopt a critical attitude against elaboration and decoration of mosques, while the

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[419] The *ḥadīth* which states that destruction is the corollary of decorating mosques is a statement of Abū al-Dardāʾ and is a *ḥadīth mawqūf*.

[420] See Ibn Mājah, *ḥadīth* no. 760; Ibn Ḥajar, *Iṣābah*, I, 191; al-Jurāʿī, p. 362.

[421] Al-Bayhaqī, *Shuʿab al-Imān*, ed. by A. ʿAbd al-Ḥamīd Ḥāmid, 14 vols (Riyadh: Maktabat al-Rushd, 2003), *ḥadīths* no. 4929-32; al-Ṭabarānī, *Awsaṭ*, *ḥadīth* no. 897; Abū Yaʿlā, *ḥadīth* no. 4386. While this *ḥadīth* is not of a high degree of authenticity for its strand includes Muṣʿab b. Thābit whose memory was not very strong, it is accepted by a majority of scholars for its sound meaning. See Abū Yaʿlā, *Musnad*, p. 349.

[422] See chapter 4.

second seems not only to permit but actively to urge people to properly build mosques. To understand this paradoxical situation and whether later polemics created or just reacted to it, we need to firstly identify the number of things against which the Prophet warned, or at least did not recommend: extravagance, distraction, imitation of non-Muslims (particularly in religious matters), and exalting the departed pious. This list of constraints did not, however, prevent the Prophet from building his mosque in a proper way, although 'proper' here does not mean elegant and massive. Rather, it means simple but practical, frugal but durable, and fine-looking but neither distractive nor pretentious.

Chapter 6: The influence of *Ḥadīth* on the architecture of the Rāshidūn mosques

Chapter 6: The influence of *Ḥadīth* on the architecture of the Rāshidūn mosques

6.1.   Introduction

Generally, the mosques which were built in the first half-century AH were influenced by the 'mosque' of the Prophet at Madīnah.[1] On this view – which was earlier stated by al-Ṭabarī[2] – early congregational mosques were more or less a reproduction of the Prophet's archetype.[3] Such early mosques are commonly referred to as either 'garrison mosques' or 'courtyard mosques'.[4] The reason for the first term is that such mosques were soon laid out in the centres of new Islamic towns, both those recently-founded and Islamized versions of older ones. Baṣrah (14/636), Kūfah (16-7/637-638) and Fusṭāṭ (20/641) are good examples for the first type; Madāʾin and Jerusalem typify the latter.[5] The reason for the second appellation is that they were normally composed of an open courtyard, usually parallelogram, enclosed by a simple device and abutted by the *dār al-imārah*, 'official residence'. Inspired by the Prophet's model, this group, a mosque and a *dār imārah*, represented the seed of a complex that prevailed for more than two centuries afterwards.[6] In such hypaethral buildings, the only covered space was the *qiblah* side which was shaded by means of a simple *ẓullah*.

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[1] See Pedersen, 'Masdjid', p. 646; Hillenbrand, *Islamic Architecture*, p. 33; Hattstein and Delius, *Islam: Art and Architecture*, p. 67; Ettinghausen, Grabar and Jenkins-Madina, p. 20; Bloom and Blair, p. 25; Irwin, p. 58. However, not all of the early mosques had courtyards. See Johns, 'the House of the Prophet', pp. 62-9.

[2] Al-Ṭabarī, IV, 45.

[3] See Pedersen, 'Masdjid', p. 648.

[4] Hattstein and Delius, *Islam: Art and Architecture*, p. 67.

[5] See early Arabic topographical writings such as: Ibn Khordadbeh: *Al-Masālik wal Mamālik*, ed. by M. J. de Goeje (Leiden: Brill, 1889); Ibn Ḥawqal, *Al-Masālik wal Mamālik*, ed. by M. J. de Goeje (Leiden: Brill, 1873). See also Pedersen, 'Masdjid', p. 648.

[6] K. A. C. Creswell, *A Short Account of Early Muslim Architecture*, (Beirut: Librairie du Liban, 1958; new impression 1968), p. 9.

According to Hillenbrand, 'the need for some serviceable gathering place for these thousands of Muslims was acute, and a simple enclosure best fitted that need. The means chosen to enclose the desired space were not necessarily monumental: a line of scattered ashes, a reed fence, a shallow ditch and the like.'[7] Commenting on this simple arrangement, Hillenbrand adds: 'it is highly significant that their austerity of plan and elevation ran increasingly counter to contemporary taste'.[8] The main question here is: why did the patrons and builders of these mosques favour such austerity when most of them were built in newly Islamized territories where long artistic traditions existed?

As a matter of course, the original form of such ephemeral buildings did not long survive. They were expanded, modified or *in toto* overwritten by a series of architectural works that were made at them by successive rulers. The archaeological evidence of how these mosques looked when they were first built is unfortunately missing. While the palace of Kūfah, for instance, has been excavated,[9] our information about its mosque is still mostly textual. Thanks to excavations, the plans of the second buildings of some of these mosques are more safely delineated. Yet, because they were built in the Umayyad period, these better-documented buildings will be dealt with in the next chapter.

Our information about the earliest forms of these mosques is mainly based on early Arabic sources. In spite of the historiographical problems

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[7] Hillenbrand, *Islamic Architecture*, p. 34.

[8] Ibid, p. 67. See also Andrew Marsham, 'The Early Caliphate and the Inheritance of Late Antiquity (c. AD 610 - c. AD 750)', in *A Companion to Late Antiquity*, ed. by P. Rousseau (Oxford: Blackwell, 2009), pp. 479-92.

[9] See Creswell, *Early Muslim Architecture*, I. I, 48-58; Hattstein and Delius, *Islam: Art and Architecture*, p. 68; Antun, 26-35.

which we have already referred to (see chapter 2),[10] the description provided by these sources is arguably sufficient to support hypothetical reconstructions.[11] Further, some early non-Arabic writings assist the study of the first-half century mosques. With this noted, the lack of concrete evidence may be the main reason why so few modern scholars have paid much attention to their study, even when writing under titles such as: '*Early Islamic Art and Architecture*'[12] or '*the Birth of Islamic Art*'.[13]

The mosques of the first half-century AH were built by, or under custody of, the *ṣaḥābīs*, 'Companions' of the Prophet who are traditionally known to be the keenest amongst his nation to follow his *sunnah*. For a majority of Muslim scholars, the vitae of the *ṣaḥābīs* are actually regarded as a part of the *sunnah*, as their conducts and approaches should have stemmed from their understanding of the Prophet's teachings.[14] There are whole chapters in the eight-ninth century collections of *Ḥadīth* in which the Prophet praises his Companions, especially those four who later succeeded him as the earliest caliphs.[15] These were: Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq (11-3/632-4), ʿUmar b. al-Khaṭṭāb (13-23/ 634-44), ʿUthmān b. ʿAffān (23-35/644-/56) and ʿAlī b. Abī Ṭālib (35-40/656-61).[16] They are traditionally known by

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[10] On these problems, see also Robinson, pp. 11-9; Albrecht Noth, Lawrence I. Conrad, *The Early Arabic Historical Tradition: A Source-Critical Study*, Studies in Late Antiquity and Early Islam, 3, 2nd edn (Princeton: Darwin Press, 1994).

[11] Johns, 'Bayt al-Maqdis', p. 63; Hillenbrand, *Islamic Architecture*, p. 38.

[12] *Early Islamic Art and Architecture*, ed. by Jonathan M. Bloom, The Formation of the Classical Islamic World, 23, general editor, Lawrence I. Conrad (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2002).

[13] See Hillenbrand, *Islamic Art and Architecture*, pp. 11-38.

[14] See Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah, *Iʿlām al-Muwaqqiʿīn*, IV, 11.

[15] See al-Bukhārī, Muslim and Ibn Mājah, chapters of *Faḍāʾil Aṣḥāb al-Nabī* (*the Virtues of the Companions of the Prophet*), and *Manāqib al-Anṣār* (*the Good Deeds of the Anṣār*).

[16] On these caliphs, see al-Ṭabarī, III, IV; Ibn Kathīr, IX, X; Hugh Kennedy, *The Prophet and the Age of the Caliphates: The Islamic Near East From the Sixth to the Eleventh Century* (London: Longman, 1986), pp. 50-81.

Sunnis as the *Khulafāʾ Rāshidūn*, 'the Rightly-guided Caliphs'.[17]

Those caliphs paid much homage to the teachings of the Prophet. Pedersen stated that the memory of the Prophet was considered 'so precious' by his followers that they liked to imitate him in everything loving to pray in the places where he used to pray.[18] In his *Orient Under the Caliphs*, Alfred von Kremer states: 'the life of the Prophet, his discourses and utterances, his actions, his silent approval and even his passive conduct constituted next to the Qurʾan the second most important source of law for the young Muslim empire.'[19] It is thus relevant to investigate how such devout Companions observed the simple model of the Prophet in a new milieu with changing settings. How did they perceive the features of this model? Were their perspectives uniform or different? Did they regard it as binding?

In what follows, the main architectural works of the Rāshidūn will be pointed out. Then, the *ṣaḥābīs'* attitudes towards building in general and building mosques in particular will be discussed. Afterwards, some architectural incidents, in which *Ḥadīth* was clearly consulted will be considered. Next, the influence of *Ḥadīth* on the location, material, plan and architectural components of early mosques will be examined. At a general level, their architecture will then be compared to relevant *Ḥadīth*. Also, there will be a discussion about the traditional views on the *ṣaḥābīs* converting churches into mosques and reusing antique columns in building them. The

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[17] Some scholars, however, consider that the six-month disputed reign of al-Ḥasan b. ʿAlī should be included in the caliphate of the *Rāshidūn*. Ibn Kathīr, XI, 131-4; al-Sūyūṭī, *Tārīkh al-Khulafāʾ*, ed. by M. Riyāḍ al-Ḥalabī (Beirut: Dār al-Mʿrifah, 1996), pp. 166-171. See also al-Ṭabarī, V, 158-60; al-Yaʿqūbī, *Tārīkh*, I, 254-6; Ibn al-Athīr, *Al-Kāmil fīl Tārīkh*, ed. by ʿAbd Allāh al-Qāḍī and M. Yūsuf al-Daqqāq, 11 vols (Beirut, Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyyah, 1987), III, 267.

[18] Pedersen, 'Masdjid', p. 650.

[19] Alfred von Kremer, *Orient Under the Caliphs* (Delhi: Idarah-i Adabiyat-i Delli, 1983), p. 269. See also John Esposito, *Islam: the Straight Path*. rev. edn (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), p. 13.

chapter ends with a brief summary of the main findings.

6.2.   Architectural works of the Rāshidūn

With the exception of some reports about Abū Bakr renewing the mosque of
the Prophet, there is no historical evidence that he achieved any work of
architectural significance. According to some accounts, the roof and columns of
the mosque were renewed in his caliphate because they had become ruined.
Thus, he rebuilt the mosque using palm stems and fronds.[20] At first glance,
such accounts seem to contradict a *ḥadīth* in al-Bukhārī according to which,
'Abū Bakr added nothing to the mosque of the Prophet,'[21] for he was entirely
engaged in the Muslim conquests.[22] According to al-Samhūdī, the apparent
contradiction in these accounts is only superficial, for what was denied
according to the latter *ḥadīth* is the act of expansion (*lam yazid fīhī Abū Bakr
shay'an*).[23] Al-Samhūdī added that this is what was (exactly) done by Abū Bakr,
whose works of restoration did not extend to an expansion of the area of the
mosque or to the use of different materials.[24]

On the other hand, the reign of the second Caliph ʿUmar b. al-
Khaṭṭāb witnessed not only a rebuilding of the mosque of the Prophet at
Madīnah but also the building of a number of congregational mosques in
Baṣrah,[25] Kūfah (figures 11 and 12),[26] Fusṭāṭ (figures 13 and 14),[27] and

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[20] Abu Dāwūd, *ḥadīth* no. 452; Ibn Kathīr, IV, 533; al-Sakhāwī, *Tuḥfah*, I, 45.

[21] Al-Bukhārī, *ḥadīth* no 446; al-Bayhaqī, *ḥadīth* no. 4294.

[22] Ibn Zabālah, p. 113; al-Samhūdī, *Wafā'*, II, 481.

[23] Al-Samhūdī, *Wafā'*, II, 481.

[24] Al-Bukhārī, *ḥadīth* no. 446; Abū Dawūd, *ḥadīth* no. 451-2.

[25] On the first mosque of Baṣrah see al-Balādhurī, pp. 390, 483-4; Ibn al-Faqīh, *Kitāb al-Buldān*,
ed. by Yūsuf al-Hādī (Beirut: ʿĀlam al-Kutub, 1996), p.188; Ibn Qutaybah, *Al-Maʿārif*, ed. by
Tharwat ʿUkāshah, Dhakhāʾir al-ʿArab, 44, 4th edn (Cairo: Dār al-Maʿārif, 1969), p. 563; Yāqūt
al-Ḥamawī, *Muʿjam al-Buldān*, 5 vols (Beirut: Dār Ṣādir, 1977), IV, 432-3, 491; Pedersen,
'Masdjid', p. 647.

[26] On the first mosque of Kūfah see al-Ṭabarī, IV, 44-6; al-Balādhurī, p. 388; Yāqūt, IV, 491;
Ibn al-Athīr, *Al-Kāmil fīl Tārīkh*, 11 vols (Beirut: Dār Ṣādir, 1965), II, 529; Reitemeyer,

Jerusalem.[28] This is in addition to some architectural works in the Holy Mosque at Mecca. In the time of ʿUthmān, however, the mosque of Madīnah was rebuilt in a more advanced form (see figures 6 and 7). Having ruled in a time of conflict and *fitnas* 'ordeals', on the other hand, the fourth caliph, ʿAlī b. Abī Ṭālib is not reported to have patronized the building of any congregational mosque. In the meantime, small mosques were built throughout the time of the Rightly-guided Caliphs.

6.3. *Ṣaḥābīs'* attitudes towards building

To study the influence of *Ḥadīth* on the architecture of the mosques which were built under the Rāshidūn Caliphs, we need to examine their attitudes towards building, and those of the *ṣaḥābīs* who lived in their times. It is equally important to investigate whence these attitudes derived. In his article about 'Masdjid' in the *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, Pedersen has already distinguished between what he called 'the old-fashioned attitude' and the 'Umayyad attitude', which was on the face of it a liberal one.

It seems safe to assume that the two personalities whose works had the most influential impact on mosque development in the first half-century

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Städtegründungen, pp. 34-5; Creswell, *Early Muslim Architecture*, I. I, 24; Pedersen, 'Masdjid', pp. 647-8, 660; Shafiʿī, p. 239; Hichem Djaït, *Al-Koufa, naissance de la ville islamique*, Islam d'hier et d'aujourd'hui ; 29 (Paris: Maisonneuve et Larose, 1986).

[27] On the first mosque of Fusṭāṭ see Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam, pp. 96-7; al-Maqrīzī, *Kitāb al-Mawāʿiẓ wa al-Iʿtibār bi Dhikr al-Khiṭaṭ wa al-Āthār: al-Maʿrūf bil Khiṭaṭ al-Maqrīziyyah*, 2nd edn, 2 vols (Cairo: Maktabat al-Thaqāfah al-Dīniyyah, 1987), II, 24-7; Ibn Taghrī Bardī, *Al-Nujūm al-Zāhirah fī Mulūk Miṣr wa al-Qāhirah*, introduced, and annotated by M. Hussein Shams al-Dīn 16 vols (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyyah, 1992), I, 85; al-Qalqashandī, *Ṣubḥ al-Aʿshā fī Kitābat al-Inshā*, 14 vols (Cairo: dār al-Kutub al-Miṣriyyah, 1922), III, 341; Rivoira, p. 23-4; Creswell, *Early Muslim Architecture*, I. I, 37; Yeomans, pp. 14-21.

[28] On the first mosque of Jerusalem (the mosque of ʿUmar), see Ibn Kathīr, IX, 656, 662; Tobler, *Itinera et descriptiones Terrae Sanctae*, I, 145; Rivoira, p. 14 (quoting Caetani, *Annali*, III, 2, pp. 950, 951; vol. IV, 507-509). See also Rivoira, pp. 15-8; Pedersen, 'Masdjid', p. 648; Creswell, *Short Account*, p. 10; Irwin, p. 58-9; Bloom and Blair, *Islamic Arts*, p. 25.

AH were ʿUmar and ʿUthmān. The personality of ʿUmar, as depicted by the sources, is that of a pious and a strict caliph. Traditions are full of narratives which give the impression that he was regarded as an authority *per se*. After the early Muslim migrants settled down in Kūfah, they did not use *qaṣab*, 'reed', in building its mosque and houses before they were given ʿUmar's permission.[29] He advised them that a 'comfortable life' would not usually make soldiers primed (to fight) (*inna al ʿaskar ashaddū* [in al-Ṭabarī, *ajaddū*] *liḥarbikom wa adhkarū lakom*). Nonetheless, he admitted that he did not want to dissent.[30] It seems that ʿUmar was ignorant of what *qaṣab* looked like and what it was used for. According to al-Ṭabarī, when ʿUmar asked about ʿ*qaṣab*', he was given the answer: '[it is] ʿ*ikrish* which, when irrigated, becomes solid like reed (*idhā rawiya qaṣṣab faṣāra qaṣaban*). ʿUmar agreed and said: 'it is your affair (*shaʾnukum*).' So the people of the two towns of Baṣrah and Kūfah built with reed.[31]

This account is reminiscent of the Prophet's conservative stance when the Companions wanted to rebuild his mosque in a more advanced form (see 5.11). Likewise, ʿUmar's statement 'it is your affair' could have been inspired from the *ḥadīth* which says: 'you are more aware of the affairs of this life of yours'.[32]

The report about ʿUmar's unwillingness to use reed have been regarded by some as exaggerated on the grounds that almost nothing could

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[29] Al-Ṭabarī, IV, 43; Ibn al-Athīr, II, 528. The houses and mosque of Baṣrah were also built of *qaṣab*, 'reed' in 14/635. See al-Balādhurī, p. 483; Ibn Qutaybah, p. 563.

[30] Al-Ṭabarī, IV, 43; Ibn Khaldūn, *Tarīkh Ibn Khaldūn al-Musammā Dīwān al-Mubtadaʾ wal Khabar fī Tārīkh al-ʿArab wal Barbar waman ʿĀṣarahum min Dhawīal-Shaʾn al-Akbar*, ed. by Khalīl Shaḥādah and Suhayl Zakkār, rev. edn, 8 vols (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, 2000-1), II, 550; Ibn al-Athīr, II, 528;

[31] Al-Ṭabarī, IV, 43. Prof. H. Kennedy has kindly drawn my attention to that building with reed is still in use in parts of Oman.

[32] Muslim, *ḥadīth* no. 6128. See also Ibn Mājah, *ḥadīth* no. 2470-1.

have been simpler. In fact, the reed of Iraqi rivers often attains eight meters in height, and is thus suitable for large and elaborate structures. This can still be seen in the vernacular constructions of the Marsh Arabs in southern Iraq.[33]

Similarly, *labin*, 'unfired brick', which was already in use in Mesopotamia at that time,[34] was not used in building the mosque and houses until a great conflagration broke out at both towns.[35] The commander-in-chief, Saʿd b. Abī Waqqāṣ,[36] dispatched envoys to ʿUmar to ask for his permission.[37] ʿUmar agreed, yet warned: 'none of you is allowed to build more than three *abyāt*, 'houses', and do not compete in elevating your buildings (*wala taṭāwalū fil bunyān*), and be adherent to the *sunnah* so that the state will be adherent to you (namely patronize you).'[38] It is said that ʿUmar sent the same message to Baṣrah.[39] On the authority of al-Ṭabarī, ʿUmar was given the people's pledge that they would not elevate a building to exceed the *qadr* which ʿUmar specified, as 'it is what would keep

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[33] Wilfred Thesiger, *The Marsh Arabs*, reissue edn (London: Penguin Classis, 2007); Antun, p. 4.

[34] Antun, p. 4

[35] Al-Ṭabarī, IV, 43-4; Ibn al-Athīr, II, 528; Ibn Kathīr, X, 34-5.

[36] Saʿd b. Mālik b. Uhayb b. ʿAbd Manāf was born in AD 595 (i.e. 23 years before the Hijrah). He was one of the first to embrace Islam, one of the 'ten blessed Companions' who were promised Paradise by the Prophet and one of the six to whom ʿUmar b. al-Khaṭṭāb entrusted the affair of the caliphate when he was stabbed during prayers. In the caliphate of ʿUmar he was made the commander-in-chief of the Muslim army which defeated the Persians in the battle of al-Qādisiyyah in 15/635. Two years later he conquered Madāʾin, the Persian capital. He was appointed by ʿUmar as the governor of Kūfah which he founded in 17/637. Saʿd narrated a large number of *ḥadīths* which were later transmitted by scholars such as Saʿīd b. al-Musayyab and Qays b. Abī Ḥāzim. He died in 55/664. See Ibn Saʿd, II, 127-38; al-Mizzī, *Tahdhīb al-Kamāl*, X, 309-14; Ibn Ḥajar, *Iṣābah*, III, 83-5; al-Dhahabī, *Siyar*, 1784-90.

[37] Al-Ṭabarī; IV, 43; Ibn al-Athīr, II, 528, Ibn Kathīr, X, 34-5.

[38] Al-Ṭabarī, IV, 43-4; Ibn al-Athīr, II, 529; ʿAlī D. al-Aʿẓamī, *Mukhtaṣar Taʾrīkh al-Baṣrah*, ed. by ʿAzzah Rifʿat (Cairo: Maktabat al-Thaqāfah al-Dīniyyah, [2001 (?)]), p. 17.

[39] Ibid.

you away from lavishness and keep you close to frugality, (*qaṣd*)'.[40] It is true that the use of *labin* was not criticized, in itself, as it was used in the mosque and houses of the Prophet, but the Prophet is reported to have said: 'I have not been commanded to do *tashyīd* to mosques [namely, raise and perfect their buildings].' (See 5.8). The zeal of ʿUmar to maintain the Prophet's model is clearly represented in making the people's adherence to the *sunnah* as a stipulation for them to be patronized by the state. According to al-Ṭabarī, in the time of ʿUmar, mosques had neither structures nor banners (*min ghayr bunyān wala aʿlām*). Al-Ṭabarī also stated that ʿUmar ordered markets, as well, to be on the fashion of mosques.[41]

On the authority of Abū Mikhnaf, Saʿd b. Abī Waqqāṣ adopted for his 'palace' a wooden gate (*bāban mubawwaban min khashab*) and a shack of reed (*khuṣṣan min qaṣab*).[42] [Having known that,] ʿUmar sent to him Muḥammad b. Maslamah al-Anṣārī who burned the gate and the *khuṣ*.[43] According to Ibn al-Athīr, ʿUmar resented the fact that his *wālī*, 'governor', took for himself what the people called 'the palace of Saʿd'. ʿUmar's tetchy message to Saʿd included:

> I have been informed that you took for yourself a palace, and you made [it] a stronghold. [I have been also told] that it is known as the palace of Saʿd and that there is a gate between you and the people. This is not your palace. [Rather,] it is the palace of corruption. Step down to a place next to the Treasury and close it.[44]

There is a possibility, however, that what ʿUmar particularly disliked

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[40] Al-Ṭabarī, IV, 44.

[41] Al-Ṭabarī, IV, 45.

[42] Working from scanty and problematic archaeological evidence, Antun argues that the *dār* of Saʿd could have been more elaborate than depicted by the sources: pp. 32-3.

[43] Al-Balādhurī, p. 392; Ibn al-Athīr, II, 529; Ibn Kathīr, X, 35.

[44] Ibn al-Athīr, II, 529-30. Ibn al-Athīr added when Saʿd swore he did not say what the people said about him, ʿUmar believed him. Ibn al-Athīr, II, 530.

about the gate of Saʿd was that it could have prevented the people from easily meeting him (namely Saʿd). We understand from Ibn Kathīr that ʿUmar became particularly angry because Saʿd used to close it. So he ordered him not to do this, nor to put anyone such as chamberlain or a door-keeper to prevent people who wished to meet Saʿd.[45]

The above-mentioned and other stories about ʿUmar imply his willingness personally to intervene to terminate whatever seemed to be a transgression.[46] The latter tendency is clearly expressed by al-Ṭabarī who stated that ʿUmar was consulted about whatever the Muslim rulers were about to discard or adopt.[47]

Such rigour on the part of ʿUmar does not seem to have blunted his appreciation of exquisite craftsmanship. According to al-Masʿūdī, no [unbeliever] non-Arab (*min al-ʿajam*) was allowed to enter Madīnah in the time of ʿUmar. However, when he was told by al-Mughīrah b. Shuʿbah[48], his governor at Kūfah, that he had a boy who was a painter (*naqqāsh*), carpenter and ironsmith and who could bring a lot of benefits for the people of Madīnah, ʿUmar gave him permission.[49] We have already seen that the Prophet had praised the skill of Ṭalq b. ʿAlī and entrusted him with the task of moulding *labin* for he proved to be the most familiar with it (see chapters 4 and 5). Likewise, ʿUmar's austerity does not seem to have prevented him

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[45] Ibn Kathīr, X, 35.

[46] For more stories about ʿUmar 's approach towards building, see Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam, p. 107; al-Sūyūṭī, *Tārīkh al-Khulafāʾ*, p. 135; Ibn Qutaybah al-Daynūrī, *ʿUyūn al-Akhbār*, ed. by Dār al-Kutub a-Miṣriyyah, 2nd edn, 4 vols (Cairo: Dār al-Kutub, 1996), I, 312. See also Yeomans, p. 19

[47] Al-Ṭabarī, IV, 43-4.

[48] Al-Mughīrah b. Shuʿbah b. Abī ʿĀmir was one of the notable Companions of the Prophet. There are twelve *ḥadīths* in al-Bukhārī and Muslim that were narrated through him. See Ibn Ḥajar, *Iṣābah*, VI, 131-2; al-Dhahabī, *Siyar*, 3917-20.

[49] This boy was Abu Luʾluʾah al-Majūsī, the one who later killed ʿUmar. Al-Masʿūdī, *Murūj*, II, 329.

from paying attention to having the mosque of the Prophet rebuilt in a proper way. He is reported to have asked the builders to thicken the courses of the walls and tighten the planks used in construction.

Some reports give the impression that a more liberal attitude was adopted during the caliphate of ʿUthmān. Al-Masʿūdī mentioned that in the time of ʿUthmān a number of *ṣaḥābīs* had farms (*ḍiyāʿ*) and [big] houses (*dūr*).[50] Of those, he mentioned: al-Zubayr b. al-ʿAwwām, Ṭalḥah b. ʿUbayd Allāh, ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. ʿAwf and others. According to al-Masʿūdī, al-Zubayr, for example, built for himself houses in Baṣrah, Miṣr, Kūfah and Alexandria, while the house of Saʿd, at the valley of ʿAqīq,[51] was high and wide with crenellations '*shurufāt*' on it.[52] However, al-Masʿūdī's opinions are, according to Wālī and others, coloured with Shīʿism.[53] Should this be true, it would be enough reason for him to try to attribute dissipation and corruption to the days of ʿUthmān who was regarded as a heretic by the Shīʿīs. In fact, the afore-mentioned *ṣaḥābīs* are said to have been well-to-do since the time of the Prophet. We should also bear in mind that the early historians' use of the word *qaṣr*, which is generally used to mean palace, was different. Ibn Rustah, for instance, attributed *quṣūr*, 'palaces' to the tanners of Ṣanʿāʾ in his days.[54]

The above-mentioned stories about ʿUmar and ʿUthmān cast shadow on the *ṣaḥābīs*' different understandings of *Ḥadīth*. The conduct of each of them seems to have sprung from a certain deed or saying of the Prophet. This, in a way, seems to enhance Goldziher's suspicions about the authenticity of *Ḥadīth* (see chapter 2). However, this could be attributed to

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[50] Al-Masʿūdī, *Murūj*, II, 342-3.

[51] On the valley of ʿAqīq, see al-Fayrūzabādī, *Maghānim*, p. 454.

[52] Al-Masʿūdī, *Murūj*, II, 342-3. On the houses of the Companions in the time of ʿUthmān, see also Ibn al-Faqīh, p. 159.

[53] A. M. Nūr Walī, *Athar al-Tashayyuʿ*, pp. 243-61.

[54] Ibn Rustah, p. 110.

how each of them understood the same *ḥadīth*, or to the possibility that some of them were acquainted with *ḥadīths* of which the other side was not. In some cases, especially in later times, the different opinions of legalists could equally be attributed to their different perspectives of valuing the authenticity of relevant *ḥadīths*. We are told about incidents where individuals or groups of early Muslims acted according to a certain *ḥadīth* which was later abrogated by another of which they were ignorant. Sometimes, argument arose on whether a certain *ḥadīth* had been abrogated. Disagreement might also have emerged concerning: the religious significance of a specific act of the Prophet; the wisdom behind it; and whether it was exclusive to a specific situation or applicable to others.[55]

Let us, for example, consider the works of ʿUmar and ʿUthmān at the mosque of the Prophet. ʿUmar's represented the strictly conservative approach. His work reflects that very clearly. The structure he built is seen by Briggs, for instance, as 'far from constituting architecture as we understand it'.[56] According to Ibn ʿUmar, the mosque was expanded in the caliphate of ʿUmar who rebuilt it [in 17/638] on the same pattern it had had in the time of the Prophet. ʿUmar used unbaked brick, leaves of date-palms and exchanged its [old wooden] pillars with [new] wooden ones.[57] Ibn Baṭṭāl said that ʿUmar's work at the mosque emphasized that the Prophet's *sunnah* regarding mosque building and furnishing is frugality and scantiness.

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[55] On the main reasons behind the disagreement of the early scholars' judgments, see Fathiddin Beyanouni, 'Ḥadīth and its Principles in the Early Days of Islam: a Critical Study of a Western Approach' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Glasgow, Faculty of Arts, 1994), pp. 79-85.

[56] Briggs, *Muhammadan Architecture*, p. 29.

[57] Al-Bukhārī, *ḥadīth* no. 446. See also Ibn Kathīr, IV, 533; Ibn al-Najjār, p. 170; al-Barzanjī, p. 12; Wensinck, p. 154; Rivoira, p. 3; Briggs, *Muhammadan Architecture*, p.29. According to Ibn Zabālah, the new pillars were made of *labin*, but al-Samhūdī had more confidence in the account of *ṣaḥīḥ ḥadīth* which states that ʿUmar retained the form and material of the Prophet's structure. See Al-Samhūdī, *Wafāʾ*, II, 481; Ibn Ḥajar, *Fatḥ*, II, 85-7; al-Barzanjī, p. 12.

He added that ʿUmar, in spite of the abundance of money in his time, changed nothing of the form which the mosque had had in the time of the Prophet. At the same time, he had to renew it because the fronds had become tattered by his time.[58]

ʿUthmān, on the other hand, rebuilt the mosque on a larger scale in a more advanced form and using better materials. The walls were built of cut stones (*al-ḥijārah al-manqūshah al-muṭābiqah*) and [coated with] stucco (*qaṣṣah*). Ashlars were also used for the columns, and teak for the roof.[59] The columns were drilled and fitted with iron dowels set in lead bedding.[60] According to another accounts, the roof rested on pillars that were built of *ājurr* 'sun-dried brick' in the time of ʿUthmān.[61]

6.4.   Examples of *Ḥadīth* consultation

Ḥadīth played a significant role in shaping the architecture of the mosques which were built under the Rightly-guided Caliphs. In some cases, *Ḥadīth* was clearly consulted. In others, the reported form and material of a certain mosque indicates that it was built after the fashion of the Prophet's model. Materially, the Prophet's model was represented by his mosque at Madīnah which as we have noted is itself regarded, by definition, as a part of his *Ḥadīth*. We shall now deal with the cases in which *Ḥadīth* was clearly consulted.

We are told about a number of incidents where *Ḥadīth* was considered as the most important, if not the only, criterion to judge an 'architectural' debate. Moreover, although these occasions are not copious,

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[58] Ibn Ḥajar, *Fatḥ*, II, 86-87.

[59] *Al-Bukhārī*, *ḥadīth* no. 446; Ibn Kathīr, IV, 533-4; Ibn al-Najjār, 174. al-Ḥarbī, p. 364, al-Maṭarī, p. 80; al-Murjānī, p. 128, al-Marāghī, p. 47; al-Samhūdī, *Wafāʾ*, II, 501-2. Burton has argued that the roof was made of timber brought from India. *Personal Narrative of a Pilgrimage to Mecca and Medina*, II, 73-4.

[60] Ibn al-Najjār, p. 174; al-Barzanjī, p. 12.

[61] Abu Dāwūd, *ḥadīth* no. 452; Ibn Kathīr, II, 170.

there is a further possibility that there were negotiations about how a mosque should be built according to *Ḥadīth*.

Narrated Abū Saʿīd al-Khudrī, ʿUmar commanded the mosque (of the Prophet) to be (re-) built and said (presumably to himself or to a worker): 'Provide the people with shelter from the rains and do not use red or yellow [paint], lest the people should be led astray [particularly distracted during their prayers].'[62] In this it was assumed by Ibn Baṭṭāl that ʿUmar might have been inspired by the Prophet's attitude when he had given the *khamīṣah*, a woollen garment with marks, to Abū Jahm, a Companion, and said: 'It distracted me during my prayers',[63] or that ʿUmar had special knowledge from the Prophet.[64] Also, it could be assumed that it was the later commentators who might have presumed that ʿUmar thought in these terms; it rather seems clear that he is 'orthodoxy' here – an authority with great status in his community. In any event, ʿUmar seems to have been strict against heightening and decorating buildings. He is also reported to have said: 'no nation had committed sinful acts without adorning their mosques.'[65]

The following incident from the time of the Caliph ʿUthmān is an example of how *Ḥadīth* determined a dispute concerning mosque architecture. After mentioning the story of ʿUmar's expansion of the

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[62] Al-Bukhārī, *ḥadīth* no. 446; Ibn Ḥajar, *Fatḥ*, II, 85; Pedersen, 'Masdjid', p. 661.

[63] The complete text of this *ḥadīth*, and others of relevant topics, has been mentioned in chapter 5.

[64] Ibn Ḥajar, *Fatḥ*, II, 85.

[65] Ibn Mājah, *ḥadīth* no. 471. Ibn Mājah reported it as a *ḥadīth* of the Prophet and not a saying of ʿUmar. Ibn Ḥajar commented that this *ḥadīth's* chain of narrators is trustworthy with exception of Jubārah b. al-Mughallas. *Fatḥ*, II. 85. According to al-Albānī, this *ḥadīth* is *ḍaʿīf*. *Ḍaʿīf al-Jāmiʿ al-Ṣaghīr wa Ziyādatuh (al-Fatḥ al-Kabir)*, rev. edn (Berut: al-Maktab al-Islāmī) *ḥadīth* no. 5075. This *ḥadīth* is reported, in similar words, by ʿAbd al-Razzāq in his *Muṣannaf* on the authority of ʿAlī b. Abī Ṭālib. *Muṣannaf*, *ḥadīths* no. 5131-4. For more details about the implications of this *ḥadīth* and scholars' different interpretations of it, see chapter 5.

mosque, Ibn Baṭṭāl said: 'then came ʿUthmān and the money in his time was more abundant. He improved the building (namely the Prophet's mosque) without decorating it (on ʿUthmān's structure, see above). Nevertheless, he underwent criticism from [conservative] Companions.'[66] ʿUbayd Allāh related that when the people criticized ʿUthmān for rebuilding the mosque of the Prophet (apparently in a more advanced form), he heard him saying to them: 'you have overstated, and I heard the Prophet saying: "whoever builds a mosque (Bukayr, a sub-narrator, said: 'I surmised he said for the satisfaction of Allāh'), Allāh will build for him one like it in Paradise."'[67] Narrated Maḥmūd b. Lubayd al-Anṣārī, when ʿUthmān wanted to build the mosque, the people disliked the proposal and wished that he left it in the same form and material as it had been in the time of the Prophet.[68] According to al-Baghawī (435-516/1043-1122), ʿUthmān was blamed for the use of carved stone and not for expanding the mosque.[69] Based on the approach of ʿUthmān, al-Baghawī concluded that the use of hewn stones 'ḥijārah manqūshah' to build mosques is only allowed if that would help fortify the masonry.[70] It is noticeable here is that Ḥadīth played the most decisive role in this discussion between ʿUthmān and the conservative ṣaḥābīs; it was Ḥadīth that validated ʿUthmān's approach and persuaded his critics who reportedly complied once they heard the ḥadīth which justified his attitude.[71]

It is of interest, however, to note that the ḥadīth he mentioned does not necessarily mean that mosques had to be built in a perfect way, for it would still be a good deed if they were built in a modest way. It was

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[66] Ibn Ḥajar, Fatḥ, II, 86-7.

[67] Al-Bukhārī, ḥadīth no. 450; Khan's transl.

[68] Muslim, ḥadīth no. 1190.

[69] Al-Baghawī, II, 349.

[70] Ibid.

[71] Ibn Kathīr, IV, 534.

ʿUthmān's understanding, then, which might have been built on the phrase 'like it', that led him to make such improvements. Building a mosque is, in any case, a charitable work, and *ṣaḥābīs* loved to give alms in a pleasing way so that they would gain a more pleasing reward from God. For instance, it is reported of ʿĀʾishah, the Prophet's wife, that she scented money before she gave it to the needy. When she was asked about that she replied: 'it falls in the hand of Allāh before it falls in the hand of the poor.'[72]

ʿUthmān's desire to use better material did not conflict with his reverence for the Prophet's model. For example, he was keen to erect his new stone columns in the same positions of the palm trunks which once supported the roof of the mosque and which were set by the Prophet and renewed by ʿUmar.[73] This task was assigned to Zayd b. Thābit who also made *ṭiqān*, 'small windows', in the mosque's eastern and western sides.[74] ʿUthmān is also reported to have retained the original number and positions of the doors.[75] He is further said to have ordered a stucco *utrujjah*, 'a flask or a fruit similar to a big lemon',[76] which was hung in the ceiling of the mosque, to be removed when he was told that the worshippers were looking up at it.[77] According to *Ḥadīth*, the worshipper is not allowed to look up during prayers. In another instance, ʿUthmān is reported by his female servant to have ordered the image (*timthāl*) of a sarcophagus towards which he was praying to be obliterated.[78]

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[72] A *ḥadīth* (*gharīb*) of the same meaning is reported by Abū Naʿīm. See Abū Naʿīm Aḥmad b. ʿAbd Allāh al-Aṣfahānī, *Ḥilyat al-Awliyāʾ wa Ṭabaqāt al-Aṣfiyāʾ*, 10 vols (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyyah, 1988), IV, 81. See also al-Albānī, *Ḍaʿīfah*, *ḥadīths* no. 5074, 6739.

[73] Ibn Zabālah, p. 116; Ibn Isḥāq al-Ḥarbī, p. 364; al-Samhūdī, *Wafāʾ*, II, 505.

[74] Ibn al-Najjār, p. 174; al-Maṭarī, p. 80; al-Murjānī, p. 128; al-Samhūdī, *Wafāʾ*, II, 505.

[75] Al-Murjānī, p. 128; al-Maṭarī, p. 80; al-Samhūdī, *Wafāʾ*, II, 507.

[76] Ibn Manẓūr, I, 425; al-Fayrūzabādī, I, 179; al-Rāzī, p. 67.

[77] Ibn Abī Shaybah, *ḥadīth* no. 4617; al-Baghawī, II, 349.

[78] Ibn Abī Shaybah, *ḥadīth* no. 4620.

The following story can throw further light on how *Ḥadīth* was considered to arbitrate a debate in terms of mosque building. Ibn Saʿd recounted:

> When ʿUmar wanted to expand the area of the mosque, he bought all the houses around it so as to merge their areas into it. The exception was the houses of the Prophet's wives and the *dār* of al-ʿAbbās b. ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib, a Muslim uncle of the Prophet. ʿUmar, thus, told al-ʿAbbās that he wanted to buy his house as there was no way to take the houses of the Prophet's wives. When al-ʿAbbās refused, ʿUmar gave him three options: to buy the house, to exchange it for a piece of land at Madīnah and build it for him, or that al-Abbās donates it. When the latter accepted none, ʿUmar asked him to choose anybody he wished to judge between them. Al-ʿAbbās chose Ubayy b. Kaʿb who, when told the story, cited a *ḥadīth* in which the Prophet tells a similar story happened to Prophet David when he was ordered to build the Temple. When David planned it, he needed to merge to its area a house of one of the Israelites. It occurred to David that he could take it (forcefully) from the man, but Allāh blamed him. The punishment was that he would not be allowed to build the Temple. Hearing that, ʿUmar caught Ubayy from his clothes and said to him: You have to find a way out of this. He led Ubayy to the mosque [of Madīnah] and when they entered it, ʿUmar caused him to stand by a circle of the Companions, with Abū Dharr included. Ubayy said: 'By Allāh, is there a man who heard the Prophet telling the *ḥadīth* of Bayt al-Maqdis when He ordered David to build it? Abū Dharr and others said: 'We did'. So, ʿUmar set Ubayy free. The latter blamed ʿUmar: 'O ʿUmar! Do you accuse me of fabricating the Prophet's *ḥadīth*? ʿUmar said:' No Abū al-Mundhir [an epithet of Ubayy], by Allāh, I did not, but I wanted the Prophet's *ḥadīth* to be publicized. ʿUmar, accordingly, said to al-Abbās: 'go [freely]; I will not try to take your house. On hearing that, al-Abbās said: 'as you said so, I donate it to enlarge the mosque [...].'[79]

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[79] Ibn Saʿd, IV, 19-20; al-Hindī, *ḥadīths* no. 23095-6; al-Samhūdī, *Wafāʾ*, II, 483-4. On the same story, see Ibn al-Najjār, p. 172.

Although this incident does not seem to have had a direct impact on the evolution of mosque architecture, apart from the illegality of usurping the adjacent houses of the mosque to enlarge it, it can give us some idea about how *Ḥadīth* dominated such discussions. It is also clearly reflective of the 3rd/9th century ideas about the relation between polity represented in ʿUmar and social elite represented in al-ʿAbbās. Here, ʿUmar's reaction to the *ḥadīth* he heard is of great interest. If *Ḥadīth* was consulted in discussions such as these, there is the possibility that it would have been taken into consideration when a mosque was about to be built. Al-Samhūdī mentioned other six narrations of this story. According to one of which, al-ʿAbbās deeply regretted the demolition of his house because the piece of land on which it was built had been dedicated to him by the Prophet who also took part in building it. He swore that it was the Prophet himself who set the gutter of this house. Having heard that, ʿUmar felt remorseful for demolishing the gutter and swore that al-ʿAbbās would re-fix it while his feet were on his shoulders.[80]

While this stance of ʿUmar shows much respect to whatever the Prophet had erected, it has been argued by some that the demolition of the mosque of the Prophet by later caliphs reflects a lack of reverence.[81] However, there seem to have been other reasons to do this. ʿUmar is reported to have said: 'unless I heard the Prophet saying: "we want to expand our mosque", I would not expand it.'[82] This means that ʿUmar did so in fulfilment of a previous wish of the Prophet who is also reported to have said: 'if this mosque was built to Ṣanʿāʾ, it would [still] be [regarded as] my

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[80] Ibn Zabālah, pp. 114-15, al-Samhūdī, *Wafāʾ*, II, 489-92.

[81] For example, see Johns, 'House of the Prophet', p. 108.

[82] Ibn Ḥanbal, *ḥadīth* no. 330; al-Hindī, *Kanz*, *ḥadīth* no. 23080; Ibn Rajab, III, 287; Ibn al-Najjār, p. 170; al-Maṭarī, p. 80; al-Marāghī, p. 45; al-Samhūdī, *Wafāʾ*, II, 481-2.

mosque.'[83] Another reason for rebuilding the mosque was that it no longer provided enough space for the increasing number of worshippers.[84] On the authority of Ibn ʿUmar: 'the number of people multiplied (*kathurū*) in the time of ʿUmar, so they asked him to expand it. ʿUmar replied that 'unless I heard the Prophet saying "I want to enlarge the *qiblah* of this mosque of ours", I would not expand it'.[85] A third reason, however, was that the lower part of the palm trunks which were set by the Prophet had decayed by the time of the ʿUmar.[86] Muslim b. Ḥubāb related that one day while he was in the mosque, the Prophet pointed to the *qiblah* and said: 'Shall we expand our mosque?' In an attempt literally to do what the Prophet had said, the Companions in the time of ʿUmar caused a man to enter the mosque and sit down in the Prophet's place of prayers and then to raise and lower his hand until they saw it was similar to the expansion referred to by the Prophet. Then, they caused him to hold one end of a cord (*miqaṭṭ*) and stretched it [to the *qiblah*]. They kept moving it forward and backward until they thought it was identical to the length referred to by the Prophet.[87] While ʿUmar's decision to expand the mosque must have been mainly based on the above clearly expedient reasons, the way he applied such expansion could reflect his loyalty to the prophetic model. Further, there is the possibility that this account, which was first reported by Ibn Zabālah, reflects a later debate referred back to memory of the Prophet.

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[83] Al-Ḥarbī, p. 361; Ibn al-Najjār, p. 171; al-Marāghī, p. 46; al-Samhūdī, *Wafāʾ*, II, 481. This *ḥadīth* is regarded by Ibn Rajab (III, 292) and al-Albānī (*Daʿīfah*, *ḥadīth* no. 973) as *ḍaʿīf jidan*.

[84] This opinion was also adopted by a number of early legalists such as Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal and Sufyān al-Thawrī. See Ibn Rajab, III, 288-9.

[85] Al-Samhūdī, *Wafāʾ*, II, 482; al-Marāghī, p. 45; al-Maṭarī, p. 80. See also al-Ḥarbī, p. 361. According to al-Samhūdī, these were the same reasons for ʿUthmān to rebuild the mosque. *Wafāʾ*, II, 502-3. See also al-Murjānī, p. 128; al-Maṭarī, p. 80; al-Marāghī, p. 47.

[86] Al-Samhūdī, *Wafāʾ*, II, 489.

[87] Ibn Zabālah, p. 114; Ibn al-Najjār, p. 171; al-Samhūdī, *Wafāʾ*, II, 482; al-Marāghī, p. 46. According to al-Albānī, this *ḥadīth* is *ḍaʿīf jidan*: *Daʿīfah*, *ḥadīth* no. 974.

It seems that ʿUmar was motivated to achieve what can be called the Prophet's 'architectural' desires. In his work at the mosque of the Prophet, ʿUmar provided the mosque with six entrances.[88] The one which was known as Bāb al-Nisāʾ,' the gate of women', was called this because the Prophet was reported to have said: 'I wish we could dedicate this gate for women'.[89] ʿUmar accordingly prevented men from using it and his son, ʿAbd Allāh, is said to have not used it until he died.[90]

Reported by al-Bukhārī, another incident indicates how dominant *Ḥadīth* was in judging argumentations at mosques. When ʿUmar saw Ḥassān b. Thābit (d. *ca.* 40/660), a Companion known as the poet of the Prophet, recited a poetry at the mosque, he stared [angrily] at him. Ḥassān commented: 'I was saying a poem at it while a better [man] than you [namely the Prophet] was there. Then, Ḥassān looked at Abū Hurayrah and said to him: 'tell me by Allāh, have you heard the Prophet saying [to me]: "Answer [the unbelievers] on my behalf. O Allāh, support him with the Holy Spirit." Abū Hurayrah said:' Yes, by Allāh'.[91] In a narration of Yaḥyā, ʿUmar left [the mosque] as he knew that Ḥassān meant the Prophet.[92] However, in another *ḥadīth*, the Prophet forbade versification at mosques.[93] Later, Ibn Ḥajar argued that what is denied by the Prophet is saying a poem of pre-Islamic times and that of the heretics (*al-jāhiliyyah wal mubṭilīn*).[94] According to others, versifying is generally denied at mosques for it would

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[88] On these doors and their names and positions, see al-Maṭarī, p. 80; al-Marāghī, p. 46; al-Murjānī, p. 127; al-Samhūdī, *Wafāʾ*, II, 495-6, 686.

[89] Abū Dāwūd, *ḥadīths* no. 462-4. See also Ibn al-Najjār, p. 171; al-Samhūdī, *Wafāʾ*, II, 495-6; al-Maṭarī, p. 80; al-Murjānī, p. 127; al-Marāghī, p. 46; al-Diyārbakrī, I, 347; Wensinck, p. 154.

[90] Al-Samhūdī, *Wafāʾ*, II, 691-2.

[91] Al-Bukhārī, *ḥadīth* no. 453; Abū Yaʿlā, *ḥadīth* no. 5885; Ibn Khuzaymah, *ḥadīth* no. 1307; Ibn Ḥajar, *Fatḥ*, II, 94-5; Ibn Rajab, III, 330; Wensinck, p. 154.

[92] Al-Samhūdī, *Wafāʾ*, II, 500.

[93] Al-Tirmidhī, *ḥadīth* no. 322.

[94] Ibn Ḥajar, *Fatḥ*. 94-5.

cause distraction.[95] Either way, this stance of ʿUmar on versification led him to the architectural solution of adding to the mosque a *raḥbah*, 'open yard', called Buṭayḥāʾ where those who wanted to versify, talk about worldly concerns, or raise their voices could do so.[96]

To take another case, ʿUthmān b. Maẓʿūn[97] washed and perfumed (*khallaqtuhā*) the *qiblah* as a penance for unintentionally spitting in it during his prayers. As a result, he is said to have been the first to perfume the *qiblah*.[98] This incident has been regarded by Grabar as an example of how 'trivial events' played a significant role in developing many of the mosque's architectural features.[99] The theory of 'trivial facts' had previously been subscribed to by Creswell (see 3.5).[100] However, there is the possibility that ʿUthmān's behaviour could have been based on a *ḥadīth*, according to which the Prophet treated the position of a spit with saffron.[101] Ibn ʿUmar, the narrator of this *ḥadīth*, expressly stated that saffron was hence made (*ṣuniʿa*) at mosques.

Of course, it could be argued that the proponents of certain tendencies might simply have fabricated *ḥadīths* to legitimate their opinions. While this was possible in later times, the previously-reported discussions in which Ḥadīth was involved in architectural concerns already include

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[95] On these views, see, al-Samhūdī, *Wafāʾ*, II, 500.

[96] Al-Ṭarṭūshī, p. 124; al-Hindī, *Kanz*, *ḥadīth* no. 23085; al-Samhūdī, *Wafāʾ*, II, 497-8. According to al-Fayrūzabādī, it was a platform (one cubit in height) built outside the mosque. *Maghānim*, p. 57.

[97] ʿUthmān was one of the earliest converts to Islam. He is said to have been the first Companion of the Muhājirūn to die at Madīnah and that was in 3/624. See Ibn Saʿd, III, 365-71.

[98] Ibn Rustah, p. 66; al-Maqrīzī, II, 247.

[99] Grabar, *Formation*, p. 103

[100] Creswell, *Short Account*, p. 9.

[101] Ibn Khuzaymah, *ḥadīth* no. 1295. See also al-Bukhārī, *ḥadīth* no. 405-17; al-Bayhaqī, *ḥadīth* no 4310; Wensinck, p. 154.

evidence that the fabrication of *Ḥadīth* would not have been easy, particularly in early days of Islam, because quite a number of the Prophet's closest Companions were still alive.[102] Hence, for a *ḥadīth* to be trustworthy it ought to be acknowledged by other Companions.[103] We have just seen that ʿUmar asked Ubayy to repeat, in presence of other Companions, the *ḥadīth* which he said he had heard from the Prophet. While such stories may reflect the 3rd/9th century debate about *Ḥadīth* authoritativeness, they could tell us about the techniques conceived to sift it in early Islam. Likewise Ḥassān b. Thābit adjured Abū Hurayrah to certify whether he had heard the same *ḥadīth* about saying poem in the mosque.[104] Further, the *ḥadīth* mentioned by ʿUthmān b. ʿAffān about the reward of building mosques, was also narrated by other Companions such as ʿAlī b. Abī Ṭālib,[105] ʿUmar b. al-Khaṭṭāb,[106] and Anas b. Mālik.[107] Such *ḥadīth*, which was passed down by a large number of people to a later large number of people, is traditionally known as *mutawātir* and has a reasonable degree of authority in Islamic law depending on other conditions (see chapter 2).

There is evidence from the late 2nd/8th century when the caliphs began, on a firmer grounds, to cite *Ḥadīth* that *Ḥadīth* played a significant role in shaping mosque architecture. Al-Quḍāʿī, for instance, mentioned that in 161/777, the pious ʿAbbasid Caliph, al-Mahdī ordered *minbars* to be shortened so as to be in the form of that of the Prophet.[108] It is also reported that when al-Mahdī visited Madīnah to perform Hajj in the same

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[102] For more on that, see ʿAjjāj, pp. 92-125.

[103] For more details about the strategies implemented by the *ṣaḥābīs* to publicize and protect *Ḥadīth*, see chapter 2.

[104] For more details about the reasons of *ḥadīth* fabrication and the procedures taken by the *ṣaḥābīs* to resist it, see chapter 2.

[105] Ibn Mājah, *ḥadīth* no. 737.

[106] Ibn Ḥanbal, *ḥadīth* no. 126; Ibn Mājah, *ḥadīth* no. 735.

[107] Al-Tirmidhī, *ḥadīth* no. 319.

[108] Al-Maqrīzī, II, 247.

year there was a plan to remove the alabaster which was later put on the
minbar of the Prophet and so return it to its original form. However, Mālik b.
Anas, the famous *Ḥadīth* scholar (93-179/711-795), pointed out that the
minbar, having been made of *ṭarfā'*, 'tamarisk', and strengthened with the
alabaster, would be shredded if the alabaster was removed. In result, al-
Mahdī did not change it.[109] Al-Mahdī is further said to have ordered the
maqṣūrah in the mosque of Madīnah to be demolished in 160/778.[110] Such
orthodox trends continued throughout Islamic history. In this respect,
Hillenbrand states:

> It is salutary to remember the willed austerity of the arrangements for
> worship as defined and practised by Muhammad. In the centuries to
> come Muslims never entirely forgot the starkness of his example, and
> periodically the forces of revivalism and pietism attempted at least a
> partial return to the pristine simplicity of earliest Islamic worship. The
> mosques erected in Saudi Arabia by the Wahhabis typify the attempt to
> reconcile early Islamic practice with the accumulated traditions of a
> millennium and more of mosque architecture. The polarities are
> virtually irreconcilable, but it is highly significant that such consistent
> attempts have made over the centuries to bring them together.[111]

6.5. The influence of *Ḥadīth* on the architectural features of early mosques

The group of *ḥadīths* about the virtue of building mosques (see 5.4) assisted
their multiplication since the time of the Rāshidūn Caliphs. Al-Balādhurī
recounted that there were already a multitude of mosques at Kūfah in the
caliphate of ʿUmar b. al-Khaṭṭāb.[112] This must have affected their architectural

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[109] Ibn Shabbah, p. 8; Ibn al-Najjār, p.159-60.

[110] Al-Balādhurī, p. 14.

[111] Hillenbrand, *Islamic Architecture*, p. 31.

[112] Al-Balādhurī, p. 391.

development, for with many mosques being built a context for their architectural evolution was provided.

Linked with this and also in compliance with *Ḥadīth*, 'in the early period, the building of mosques was a social obligation of the ruler as representative of the community and the tribes.'[113] Yet, in the beginning, Friday sermons were not allowed to be given in small mosques. The Caliph ʿUmar b. al-Khaṭṭāb is said to have sent messages to the rulers of the *Amṣār*, 'cities', to build mosques for daily-five prayers in villages,[114] but for such small mosques to be abandoned in favour of the congregational mosque in the city or the town on Fridays.[115] This stance of ʿUmar seems to be based on a *ḥadīth* according to which performing prayers at congregational mosques is better-rewarded than performing them at tribal small mosques (see 5.4). It seems that the early caliphs disliked having a multitude of Friday sermons in the same town as this would act against the supreme purpose of erecting congregational mosques, namely the consolidation of the Muslim community.[116] Also, the development of Friday mosques might have been connected to the centralization of caliphal power.

Below, we will see how under the Rāshidūn *Ḥadīth* interacted with mosque-related issues such as location, builders, and architectural components.

6.5.1. Location

Each of the three major mosques of Baṣrah, Kūfah and Fusṭāṭ was built in the centre of a new town. It is a question why the Muslim conquerors

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[113] Pedersen, 'Masdjid', p. 653.

[114] *Ḥadīth* states that mosques could also be built in markets.

[115] Al-Hindī, *Kanz*, *ḥadīth* no. 23075; al-Maqrīzī, II, 246. Al-Maqrīzī also told us that Friday assemblies were not held in the time of ʿAmr b. al-ʿĀṣ except in the mosque of ʿAmr. This would imply that in the beginning Friday sermons were held at villages.

[116] M. al-Jadīd, pp. 104-6.

usually ignored older towns with already-standing buildings and charming palaces and began to build new ones, usually of much simpler configuration with a mosque in the centre. Is there anything in tradition to imply that this practice was based on the Prophet's teachings? What were the criteria for choosing the sites of these new towns?

When the triumphant Muslim general ʿUtbah b. Ghazwān[117] reached a place called Khuraybah in 14/636, he wrote to the Caliph ʿUmar b. al-Khaṭṭāb telling him that he had taken it as a residence. ʿUtbah added that there would be a place for the Muslims to take as a winter-camp where they could settle down when they came back from invasions. ʿUmar, then, commanded ʿUtbah to take one place for all the Muslim troops. This place according to ʿUmar should be near to water sources and meadows (*marʿā*). Such conditions were found in Baṣrah. [118]

At Kūfah, the situation was different. It seems that the Muslims at first had no intention to found a new town there. According al-Ṭabarī, they first spread out in Madāʾin, the Persian capital, but then soon began to experience general weakness in their bodies (presumably because of different climate).[119] Having noticed this, ʿUmar b. al-Khaṭṭāb ordered Saʿd, the commander-in-chief, to adopt a habitable migration-place for them. ʿUmar asserted that he wanted neither sea nor bridge between him at Madīnah and the Muslim troops in their new encampment. Thus, Saʿd

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[117] ʿUtbah b. Ghazwān b. Jābir b. Wahb b. Nusayb (d.17/ 639) was amongst the earliest to embrace Islam (the seventh according to some accounts). He was one of the Prophet's archery. In the caliphate of ʿUmar he was one of the generals of the Muslim army. After the victories he achieved in a series of battles, such as that of Ubullah, ʿUmar appointed him as the governor of Baṣrah which ʿUtbah founded in 14/636. The few *ḥadīths* he narrated were transmitted by scholars such as al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī and Khālid b. ʿUmayr. See Ibn Saʿd, III, 92-3; IX, 5-8; al-Mizzī, *Tahdhīb al-Kamāl*, XIX, 317- Ibn Ḥajar, *Iṣābah*, IV, 215-6; al-Dhahabī, *Siyar*, 2646-7.

[118] Al-Balādhurī, p. 483; Ibn al-Faqīh, pp. 229-30; Yāqūt, I, 432.

[119] Al-Ṭabarī, IV, 40-2. While the geometric height of Madīnah attains 608 m (1,995 ft), that of al-Madāʾin is approximately 34 m (112 ft).

moved to a place called Anbār, but it was full of flies. Therefore, he left it for another place which proved equally inappropriate. Al-Balādhurī mentioned some accounts where other places were tried before they settled on Kūfah.[120] When Saʿd explained the dilemma, ʿUmar told him that the Arab people are, in this respect, like camels, and advised him to adopt for them a fertile place (ʿadna) where they would love to live.[121] However, living in new towns was not obligatory; Saʿd is reported to have given the people the choice of living either in Baṣrah or Madāʾin.[122]

The same thing is recorded in Egypt. When ʿAmr conquered Alexandria, he wanted to retain it as the capital of Islamic Egypt. Justifying his proposition, ʿAmr argued that it would save them the task of building a new one. When he sent a message saying this to the Caliph ʿUmar b. al-Khaṭṭāb, the Caliph wondered whether there would be 'water' separating him from the Muslims if they inhabited this city. ʿAmr said that the Nile would do this in days of inundation. ʿUmar then refused, as he did not wish to be separated from Muslims by water all the year round.[123] Here again, then, priority was given to accessibility. Another reason for caliph ʿUmar not to have favoured living in such cities was that he did not want the Muslim conquerors and other migrants to live in a 'luxurious' ambience, lest they should get used to relaxation and neglect the continuation of conquests.

Seen in this light, the long Islamic convention of leaving the already established cities of the conquered countries and erecting new capitals could have begun with a number of expedient reasons. The rationale of ʿUmar for not taking Alexandria and Madāʾin as Islamic capitals bears a lot of

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[120] See al-Balādhurī, pp. 387-8; al-Ṭabarī, IV, 40-2.

[121] Al-Balādhurī, p. 388. See also Yāqūt, IV, 490-1; H. Djait, 'al-Kūfa', in *Encyclopaedia of Islam* 2nd edn, V (1986), pp. 345-51.

[122] Al-Ṭabarī, IV, p. 43; Ibn al-Athīr, II, p. 528.

[123] Al-Sūyūṭī, *Ḥusn al-Muḥāḍarah fī Tārīkh Miṣr wal Qāhirah*, ed. by M. Abū al-Faḍl Ibrāhīm, 2 vols (Dār Iḥyāʾ al-Kutub al-ʿArabiyyah, 1967), p. 130. See also Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam, p. 91.

implication. His objection was based on logistical factors rather than on a particularly Islamic percept.[124]

For Muslim generals, the mosque was apparently the cornerstone of every new community. This view, which later became a deeply-held Islamic tradition, stemmed from the fact that the Prophet built his mosque soon after he migrated to Madīnah.[125]

The mosque played a seminal role in every Islamic society. The many functions it held, especially in early Islam, rendered it truly the core of the community. It was not merely the place where the Muslim congregation performed their prayers, but it served as their meeting-point and the place where they discussed their concerns and conducted their judicial affairs. In many cases, it also contained the treasury and served as the military headquarters. According to Irwin, 'books were commonly "published" by being read out aloud in the mosque.'[126]

Running after the Prophet's model, when ʿUtbah b. Ghazwān and Saʿd b. Abī Waqqāṣ founded the two towns of Baṣrah and Kūfah in 14/635 and 16-17/637-638, respectively, the first thing they did was to lay out the mosque. While there is no adequate information about how the sites of the two mosques were actually chosen, the mosque of ʿUmar at Jerusalem was built to commemorate a blessed spot of land. Luckily, more information is available about the site of the mosque of Fusṭāṭ. According to traditions,[127] the place where the mosque was built was originally a *khān*, 'shop', seized by a migrant Companion, Qaysabah b. Kulthūm al-Tujībī, who preferred to

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[124] It should be noted, however, that securing the Muslim conquerors also comes from Islamic teachings with *Ḥadīth* included.

[125] On the connection between *hijrah* and mosque foundation, see Patricia Crone, 'The First-Century Concept of "Hiğra"', *Arabica* 41 (1994), 352-87.

[126] Irwin, p. 59; See also Hillenbrand, *Islamic Architecture*, p. 42. On early oral publication, see Schoeler, *Genesis*, p. 69.

[127] Al-Maqrīzī, II, 246; Ibn Taghrī Bardī, I, 84, al-Qalqashandī, III, 341.

donate it so that the mosque would be built on it.[128] This is reminiscent of the story of the two orphans who gave their *mirbad* to the Prophet so as to build his mosque at Madīnah (see 4.4). According to Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam, the area around the mosque of ʿAmr was once occupied with gardens and vineyards.[129] It is true that there is a similarity between the site of the mosque of ʿAmr and its precedent of the Prophet. Yet, this is not necessarily to say that ʿAmr chose this site to imitate the Prophet who built his mosque on a *mirbad*.[130] While there is a possibility that this account about choosing the mosque site was romanticized to attribute to ʿAmr and his comrades the grace of following the Prophet, there is nothing in *Ḥadīth* to say that the Prophet recommended certain sites for mosques (see 4.4 and 5.6).[131] Indeed, this lack of specificity seems to have helped accelerate the building of a multitude of mosques by enabling broadness of choice so as to serve the rapidly increasing numbers of Muslims. [132]

The practice of building a new city after conquest with a mosque in the centre may have implications for the mosque site preferences. Since the mosque would be the nucleus around which a whole community would agglomerate,[133] it was necessary to choose a level place with a wide and unencumbered vicinity. This is exactly what happened in Baṣrah, Kūfah and Fusṭāṭ. The mosque at Baṣrah, for instance, was built in a place known in the time of al-Balādhurī as the *raḥbah*, 'wide yard' of Banū Hāshim.[134] As soon as these mosques were planned, the area around each of them was

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[128] Yāqūt, IV, 265; Ibn Taghrī Bardī, I, 84. See also al-Qalqashandī, III, p.341.

[129] Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam, p. 92; al-Sūyūṭī, *Husn*, p. 132.

[130] On *mirbad*, see p. (4.4).

[131] For more information about the specifications of mosque location according to *ḥadīth*, see chapter 5.

[132] Irwin, p. 59.

[133] Hillenbrand, *Islamic Architecture*, p. 42.

[134] Al-Balādhurī, p.483-4; Ibn al-Faqīh, p. 188.

divided into *khiṭaṭ* and each *khiṭṭa* was dedicated to a tribe of the migrants.[135]

Some have argued that decisions on site selection in a new town or where to lay out its mosque, *dār al-imārah* and other buildings were taken by the governors who usually asked for advice from informed people.[136] There has been doubt as to whether the tribes had any impact on the way of laying out towns.[137] The account of al-Mawardī (d. 450/1058) ascribed such tasks to the Companions. It is worth noting that the word 'companion' could refer to citizens and authority, for the word 'companion' means any Muslim who talked with, or even just saw, the Prophet.[138]

6.5.2.   Builders of mosques and their awareness of *Ḥadīth*

It is necessary to define who was primarily responsible for laying out early mosques and choosing the material and technique for building them. It is equally important to investigate those people's knowledge of relevant *ḥadīths*.

Al-Balādhurī mentioned different accounts about those to whom the task of planning the mosque of Baṣrah was assigned.[139] According to the most usually accepted one, it was ʿUtbah himself who planned the mosque.[140] In any event, it seems that the task of laying out the first mosques of Baṣrah and Kūfah did not require much experience. According to tradition, it was not until 17/639 that the mosque of Baṣrah, for example,

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[135] See Jamel Akbar, 'Khiṭṭa and the territorial structure of early Muslim Towns', *Muqarnas*, 6 (1989), 22-32.

[136] J. Akbar, p. 26.

[137] Ibid.

[138] Ibid, p. 26.

[139] Some said it was laid out by Miḥjar (or Miḥjan according to Ibn Qutaybah) b. al-Adhraʾ al-Bahzī, others said it was Nāfiʿ b. al-Ḥārith b. Kaladah. According to others, it was laid out by al-Aswad b. Sarīʿ al-Tamīmī. All are reported to have laid it out in 14/635. Al-Balādhurī, p. 483. According to Ibn al-Faqīh the architect was Ḥijr b. al-Awzaʾ. p. 231.

[140] Al-Balādhurī, p. 483.

was built of *labin* and mud by Abū Mūsa al-Ashʿarī.[141]

At Kūfah, when the State Treasury suffered a burglary in the time of Saʿd, he sent a message to ʿUmar asking for his advice. ʿUmar advised him to shift the mosque so as to be adjacent to the *dār* and to render the *dār* in front of its *qiblah*.[142] When Saʿd wanted to build the mosque, a man called Rūzbīh b. Buzurdjmihr b. Sasān offered to build it along with a palace for him.[143] Al-Ṭabarī tells us that Rūzbīh was a *dihqān*, from Hamadan,[144] and adds that he fled to Byzantium (Rūm) after being persecuted by the Akāsirah, 'Persian kings'. He did not feel safe until the advent of Saʿd. Thus, he built the mosque and the palace for Saʿd before he converted to Islam.[145]

According to al-Ṭabarī, later on, when Ziyād (d. 53/673), the Umayyad governor,[146] wanted to perfect the mosque of Kūfah, he invited non-Muslim builders to do the work for him.[147] Taken alone, this might imply that such builders had not been hired in the previous works; however, we have just seen that the mosque of Kūfah was reportedly laid out by Ruzbīh before he embraced Islam. Does this represent any departure from Islamic teachings?[148] Although some recent Islamic voices do not accept that

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[141] Al-Balādhurī, p. 489; Ibn al-Faqīh, p. 230; Yāqūt, I, 433.

[142] ʿUmar's vision was that the State Treasury would be guarded by the people who frequented the mosque all day and night.

[143] Al-Ṭabarī, IV, p. 46.

[144] Al-Ṭabarī, IV, p. 46. Dihqān was a Persian noble or notable merchant. Ibn Manẓūr, II, 1443. Nöldeke argued that the *dihqāns* were the major landowners and imperial tax-collectors. Nöldeke *Geschichte der Perser und Araber*, pp. 440-41, quoted by Creswell, *Early Muslim Architecture*, I. I, 26.

[145] Al-Ṭabarī, IV, p. 48.

[146] On Ziyād and his role in developing mosque architectural design, see next chapter.

[147] Al-Ṭabarī, IV, 46.

[148] For the answer of this question, see next chapter.

mosques should be built or designed by non-Muslims,[149] there is nothing in *Ḥadīth* to condemn such practice. As the practice of hiring non-Muslim masons was more established in the Umayyad period, we will defer the discussion on how it should be ascertained until the next chapter (see 7.3). In any case, the process of building the mosque of Kūfah could not have been wholly left to Ruzbīh, as he would surely have received his brief from, and may have been supervised by, Saʿd and other Companions.

The task of laying out (the *qiblah* of) the mosque of Fusṭāṭ is said to have been supervised by eighty Companions including al-Zubayr b. al-ʿAwwām and ʿUbādah b. al-Ṣāmit.[150] However, in a less familiar account, the number of these Companions is reduced to four.[151] On the authority of ʿAbd Allāh b. Abī Jaʿfar, the *miḥrāb* was set by *naqibān*, 'two prefects',[152] ʿUbādah b. al-Ṣāmit and Rāfiʿ b. Mālik,[153] while according to al-Layth b.

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[149] M. al-Jadīd, pp.100-1; al-Khuḍayrī, p. 36. See also al-Khuḍayrī, 'Aḥkām', pp. 36-7.

[150] Al-Maqrīzī, II, 246-7; Ibn Duqmāq, IV, 62, 64; al-Qalqashandī, III, 341. Al-Zubayr b. al-ʿAwwām (d. 36/656) was known as 'the disciple of the Prophet'. He narrated a large number of *ḥadīths*. See Ibn Saʿd, III, 93-106; al-Mizzī, *Tahdhīb al-Kamāl*, IX, 319-29; Ibn Ḥajar, *Iṣābah*, III, 5-7; al-Dhahabī, *Siyar*, 1711-7. The second person, ʿUbādah b. al-Ṣāmit (d. 34/654) was one of the five Companions who are said to have combiled the *Qurʾān* in the time of the Prophet. ʿUbādah narrated about 181 *ḥadīths*. See Ibn Saʿd, III, 506; al-Mizzī, *Tahdhīb al-Kamāl*, XIV, 183-90; Ibn Ḥajar, *Iṣābah*, IV, 27-8, al-Dhahabī, *Siyar*, pp. 2117-8.

[151] These were: Abū Dharr, Abū Baṣīrah, Maḥmaʾa al-Zubaydī and Nabīh b. Ṣawāb. Al-Maqrīzī, II, 247.

[152] Those are the group of the Anṣār, 'Helpers from Madīnah' who met the Prophet at ʿAqabah, embraced Islam and spread it at Madīnah.

[153] Al-Maqrīzī, II, 247. Rāfiʿ b. Mālik b. Zurayq was the first one to embrace Islam from the tribe of Khazraj. The mosque of his kin, Banū Zuryaq, is said to have been the first mosque in Islam in which *Qurʾān* was recited. When he met the Prophet at ʿAqabah he took from him all that had been revealed from the *Qurʾān* and then taught it to his people. See Ibn Saʿd, III, 573-4; Ibn Ḥajar, *Iṣābah*, II, 189-90; Ibn Rajab, III, 152-3.

Saʿd,[154] ʿAmr stretched the cords himself until the *qiblah* was fixed.[155] Whatever the case might have been, all Companions could not have missed the major event of building the mosque of the Prophet at Madīnah, or at least had the chance to see it. There is a strong probability that they transferred such experience to the workplace at Fusṭāṭ.

At Madīnah, we are told that the Caliph ʿUthmān supervised the work of rebuilding the mosque of the Prophet by himself.[156] An eyewitness, ʿAbd al Raḥmān b. Safīnah, reported that he saw *qaṣṣah*, 'stucco', being brought to ʿUthmān from a place called Baṭn Nakhl[157] while he was building the mosque of the Prophet. Ibn Safīnah added that he saw ʿUthmān standing and the masons working in the mosque and when a prayer time was due, he was leading them [...].[158]

The inherent problems of investigating builders' acquaintance of *Ḥadīth* are lessened by the fact that they were mostly *ṣaḥābīs* who either knew relevant *ḥadīths*, had witnessed the process of building the mosque of Madīnah, or had seen it in its original form.[159] For example, ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿAmr b. al-ʿĀṣ, who stayed with his father at Fusṭāṭ and built for himself a house adjacent to the mosque (see figure 17), was one of the earliest

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[154] Al-Layth b. Saʿd b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Fahmī was a notable Egyptian scholar in the generation of *tābiʿīs*. He took knowledge from scholars such as al-Zuhrī and Hishām b. ʿUrwah. Al-Layth's knowledge of *Ḥadīth* and *Fiqh* was remarkable to the effect that he was regarded as the founder of a separate school of Islamic jurisprudence. He died in 175/791. See al-Dhahabī, *Siyar*, 3133-9.

[155] Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam, p. 92; al-Maqrīzī, II, 247.

[156] Al-Maṭarī, p. 80.

[157] On this place, see al-Fayrūzabādī, *Maghānim*, p. 57.

[158] Ibn al-Najjār, p. 174; al-Samhūdī, *Wafāʾ*, II, pp. 504-5. See also al-Marāghī, p. 22; al-Barzanjī, p.12.

[159] For more information about the *ṣaḥābīs's* acquaintance of *Ḥadīth*, see (2.1.3.2).

Companions to set *Ḥadīth* down in writing (see 2.1.3.2).[160] Guillaume states:

> Of the series authorizing the writing of ḥadīth we may cite one on the
> authority of that prolific father of tradition Abū Huraira, who said that
> one of the helpers (Ansar) used to sit and listen with admiration to the
> utterance of the prophet of God, and, being unable to remember what
> he heard, lamented his weakness to the prophet. The latter replied,
> 'Call your right hand to your aid,' i.e. write them down. This hadith
> exists in many different forms associated with the names of Abū Ṣāliḥ
> and Anas b. Mālik. Again ʿAbd Allah b. ʿUmar says: 'We said, "O
> prophet of God, we hear from you ḥadīth which we cannot remember.
> May we not write them down?" "By All means write them down," said
> he.' This ḥadīth exists in no less than thirty versions, which present
> small differences. Again, Abū Huraira asserts—not without reason!
> —that none of the Companions preserved more hadith than he, except
> ʿAbd Allah b. ʿUmar. 'But he wrote them down, and I did not write
> them.' This ʿAbd Allah (d. 65) says, 'The book I wrote from the prophet
> of God is Al-Ṣādiqa,' and Mujāhid asserts that he saw this book in the
> possession of its compiler. Anas b. Mālik states that Abū Bakr wrote
> down from him the laws regarding alms.[161]

It should be noted, however, that in these early days of Islam for a
ḥadīth to be circulated it was not necessary for it to be written in *ṣuḥuf*,[162]
for it could have been heard from the Prophet by many Companions who, in
turn, might have told it to others.

Although most of the *ḥadīths* about mosques were narrated by
Companions like Anas b. Mālik,[163] Ibn ʿUmar, Ibn ʿAbbās and ʿĀʾishah, there

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[160] Al-Dārimī, *ḥadīth* no. 513; al-Baghdādī, *Taqyīd*, pp. 100-06; Sezgin (Ḥijāzī's transl.), I, 153-4.
On ʿAbd Allah's notable knowledge of *Ḥadīth*, see also Muslim, *ḥadīth* no. 6799.

[161] Guillaume, pp. 15-6. On ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿUmar's writing of Ḥadīth, see also al-Bukhārī, *ḥadīth*
no. 113; al-Dārimī, *ḥadīth* no. 500.

[162] On ways of early oral publication of *Ḥadīth*, see Schoeler, *Genesis*, pp. 69-71.

[163] We will see in the next chapter how Anas was involved in discussions about mosque
architecture.

is a probability that some of the *ṣaḥābīs* who are not known to us as major *Ḥadīth* narrators were nevertheless acquainted with relevant *ḥadīths*. Al-Zubayr b. al-ʿAwwām, for instance, who is said to have participated in setting the *qiblah* of the mosque of Fusṭāṭ, was asked by his son ʿAbd Allāh: 'why do not I hear you narrate the Prophet's *Ḥadīth* [...]?' Al-Zubayr's answer was: 'I have not left him [namely the Prophet] since I embraced Islam, but I have heard him say: "he who lies to me [namely falsely attributes sayings to me] should prepare himself to have a place in Hell".'[164] Another example is Saʿd b. Abī Waqqāṣ who was the key figure in laying out the mosque of Kūfah. Saʿd was accompanied in a journey from Madīnah to Mecca by al-Sāʾib b. Yazīd (d. 91/709) who stated: 'I did not hear him [namely Saʿd] telling a *ḥadīth* until he came back.'[165] According to Abū al-Qāsim al-Kaʿbī (d. 273/886 or 317/929), al-Sāʾib b. Yazīd's attributed the same discretion to Ṭalḥah b. ʿUbayd Allāh, ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. ʿAwf, and al-Miqdād b. al-Aswad.[166] The latter is said to have participated in setting out the *qiblah* of the mosque of Fusṭāṭ.[167] Even if these Companions did not like to tell *Ḥadīth* for fear of making mistakes, or for any other reason, it is still likely that they applied their knowledge to the building of mosques in which they took part.

As already hinted, there is more likelihood that many of the builders of the first half- century mosques had taken part in, or at least witnessed, the process of building the mosque of the Prophet at Madīnah. According to

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[164] Ibn Mājah, *ḥadīth* no. 36. See also Ibn Mājah, *ḥadīth* no. 30-7; al-Bukhārī, *ḥadīths* no. 106-10; al-Haythamī, *ḥadīths* no. 620-64.

[165] Ibn Mājah, *ḥadīth* no. 29; Ibn Saʿd, III, 134. See also Ibn Mājah, *ḥadīths* no. 23-8 under the heading of 'the chapter of being precautious while reporting (*al-ḥadīth ʿann*) the Prophet'. On Saʿd b. Abī Waqqāṣ, see Ibn Saʿd, III. 127-38.

[166] Abū al-Qāsim ʿAbd Allāh b. Aḥmad al-Kaʿbī, *Qabūl al-Akhbār wa Maʿrifat al-Rijāl*, 2 vols (Beirut: dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyyah, 2000), p. 25.

[167] Ibn Taghrī Bardī, I, 84; al-Maqrīzī, II, 247.

Ibn Saʿd, large numbers of the people of Madīnah welcomed the Prophet.[168] There was not a tribe but offered the Prophet a place to stay amongst them.[169] Naturally, such a major event as building the mosque and houses of the Prophet should have been attended by a large number of the early Muslims. The *Muhājirūn*, 'Migrant Muslims' and the *Anṣār*, 'Muslim Helpers of Madīnah' were said to have participated in the work which was launched by the Prophet himself.[170] Even those who missed the event because they had not yet migrated, or for any other reason, should have seen the mosque later on and possibly joined the Prophet in the second or the third phase of building it.

6.5.3.   Components of the mosque

6.5.3.1.   The *miḥrāb*, 'prayer niche'

We do not possess enough information about how the *qiblah* was marked in mosques which were built under the four Rightly-guided Caliphs. However, the first mosque of ʿAmr might have had a *miḥrāb* for when a *miḥrāb* was added to it in the Umayyad period, it was said to have been set in a line with the older *miḥrāb* of the first mosque.[171] That older *miḥrāb* was not a concave prayer niche.[172] While expressly stating that the mosque had no concave prayer niche (*miḥrāb mujawwaf*), al-Qalqashandī (d. 1418) is the only source to say that the *qiblah* was marked by means of colonettes (*ʿumud qāʾimah bi ṣadr al-miḥrāb*).[173] Abouseif, accordingly, hypothesizes that there might have been a 'flat niche formed of two pairs of columns with

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[168] Ibn Saʿd, I, 201-2.

[169] See al-Sūhaylī, II, 334-5.

[170] Ibn Hishām, II, 141-2; Ibn Saʿd, I, 205-6.

[171] Al-Maqrīzī, II, 249; Ibn Duqmāq, IV, 64, Ibn Taghrī Bardī, I, 88.

[172] Creswell, *Early Muslim Architecture*, I. I, 37.

[173] Al-Qalqashandī, III, 341.

an arch drawn between them'.[174] Ṭāha al-Walī, however, argues that the earliest *miḥrāb* was added to the mosque of the Prophet in the caliphate of ʿUthmān b. ʿAffān (23-35/643-55),[175] but that this was no more than a mark posted on the *qiblah* wall which remained flat.

Whatever it was, *Ḥadīth* did not specify a particular way to mark the *qiblah*. Thus, Muslims can apply whatever device they see as appropriate unless it collides with general Islamic principles as established by *Qurʾān* and *Ḥadīth* (see 5.7.5.2 and 7.9.1).[176]

6.5.3.2.   The *minbar*, 'pulpit'

A similar scarcity of information is faced when dealing with early *minbars*. We know from Yāqūt that the mosque of Baṣrah, for example, had a *minbar* that was first set in the middle,[177] but we have no information about what it looked like. This said, it seems that in the early years of Islam, the Prophet's legacy, and particularly his *ḥadīths* abhorring pompousness, deterred the adoption of lofty *minbars*. According to Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam, when ʿAmr adopted a *minbar* for himself, the Caliph ʿUmar sent a strict message to him: 'is not it enough for you to stand up while the Muslim congregation are sitting at your feet?' He ordered ʿAmr to pull it down. So he did,[178] but it is said that ʿAmr 'rebuilt' it after the death of ʿUmar.[179] Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam's use of the word 'rebuilt' suggests that the *minbar* of ʿAmr could have been an elevated structure, and hence perhaps explains, ʿUmar's resentment. The *minbar* of ʿAmr – which could have had a political significance – was seemingly in contrast with contemporary

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[174] Doris Behrens-Abouseif, *Islamic Architecture in Cairo: an Introduction*, p. 47. See also Yeomans, p. 20.

[175] T. al-Walī, *Al-Masājid fil Islām*, p. 231.

[176] More on that will be discussed in the next chapter.

[177] Yāqūt, I, 433.

[178] Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam, p. 92; Ibn Khaldūn, *Muqaddimah*, 269; al-Suyūṭī, *Ḥusn*, 132; Ibn Taghrī Bardī, I, 85; al-Maqrīzī, II, 247.

[179] Al-Qalqashandī, III, 341.

minbars. According to Sauvaget, 'Various evidence allows one to imagine that particular minbars of the first two centuries of the Hijra were very modest in height, a feature shared by the minbar of Muhammad.'[180]

6.5.3.3.   Floor covering

It seems that the reconstruction of the mosque of Madīnah in the time of ʿUmar resulted in spreading out the pebbles with which its floor had been covered since the time of the Prophet (see 5.7.11). Therefore, ʿUmar, on the advice of Sufyān b. ʿAbd Allāh al-Thaqafī,[181] ordered the floor of the new mosque to be covered with pebbles from the valley of ʿAqīq.[182] Ibn Saʿd added that ʿUmar did so when he saw the people clapping their hands after prostration to free them from dust.[183] It seems that he was afraid that, by passage of time, later generations would consider this action as a part of the prayer.

Under the Rāshidūn Caliphs a step was taken towards applying more comfortable materials. In the time of ʿUmar, a *ṭunfuṣah*, 'rug', owned by ʿAqīl b. Abī Ṭālib, was used on Fridays to cover the area next to the mosque's western wall of the Prophet's mosque.[184] At Fusṭāṭ, however, the floor was strewn with pebbles from the beginning,[185] while at Baṣrah and Kūfah, the floor of the two mosques were of sand. It was not until the Umayyad period that pebbles were used to cover their floors.[186] For some, these accounts about covering the floors of the mosques of Madīnah, Kūfah and Baṣrah with pebbles are conflicting, for they attribute the introduction of pebble flooring to four different people, that is the Prophet, ʿUthmān, Ziyād

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[180] Sauvaget, 'Mosque and Palace', pp. 127-8. On the *minbar* of the Prophet, see 4.6.3.

[181] Sufyān was a Companion from al-Ṭāʾif. Some of the few *ḥadīths* he narrated were reported by Muslim and al-Nasāʾī. See Ibn Ḥajar, *Iṣābah*, III, 105-6.

[182] Ibn al-Najjār, p. 173. See also Ibn al-Faqīh, p. 81.

[183] Ibn Saʿd, III, 264; Ibn al-Najjār, p. 173.

[184] Ibn Zabālah, p. 124; al-Samhūdī, *Wafāʾ*, II, 663.

[185] Al-Maqrīzī, II, 248; Ibn Taghrī Bardī, I, 86.

[186] Al-Balādhurī, p. 389-90.

and al-Walīd.[187] In fact, tradition does not say that the work of any of the above names, with ʿUmar added to them, was unprecedented. ʿUmar was the first to cover the floor of the Madīnah mosque with pebbles after he had rebuilt it. This is not to say that pebbles were not used to cover the floor of the mosque in the time of the Prophet. Likewise, Ziyād and al-Walīd are said to be the first to apply pebble flooring to the mosques which they built and not the first to do so in Islam. In addition to having been a natural improvement, the use of more comfortable materials to cover the mosque floor is legalized by reports about the Prophet praying on fabrics and other comfortable materials (see 5.7.11). This practice of using *Ḥadīth* to substantiate later practices was put into effect in the 3rd/9th century and may be earlier. The use of more comfortable flooring to prostrate oneself is a natural upgrading that must have been matching with the people's cultural life and it did not need any statutory vindication.

6.5.4.   Plan and material

The early mosques, judged by their plans and materials, were inspired by the Prophet's archetype.[188] They were functional, void of any minarets, domes, monumental façades, concave prayer niches or any decorative element. Apart from the re-use of antique columns,[189] which could have given the colonnade of the mosque of Kūfah the look of a 'gallery',[190] the early mosques as described in sources were void of any artistic tinge.

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[187] See Antun, pp. 120-1.

[188] It seems that this form of building, namely *ʿarīsh*, was also a familiar one for the Companions. When the army of ʿAmr entered the Ptolemaic city of Rhinocorura, located in the North-eastern part of Egypt, they camped there in a *ʿarīsh*, which they erected. This town was, accordingly, given the Arabic name of 'Arish', which it still bears to the present day.

[189] See Pedersen, 'Masdjid', p. 660; Hillenbrand, 'Masdjid', in *the Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd edn, VI (1991), pp. 677-88 (p. 679).

[190] Rivoira, p. 8.

The dimensions of these earliest mosques (with the exception of that of Fusṭāṭ whose case will be discussed below) were relatively large. We saw in chapter 5 that the Prophet asked the builders of a mosque to make it large.

Like the mosque of the Prophet, the dominant scheme was of an open courtyard with an unpretentious *ẓullah* in the *qiblah* side. The technique of demarcating the mosque proper was either a trench, as in the mosque of Kūfah,[191] or a reed fence as in that of Baṣrah.[192] Like the mosque of the Prophet to which the houses of his wives were attached, these early mosques were abutted by the governor's residence and the State Treasury. Al-Ṭabarī stated that this was the arrangement of [all] mosques except the holy sanctuary at Mecca. According to him, the *ṣaḥāba* did not like to imitate the latter's unique configuration as it enjoyed an exceptionally high status.[193]

However, according to tradition, the mosque of Fusṭāṭ had no *ṣaḥn* when it was first built by ʿAmr.[194] Yet, al-Maqrīzī,[195] who also stated that there was no *ṣaḥn* in the mosque, mentioned a lane between the mosque and the adjacent house of ʿAmr in which people prayed during the summer. Ibn Taghrī Bardī (d. 874/1470) stated: '[...] its roof was low and [it] had no *ṣaḥn*. [In the summer],[196] the people were aligned in rows in its *finā*',

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[191] Al-Ṭabarī, IV, 45; Pedersen, 'Masdjid', pp. 647-8.

[192] Al-Balādhurī, pp. 483-4; Ibn Qutaybah, p. 563; Yāqūt, IV, 432.

[193] Al-Ṭabarī, IV, 45.

[194] Al-Maqrīzī, II, 247-8; Ibn Taghrī Bardī, I, 85.

[195] On al-Maqrīzī, Max van Berchem states: 'All the great cities of the East have their topographers; Maqrizi surpasses them all, if not in accuracy, at least in the quantity of his information.' Max van Berchem, 'Notes on Arab Archaeology', in *Early Islamic Art and Architecture*, ed. by Jonathan M. Bloom, the Formation of the Classical World, 23 (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2002), pp. 1-6 (p. 5).

[196] This addition is quoted from ʿAlī Mubārak, *Al-Khiṭaṭ al-Tawfīqiyyah al-Jadīdah*, 20 vols (Bulāq: al-Maṭbaʿah al-Amīriyyah al-Kubra, 1889).

'vacant space'.[197] [A lane of] seven *dhirāʿs* separated between it and the house of ʿAmr. And it was enclosed from all sides by the road.'[198] Pedersen considered the phrase 'it had no *ṣaḥn*' to mean that 'this space planted with trees, between the covered halls was very narrow.'[199] Apparently, then, this lane provided the congregation with a substitute that was suitable enough to have delayed the process of adding a courtyard for thirty-two years.

However this may be, it seems safe to argue that the plan of the mosque of Fusṭāṭ differed from that of the mosque of the Prophet in that the middle open courtyard was not its main element (see figures 13 and 14). Why did it so differ? The pressing need for a place of prayer and Egypt's relatively moderate climate might have been two reasons why the mosque lacked a *ṣaḥn*.[200] It could be also due to the fact that the mosque was built during the winter of 21/641-2.[201] It may be that the Companions did not see any urgent need to build a courtyard which is more frequently used in summer than in winter. Kubiak, arguing from the mosque's relatively limited size, suggested that it was originally intended to be a *masjid* for the Ahl ar-Rāyah, rather than a *jāmiʿ* for the whole Muslim community of Fusṭāṭ.[202] Nonetheless, the thirty-two years that elapsed before the Umayyad governor Maslamah b. Mukhallad rebuilt the mosque rather weaken the suggestion that it was only intended to be temporary.[203]

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[197] *Fināʿ* is another term for courtyards, particularly used in residential architecture. Al-Shahrī, 'Ṣaḥn', p. 1.

[198] Ibn Taghrī Bardī, I, p. 85.

[199] Pedersen, 'Masdjid', p. 661. See also Hazzāʿ al-Shahrī, 'Ṣaḥn al-Masjid al-Jāmiʿ wa Taṭawwuruhū fil ʿImārah al-Islāmiyyah', p. 4.

[200] For more information about the influence of climate on Islamic architecture, see Farīd Shafiʿī, p. 233.

[201] See Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam, pp. 91-2.

[202] W. B. Kubiak, *Al-Fustat* (Cairo: The American University in Cairo Press, 1987) p. 129. See also Yeomans, p. 20.

[203] On Maslamah and his work at the mosque of ʿAmr, see next chapter.

 A further aspect is that by this time the Muslim community was heavily engaged in acquiring more land or defending what it had already gained; hence there might have not been enough time for such 'secondary' issues. In fact, the lack of an open courtyard did not instantly represent a problem. Later when its absence did become a problem, a courtyard was added in 53/673.

Meanwhile, it does not seem reasonable to attribute the lack of an open courtyard to the difficulty of making it, since it was a simple part of the Prophet's structure that did not need any special experience or material. This may imply that the Companions understood that the form adopted by the Prophet was not *per se* binding, and that they used 'whatever came to hand'.[204]

The most noticeable and transferable trait in the Prophet's structure was simplicity. Therefore, whether the mosque had a *ṣaḥn* or a portico was apparently left to the builders, whose treatment was in turn influenced by the needs of place, climate, the number of worshippers, or other locally-varying factors. The previously-mentioned *ḥadīth*, 'you are more aware of the concerns of your [worldly] life', is believed to have given Muslims freedom of action in different ways in the different aspects of life as long as there is no religious rule to govern such issues. The only condition, here, was that they should not act in a way that contradicted any of the Islamic general principles; otherwise their acts would be regarded as *bid'ah*.[205]

Generally, the relatively simple form of early mosques could imply that the Companions of the Prophet preferred the grace of following his *Sunnah* of simplicity to the adoption of more advanced architectural styles of the conquered territories. If so, this is not to say that they did not

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[204] Bloom and Blair, *Islamic Arts*, p. 23. See also Bloom, 'Mosque', *EQ*, III, 431.

[205] The definition of *bid'ah* and the difference between it and the religiously-accepted improvisation are discussed in chapter 5.

appreciate the grandeur of such architectural heritage. For example, when ʿAmr b. al-ʿĀṣ conquered Alexandria he sent a message to the Caliph ʿUmar at Madīnah describing how splendid the town was.[206] The fact that the mosque of ʿAmr at Fusṭāṭ and that of ʿUmar at Jerusalem were built in such modesty, in spite of the availability of other more durable materials and architectural expertise is telling.[207]

We have seen that some scholars have argued that the mosque of the Prophet at Madīnah was so simple because the Arabs' knowledge of architecture at that time was rudimentary, and because Arabia is poor in building materials.[208] While this may seem, *prima facie*, plausible, if the same reasoning is applied to the also-simple mosque that ʿAmr planted in Egypt – a land which boasted thousands of years of architectural heritage and is rich in building material – it makes no sense.

The fittingness of the mosque of the Prophet, in spite of its simplicity,[209] derived from its provision of three essential elements: a praying space, a way of indicating the direction of Mecca, and a shelter.[210] For Hillenbrand, one of the reasons why the model of the Prophet was largely favoured is that it 'answered to a nicety the needs of Muslim liturgy and prayer'.[211] The courtyard, for instance, suited the sunny climate of the southern Mediterranean and the Near East. Thus, the so-called 'Arab plan'

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[206] See Yāqūt, I, 182-9.

[207] The simplicity of ʿUmar's mosque at Jerusalem was confirmed by Arculf, *Pilgrimage*, p. 6. See also Tobler, *Itinera et descriptiones Terrae Sanctae*, I, 145; Rivoira, p. 18; Pedersen, 'Masdjid', p. 648; Irwin, p. 58-9; Bloom and Blair, *Islamic Arts*, p. 25.

[208] For more details, see G. R. D. King, 'Creswell's Appreciation of Arabian Architecture', *Muqarnas*, 8 (1991), 94-102.

[209] Irwin argues that this simplicity 'facilitated the extension of mosques to accommodate their ever-growing numbers of worshippers': p. 59.

[210] Bloom and Blair, *Islamic Arts*, p. 23.

[211] Hillenbrand, 'Masdjid', *EI2*, VI, 679.

was capable of adaptation dictated by changeable factors.[212]

The feature of supreme importance for consideration in the plan of such early mosques was facing the *qiblah*.[213] Its significance can be recognized from the above *ḥadīths* about its inevitability (see chapter 5), and the scholars' long discussions about it. For example, there is a notable subheading in al-Maqrīzī, 'the *miḥrābs* of Egypt: the reasons of their variation and the indication of the right and the wrong among them'.[214] Under this, he fully discussed this subject from the astronomical and jurisprudential perspectives. We have just seen that the process of setting the *qiblah* of the mosque of ʿAmr, for example, was said to have been supervised by eighty Companions.[215] According to some authorities, ʿAmr set the *qiblah* by himself,[216] but did not manage to set it accurately. It should be noted that prayers are still valid if, for some reason, facing the *qiblah* was unattainable. The Prophet is reported to have said: 'between the East and the West is [generally] a *qiblah*'.[217]

6.5.5.   Spolia and the conversion of churches into mosques

To investigate how the Companions observed the attitude of *Ḥadīth* towards the conversion of other buildings, we should first consider how the Companions approached the question of performing prayers in places containing images of humans and animals, for churches and other houses of prayers of other faiths often contained such images.

According to al-Ṭabarī, when the Muslims conquered al-Madāʾin,

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[212] Ibid. See also Bloom, 'Mosque', *EQ*, III, 432.

[213] Al-Jadīd, pp. 109-11.

[214] Al-Maqrīzī, II, 256.

[215] Al-Sūyūṭī, *Tārīkh al-Khulafāʾ*, p.132; Yāqūt, IV, p. 265; Ibn Taghrī Bardī, p. 84; al-Qalqashandī, III, 341.

[216] Al-Maqrīzī, II, 247.

[217] Mālik, *Muwaṭṭaʾ*, *ḥadīth* no. 548; al-Tirmidhī, *ḥadīth* no. 342.

capital of the Persian Empire, Saʿd prayed *ṣalāt al-fatḥ*, 'prayer of conquest',
in the *iwān* of Kisrā and took it as a mosque while there were statues of
stucco (*jiṣṣ*) for men and horses.[218] Al-Ṭabarī commented that neither he,
namely Saʿd, nor the Muslims were molested by the existence of these
figures which they did not obliterate.[219]

This could be explained by an instantaneous need on the part of the
Muslim conquerors to give thanks. According to al-Ṭabarī, the first thing the
Companions liked to do when they founded a city or settled down in a place
was to pray and supplicate.[220] In this context, occasional, or rather
seldom,[221] prayers in the houses of worship of other faiths do not
necessarily imply that the earliest Muslims tolerated the decoration of
mosques or the regular prayers in churches or synagogues.

Indeed, there is a stark tone of abomination in *Ḥadīth* about the
imitation of Christians and Jews in religious matters in general and in
decorating places of worship in particular (see 5.8). Did the early Muslims
adhere to this? According to Grabar, the Prophet and early Islam strove to
avoid priesthood and its clergy.[222]

An incident reported by al-Ṭabarī illustrates ʿUmar's ardency not to

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[218] Al-Ṭabarī, IV, p. 16, Ibn Kathīr, X, 13.

[219] Al-Ṭabarī, IV, 16. See also K. A. C. Creswell, 'The Lawfulness of Painting in Early Islam', in
Early Islamic Art and Architecture, ed. by J. M. Bloom, (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2002), pp. 101-8
(p. 102).

[220] Al-Ṭabarī, IV, 41; Ibn Kathīr, X, 41.

[221] It is reported that ʿUmar and ʿAmr performed prayers in churches. A man from the tribe of
Tujīb said that he saw ʿAmr entered a church and prayed in it. Al-Maqrīzī, II, 247. According to
Ibn Kathīr, after the conquest of Jerusalem, ʿUmar entered the 'mosque' of Bayt al-Maqdis and
prayed in the *miḥrāb* of Dāwūd where he led the Muslims in *ṣalāt al-ghadāt*. Ibn Kathīr, IX, p.
656. Muʿāwiyah is also said to have prayed at Christian churches. See *The Seventh Century in
the West-Syrian Chronicles*, trans. by Andrew Palmer, (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press,
1993), p. 31.

[222] Grabar, *Formation*, p. 102-3.

imitate them in mosque related-issues. When Kaʿb al-Aḥbār advised him to build his mosque at Jerusalem behind the Holy Rock, ʿUmar nudged his chest and said: '[in so doing] you have imitated the Jews'. He then built it in front of the Holy Rock.[223] This account seems to counter Caetani's argument that ʿUmar's mosque was built on the remnants of the church of the Virgin.[224] If ʿUmar disliked choosing a site for his mosque that would put it in relation with Jewish tradition, how could we believe that he tolerated the conduct of regular prayers in a church or a fire temple? Further, he is reported to have refused to pray in a church in Bayt al-Maqdis lest Muslim people would take that as a justification to turn churches into mosques.[225]

What about the reports about the re-use of columns taken from ruined churches and palaces in the mosque of Saʿd at Kūfah?[226] In fact, there are reasons to doubt such accounts, which were provided only by al-Ṭabarī on the authority of Sayf b. ʿUmar whose narratives were rejected by Wellhausen.[227] Al-Balādhurī, for example, said nothing about the *ẓullah* or the antique columns.[228] Shafiʿī argued that the account (which also states that the Companions were told about the site of Kūfah by a Christian) was doctored so as to link the birth of Islamic architecture to Christian origins.[229]

Nonetheless, al-Balādhurī tells us about a few cases where churches, or parts of them, were converted into mosques in the time of the Rāshidūn caliphs.[230] Should such *akhbar* be reliable, they would imply that

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[223] Al-Ṭabarī, III, 611; Ibn Kathīr, IX, 662. See also *Muthīr al-Gharām*, p. 166.

[224] See Caetani, *Annali*, III, 2, pp. 950, 951; vol. IV, 507-509.

[225] Creswell, *Early Muslim Architecture*, I. I, 34. This story is also referred to by al-Maqrīzī, II, 492. See also Wüstenfeld, *Geschichte der Copten*, p. 21; transl., p. 52.

[226] See al-Ṭabarī, IV, 44-6.

[227] Julius Wellhausen, 'Prolegomena zur ältesten Geschichte des Islams', in *Skezzen und Vorarbeiten,* (Berlin, 1899).

[228] Al-Balādhurī, pp. 388-9.

[229] Shafiʿī, p. 239.

[230] See al-Balādhurī, p. 179. See also Ibn Ḥawqal, p. 117.

the Companions found nothing outrageous in converting churches into mosques or reusing antique columns to build them, especially when these were taken from derelict structures.[231] There is no account to tell us that such a practice was condemned by any of the Companions, even the most zealous of them like ʿUmar b. al-Khaṭṭāb who – as we have seen – usually intervened to undermine any unorthodox innovation.

Yet, the question remains: could such practices imply that the *ṣaḥābīs* dealt with the houses of prayers of other faiths with little respect? There is evidence that non-Muslim sanctuaries were dealt with a considerable amount of reverence under the Rāshidūn Caliphs. When ʿUmar conquered Jerusalem, he – after the model of the Prophet's pledge to the Christians of Najrān – promised to protect churches and crucifixes. His pledge included: 'This is what the slave of Allāh, ʿUmar b. al-Khaṭṭāb, the emir of the faithful, has given of safety to the People of Ilyāʾ; he has given them safety (*amān*) for themselves, their money and their crosses. This is also for the rest of those who embrace the same religion as that of the people of Ilyāʾ [namely, Christianity]. Their churches are neither to be populated [namely by the Muslims], nor to be dilapidated. Nothing is to be taken out of their areas nor of their crosses nor of any of their riches, and they are not to be obliged to convert (*wala yukrahūn ʿala dīnihim*).'[232] This is also asserted by M. Biddle who wrote: 'In the end it was decided to follow the example of caliph Omar who on his capture of the city [of Jerusalem] in 638 had confirmed the Christians in their possession of the church [of

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[231] It should be noted, here, that the use of spolia was a wide phenomenon. See S. Bassett, *The Urban Image of Late Antique Constantinople* (Cambridge: 2004); L. Bosman, *The Power of Tradition: Spolia in the Architecture of St. Peter's in the Vatican* (Hilversum, 2004); J. Alchermes, 'Spolia in Roman Cities of the Late Empire: Legislative Rationales and Architectural Reuse', *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 48 (1994), 167-78.

[232] Al-Ṭabarī, III, 609. A similar pledge was given to the people of Ludd (Lydda) and the rest of Palestine. Al-Ṭabarī, III, 609-10.

Resurrection].'[233]

A similar guarantee was given by ʿAmr b. al-ʿĀṣ to the Copts of Egypt. According to al-Ṭabarī, ʿAmr 's pledge included: 'This is what ʿAmr b. al-ʿĀṣ has given to the people of Egypt of safety (*amān*) for themselves, religion (*millatihim*), money (properties), churches, crosses, land and sea. Nothing of this should be added or taken out of them (*lā yudkhal ʿalayhim shay'un min dhālek wala yuntaqaṣ*)'.[234] We are also told that ʿUmar b. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz ordered his governors not to pull down a church or a synagogue.

An important and related point is that the layouts of churches and synagogues do not fulfil the Islamic need for a place of prayer. As Hillenbrand says:

> The briefest acquaintance with Muslim liturgy is enough to explain why the places of worship employed by the other faiths of the time were fundamentally unsuitable for the needs of Islam. It is true that many churches, some fire temples, and on occasion even portions of classical, Hindu or Jain temples, were adapted to serve as mosques. But this was only a matter of expedience, and was never a long-term deliberate policy.[235] It did, however, have its uses; indeed, several motives could account for these conversions. In newly Islamised territory the pressing need for a place of worship could not always be met as quickly as might be wished. The advantages of using an already existing monument – convenience, cheapness, suitable location, and saving of time and effort and of course the less easily definable proselytising, propaganda and symbolic elements – outweighed the initial disadvantage of using an architectural form not designed to serve as a mosque. Nevertheless, these disadvantages made themselves felt in short order, and already within the first decade of the Islamic conquests 'custom-built' mosques — if that is not too grand a term for such extremely structures — were

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[233] Martin Biddle, *The Tomb of Christ* (Stroud: Sutton publishing, 1999), p. 98.

[234] Al-Ṭabarī, IV, 108-9.

[235] Hillenbrand, *Islamic Architecture*, p. 33.

being erected.[236]

Hence, the rationale of using an existing monument was probably one of temporary urgency rather than a matter of wide and a permanent strategy.

6.6. Conclusion

This discussion about interaction between *Ḥadīth* and mosques under the Rāshidūn Caliphs argues that from an early stage we begin to note evidence of diversity of form within unity of underlying principles. These underlying principles were extracted from a varied range of sources including the *Qurʾān*, *Ḥadīth*, and practices of notable *ṣaḥābīs*. Although the time of the Rightly-guided Caliphs, which lasted for only thirty years, was directly next to that of the Prophet, we could say that the strong political and social changes it saw made it a truly different milieu.

Under the Rāshidūn, the simple model of the Prophet was observed. We are told about examples of clear consultation. The reported forms of the mosques they built encourage the same thinking. The recorded change in some mosques – the most salient example was the lack of *ṣaḥn* in the mosque of Fusṭāṭ – could well be ascribed to the fact that the Prophet did not set out a binding architectural form for the mosque. The Rāshidūn ruled in a time where Muslim communities lived in various places of widely contrasting climate and geology, and of different cultural backgrounds. It was thus inevitable for mosque architecture to acclimatize to such new and varying dimensions provided the general principles which had been prescribed by the Prophet were maintained.

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[236] Hillenbrand, *Islamic Architecture*, p. 33.

Chapter 7: The influence of *Ḥadīth* on the architecture of the Umayyad mosques

Chapter 7: The influence of *Ḥadīth* on the architecture of the Umayyad mosques

7.1. Introduction

The Umayyad Dynasty was founded after al-Ḥasan b. ʿAlī b. Abī Ṭālib relinquished the disputed caliphate to Muʿāwiyah b. Abī Sufyān, the inveterate rival of his father, in 41/661. This year, hence, was called 'the year of unanimity' (*ʿām al-jamāʿah*).[237] The dynasty was named after Umayyah b. ʿAbd Shams b. Manāf, the grandfather of the first Umayyad caliph (see chart 3).[238] It ruled for a period of 91 years during which fourteen caliphs succeeded to the throne. The last of the Umayyad caliphs was Marwān b. Muḥammad who was defeated by the ʿAbbāsids in a battle known as al-Zāb al-Kabīr in 132/750.[239]

Muʿāwiyah b. Abī Sufyān b. Ḥarb (41-60/661-80), the founder of the Umayyad caliphate, was born at Mecca. He, along with his father, Abū Sufyān, embraced Islam on the day of Mecca conquest.[240] Under Muʿāwiyah, the residence of the Islamic caliphate was moved form Kūfah to Damascus, partly because of the large number of partisans he had there and also because of its fitting location. In spite of having greatly expanded the Muslim empire and achieved military and administrative improvements, the Umayyads are generally accused of having changed much of the *sunnah*

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[237] Al-Ṭabarī, V, 162-3, 324; al-Masʿūdī, *Kitāb al-Tanbīh wal Ishrāf*, (Leiden: Brill, 1893), pp. 300-1; Ibn al-Athīr (Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyyah), III, 271-4; Abū al-Fidāʾ, *Al-Mukhtaṣar fī Akhbār al-Bashar*, 4 vols (Cairo: al-Maṭbaʿa al-Ḥusayniyyah, 1907), I, 182-4; Ibn Kathīr, XI, 132-3; al-Diyārbakrī, II, 325.

[238] Al-Ṭabarī, V, 328.

[239] Al-Masʿūdī, *Tanbīh*, pp. 327-8; Ibn Kathīr, XIII, 254-6; Philip K. Hitti, *History of the Arabs: From the Earliest Times to the Present*, 10th edn (London: Macmillan, 1970), p. 285; H. Kennedy, *The Prophet and the Age of the Caliphates*, pp. 115-6.

[240] Ibn Qutaybah, *Maʿārif*, II, 332; H. Kennedy, *The Prophet and the Age of the Caliphates*, p. 82.

of the Prophet and his Rightly-guided Caliphs.[241] While the Umayyads' 'notoriousness' could arguably be ascribed to the fact that they lost power, there are reasons to think that they took procedures which ran counter to the Prophetic model. One salient example is their controversial adoption of hereditary succession which was already established in Alid/proto-Shīʿī thought. Muʿāwiyah bequeathed the throne to his son Yazīd.[242] There is belief that the Umayyads brought a liberal attitude to the Muslim community, and that this was in contrast to the conservative one which had been adopted by the Rāshidūn Caliphs and the Umayyads' contemporary pious legalists.

Under the Umayyads, many mosques were erected; some for the first time, others as rebuildings. Below are the most significant royal patrons and their architectural works at mosques:

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[241] Al-Sūyūṭī, *Tarīkh al-Khulafāʾ*, pp. 18-9; H. Kennedy, *The Prophet and the Age of the Caliphates*, 119-20.

[242] Al-Ṭabarī, V, 301-7, 322-3; al-Sūyūṭī, *Tarīkh al-Khulafāʾ*, pp. 173-4; Ibn al-Athīr (Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyyah), III, 368-9, 374.

- Muʿāwiyah b. Abī Sufyān (41-60/661-80): rebuilt the mosques of Baṣrah (45/665),[243] Kūfah (50/670),[244] Fusṭāṭ (53/673, 92-3/710-12)[245] and Aqṣā[246]

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[243] On the Umayyad rebuilding of the mosque of Baṣrah, see Ibn Qutaybah, p. 563; al-Balādhurī, p. 485; Creswell, *Early Muslim Architecture*, I. I, 45; Fikrī, *Madkhal*, pp. 199-200.

[244] On the Umayyad rebuilding of the mosque of Kūfah, see Ibn Qutaybah, p. 565; al-Balādhurī, pp. 389, 485; al-Ṭabarī, IV, 46; al-Muqaddasī (Collins's transl.), p. 106; Yāqūt, I, 492-3; Ibn Jubayr, pp. 187-8; Creswell, *Early Muslim Architecture*, I. I, 46-8; Fikrī, *Madkhal*, pp. 200-3.

[245] On the Umayyad architectural works at the mosque of Fusṭāṭ, see Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam, p. 131; al-Maqrīzī, II, 247-56; Yāqūt, IV, 265; Ibn Taghrī Bardī, I, 86; al-Sūyūṭī, *Ḥusn*, pp. 132-3; al-Qalqashandī, II, 342; Creswell, *Early Muslim Architecture*, I. I, 58-60, 149-51; Kamāl al-Dīn Sāmiḥ, *Al-ʿImārah al-Islāmiyyah fī Miṣr*, Kitābuk Series, 30 (Cairo: Dār al-Maʿārif, 1977 [?]), p. 4; Fikrī, *Madkhal*, pp. 67-9; Yeomans, pp. 20-6.

[246] According to Antun and Julian Raby, the two preliminary phases of the first Aqṣā mosque were built under Muʿāwiyah as a governor and then as a caliph (see figure 27). See Antun, p. 57; Johns, 'House of the Prophet', p. 62.

- ʿAbd al-Malik b. Marwān (685-705): built the Dome of the Rock (72/691-2),[247] and Wāsiṭ (83 or 84/703-4),[248] and rebuilt the mosques of Aqṣā[249] and Qayrawān (84/703)[250]

- Al-Walīd b. ʿAbd al-Malik (705-15): built the mosques of Damascus (87/706),[251] ʿAnjar, Khirbat al-Minyā and Jabal Says. He also rebuilt the

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[247] On the Dome of the Rock, see Ernest T. Richmond, *The Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem: A Description of its Structure and Decoration*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1924); Rivoira, pp. 45-72; Creswell, *Early Muslim Architecture*, I. I, 65-129; ʿAfīf Bahnasī, *Al-Fann al-ʿArabī al-Islāmī fī Bidāyat Takawwunih* (Damascus, Dār al-Fikr, 1983), pp. 55-69; Oleg Grabar, 'The Umayyad Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem', *Constructing the Study of Islamic Art*, 4 (2005); 'Ḳubbat al-Ṣakhra', in *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd edn, V (1986), pp. 298-9; Ettinghausen and Grabar, pp.28-34; Hattstein and Delius, *Islam: Art and Architecture*, p. 64; Bloom and Blair, pp. 25-30.

[248] On the mosque of Wāsiṭ, see al-Masʿūdī, *Tanbīh*, p. 360; Ibn al-Athīr (Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyyah), IV, 222; Yāqūt, V, 35. According to Begshel (d. 292/905), the chronicler of Wāsiṭ, the process of building of the mosque began in 75/694 and it lasted for three years. Begshel, *Tārīkh Wāsiṭ*, ed. by Kurkis Awwad (Beirut: ʿĀlam al-Kutub, 1986), p. 22. See also Fuad Safar, *Wāsiṭ* (Cairo, 1952); Creswell, *Early Muslim Architecture*, I. I, 132-8; Fikrī, *Madkhal*, pp. 213-6.

[249] According to a number of historians such as al-Ṭabarī, Mujīr al-Dīn al-Ḥanbalī (*Al-Uns al-Jalīl bi Tarīkh al-Quds wal Khalīl*, I, 248) and al-Muqaddasī (Collins's transl. p. 153), the Aqṣā mosque was rebuilt by ʿAbd al-Malik b. Marwān in 65/685. More recently, this attribution has been sustained by Antun, p. 57.

[250] On the mosque of Qayrawān under the Umayyads (figure 31), see al-Bakrī, *Al-Masālik wal Mamālik*, 2 vols (Tunisia: Bayt al-Ḥikmah, 1992), II, 673; Unknown Author, *Kitāb al-Istibṣār fī ʿAjāʾib al-Amṣār* (Casablanca: Dār al-Nashr al-Maghribiyyah, 1985), p. 114; Fikrī, *Al-Masjid al-Jāmiʿ bil Qayrawān* (Cairo: al-Maʿārif, 1936), p. 23; Fikrī, *Madkhal*, pp. 203-9; Muʾnis, p. 56; Creswell, *Early Muslim Architecture*, I. I, 61, 138-41; I. II, 521.

[251] On the Umayyad mosque, see al-ʿUmarī, *Masālik al-Abṣār*, I, 178-203; al-Muqaddasī, (Collins's transl.), pp. 144-7; Ibn Kathīr, XII, 563-605; Ibn Jubayr, pp. 236-46; Richmond, *Moslem Architecture* (London, 1926), pp 25-30; Briggs, *Muhammadan Architecture*, pp. 39-44; Rivoira, pp. 72-137; Creswell, *Early Muslim Architecture*, I. I, 151-210; Fikrī, *Madkhal*, pp. 216-20; Bahnasī, pp. 35-54; Hillenbrand, *Islamic Art and Architecture*, pp. 25-8; Ettinghausen and Grabar, pp.37-45; Bloom and Blair, pp. 31-3.

mosque of the Prophet at Madīnah (88-90/707-9),[252] and the mosque of Ṣanʿāʾ, and decorated the Aqṣā mosque (87/706).[253] He also built, jointly with his brother the Caliph Sulaymān, the mosque of Aleppo.

- ʿUmar b. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz: supervised – as al-Walīd's governor of Madīnah – the re-building of the mosque of the Prophet.

- Hishām b. ʿAbd al-Malik (724-43): rebuilt the mosque of Qayrawān (105/723) and built a number of smaller mosques such as Jerash, Khirbat al-Mafjar, Qaṣr al-Ḥayr al-Gharbī and Qaṣr al-Ḥayr al-Sharqī.

It is worth noting that the Umayyads, having been overthrown by the ʿAbbāsids, established in Andalusia (Hispania) an independent emirate in 138/756 and then a caliphate in 317/929.[254] However, none of their mosques will be dealt with here as the first of them was built at a date

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[252] On the mosque of Madīnah as rebuilt by al-Walīd, see Ibn Zabālah, pp. 116-27; al-Ṭabarī, VI, 435-6; Ibn al-Najjār, p. 174-8; al-Samhūdī, II, 513-35; Abū al-Fidāʾ, I, 198; Quṭb al-Din, 111-3; Yāqūt, V, 87; al-Qazwīnī, p. 108; Ibn Baṭṭūṭah, *Riḥlat Ibn Baṭṭūṭah al-Musammāh Tuḥfat al-Nuẓẓār fī Gharʾib al-Amṣār wa ʿAjāʾib al-Asfār*, 2 vols ([n.p.]: al-Maṭbaʿah al-Amīriyyah, 1904), I, 85-6; Ibn ʿAbd Rabbih, VI, 260-1; Ibn Rustah, pp. 70-8; Ibn Jubayr, pp. 168-73; al-Batanūnī, p. 244; Creswell, *Early Muslim Architecture*, I. I, pp. 142-9; Jean Sauvaget, *La Mosquée Omeyyade de Médine: Études sur les Origines Architecturales de la Mosquée et de la Basilique* (Paris, 1947); Suʿād Māhir, *Masājid fī al-Sīrah al-Nabawiyyah*, (Cairo: al-Hayʾah al-Miṣriyyah al-ʿĀmmah lil Kitāb, 1987), p. 37; Fikrī, *Madkhal*, 174-8, 189-95.

[253] According to a number of historians such as Ibn al-Faqīh (152), Ibn al-Athīr (IV, 292) and Ibn Khaldūn (*Muqaddimah*, p. 355), al-Walīd rebuilt the Aqṣā mosque. Based on archaeological evidence, Antun has recently argued that the works of al-Walīd were confined to embellishment. Antun, p. 57. On the Aqṣā mosque, see H. Becker, 'Der Temple zu Jerusalem', *Allgemeine Bauzeitung*, 58, pp. 16-8; De Vogüé, *Le Temple de Jérusalem* (Paris, 1854); Hamilton, pp. 10-2, 16; Creswell, *Early Muslim Architecture*, I. II, 373-8; Oleg Grabar, 'The Haram al-Sharif: An Essay in Interpretation', *Jerusalem*, 4 (2005), first published in *Bulletin of the Royal Institute for Inter-Faith Studies*, 2 (2000), pp. 1-13, (pp. 207-8); Oleg Grabar, 'Al-Masjid al-Aqṣā', first published in the *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd edn, VI, (1991), pp. 707-8; N. J. Johnson, 'Aqṣā Mosque', in *Encyclopaedia of the Qurʾān*, I (2001), pp. 125-7; Fikrī, *Madkhal*, pp. 209-213; Johns, 'House of the Prophet', p. 62.

[254] See al-Ṭabarī, VI, 468; John Gill, *Andalucía: a Cultural History*, Series: Landscapes of the imagination (New York: Oxford University Press US, 2009), pp. 71-2.

outside the scope of this study.[255]

It is generally considered that the Umayyad period witnessed the real onset of Islamic architecture. It was under art-lover caliphs, such as ʾAbd al-Malik b. Marwān and his son al-Walīd, that many of the mosque's architectural elements, whose seeds had emerged in the early caliphate, began to flower.

A comparison between the reconstructed plan of the mosque of the Prophet and the surviving Umayyad mosques, which were built slightly more than half a century later, reveals a large gap in terms of form and material. This gap looks even wider when one compares the reported description of these Umayyad mosques in their heydays to the simplicity of the Prophet's model. A number of questions accordingly emerge. What explains the contrast? Why did the Umayyads elevate and decorate their mosques if they knew it was against *Ḥadīth* to do so? Did they know about the Prophet's model? If so, how and how did they appreciate it? To what extent did they consider it in building their mosques?

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[255] See Grabar, *Formation*, p. 20.

Umayyah b. ʿAbd Shams

Abū al-ʿAṣ

al-Ḥakam

(4)
Marwān b. al-Ḥakam
64-5

Muḥammad

(5)
ʿAbd al-Malik b. Marwān
65-86

ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz

(14)
Marwān b. Muḥammad
127-32

(10)
Hishām
105-25

(9)
Yazīd II
101-5

(7)
Sulaymān
96-9

(6)
al-Walīd
86-96

(8)
ʿUmar b. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz
99-101

Muʿāwiyah

(11)
Walid II
125-6

(12)
Yazīd III
126

ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Dākhil (founder of the Umayyad Daynasty in Andalusia)

(13)
Ibrāhīm
126-7

Ḥarb

Abū Sufyān

(1)
Muʿāwiyah b. AbīSufyān
41-60

(2)
Yazīd b. Muʿāwiyah
60-4

(3)
Muʿāwiyah b. Yazīd
64

Chart 3: Tree of the Umayyad dynasty

7.2. Scope of the chapter

In order to approach these and other questions we will investigate the religious attitude of the main Umayyad patrons of mosques and their knowledge of *Ḥadīth*. There will be discussion about what it was that incentivised the building of such massive and ornate mosques, and whether these incentives were consistent with *Ḥadīth*. The question of the origins of Islamic architecture has been dealt with by a large number of scholars and it is thus not the main topic of this study. For present chapter, it is nonetheless important to know whether the architectural components of the mosque were formed in a way consistent with *Ḥadīth*. There will be discussion about this and about whether *Ḥadīth* played any significant role in shaping such components. The chapter will conclude with a general discussion centring on whether and how *Ḥadīth* influenced mosque architecture in the Umayyad period.

7.3. Builders of the Umayyad mosques: their knowledge of *Ḥadīth* and their religious attitudes

Key Umayyad figures for mosque architecture appear to be Muʿāwiyah, ʿAbd al-Malik and the latter's son and successor al-Walīd. It is important for this study to investigate the religious attitude and knowledge of *Ḥadīth* of these Umayyad caliphs.[256]

Muʿāwiyah narrated 163 *ḥadīths*. His narrated *ḥadīths* were trusted and transmitted by a number of prominent *ṣaḥābīs* such as Ibn ʿAbbās, Ibn ʿUmar,[257] and a number of *tābiʿīs* such as Ibn al-Musayyab.[258] These three people narrated the largest number of *ḥadīths* about mosques. Muʿāwiyah's

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[256] On the activities of the Umayyads to preserve the biography of the Prophet, see Schoeler, *Genesis*, pp. 54-6.

[257] These three Companions are amongst those who narrated the largest number of *ḥadīths*.

[258] Al-Sūyūṭī, *Tārīkh al-Khulafāʾ*, p. 172. For more information about these two *tābiʿī* scholars, see below.

ḥadīths were reported and kept by the compilers of *Ṣaḥīḥs* and *Musnads*.[259] Muʿāwiyah is reported to have written to al-Mughīrah b. Shuʿbah, his governor of Iraq, asking him to write and send to him something that he (namely al-Mughīrah) had heard from the Prophet. So, al-Mughīrah wrote down some *ḥadīths* and sent them to him.[260] Muʿāwiyah was also one of the *kuttāb al-waḥī*, 'writers of revelations', in the time of the Prophet.[261] 'He wrote some Traditions from Muhammad and added a few more by correspondence with his governor of Iraq. He cited Tradition in his mosque's speeches and court sessions, and is also listed as a Hadith scholar.'[262]

ʿAbd al-Malik b. Marwān, on the other hand, is reported to have had regular meetings with *faqīhs* and pious people. He was the patron of the traditionally-known chief ten scholars of his time. These included: Abān b. ʿUthmān,[263] Khārijah b. Zayd, Sālim b. ʿAbd Allah, Saʿīd b. al-Musayyab, al-Qāsim b. Muḥammad and ʿUrwah b. al-Zubayr.[264] This group of scholars had a significant influence in the Umayyad period and they were regarded as ʿAbd al-Malik's 'court scholars' (see below).[265] ʿAbd al-Malik transmitted *ḥadīths* from a number of Companions of the Prophet.[266] His *ḥadīths* were transmitted by eminent narrators such as ʿUrwah, al-Zuhrī and Rajāʾ b.

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[259] Ibn Kathīr, XI, 397; al-Dhahabī, *Siyar*, pp. 3880-91.

[260] Muslim, *ḥadīths* no. 1341-2. See also *ḥadīths* no. 1338-40, al-Bukhārī, *ḥadīths* no. 844, 6330.

[261] Ibn Kathīr, XI, 146, 397; al-Dhahabī, *Siyar*, p. 3881.

[262] Abbott, 'Collection and transmission of Ḥadīth', *Arabic literature to the End of the Umayyad Period*, The Cambridge history of Arabic Literature 1 (Cambridge: 1983), pp. 289-298 (pp. 291-8). See also F. Beyanouni, p. 66.

[263] See Ibn Saʿd, VII, 150-2.

[264] Ibn Kathīr, XIII, 18. Al-Yaʿqūbī added to them others such as ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿAbbās and ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿUmar: I, 337-8. On these personages, see below.

[265] Abbott, 'Collection'. p. 292.

[266] These included Jābir, Abū Saʿīd al-Khudrī, Abū Hurayrah, Ibn ʿUmar, Muʿāwiyah, Umm Salamah and others. See al-Dhahabī, *Siyar*, p. 2583.

Ḥaywah.[267] The piety of ʿAbd al-Malik and his vigorousness in studying *fiqh* was praised by contemporary religious authorities, such as Nāfiʿ.[268] According to Abū al-Zinād and al-Aʿmash, two of the early most famous *Ḥadīth* narrators, ʿAbd al-Malik was one of the four most renowned *faqīhs* at Madīnah.[269] Yet, Ibn Saʿd expressly stated that, ʿAbd al-Malik was such a worshipper, particularly, before ascending to the throne.[270]

The most eminent Umayyad patron of mosques was al-Walīd b. ʿAbd al-Malik who seems to have had a conscious scheme for building massive mosques. Unlike his father, al-Walīd does not seem to have been particularly learned. Even his Arabic was less than eloquent.[271] Ibn Kathīr tells us that al-Walīd took knowledge from Anas b. Mālik, a famous Companion and *Ḥadīth* narrator. Yet, the only occasion on which we are told that al-Walīd learned something from Anas is when he asked him about the signs of the Last Day. Al-Walīd also listened to (that is, took knowledge from) Saʿīd b. al-Musayyab and al-Zuhrī.[272]

Another important figure is the pious ʿUmar b. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz (also

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[267] Ibn Kathīr, *Tārīkh al-Dawlah al-Umawiyyah: Khulāṣat Tārīkh Ibn Kathīr*, ed. by M. Aḥmad Kanʿān (Beirut: Muʾassasat al-Maʿārif, 1997), p. 187; al-Dhahabī, *Siyar*, p. 2583; al-Sūyūṭī, *Tārīkh al-Khulafāʾ*, pp. 191-2. ʿUrwah b. al-Zubayr (d. 94/713) is one of the earliest historians and *Ḥadīth* scholars. According to Duri and Schoeler, ʿUrwah was one of the 'seven principal jurists' of Madīna to whom the systematic documentation of *Ḥadīth* and other historical material is attributed'. Duri, p. 78. For more information about ʿUrwah and al-Zuhrī, see below.

[268] His epithet was Abū ʿAbd Allāh (d. 117/735). He was a Daylamī from Abrashahr. Having been the servant of ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿUmar, the renowned Companion and *Ḥadīth* narrator, Nāfiʿ became one of the most eminent *Ḥadīth* scholars in the generation of *tābiʿīs*. Ibn Saʿd, VII, 423-5; Ibn Qutaybah, pp. 460-1. On Nāfiʿ and his position in *Ḥadīth* literature, see Juynboll, *Studies*, pp. 208-44.

[269] The other three were: Saʿīd b. al-Mussayab, ʿUrwah and Qubayṣah b. Dhuʾayb. Ibn Kathīr, *Khulāṣat*, p. 188; al-Sūyūṭī, *Tārīkh al-Khulafāʾ*, p. 191.

[270] Ibn Saʿd, VII, 221-32. See also Ibn Kathīr, *Khulāṣat*, p. 187; al-Dhahabī, *Siyar*, p. 2583.

[271] Ibn ʿAsākir, LXIII, 179; Ibn Kathīr, *Khulāṣat*, p. 297; al-Dhahabī, *Siyar*, p.4131.

[272] Ibn Kathīr, *Khulāṣat*, p. 297.

known as ʿUmar II) who reconstructed the mosque of the Prophet when he was al-Walīd's ruler at Madīnah. Apart from the Rightly guided Caliphs, ʿUmar b. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz is traditionally regarded as the most devout caliph in Islamic history. For many Islamic authorities, his deeds and sayings are of considerable credence in Islamic *sharīʿah*.[273] His reportedly impeccable standing has caused some to see him as the fifth Rightly-guided Caliph.[274] According to Hitti, 'ʿUmar was entirely under the influence of the theologians and has enjoyed through ages a reputation for piety and asceticism that stands in glaring contrast with the alleged impiety of the Umayyad *régime*. He was, in fact, the Umayyad saint.'[275] He narrated *ḥadīths* from such scholars as Anas, ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿUmar, Saʿīd b. al-Musayyab and ʿUrwah b. al-Zubayr and his *ḥadīths* were trusted and transmitted by the like of al-Zuhrī and Rajāʾ b. Ḥaywah.[276] Aḥmad b. Ḥanbal said: 'I am aware of none of the *tābiʿīs* whose saying is evidence (*ḥujjah*) except ʿUmar b. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz.'[277] ʿUmar is also said to have taken no decision without consulting the ten Medinese *faqīhs* whom he appointed as chancellors.[278] We will see below how the work which ʿUmar did at the mosque of the Prophet was significant to the general evolution of mosque architecture.

Other fundamental persons for mosque architecture in the Umayyad period were Ziyād b. Abīh (Muʿāwiyah's governor at Kūfah and Baṣrah),[279] Maslamah b. Mukhallad (Muʿāwiyah's governor in Egypt), and Qurrah b.

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[273] On ʿUmar b. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz, see Ibn Saʿd, VII, 324-97.

[274] See al-Suyūṭī, *Tārīkh al-Khulafāʾ*, p. 201-2.

[275] Hitti, p. 222.

[276] Ibn Kathīr, *Khulāṣat*, p. 373; al-Suyūṭī, *Tārīkh al-Khulafāʾ*, p. 202.

[277] Ibn Kathīr, *Khulāṣat*, p. 373.

[278] Ibid. P.375. These included ʿUrawah b. al-Zubayr, al-Qāsim b. Muḥammad b. Ḥazm, Sālim b. ʿAbd Allāh and Khārijah b. Zayd. Yet, ʿUmar was more strongly linked with Saʿīd b. al-Musayyab.

[279] On him, see Ibn ʿAsākir, XIX, 162-209.

Sharīk (al-Walīd's governor in Egypt).[280] Traditions do not tell us about the religious knowledge of Ziyād (d. 53/673).[281] Ibn ʿAsākir (d. 571/1176) tells us that Ziyād was not a *faqīh* or a scholar but he was a writer for Abū Mūsā al-Ashʿarī and that he narrated few *ḥadīths*.[282] The clearest reported side of his personality, however, was firmness and resolution.[283] While some accounts depict him as a tyrant,[284] others state that he used power and authority to discipline the wicked and that he was even assisted in this task by some of the Companions.[285] On the authority of al-Shaʿbī, Ziyād was a knowledgeable and an eloquent speaker who was appreciated by ʿUmar b. al-Khaṭṭāb.[286] Naturally, these divergent reports about Ziyād can indicate how the past was remembered from different perspectives. Nonetheless, Ziyād seems to have been really obsessed with the adoption of manifestations of supremacy and solemnity; many of these were introduced to Islam for the first time by him.[287] We will shortly see (7.5) how this tendency on the part of Ziyād influenced the architectural evolution of the Umayyad mosques.

Maslamah b. Mukhallad was born in the first year of Hijrah and the *ḥadīths* narrated by him were accepted and transmitted by scholars like Abū Ayyūb al-Anṣārī and Ibn Sirīn. He was seen by al-Bukhārī to have been a Companion. Maslamah died in 62/682.[288]

Qurrah b. Sharīk (d. 96/715), on the other hand, was a notorious

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[280] On the works of these three Umayyad governors, see below.

[281] On him, see Ibn Qutaybah, *Maʿārif*, pp. 346-7.

[282] Ibn ʿAsākir, XIX, 165.

[283] Al-Ṭabarī, V, 219-22; Ibn Kathīr, XI, 168-9.

[284] Ibn al-Athīr (Dār al-Kutub al-ʿʿIlmiyyah), III, 307, 341.

[285] Ibn Kathīr, XI, 168.

[286] Ibn Kathīr, XI, 168-9.

[287] Al-Ṭabarī, V, 224.

[288] Ibn Ḥajar, *Iṣābah*, VI, 97-8; *Tahdhīb*, IV, 78; Ibn Saʿd, VI, 562-3; al-Dhahabī, *Siyar*, III, 3854. See also al-Maqrīzī, II, 248.

ruler.[289] On the authority of Abū Naʿīm, ʿUmar b. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz said, while al-Walīd was ruling in Sham, al-Ḥajjāj in Iraq, ʿUthmān b. Jubārah in Hijāz and Qurrah b. Sharīk in Egypt: 'By Allāh, the earth has been full of tyranny.'[290] It is even reported, on the authority of Ibn ʿAsākir, that Qurrah was having shameless night parties at the mosque of ʿAmr after the workers were leaving.[291] Why did such reportedly impious personalities such as Qurrah b. Sharīk and al-Ḥajjāj b. Yūsuf (AH 41-95) build or rebuild mosques? The answer may well be that building mosques had, by that time, been not only religious but also political and social commitment. Both al-Ḥajjāj and Qurrah, having been governor in Iraq and Egypt, respectively, should have built mosques, especially if this was the wish of the caliph.

In fact, we do not possess adequate information about the architects of the Umayyad mosques, but we are told about two key persons to whom ʿAbd al-Malik b. Marwān assigned the task of building the Dome of the Rock. These were Rajāʾ b. Ḥaywah and Yazīd b. Sallām.[292] While their duties are seen by some scholars to have been restricted to financial and administrative aspects,[293] there are signs that they were responsible for designing and decorating the structure.[294] Rajāʾ b. Ḥaywah (d. AH 112) was a renowned legalist and *Ḥadīth* narrator.[295] The *ḥadīths* he transmitted were

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[289] On Qurrah, see Ibn ʿAsākir, XLIX, pp. 305-9.

[290] Al-Sūyūṭī, *Tārīkh al-Khulafāʾ*, p. 197; Ibn ʿAsākir, XLIX, 308.

[291] Ibn ʿAsākir, XLIX, 307.

[292] Yazīd, who was from Bayt al-Maqdis, was a servant of ʿAbd al-Malik. According to Mujīr al-Dīn, two sons of Yazīd were also entrusted with the work. *Al-Uns al-Jalīl*, I, 241.

[293] Gildemeister, XIII, 21, quoted by Creswell, *Early Muslim Architecture*, I. I, 100.

[294] Mujīr al-Dīn, *Al-Uns al-Jalīl*, I, 241-2; Shihāb al-Dīn al-Maqdisī, *Muthīr al-Gharām ilā Ziyārat al-Quds wal Shām*, ed. by Ahmad al-Khuṭaymī (Beirut: Dār al-Jīl, 1994), p. 172, 343; Ibn Kathīr, XII, 41-4.

[295] Shihāb al-Dīn, *Muthīr*, pp. 343-4. According to Ibn Saʿd, the Caliph Sulaymān consulted him about, and entrusted him with, his will to appoint ʿUmar b. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz as the next caliph. Ibn Saʿd, VII, 329-33.

trusted and reported by prominent *Ḥadīth* scholars such as al-Zuhrī and Qatādah. His knowledge and devotion were praised by a group of prominent *faqīhs* and scholars of *Ḥadīth* such as Saʿīd b. Jubayr and Abū Naʿīm al-Aṣbahānī, and he was regarded as *thiqah*, 'trusted' by *Ḥadīth* compilers such as al-Nasāʾī and Ibn Ḥibbān.[296] It is also reported that his religious knowledge was trusted, and consulted by ʿUmar b. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz.[297] Rajāʾ narrated that one day the Caliph Hishām b. ʿAbd al-Malik asked him about a *ḥadīth*. He said: 'I have forgotten it, but I had it written down.'[298]

According to al-Maqrīzī,[299] when the mosque of ʿAmr at Fusṭāṭ was rebuilt in 92/710 by order of Qurrah b. Sharīk, the work was supervised by Yaḥya b. Ḥanẓalah. The same thing is ascertained by the Aphrodito papyri.[300] Unfortunately, we do not possess any information about Yaḥya apart from that he was the servant of Banū ʿĀmir b. Luʾaī.[301] At Damascus, al-Walīd entrusted his brother and the crown-prince, Sulaymān b. ʿAbd al-Malik, with the task of building the Great Umayyad mosque.[302] Sulaymān, who succeeded al-Walīd as the Umayyad seventh caliph, and thus completed the works of building and decorating the Umayyad mosque, is traditionally known as a beneficent caliph.[303] Ibn ʿAsākir also tells us that Zayd b. Wāqid, whose epithet was Abū ʿAmr al-Dimashqī, was put in charge of overseeing the workers.[304] Zayd (d. 138/755) was a prominent *Ḥadīth* scholar who transmitted *ḥadīths* from a large number of early *tābiʿīs* such as Nāfiʿ, ʿAbd al-Malik b. Marwān and al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī. Some of his *ḥadīths*

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[296] See al-Dhahabī, *Siyar*, 1688-9. Ibn *Ḥajar*, *Tahdhīb*, I, 601-2.

[297] Ibn Kathīr, *Khulāṣat*, pp. 379, 384.

[298] Al-Dārimī, *ḥadīth* no. 522; al-Baghdādī, *Taqyīd*, p. 139.

[299] Al-Maqrīzī, II, 248.

[300] Creswell, *Early Muslim Architecture*, I. I, 150-1.

[301] Al-Maqrīzī, II, 248.

[302] Ibn ʿAsākir, II, 264; Ibn Kathīr, XII, 570.

[303] Ibn Qutaybah, p. 360.

[304] Ibn ʿAsākir, II, 241.

are found in al-Bukhārī, Abū Dāwūd, al-Nasāʾī and Ibn Mājah.[305] He was seen as *thiqah*, 'trustworthy', by the like of Aḥmad b Ḥanbal, Ibn Maʿīn and al-Dāraquṭnī.[306]

More information is available about workers and artisans. According to traditions, al-Walīd summoned a great number of craftsmen, architects and workers to building the Umayyad mosque.[307] Al-Muqaddasī, for example, tells us that al-Walīd gathered skilful artisans from Persia, India, the Maghreb, and Rūm, 'Byzantium'.[308] According to the Aphrodito papyri,[309] workmen from Egypt were also employed. When al-Walīd sent a message to *malik al-Rūm*, 'the Byzantine king', asking him to send marble workers, the king sent him two hundred craftsmen.[310] Ibn Khaldūn also mentions in his *Muqaddimah* that skilful builders and mosaic workers were sent to al-Walīd by the Byzantine king to help him erect and decorate mosques.[311]

The tradition about *malik al-Rūm*, however, is doubted by many scholars whose skepticism about it may be enhanced by the fact that it is repeated with the mosque of Madīnah, but with more details.[312] Whether

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[305] On Zayd, see Ibn ʿAsākir, XIX, 524-9; al-Mizzī, *Tahdhīb al-Kamāl*, X, 108-11.

[306] Ibn Ḥajar, *Tahdhīb*, I, 671.

[307] Ibn Kathīr, XII, 570.

[308] Some earlier scholars such as Ibn Qutaybah (d. 276/889) in his *ʿUyūn al-Akhbār* and Ibn ʿAsākir (d. 571/1176) in his *Tarīkh* (LXIII, 177) also mentioned the Byzantine emperor being associated with the process of building the mosque of Damascus. See also Ibn Baṭṭūṭah, I, 62; al-ʿUmarī, I, 183.

[309] Creswell, *Early Muslim Architecture*, I. I, 151.

[310] Ibn Kathīr, XII, 570-1.

[311] Ibn Khaldūn, *Muqaddimah*, p. 355. See also al-Qazwīnī, p. 108.

[312] Ibn Zabālah, p. 119; Ibn al-Najjār, p. 175; al-Samhūdī, II, *Wafāʾ*, 518-9. An abridged version of the story was also mentioned by al-Ṭabarī. *The History of al-Ṭabarī: Volume XXIII the Zenith of the Marwānīd House*, trans. by Martin Hinds, (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1990), 142. On the same story, see also Ibn Rustah, p. 69; Abū Ḥanīfah al-Dīnawrī, *Al-Akhbār al-Ṭiwāl*, ed. by Vladimir Guirgass (Leiden: Brill, 1888), p. 329; Ibn Kathīr, XII, 570. This story is discussed in detail in discussion of the origin of the *miḥrāb*: see 5.7.5.1.

foreign builders were employed or not, a considerable part of the work at the mosque of the Prophet was undertaken by local builders. According to al-Ṭabarī, ʿUmar b. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz [along with the local builders of Madīna] 'began to pull down the rooms of the wives of the Prophet, may God bless and preserve him, and build the mosque. Soon afterwards, there arrived the workmen sent by al-Walīd.'[313] Al-Ṭabarī adds:

> Ṣāliḥ [b. Kaysān] said: he [namely ʿUmar] put me in charge of pulling it down and building it [again]. We pulled it down using the workers of Medina, and we began to pull down the rooms of the wives of the Prophet, may God bless and preserve him. [This went on] until there came to us the workmen sent by al-Walīd.[314]

According to Ibn Saʿd, Ibn ʿAsākir and al-Mizzī (d. 742/1341), Ṣāliḥ b. Kaysān (d. after 140/758) was a trusted Ḥadīth scholar who took ḥadīths from scholars such as ʿUrwah and al-Zuhrī.[315] He shared with al-Zuhrī in the pioneering efforts of preserving ḥadīth and sunan.[316] Ṣāliḥ is included in the chain of transmitters on whose authority al-Bukhārī, and others,[317] reported the ḥadīth which describes the forms and materials which the mosque of Madīnah had in the time of the Prophet and the first two caliphs.[318] There is a possibility, then, that he applied his knowledge of the Prophet's model to the new building of the mosque, especially that he built it under supervision of such a pious ruler as ʿUmar b. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz.

The Umayyad structure of the Prophet's mosque, as described by the sources, does not seem to have required the employment of foreign

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[313] Al-Ṭabarī, XXIII (Hinds's transl.), p. 141.

[314] Al-Ṭabarī, XXIII (Hinds's transl.), 142; al-Samhūdī, II, Wafāʾ, 522.

[315] Ibn Saʿd, VII, 513; Ibn ʿAsākir, XXIII, 362-72; al-Mizzī, Tahdhīb al-Kamāl, XIII, 79-84.

[316] Ibn ʿAsākir, XXIII, 367-9; al-Mizzī, Tahdhīb al-Kamāl, XIII, 82-3; al-Baghdādī, Taqyīd, p. 137.

[317] See Abū Dāwūd, ḥadīth no. 451.

[318] On this ḥadīth, see below.

masons, especially as there already were skilful builders at Madīnah such as ʿUthmān b. ʿUrwah[319] and Wardān al-Bannāʾ, 'the builder'. The latter was called by ʿUmar b. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz to rebuild the eastern wall of the Prophet's houses after it had collapsed when the builders were digging to lay the foundations of the columns of the mosque in the time of al-Walīd.[320] According to al-Shihrī, the Medinese builders who had participated in the works of ʿUthmān b. ʿAffān at the mosque in 29/650 should have had enough time to be well practiced.

The assistance of non-Muslim builders was also attributed to the mosque of Kūfah. Al-Ṭabarī related that al-Walīd summoned non-Muslim builders for building the mosque of Kūfah. He told them of his will for the architectural form of his mosque, which he was not able to describe properly (*ashtahī min dhālika shayʾan lā aqaʿū ʿalā ṣifatih*). One builder, whose name is not known to us but who formerly had been amongst the builders of Khusrau, said to the caliph that the only way to perfect this structure and accomplish it as wished was by using [stone] columns from the Jabal al-Ahwāz, scooping them out, drilling them and fitting them together by means of leads and dowels (*safāfīd*) of iron.[321] The approach of hiring non-Muslim workers is also said to have been applied to the Muslims' most venerated structure, namely the Kaʿbah. According to some reports, Persian masons were employed by the pious emir Ibn al-Zubayr, the Umayyads' rival at Mecca when he reconstructed the Kaʿbah.[322] The Aphrodito papyri state that skilled Egyptian workmen also took part in building the Kaʿbah.[323]

Sauvaget argued that the story which associates the Greek emperor

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[319] On him, see below.

[320] Al-Samhūdī, *Wafāʾ*, II, 545; al-Shihrī, *ʿImārat al-Masjid al-Nabawī*, p. 113.

[321] Al-Ṭabarī, IV, 46; Creswell, *Early Muslim Architecture*, I. I, 46.

[322] See Creswell, *Early Muslim Architecture*, I. I, 63-4.

[323] See Creswell, *Early Muslim Architecture*, I. II, 373.

with the affairs of building the Umayyad mosque and the mosque of Madīnah is doubtful.[324] Sauvaget considered that this might have been invented by al-Walīd's pious critics who attempted to attribute to him the culpable act of using infidels to rebuild the Prophet's mosque.[325] Hamilton Gibb contested this opinion, which had been shared by Creswell and van Berchem.[326] According to Gibb, there was no evidence for it apart from what he called 'certain pietistic traditions against the decoration of mosques *in general*'.[327] Gibb continued: 'If there had really been any widespread, or even factitious, resentment of al-Walīd's initiative, one would expect to find it expressed in much more open terms, without having to guess at an anti-Umayyad implication.'[328] In fact, there are some reports about transgressions and indecencies which were attributed to non-Muslim masons while building the mosque of the Prophet. Ibn Rustah, for example, mentions that one of the Byzantines made a representation of a pig above five windows (*ṭaqāt*) in the *qiblah* wall and when ʿUmar knew of that he ordered his head to be cut off.[329] Al-Muqaddasī adds that one of the non-Muslim workers, when he found the mosque empty, tried to urinate on the grave of the Prophet.[330] While such narratives could have been later invented to imply that al-Walīd was mistaken to hire such masons – if he really did, they could also be reflective of how the later generations thought of the reasons for which non-Muslim builders should be supervised.

There are implications that such employment of non-Muslim masons

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[324] Ibid.

[325] Gibb, 'Arab-Byzantine Relations', pp. 227-8.

[326] Creswell, *Early Muslim Architecture*, I. I, 151-3.

[327] Gibb, 'Arab-Byzantine Relations', p. 228.

[328] Ibid.

[329] Ibn Rustah, p. 69.

[330] Al-Muqaddasī, *Aḥsan al-Taqāsīm fī Maʿrifat al-Aqālīm*, ed. by M. Makhzūm (Beirut: Iḥyāʾ al-Turāth al-ʿArabī, 1987), p. 82; Ibn Rustah, p. 69.

by al-Walīd was approved, or at least not condemned, by contemporary religious authorities.[331] We have already seen that there is nothing in *Ḥadīth* to say that non-Muslim masons should not be hired to build a mosque (see 6.5.2). Indeed, a *ḥadīth* in al-Bukhārī mentions an incident where unbelievers, especially Jews and Christians, were allowed to enter the mosque of the Prophet.[332]

Under the rubric of 'an unbeliever to enter the mosque except that of Mecca', al-Bayhaqī also reported a group of *ḥadīths* which deals with a number of episodes in which non-Muslim individuals or groups entered the mosque of the Prophet.[333] According to one of these, the Prophet let a non-Muslim group of Thaqīf to stay in a 'dome', presumably a tent, at the mosque. While Mālik saw that it is not allowed for non-Muslims to enter the mosque, both Abū Ḥanīfah and al-Shāfiʿī argued that only the people of the Scripture, namely the Jews and the Christians, are allowed to enter all mosques but that of Mecca.[334] The latter opinion seems to have been based on the *ḥadīth* according to which the Prophet allowed a group of Christian from Najrān to enter his mosque and even perform their prayers in it.

In addition to the natural role of patrons and builders, the building of the Umayyad mosques was invigilated by contemporary scholars; some of whom transmitted the most important *ḥadīths* about mosques. Examples are: Abū Qilābah al-Jarmī (d. 104/722),[335] Saʿīd b. al-Musayyab (d. 96/715),[336] Nāfiʿ (d. 117/735), ʿUrwah b. al-Zubayr (d. 94/713),[337] his son

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[331] See Ibn Rajab, III, 297.

[332] Juynboll, p. 278. See also al-Bukhārī, *ḥadīth* no. 469.

[333] Al-Bayhaqī, *ḥadīths* no. 4330-5.

[334] See Ibn Ḥazm, *Muḥallā*, IV, 243; Ibn Ḥajar, *Fatḥ*, II, 107; Ibn Taymiyyah, *Fatāwā*, XXII, 119. See also al-Khaṭṭābī, I, 145; Ibn Rajab, III, 390-4.

[335] Ibn Saʿd, IX, 182-5; Ibn Ḥajar, *Tahdhīb*, II, 339-40.

[336] Ibn Saʿd, VII, 119-43.

[337] On him, see Ibn Saʿd, VII, 177-81; Ibn ʿAsākir, XL, 237-86.

Hishām (d. 146/763)[338] and al-Zuhrī.[339] The *ḥadīth* about how the Prophet founded his mosque was narrated by ʿAbd al-Wārith b. Saʿīd (d. 180/796)[340] from Abū al-Tayyāḥ (d. 128/647 or 130/648).[341] Many of these scholars were reported to have participated in the building of the Umayyad mosques. The fact that mosques frequently accommodated the teaching circles of the above scholars, and others, should have made their architectural development under continuous vigilance of the pious.

7.4. How did the Umayyad patrons of the mosques regard the model of the Prophet?

Tradition provides us with quite a number of situations which imply that the Umayyad patrons appreciated the model of the Prophet and his early caliphs. It seems that they realized that their legitimacy sprung from respecting and retaining that model. It is true that there is a controversy on whether they followed it from the political and religious points of view, but as far as mosque building is concerned there are signs that they showed respect for that archetype.

On the authority of an eye-witness, Muḥammad b. Mūsā b. Yaʿqūb, ʿUmar b. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz pulled down the mosque of the Prophet while accompanied by the notable Medinese faqīhs.[342] They showed to ʿUmar the key features (*aʿlām*) in the [old] mosque, estimated it and laid its foundations.[343] According to Ibn Isḥāq al-Ḥarbī, 'they showed to him [namely ʿUmar] the [remnants of] of the first mosque of the Prophet which

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[338] On Hishām, see Ibn Saʿd, VII, 462-3; al-Mizzī, *Tahdhīb al-Kamāl*, XXX, 232- 42.

[339] On al-Zuhrī, see chapter 2. For more on him see, Ibn Saʿd, VII, 429-39.

[340] See al-Dhahabī, *Siyar*, pp. 2595-6; Ibn Ḥajar, *Tahdhīb*, II, 634-5.

[341] See al-Dhahabī, *Siyar*, p. 4221; Ibn Ḥajar, *Tahdhīb*, IV, 409.

[342] They included: al-Qāsim, Sālim, Abū Bakr b. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān b. al-Ḥārith, ʿUbayd Allāh b. ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿUtbah, Khārijah b. Zayd and ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿUmar.

[343] Al-Ṭabarī, XXIII (Hinds's transl.), 142.

was enlarged by ʿUmar and ʿUthmān, so that ʿUmar should know the marks of the first mosque which had stood in the time of the Prophet.'[344] Al-Muqaddasī relates that before ʿUmar b. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz pulled down the *miḥrāb*, he called the sheikhs of Muhājirūn and Anṣār (Ibn Rustah added: 'from the Arabs and the non-Arabs') and said [to them]: 'attend the erection of your *qiblah* lest you should say ʿUmar changed it.'[345] 'He did not take out a stone unless he put [a new] one in its position.'[346] The tradition of appreciating the Prophet's model was represented in a number of procedures such as retaining the positions and names of the old columns of his mosque. His *minbar* and *miḥrāb* were also kept in their old positions. Further, the new three doors of Bāb Jibrīl, Bāb al-Nisāʾ and Bāb al-Raḥmah were set on the same axes of those which had been built by the Prophet and had had the same names.[347]

Likewise, much reverence was paid to relics of the Prophet. When Marwān b. al-Ḥakam elevated the *minbar* of the Prophet and added some staircases to it to be nine,[348] he nailed a wooden plank in the place where the Prophet used to sit lest anybody else should sit on his place.[349] On the other hand, the account which states that Muʿāwiyah ordered Marwān to move the Prophet's *minbar* to Syria is unreasonable and has a legendary character.[350] Further, ʿUmar b. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz is said to have taken the *labin*, 'brick', of the old mosque, which was built by ʿUthmān, and those of the rooms of the wives of the Prophet, which were built by the Prophet, and

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[344] Ibn Isḥāq al-Ḥarbī, *Manāsik*, p. 366.

[345] Al-Muqaddasī, pp. 81-2; Ibn Rustah, p.69.

[346] Ibn Rustah, p. 69.

[347] Al-Pāshā, *Madkhal*, pp. 105-6.

[348] Ibn al-Najjār, p. 159; Ibn Mufliḥ, III, 175-6.

[349] Al-Shihrī, *Imārat al-Masjid al-Nabawī*, p. 105. On the *minbar* of the Prophet and the intention of al-Mahdī, the pious ʿAbbāsid Caliph (ruled from 158/775 to 169/785), to restore it, see 6.4.

[350] Al-Ṭabarī, V, 238-40; Ibn al-Athīr, II, al-Samhūdī, *Wafāʾ*, II, 399.

reused them to build his own house at Ḥarrah. There is, of course, the possibility that such reports were invented, emendated, or selected by some pro-Umayyad historians to imply the Umayyads' keenness to respect the Prophet's legacy. Yet, there are reasons to think that such report do not lack a genuine awareness, on the part of the Umayyads, of the authority of the model which had been set by the Prophet and his early caliphs. For example, in order to convince ʿUmar b. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz about the legality of demolishing and rebuilding the mosque of the Prophet, al-Walīd said to him: '[in this], you have the good ideals of ʿUmar and ʿUthmān [who formerly rebuilt the mosque].'[351]

7.5. What incentives were there for building and perfecting the Umayyad mosques?

The group of *ḥadīths* which praise the act of mosques building, or participating in such building, should have urged, along with other political reasons, the Umayyad patrons and builders to erect many mosques. The cluster of *ḥadīths* and verses of the *Qurʾān* about the exceptional status of the three pan-Islamic sanctuaries of Mecca, Madīnah and Jerusalem should have stimulated the Umayyads to take special 'architectural' care of them. For the pious the building of mosques sprang from an innate wish to beseech God's satisfaction and reward, and for the others it was a workable strategy to build up a good reputation amongst the people and the pious scholars whose views were critical for the rulers' public image.

Generally, there is a strong impression that the Umayyads were inclined towards manifestations of pomp and vanity. They loved to erect towering palaces and massive mosques. History provides us with many examples of how proud the Umayyad patrons were of their mosques. In many cases, the work was supervised by the ruler himself. It is reported, for

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[351] Al-Ṭabarī, XXIII (Hinds's transl.), 141.

example, that when the work in the mosque of Baṣrah was accomplished, Ziyād was keen to examine it by himself while accompanied by the notables of Baṣrah. He admired almost everything. There was no crack, obliqueness or flaw. The only thing he criticized was the slenderness of some columns.[352] ʿAbd al-Malik b. ʿUmayr saw Ziyād going around the mosque and saying: 'How similar to [great] mosques it is. I have spent 1800 *mithqāl* on each column [of it].'[353] This last sentence was also attributed to a number of Umayyad patrons of mosques. Likewise, when ʿUbayd Allāh b. Ziyād rebuilt the mosque of Kūfah, he gathered the people, mounted the *minabr* and said: 'O people of Kūfah! I have built for you a mosque of no counterpart on earth, and I have spent on each column 1700 *mithqāl*. None will pull it down except a tyrant or a renegade.'[354] Such reports about the Umayyad patrons could reflect a general third-century tendency to depict many of the Umayyad rulers as pretentious and profligate persons.

    Similarly, when al-Walīd was inspecting the mosque of the Prophet after it had been rebuilt by his command, he looked at Abān (d. between 95/713 and 105/733),[355] the son of ʿUthmān b. ʿAffān and said to him: 'Look at the big difference between our building and yours.' Abān, then, replied: 'We had built it as a mosque but you built it as a church.'[356] This statement of Abān implies that the generation of *tābiʿīs* believed that Companions, such as ʿUmar and ʿUthmān, consciously re-built the mosque

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[352] Ibn al-Faqīh, p. 230; al-Balādhurī, pp. 484-5; Yāqūt, I, 433.

[353] Al-Balādhurī, p. 389; Yāqūt, I, 433.

[354] Yāqūt, I, 492.

[355] Abān was an early *Ḥadīth* scholar who also showed interest in the study of *maghāzī*, 'battles of the Prophet'. His accounts about *maghāzī* were written down by one of his disciples. See Duri, pp. 24-5; K. V. Zetterstéen, 'Abān b. ʿUthmān', in *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd edn, I (1986), pp. 2-3; Muḥammad M. ʿAlī, *Sīrat al-Nabī and the Orientalists: with Special Reference to the Writings of William Muir, D. S. Margoliouth and W. Montgomery Watt*, (Medina: King Fahd Complex, 1997), I. I, 9.

[356] Al-Samhūdī, *Wafāʾ*, II, 523; Ibn al-Najjār, p. 177.

after the model of the Prophet.

What were the reasons behind such Umayyad desire to perfect mosques? Creswell has argued that Ziyād had a tendency to erect massive structures and a great court which might have been 'even greater than Muʿāwiyah at Damascus.'[357] According to him, Ziyād, having formerly ruled at Iṣṭakhr, was instilled with ideas about the grandeur of the ruler's court. The first place to which Ziyād thought to apply such an approach was the mosque. The mosque by that time had become the focal point of the Muslim community and the place where crucial decisions were taken, 'a Parliament in fact'.[358] Politically, the significance of the mosque surpassed that of the *dār al-imārah*, which was no more than the private residence of the sovereign.[359] Ibn Khaldūn mentioned that the Umayyad mosque, for example, was known as the court of al-Walīd.[360]

It could also be argued that the Umayyad caliphs paid a great deal of attention to perfecting and decorating their major congregational mosques so as to divert the people's attention from the tribal and sectarian mosques whose political influence was on the rise.[361]

While traditions tell that al-Walīd built the mosques of Damascus and Madīnah to accommodate more worshippers, there are some reports that he did so for other reasons. Al-Muqaddasī argued that al-Walīd did not build the mosque of the Prophet for the sake of God. Rather, he did so because he resented the fact that the house of al-Ḥasan b. al-Ḥasan b. ʿAlī

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[357] Creswell, *Early Muslim Architecture*, I. I, 43.

[358] Ibid.

[359] Ibid.

[360] Ibn Khaldūn, *Muqaddimah*, p. 355.

[361] Pedersen, 'Masdjid', pp. 648-9; M. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz Marzūq, *al-Fann al-Maṣrī al-Islāmī* (Cairo, Dār al-Maʿārif, 1952), pp. 17-8.

whose door gave access to the mosque was still standing.[362] This would mean that enlarging the mosque was simply a pretext to demolish the house of al-Ḥasan. There are reasons why such anti-Umayyad reports should not be taken at face-value. There is a possibility that such accounts were invented to deprive the Umayyad caliphs from the credit of the good deed of building mosques. Al-Walīd might have rebuilt the mosque of the Prophet because he realized, during his visit to Madīnah, that the mosque no longer gave enough room for worshippers. We are told that there was already thinking in the caliphate of ʿAbd al-Malik, al-Walīd's father, to incorporate the area of some adjacent houses to enlarge the mosque.[363] It seems that the mosque was congested to the extent that, in the time of ʿAbd al-Malik, worshippers were allowed to enter the adjacent rooms of the Prophet's wives to attend the Friday sermons.[364] We have already seen that the Prophet himself is reported to have enlarged the mosque a number of times.[365]

The Umayyads' keenness to erect such buildings is attributed, by many religious authorities, to a retreat in religious devotion and also to the impact of the cultures of the conquered territories. However, there is historical evidence that such mosques might have been erected with other approaches, mainly religious, in view. These could properly include the caliphs' desire to exalt the mosque which is known as the House of God. They wanted to make its form of no less glory than the places of prayers of other faiths, or the Muslims' own houses.[366] Al-Muqaddasī states:

> Now, talking to my father's brother one day said I: 'O my uncle, surely

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[362] Al-Muqaddasī, p. 81; Ibn al-Faqīh, p. 157; Ibn Rustah, p.67. See also Ibn Zabālah, p. 116; al-Samhūdī, II, 513.

[363] Al-Samhūdī, *Wafāʾ*, II, 515. See also al-Dhahabī, *Kitāb al-ʿIbar*, I, 85.

[364] Al-Marāghī, p. 50, al-Samhūdī, *Wafāʾ*, II, 517. See also Mālik, *Muwaṭṭaʾ*, ḥadīth no. 458.

[365] See chapter 4.

[366] Marzūq, p. 18.

it was not fitting for al-Walīd to expend the resources of the Muslims on the mosque at Damascus. Had he expended as much in building roads, or the water tanks, or in repairing the fortresses, it would have been more proper and more to his credit.' Said he: 'You simply do not understand, my dear son. Al-Walīd was absolutely right, and it was open to him to do a worthy work. For he saw that Syria was a country settled by the Christians, and he noted there their churches do handsome with their enchanting decorations, renowned far and wide, such as are the Qumāma [namely, the church of the Holy Sepulchre], and the churches of Ludd (Lydda) and al-Ruhā. So he undertook for the Muslims the building of a mosque that would divert their attention from the churches, and make it one of the wonders of the world. Do you realize how ʿAbd al-Malik, seeing the greatness of the dome of the Qumāma and its splendour, fearing lest it should beguile the hearts of the Muslims, hence erected, above the Rock, the dome you now see there?'[367]

When ʿUmar b ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz became the caliph, he intended to eliminate what the mosque included of gold. He also wanted to remove the gilt chains, the marble and the mosaics, return all this to *bayt al-māl* and put mud (*ṭīn*) and ropes instead.[368] He said: 'The people are distracted from their prayers by looking at them.'[369] This intention of ʿUmar annoyed the people of Damascus. One of their chiefs, Khālid b. ʿAbd Allāh al-Qasrī said: 'I could speak to him [about this] on your behalf.' Khālid, then, told ʿUmar that his wish could not be fulfilled as the major part of the marble which was used in the mosque did not belong to *bayt al-māl*. Rather it belonged to the Muslim individuals who willingly brought it from the different territories of the Muslim empire. This made ʿUmar [re-] consider his idea. Simultaneously, a Byzantine delegation was sent to Damascus; when they

[367] Al-Muqaddasī (Collins's transl.), p. 146.

[368] Ibn al-Faqīh, p. 158; al-Ṭarṭūshī, p. 106; al-ʿUmarī, I, 191-2; Ibn Rajab, III, 285; Yāqūt, II, 468; Ibn Kathīr, XII, 580-2. See also Ibn Ḥazm, *Muḥallā*, IV, 248.

[369] Mālik, *Mudawwanah*, I, 197; al-Yaʿqūbī, *Tarīkh*, I, 214.

saw the splendour of the mosque and the beauty of its ornaments, their leader, impressed, said: 'I would not think that the Muslims could build such edifice. I reckoned that their time would be shorter than that.' Having been told of this incident, ʿUmar felt relieved and commanded them to leave the mosque.[370] Some accounts even exaggerated the reaction of the leader of the Byzantine delegation; according to some he was shocked, according to others he went unconscious.[371] While this story seems to be coloured by patriotism, we cannot dismiss it completely. The original Umayyad mosque, as far as literary and archaeological evidence tells, was a striking piece of art and architecture, especially when its temporal and spatial contexts are taken into account; it must have impressed visitors and viewers. This means that the use of mosques as a tool of Islamic propaganda was regarded by some authorities like ʿUmar b. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz to be compatible with the principles of Islam.

7.6.   Why was the Dome of the Rock built?[372]

Three theories have been put forward to explain why the 'unique' Dome of the Rock was built and to interpret its religious and political meaning. It is traditionally believed that the Dome was built to protect and commemorate the Holy Rock which was, and still is, venerated in Islam as the place where the Prophet ascended to Heavens in the famous journey of *al-Isrāʾ wal Miʿrāj*.[373]

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[370] Al-Ṭarṭūshī, p. 106; al-ʿUmarī, I, 191-2; Ibn Kathīr, XII, 581-2. See also Ibn al-Faqīh, pp. 158-9; Ibn ʿAsākir, II, 275-7.

[371] Ibid.

[372] For a detailed discussion about the interpretation of the Dome of the Rock, see Grabar, 'The Umayyad Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem'; Grabar, *Formation*, pp. 46-57; Rivoira, pp. 45-72; Ettinghausen and Grabar, pp.28-34; Hattstein and Delius, *Islam: Art and Architecture*, p. 64; Bloom and Blair, pp. 25-30, Bahnasī, pp. 55-69.

[373] Ibn al-Jawzī, *Faḍāʾl al-Quds*, ed. by Gibrāʾīl Jabbūr 2nd (Beirut: Dār al-Afāq al-Jadīda, 1980), pp. 116-21. On *ḥadīths* about the status of Bayt al-Maqdis in Islam and the blessedness of the Holy Rock, see Ḍiyāʾ al-Dīn al-Ḥanbalī, *Faḍāʾil Bayt al-Maqdis*, ed. by M. Muṭīʿ al-Ḥāfiẓ

Eutychius (d. 328/940), a Melkite priest from Alexandria, states that ʿAbd al-Malik 'enlarged the masjid so that the Rock was included within the praying place'.[374] In addition to evidence from *Qurʾān* and *Ḥadīth*, 'a passage, possibly written before the accession of ʿAbd al-Malik, in the poems of ʿUmar b. Abī Rabīʿa (born 23 H. = A.D 644), shows that Jerusalem had already come to be regarded as the place whence Muhammad had made his famous night journey to heaven.'[375]

A different theory was first proposed by Goldziher and then adopted by Creswell. It depends on an account of al-Yaʿqūbī (260/874).[376] According to this, ʿAbd al-Malik was annoyed by the fact that Syrian pilgrims kept visiting Mecca, which by that time was under the reign of his political adversary Ibn al-Zubayr. Having been afraid of Ibn al-Zubayr's influence on them, ʿAbd al-Malik forbade the Syrians to go to Mecca for pilgrimage. The people became irritated by a decision which deprived them from conducting the fifth pillar of Islam. They said to him: 'How do you forbid us from making the pilgrimage to Allāh's house, seeing that the same is a commandment of Allah upon us?' ʿAbd al-Malik replied: 'Has not ibn Shihāb al-Zuhrī [a famous *Ḥadīth* scholar] told you that the Prophet said: "Men shall journey to but three mosques, al-Masjid Ḥarām [at Mecca], my mosque [at Madīnah], and the mosque of Jerusalem"?'[377] So this last is now appointed for you in lieu of the Masjid al-Ḥarām. And this Rock, of which it is reported that upon it the Prophet set his foot when he ascended into heaven, shall be

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(Damascus: Dār al-Fikr, 1988); Mujīr al-Dīn, *Al-Uns al-Jalīl*, I, 209-12; Heribert Busse, 'Jerusalem', in *Encyclopaedia of the Qurʾān*, III (2003), pp. 2-7.

[374] Creswell, *Early Muslim Architecture*, I. I, 66.

[375] Ibid.

[376] He is a Shīʿī traveller who was brought up in Baghdad.

[377] This *ḥadīth* is reported by al-Bukhārī (*ḥadīth* no. 1189) on the authority of al-Zuhrī. See also al-Dārimī, *ḥadīth* no. 1461; Ibn Ḥanbal, *ḥadīth* no. 11347; Abū Yaʿlā, *ḥadīths* no. 1167, 5880. On the merit of performing prayers at the pan-mosques of Mecca and Madīnah, see also Mālik, *Muwaṭṭaʾ*, *ḥadīth* no. 517; al-Dārimī, *ḥadīths* no. 1458-60.

unto you in the place of the Kaʿbah.' He accordingly erected a dome above the Rock and 'hung it around with curtains of brocade'. He then installed a door-keeper and let the people do *ṭawāf* around the Rock in the same manner as the Muslims do around the Kaʿbah and this practice lasted all the Umayyad period.[378]

Although this story was mentioned by a number of other medieval Muslim and Christian historians,[379] it has been criticized by some modern scholars such as M. ʿAkkūsh, who argues that had ʿAbd al-Malik prevented the people from pilgrimage, it would have been an enormous crime against Islam.[380] S. D. Goitein also wondered how such a decisive event as building a rival sanctuary to Mecca could have been ignored by observant historians such as al-Ṭabarī and al-Balādhurī and by zealous partisans such as al-Muqaddasī. Goitein added that had ʿAbd al-Malik done so, it would have been a remarkable political sin, for he would have been regarded by the great majority of contemporary Muslims as *Kāfir*, 'unbeliever', and it would have led many of them to claim *jihad* against him.[381] Grabar added that this story includes errors *à propos* dates and misattribution of events. Grabar went further to conclude that the source of this story is only one account which was repeated by later historians.[382] It should be noted that if al-Yaʿqūbī's account was the reason of building the Dome of the Rock, then

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[378] Al-Yaʿqūbī, *Tarīkh*, ed. by M. T. Houtsma (Leiden: Brill, 1883), II, 311, as translated by G. Le Strange in his *Palestine under the Moslems*, p. 116. See also Creswell, *Early Muslim Architecture*, I. I, 66; M. J. Kister, '"You Shall Only Set Out for Three Mosques": A Study of an Early Tradition', in *Studies in Jāhiliyya and Early Islam*, (London: Variorum, 1980), pp. 173-196.

[379] Eutychius (939), Ibn ʿAbd Ribbih (d. 940), al-Makīn (b. 1204), Ibn Kathīr (d. 1373), Abū al-Maḥāsin (1458), Mujir al-Din (1496), and al-Diyārbakrī (1534). See also Abū Shāmah, p. 30.

[380] Maḥmūd ʿAkkūsh, 'Bināʾ Qubbat al-Sakhra', *Mijallat al-Sharq al-ʿArabī*, 14 and 15 (1946). See also ʿAjjāj, pp. 502-15.

[381] S. D. Goitein, 'The Historical Background of the Erection of the Dome of the Rock', *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, 70 (1950), 104-8.

[382] Grabar, 'Umayyad Dome', p. 5.

Ḥadīth should have, in a way, played a significant role here. It was quoted, as shown above, to legitimatize the Ḥajj, or rather journey, to a holy sanctuary at Jerusalem.

In addition to these theories, a third has recently appeared. According to this, the erection of the Dome of the Rock was a part of a theological and political 'cold war' between Islam and the other two monotheistic religions.[383] It is worth noting that this latter theory which seems best to match the historical context of the period is consistent with the accepted Islamic framework of the time of ʿAbd al-Malik's who, based on al-Wāsiṭī's account, did not embark upon his 'national project' before he got the approval of his subjects.[384]

It is of interest for this study that according each of the three theories about the reason of building the Dome of the Rock and its interpretation, *Ḥadīth* played a significant role.

7.7. The Kaʿbah

The Meccan shrine of Kaʿbah enjoys an exceptional status amongst Muslim people.[385] It represents their *qiblah* and is the holiest mosque in Islam. Many verses in the *Qurʾān* and a whole subset of *ḥadīths* stress the sanctity of the Ḥaram and deal with its *aḥkām*, 'regulations', many of which are specific to

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[383] Al-Ṭabarī, I; Grabar, 'Umayyad Dome', p. 43. See also Grabar, 'Qubbat al-Sakhrah', *Jerusalem*, 4 (2005), pp. 114-5, first published in *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd edn, V (1980), pp. 298-9. pp. 114-5.

[384] Wāsiṭī, *Faḍāʾil*, pp. 81-1, account no. 136, quoted from and translated by Nasser Rabbat in his 'The Dome of the Rock Revisited', p. 68. For the same account, see Shihāb al-Dīn, *Muthīr*, pp. 171-2; Mujīr al-Dīn, *al-Uns al-Jalīl*, I, pp. 140-1.

[385] See A. J. Wensinck, 'Kaʿba: the Most famous Sanctuary of Islam', in *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, IV (1997), pp. 317-22; Gerald R. Hawting, 'Kaʿbah', in *Encyclopaedia of the Qurʾān*, III (2003), pp. 75-80.

it.[386] For example, passing in front of someone at prayer is forbidden at all mosques and places of prayer except the Kaʿbah. As far as this study is concerned, we need to know how the Kaʿbah was architecturally treated in early Islam. How did the Prophet and his followers reconcile their respect for this supreme Abrahamic structure and their intrinsic keenness to cut the relation between Muslims and any material object?

We will see below (7.11) that the Prophet expressed his desire to rebuild the Kaʿbah in the form it had had after the work of Prophet Abraham, but that we have no report that he applied any kind of architectural treatment to it. Nor is there anything in tradition to tell us that he maintained any kind of special furnishing for the Holy Sanctuary apart from covering it with Yamānī fabrics.[387] According to al-Azraqī, the first architectural work to have been done to the Kaʿbah in Islam was by the Caliph ʿUmar b. al-Khaṭṭāb. ʿUmar bought the houses around the Kaʿbah, pulled them down and enclosed the area with a wall to the height of a man on which some lamps were placed. Having done this, ʿUmar gave the holy sanctuary, a *finā'*, 'courtyard' such as that of the mosque of the Prophet at Madīnah. After the works of ʿUmar and ʿUthmān, the unroofed Ḥaram was surrounded by a low enclosure wall around which the people used to sit during the day and in the evenings.[388]

In 64-5/684-685, Ibn al-Zubayr, who set himself as a contender caliph at Mecca, reconstructed the Kaʿbah after it was struck by catapults (*manjanīq*) by al-Ḥajjāj, ʿAbd al-Malik's notorious governor.[389] Ibn al-Zubayr

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[386] On this, see al-Azraqī's *Akhbār Makkah wamā Jāʾ fīhā min al-Āthār*. See also al-Zarkashī, 43-219.

[387] Al-Azraqī, pp. 356-7.

[388] Al-Azraqī, pp. 593-4. See also Pedersen, 'Masdjid', pp. 660, 665.

[389] Al-Azraqī, pp. 294-320; al-Yaʿqūbī, I, 309-10; al-Diyārbakrī, II, 337. Al-ʿUmarī, on the authority of al-Suhaylī, mentions that the reason of rebuilding the Kaʿbah was that it accidently

consulted the chief *ṣaḥābīs* about whether to pull it down and rebuild it. Yet, a majority of them, with Ibn ʿAbbās included, refused lest later generations should do the same and that in result the Kaʿbah should lose its veneration. They advised him to restore it (*irqaʿhā*), but he did not accept the idea. He said: 'By Allāh, none of you would be satisfied with restoring the house of himself, his father or mother! How can I [then] restore the House of Allāh?' He wanted to rebuild it using *wars*, 'a yellow plant', from Yemen,[390] but the people told him that it is easily damaged and vulnerable to decay. Ibn al-Zubayr was advised to rebuild with *qaṣṣah*, 'mortar', the finest of which was to be found in Ṣanʿāʾ, Yemen. So he bought the *qaṣṣah* from there.[391] This could also indicate how the Companions and the followers of the Prophet were keen to rebuild the Kaʿbah in proper way.

Ibn al-Zubayr rebuilt it in a way previously wished by the Prophet.[392] He erected his new structure on the old foundations which it was believed had been laid by Prophet Abraham.[393] The new building of Kaʿbah was made of stones and equipped with two double doors plated with gold.[394] Al-Azraqī, however, ascribed such innovation to the days of al-Walīd.[395] Following the fashion of ʿUmar and ʿUthmān,[396] Ibn al-Zubayr provided the Kaʿbah with a covering of Coptic fabric (*qabāṭī*).[397] Stones left over after the

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burned when a woman was scenting it with incense. Al-ʿUmarī, I, 95. Al-Azraqī also mentioned other accounts about the reasons of damaging the Kaʿbah: pp. 296-7.

[390] Ibn Manẓūr, VI, 4812.

[391] Al-Azraqī, pp. 298-9.

[392] Al-Muqaddasī (Collins's transl.), pp. 73-4. See below.

[393] Al-Azraqī, pp. 300-2; Ibn ʿAbd Rabbih, VI, 255; Mujīr al-Dīn, I, 240; Creswell, *Early Muslim Architecture*, I. I, 63.

[394] Al-Balādhurī; 63; Ibn Khaldūn, *Muqaddimah*, p. 352.

[395] Al-Azraqī, p. 307.

[396] Al-Balādhurī, p. 63; Ibn al-Faqīh, pp. 76-7.

[397] Al-Azraqī, p. 305; al-Yaʿqūbī, I, p. 311.

work was finished were used to make a pavement around the Kaʿbah.[398] Having demolished quite a number of the adjacent houses, Ibn al-Zubayr is said to have given the Kaʿbah a spacious *finā'*.[399] Later, some modifications were carried out by ʿAbd al-Malik and his son al-Walīd. Mainly quoting al-Azraqī, Oleg Grabar states:

> The Umayyads did not modify the sizes of the mosque [al-Haram in Mecca], but they did transform its character. Both ʿAbd al-Malik (685-705) and al-Walid (705-15) are credited with beautification (*ḥusna*), and it is probable that we are dealing with a single activity which lasted many years. The outer walls were raised and a covered area was built, consisting probably of a portico with a wooden ceiling; the capitals or upper parts (*ru'ūs*) of the supports (*asāṭīn*, piers or columns) were gilt. Al-Walīd is remembered for having covered supports with marble, and soffits or spandrels (wajh al-ṭaqān) with mosaics; he also built its crenellations and moldings.[400]

7.8. How were the Umayyad mosques regarded by contemporary religious authorities?

As far as literature can tell, the Umayyad mosques were not considered as excessive innovations. Ibn Khaldūn states that al-Walīd built his mosques after the orthodox model (*sunan*) of mosques of Islam.[401] In spite of few reports of resentment, there are indications that the architectural sophistication of the Umayyad mosques was not generally condemned by contemporary scholars and *Ḥadīth* narrators. It seems that the architectural works of ʿAbd al-Malik and his son were agreed upon by some of the contemporary jurists, who sometimes

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[398] Creswell, *Early Muslim Architecture*, I. I, 64.

[399] Al-Azraqī, pp. 594-7.

[400] Grabar, 'Upon Reading al-Azraqī', *Muqarnas*, 3 (1985), 1-7 (p. 4). This passage of Grabar is mainly based on al-Azraqī, pp. 297-8. See also al-ʿUmarī, I, 97-8.

[401] Ibn Khaldūn, *Muqaddimah*, p. 355.

themselves took part. For instance, the learned traditionsts of Madīnah helped

ʿAbd al-Malik choose the site of his mosque.[402]

According to Ibn Kathīr, none of the *ṣaḥābīs* except Anas b. Malik

saw al-Walīd's mosque of Damascus, (arguably because they had died or

lived in other places). Anas (d. 93/712) who narrated a number of important

ḥadīths about mosques saw the mosque when he visited Damascus in

92/711 while al-Walīd was still building it. Anas prayed in it and criticized

nothing but the fact that al-Walīd delayed prayers to a late time.[403] Further,

on the authority of al-Samhūdī, who quoted al-Wāqidī, Saʿīd b. al-Musayyab,

the contemporary religious authority and notable *Ḥadīth* scholar, observed

the work of the Byzantine and the Copts at the mosque of the Prophet in

the time of al-Walīd and commented that the work of the Copts was much

better.[404] Needless to say, if any of these scholars who saw what had been

done thought it to transgress *Ḥadīth*, presumably they would have said so.

Saʿīd b. al-Musayyab, in particular, was known for his strong views against

the Umayyad caliphs.[405]

We are left to conclude that al-Walīd's patronage of building and

decorating massive mosques was not regarded by legalists as a sacrilege of

the Prophet's tradition. Indeed, it was the opposite. According to Ibn

ʿAsākir,[406] one of the reasons why al-Walīd was regarded by the people of

Shām, 'Syria', as one of their most beneficent caliphs is that he built

[congregational] mosques in Damascus.[407] Al-Walīd's building of the

Umayyad mosque and his works at the mosque of the Prophet were

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[402] Creswell, *Early Muslim Architecture*, I. I, 66.

[403] Ibn Kathīr, XII, 590.

[404] Al-Samhūdī, *Wafāʾ*, II, 524-5.

[405] On Saʿīd b. al-Musayyab and his confrontation with the Caliphs al-Walīd and Hishām, see Ibn Saʿd, VII, 119-43.

[406] See Ibn ʿAsākir, LXIII, 164-87 (p. 176).

[407] Al-Diyārbakrī, II, 348.

regarded by such scholars as Muḥammad b. al-Madāʾinī as two of his most outstanding deeds.[408] Naturally, if these architectural activities were not felt to have been compliant with *Ḥadīth*, they would not have been so praised by such scholars, especially given that they all were eminent *Ḥadīth* narrators. Such reports might also reflect the own perspectives of later scholars such as al-Madāʾinī and Ibn ʿAsākir on the Umayyads' building of elaborated mosques, and on the Umayyad period in general.

Al-Zuhrī relates that he was at ʿUmar b. ʿAbd al-Aziz's [house] one day when a letter came from one of his governors telling him that the town was in need of restoration. Al-Zuhrī said to ʿUmar: 'one of the governors of ʿAlī b. Abī Ṭālib sent him similar message, while ʿAlī wrote to him: "fortify it with justice and clean its streets from prejudice." Then, ʿUmar took his advice and wrote a similar message to his governor.[409] Such accounts, found scattered in literature, not only give impression that the Umayyad patrons received from contemporary scholars advice related to architectural issues, but could also indicate the extent of their architectural knowledge. Further, if al-Zuhrī, who is widely respected in modern circles as one of the earliest and most reliable *Ḥadīth* scholars,[410] had more knowledge in this regard, he would have likely passed it down to ʿUmar.

It is also important to refer to that mosques, *in illo tempore*, were regularly attended by *Ḥadīth* scholars and pious imams and it is natural that had such religious authorities found any aggression in the way these mosques were built, they would have referred to that in their works.

Nonetheless, we are told of strong resistance to the order to pull

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[408] Ibn Kathīr, *Khulāṣat*, pp. 297, 301-3; al-Suyūṭī, *Tārīkh al-Khulafāʾ*, p. 198; al-Diyārbakrī, II, 348.

[409] Al-Yaʿqūbī, *Tārīkh*, p. 214. See also al-Suyūṭī, *Tārīkh al-Khulafāʾ*, p. 205.

[410] Robson, 'Ḥadīth', p. 24. On al-Zuhrī, his role of collecting *ḥadīths* and the views of Muslim and non-Muslim scholars about him, see chapter 2.

down the houses of the Prophet's wives so that their area should be incorporated into the mosque.[411] An eye-witness, Ibn ʿAṭāʾ al-Khurasānī, recounted: 'I saw the compartments (*ḥujar*) of the Prophet. [...]. I was present when the letter of al-Walīd was recited [commanding] the *ḥujar* to be merged into the mosque. [I bear witness that] I have not seen more criers than what I have seen on that day. I heard Saʿīd b. al-Musayyab saying: "I wish that they left it so that a comer would see what the Prophet was contented with in his life. It should have been a reminder for people not to boast and extravagate."'[412] Abū Umāmah said: 'I wish they had been left so that the [later] people would not pay much attention to [the affair of] building and see what Allāh has been content with for his Prophet while the keys of this world are in His hands.'[413] While this incident does not mean that the contemporary religious authorities criticized al-Walīd's intention to rebuild the mosque, it means that they had the ability to express their antipathy when there was a need to do so. Their general silence about the architectural works of ʿAbd al-Malik and his son al-Walīd would thus imply that they did not see them as stark contraventions.

The Medinese *faqīhs* also protested against al-Walīd's intention to include the grave of the Prophet and his two Companions Abū Bakr and ʿUmar in the mosque.[414] We have already seen that the act of building mosques on tombs was reproached by many *ḥadīths*.[415] One of ʿUmar b. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz's critics, ʿUthmān b. ʿUrwah,[416] advised him to build a

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[411] Al-Samhūdī, *Wafāʾ*, II, 547; *Al-ʿUyūn wal Hadāʾiq*, I, 3-4. On the incorporation of these apartments into the mosque, see also Wensinck, p. 154.

[412] Ibn Saʿd, I, 430; al-Samhūdī, *Wafāʾ*, II, 517; Ibn al-Najjār, p. 153.

[413] Ibid.

[414] Al-Yaʿqūbī, I, 198.

[415] See chapter 5. Al-Albānī has mentioned 14 *ḥadīths* in his *Taḥdhīr al-Sājid min Ittikhādh al-Qubūr Masājid*, pp. 11-8. See also al-Shihrī, *ʿImārat al-Masjid al-Nabawī*, p. 112.

[416] According to al-Sakhāwī, he was one of Qyraysh's eminent scholars: *Tuḥfah*, III, 161.

[pentagonally-shaped] wall (*juʾjuʾan*) around it,[417] lest the laity should pray towards it if they could see it. We are told that ʿUmar b. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz purposely angled the sides of this structure in order to make it difficult for anyone to be orientated towards the *qiblah* if facing it.[418]

Finally, could the gap between the simplicity of the Prophet's model and the advancement of the Umayyad mosques be attributed to *Ḥadīth* written under the ʿAbbāsids, the Umayyads' political rivals? This would imply either of two possibilities: that the Umayyad builders did not know about the Prophet's simple model and thus elaborated their mosques, or that the *ḥadīths* about the Prophet's model were written retrospectively by the ʿAbbāsids to distort the Umayyads' reputation. We have seen that *Ḥadīth* began to be collected before the ʿAbbāsid period. Under the Umayyads, quite a number of *Ḥadīth* collections were committed to writing (see 2.1.3.3),[419] and this should have possibly enabled larger number of people, including patrons and builders of mosques, to be aware of *Ḥadīth*. Besides, it is not likely that the ʿAbbāsid historians and collectors of *Ḥadīth* attributed *ex post facto* such simplicity to the Prophet's approach in order to portray the Umayyads as heretics. In fact, the ʿAbbāsid mosques were more lavishly decorated than their Umayyad predecessors. Further, all the *ḥadīths* about the simplicity of the Prophet's mosque and life in general were reported by Umayyad scholars such as Saʿīd b. al-Musayyab and al-Zuhrī.

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[417] Al-Samhūdī, *Wafāʾ*, II, 548. See also M. M. Yāssīn, *Riḥlah*, p. 124. See also al-Nawawī, *Sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, V, 14; Ibn Taymiyyah, *al-Jawāb al-Bāhir fī Zuwwār al-Maqābir*, p. 12.

[418] Al-Samhūdī, *Wafāʾ*, II, 548; Ibn Jubayr, pp. 168-9.

[419] See chapter 2.

7.9. Components of the mosque

7.9.1. *Miḥrāb* (concave prayer niche)[420]

It is believed by some that the *miḥrāb mujawwaf*, 'concave prayer niche', was borrowed unwillingly from church architecture.[421] This theory has been built on a link between two early accounts. According to the first, the concave prayer niche was first introduced when ʿUmar b. ʿAbd al-Azīz rebuilt the mosque of the Prophet in Madīnah in 91/708.[422] According to the second, the Caliph al-Walīd sent Byzantine and Coptic masons to participate in rebuilding the mosque.

Creswell supported these views by citing material from al-Samhūdī and al-Sūyūṭī. Al-Samhūdī relates that the masons who built the front part of the mosque of the Prophet [where the *miḥrāb* is always located] in the time of al-Walīd were Copts.[423] In his *Iʿlām al-Arīb bi Ḥudūth Bidʿat al-Maḥārīb*,[424] al-Sūyūṭī mentions a number of *ḥadīths* which refer to *miḥrābs* as *bidʿah* and forbid praying in them (see also 5.7.5.2).

Creswell used the accounts of al-Samhūdī and al-Sūyūṭī to argue

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[420] For detailed discussions about the origin of the *miḥrāb* from the linguistic and architectural points of view, see 5.7.5.1. See also Nöeldeke, *Neve Beitrage fur Semitischen Sprachen*, 1910, p. 52 footnote; Horovitz, 'Bemerkungen zur Geschichte und Terminologie', *Der Islam*, 16 (1927), pp. 260-3; Landberg, *Glossiare daṯînois*, (Leiden, 1920-42), 393 seq; G. Fehérvári, 'Miḥrāb', *EI2*, VII, pp. 7-15; R. B. Serjeant, 'Miḥrāb', *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, University of London, 22, (1959), pp. 439-53; George C. Miles, 'Miḥrāb and ʿAnaza', pp.149-71.

[421] See chapter 5.

[422] This is stated by Ibn Duqmāq and al-Maqrīzī who both quoted al-Wāqidī (d. 823). Ibn Duqmāq, V, 62; al-Maqrīzī, II, 247. It should be noted that this account is not found in al-Wāqidī's book, but it is told by other authorities such as Ibn Baṭṭūṭah. *Riḥla*, I, 85.

[423] Al-Samhūdī, *Wafāʾ*, II, 524; Creswell, *Early Muslim Architecture*, I. I, 148. This group of scholars argue that it was also the Copts who introduced the concave prayer niche to the mosque of Fusṭāṭ in the time of Qurrah b. Sharīk, two years later. Fikrī, *Madkhal*, p. 277.

[424] N. Yūnus al-Ḥājj, *Al-Maḥārīb al-ʿIrāqiyyah Mundhū al-ʿAsr al-Islāmī Ilā Nihāyat al-ʿAṣe al-ʿAbbāsī* (Baghdad: Mudīriyat al-Āthār, 1876), pp. 36-43; al-Shihrī, *ʿImārat al-Masjid al-Nabawī*, p. 120.

that the *miḥrāb* was introduced to mosque architecture by the Copts and that it is for that reason reproached by *Ḥadīth*.[425] This theory appears to depend on three points: (i) that the *miḥrāb* made by ʿUmar b. ʿAbd al-Azīz in the mosque of the Prophet was the earliest example of a recessed *miḥrāb*; (ii) that it was introduced by the Coptic masons; and (iii) Muslims' reluctance to adopt it.

Taking these in turn, the argument that the *miḥrāb* of ʿUmar b. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz was the earliest concave prayer niche in Islam contradicts both historical and material evidence. It is not agreed that the first to introduce the *miḥrāb* was ʿUmar b. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz. Ibn Baṭṭūṭah, for example, gives three different accounts of to whom the first introduction of the *miḥrāb* is due. According to one of them, it was ʿUthmān b. ʿAffān. According to another, it was Marwān b. al-Ḥakam in 65/684, while the third assumes that it was ʿUmar b. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz.[426] According to Ibn al-Faqīh, Muʿāwiyah was the first to adopt *miḥrābs*.[427]

Next, Fikrī's archaeological work at the mosque of Qayrawān provides evidence that a concave prayer niche was made there by ʿUqbah b. Nāfiʿ, the founder of Qayrawān mosque in 50/670, forty years earlier than ʿUmar's works at the mosque of Madīnah.[428] Shāfiʿī argues that the earliest extant *miḥrāb mujawwaf* may be the one in the southern side of the outer octagon of the Dome of the Rock (figure 40), which was built before the

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[425] Muʾnis doubted the attribution of this article to al-Suyūṭī, who lived in the fifteenth century, for it has no support from any of the earlier historians. Muʾnis, p. 70. In fact, many of these *ḥadīths* were compiled by al-Bayhaqī and others.

[426] Ibn Baṭṭūṭah, I, 85.

[427] Ibn al-Faqīh, p. 159.

[428] Fikrī, *Madkhal*, p. 297; Fikrī, *al-Masjid al-Jāmiʿ bil Qayrawān*, pp. 57-9. Fikrī systematically criticized the views which say that the *miḥrāb* had a non-Islamic origin. See also Fikrī, 'Bidʿat al-Maḥārīb', *Mijallat al-Kātib al-Maṣrī*, 14 (1946), pp 306-20.

time of al-Walīd.[429] Also speaking of the *miḥrāb* beneath the Rock, and
referring to the type of ornaments and the archaic Kūfic inscription, Creswell
argues that this *miḥrāb* could be attributed to the founder of the Dome of
the Rock and that this would mean that it is 'the oldest *miḥrāb* in Islam,
dating from the days before the concave *miḥrāb* was introduced'.[430]
Reinforcing the case for an earlier date is a representation of a simple
miḥrāb on an early coin known as the '*miḥrāb* and the *ʿAnazah*' drachm
(Figure 41).[431] Although it has no mint date, Johns believes that it was
struck in the mid-70s AH.[432] The argument that ʿUmar's *miḥrāb* at Madīnah
was the first in Islam is even doubted by Creswell himself.[433] There is
evidence that Muslims in the Umayyad period used movable *miḥrābs* before
the introduction of concave prayer niches in the time of al-Walīd.[434]
Whatever the oldest *miḥrāb* might have been, if that of ʿUmar b. ʿAbd al-
ʿAzīz was not the first in Islam, then it should have been inspired by its
predecessor (even if they were not in the form of concave prayer niches)
and not the apse of the church, especially given clear architectural
difference between a *miḥrāb* and an apse.[435]

The story of the Copts was adopted by Caetani and Creswell, but
has been quite widely contested.[436] Sauvaget regards it as such a legend,[437]

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[429] According to him, the second earliest is the central *miḥrāb* in the Umayyad mosque. Shāfiʿī, *ʿImārah ʿArabiyyah*, p. 611. According to Ettinghausen and Grabar, the earliest remaining *miḥrāb* is the one at the mosque of Damascus. Ettinghausen and Grabar, p. 40.

[430] Creswell, *Early Muslim Architecture*, I. I, 100. According to Pedersen, this marble panel is known as the *miḥrāb* of Sulaymān. p. 8.

[431] Johns, *Archaeology*, p. 431; M. Bloom, 'Mosque', *EQ*, III, 430.

[432] Johns, *Archaeology*, p. 431.

[433] Creswell argues that ʿUmar's was the earliest concave prayer niche, but not the first *miḥrāb* in Islam.

[434] Muʾnis, p. 70.

[435] The architectural difference between the *miḥrāb* and the altar is discussed by Pautey and Fikrī. Pautey, 'Taṭawwur Niẓām al-Taʾ', p. 98

[436] See Yeomans, pp. 19-20.

pointing to the implausibility of the Umayyads asking their enemies to help them with rebuilding the mosque of their Prophet. According to him, even if they took part in the work at the Madīnah mosque, this would not necessarily affect the architectural form of the building.[438] Sauvaget argued that a similarity between the features of two architectural elements cannot by itself stand as evidence that one of which is derived from the other, unless concrete reasons for such a derivation can be clearly presented.[439] Sauvaget was not the only one to contest the story of the Copts. M. van Berchem and F. Shāfiʿī also doubted its authenticity.[440] Both came to the conclusion that the builders who built and decorated the Dome of the Rock in the time of ʿAbd al-Malik, and then the Umayyad mosque in the time of his son al-Walīd, were from Syria and that they had their own school of art and architecture.[441] The story of the Persians and the Copts has more recently criticized by Shāfiʿī who compared the number of the masons as given by the sources to the labour needed to erect and decorate such a colossal building as the mosque of the Prophet in the time of al-Walīd. Shāfiʿī concluded that the participation of these foreign workers was confined to decoration.[442]

The third pillar on which the theory of the non-Islamic origin of the *miḥrāb* is based is the *ḥadīths* mentioned by al-Sūyūṭī about the abhorrence

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[437] Sauvaget, pp. 113-4.

[438] Ibid, pp. 115-6.

[439] Ibid, p. 145; Sauvaget, 'Mosque and palace', pp. 133-4.

[440] The earliest to mention the story of the Byzantine and the Copts was al-Yaʿqūbī. Eight years earlier, al-Balādhurī mentioned that al-Walīd sent to ʿUmar gold, mosaic and masons without saying any thing about the help of the Roman king. See Shāfiʿī, *ʾImārah ʿArabiyyah*, 589-97. However, this argument of Sauvaget and van Berchem about the historical unreliability of the story of the Byzantine and Copt artisans was contested by H. Gibb. 'Arab-Byzantine Relations', pp. 225-9.

[441] Shāfiʿī, *ʾImārah ʿArabiyyah*, p. 593,597.

[442] Ibid, pp. 588-90.

of adopting it in mosques. This has already been dealt with (see 5.7.5.2).

Sauvaget and Fikrī conclude that the *miḥrāb* in Islamic architecture is an element in the mosque especially rendered for the *imām*.[443] While so saying, Sauvaget does not agree that it was first innovated by the Muslims. He believes that the *miḥrāb* was derived from domestic architecture (particularly the palace). What are its functions? The *miḥrāb* became a persistent feature because:

- It would guide the worshippers to the true direction of the *qiblah*. Yet, the *miḥrāb* could not have been invented simply to indicate the *qiblah* direction as this would have been done by the whole outline of mosque.

- It might have been introduced to act as a *sutrah*, which is an object put in front of the worshipper to demarcate his area of prostration and preclude any one to pass in front of him (see 5.7.5.1).[444]

- It would also provide space within which the *imām* could pray. According to one *ḥadīth* the Prophet used to leave a space of three cubits, or at least the space of what would permit a sheep to pass, between him and the *qiblah* wall.[445] The invention of a concave prayer niche would perform this function and spare a row for other worshippers.

- It would amplify the voice of the *imām* during *ṣalāt*.[446]

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[443] Fikrī, *al-Masjid al-Jāmiʿ*, 59-60; Fikry, *Nouvelles recherches sur la Grand Mosquée de Kairouan* (Paris: H. Laurens, 1934), p. 62; Sauvaget, 'Mosque and Palace', p. 138. Sauvaget, however, does not agree with Fikrī that the *miḥrāb* is an Islamic innovation. Sauvaget, 'Mosque and Palace', p. 133 n. 140.

[444] On sutrah, see al-Bayhaqī, *ḥadīths* no. 3453-65; al-Bājī, *Muntaqā*, II, 276-84; Ibn Ḥajar, *Fatḥ*, II, 117-31; al-Hindī, *Kanz*, *ḥadīths* no. 19201-2; al-Nawawī, *Sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, IV, 216-29; *Ḥāshiyaht al-Dusūqī*, I, 246-7.

[445] Al-Bukhārī, *ḥadīths* no. 496, 497; Ibn Ḥajar, *Fatḥ*, II, 123; Wensinck, p. 223.

[446] N. Yūnus al-Ḥājj, p. 29

- The *miḥrāb* could have begun, in al-Walīd's works at Madīnah, as a 'precise memorial' to commemorate the place where the Prophet used to pray.[447] Needless to say, if this is true, it would also be a direct example of *Ḥadīth* influence on mosque architecture.

How did the Umayyads conceive the religious acceptability of the adoption of *miḥrābs*? The Prophet is reported to have said: 'Ḥalāl, 'religiously-accepted' is what Allāh has made *ḥalāl* in His Book [namely the *Qurʾān*], and *ḥarām*, 'religiously-prohibited', is what He has made *ḥarām* in His Book, and what he has not addressed (*wamā sakat ʿanhū*) should be regarded as a pardon.'[448] According to another *ḥadīth*, 'Allah has enjoined *farāʾḍ*, 'obligations'. So, do not disregard them [namely, observe them]. And [He] has set limitations. So, do not violate them. And [He] has not addressed many [things], without oblivion. So, do not affect them. This has been a mercy from Allāh. So, accept it.'[449] In another narration, '[...] Thus, accept from Allāh His pardon, as Allāh would have forgotten nothing.' Based on this *ḥadīth* and others, an Islamic principle states that everything should be *ḥalāl*, unless otherwise is specified. It seems that the Umayyads, having seen nothing *ḥarām* in the adoption of *miḥrābs*, set up a multitude of them (namely *miḥrābs*). The Umayyads' thinking of the acceptability of the *miḥrāb* could have also been based on the fact that there was no fixed form of the mosque according to *Ḥadīth*. It could have equally derived from the simple *miḥrāb* which the Prophet might have taken for his mosque, or from their understanding that the Prophet paid attention to indicating the *qiblah* direction by means of a wooden plank as reported.

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[447] Ettinghausen and Grabar, p. 40.

[448] Al-Tirmidhī, *ḥadīth* no. 1726. According to al-Tirmidhī, this *ḥadīth* is *gharīb*. According to Albānī, it is *ḍaʿīf*.

[449] Al-Ṭabarānī, *ḥadīths* no. 7461, 8938.

It is also noticeable that the forms, number, and positions of these *miḥrābs* were different. The miḥrāb may, or may not, be set in the middle of the *qiblah* wall. There is no rule here. According to al-Samhūdī, the palm-stem on which the Prophet used to lean was situated in the middle of the *qiblah* wall,[450] but after the mosque was enlarged his *miḥrāb* was no longer central. Both the palm-stem and the *minbar* of the Prophet retained their original positions. Similarly, the *miḥrāb* was not set in the middle of the *qiblah* wall in the Umayyad mosque of Madīnah, the ʿAlawī mosque at Iskāf Banī Junayd, the mosque of Ḥarrān[451] and the mosque of ʿAmr at Fusṭāṭ.[452] The only instance in which we are told that there was a clear violation to *Ḥadīth* in this respect was at Wāsiṭ. Excavations showed that the *qiblah* direction at the mosque of Wāsiṭ was set askew. It is reported that al-Ḥajjāj did that on purpose.[453]

7.9.2.   *Manārah* (minaret)

Here too, there is no agreement about to whom the introduction of the minaret should be attributed. According to al-Balādhurī, it was introduced for the first time at the mosque of Baṣrah in the time of Ziyād b. Abīh in 45/665,[454] and it was made of stone.[455] Creswell, however, seems cautious to accept this, his reservation being that it is only mentioned by al-Balādhurī. Even so, Creswell argues the possibility that the mosque of Kūfah was provided with a minaret in

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[450] Al-Samhūdī, *Wafāʾ*, II, 393-4. This palm stem was one of the marks of the Prophet's *muṣallā*.

[451] On the mosque of Ḥarrān, see Ibn Jubayr, p. 221; Creswell, *Early Muslim Architecture*, I. II, 644-8; Fikrī, *Madkhal*, pp. 225-7

[452] See Fikrī, *Madkhal*, p. 298.

[453] This is stated by treatise of al-Jāḥiẓ. See A. Farīd al-Rifāʿī, *ʿAṣr al-Maʾmūn*, 2nd edn, 3 vols (Dār al-Kutub al-Miṣriyyah, 1927), III, 77.

[454] This opinion was mentioned by al-Balādhurī on the authority of al-Walīd b. Hishām b. Qaḥdham. Al-Balādhurī, p. 485; Creswell, *Early Muslim Architecture*, I. I, 45. See also Irwin, p. 64.

[455] Al-Balādhurī, p. 485.

the time of Ziyād b. Abīh. Creswell rests this suggestion on an account of Ibn al-Athīr which states that the minarets of the mosques of Kūfah were commanded to be pulled down by Khālid al-Qasrī who was at Kūfah in 105/723-120/738. The reason given by Ibn al-Athīr for al-Qasrī taking such a radical action could also show us how *Ḥadīth* and teachings of Islam influenced mosque architecture. According to the same account, the latter heard a poet saying that the muezzin [when mounting the minaret] could see, and communicate with, the people on the roofs of the [adjacent] houses.[456] It is prohibited, according to Islamic teachings, to build a *ṣawmaʿah*, 'an elevated structure' or use the roof of the mosque to spy on the private life of the people in the vicinity.[457] When Saḥnūn b. Saʿīd al-Tanūkhī (d. 240/854), a notable Mālikī scholar in the Maghreb, was asked about a similar case, he stipulated that the patron of the mosque must build a screen wall on the roof to obstruct gazes and that worshippers must not be allowed to use the mosque until the work is finished.[458]

Other scholars believe that the first to build minarets in Islam was Maslamah b. Mukhallad, when he rebuilt the mosque of Fusṭāṭ in 53/673.[459] According to Creswell, these square structures (*ṣawāmiʿ*) were inspired by the four watchtowers at the Roman temenos in Damascus (see figure 25).[460]

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[456] Creswell, *Early Muslim Architecture*, I. I, 47.

[457] See Ibn al-Rāmī, pp. 77-9; al-Sadlān, pp. 8-9; al-Jadīd, pp. 108-9.

[458] Ibid.

[459] According to al-Maqrīzī, Maslamah, at command of Muʿāwiyah, ordered minarets to be adopted in all mosques except those of Tujīb and Khawlān. Al-Maqrīzī, II, 248. On these four *ṣawāmiʿ*, see also Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam, p. 131. Al-Maqrīzī (*Khiṭaṭ*, II, 248) expressly states that the mosque of ʿAmr had no minaret before these four structures of Maslamah.

[460] This argument of Creswell also depends on the account of Ibn al-Faqīh (written in 291/903) who said that al-Walīd retained them when he constructed his mosque. The same opinion was adopted by al-Masʿūdī in his *Murūj al-Dhahab*. On these minarets see also Ibn Kathīr, XII, 578; Creswell, *Early Muslim Architecture*, I. I, 59-61; Jonathan M. Bloom, 'Creswell and the Origin of the Minaret', *Muqarnas*, 8 (1991), 55-8.

Shāfiʿī, however, argued that the watchtowers, having been not tall enough, served only as bases for the minarets of the Umayyad mosque.

According to others, the earliest minaret was that of the mosque of ʿUqbah b. Nāfiʿ at Qayrawān which was built in 50-5/670-5.[461] Whatever the first minaret in Islam might have been, its introduction in the Umayyad period should have been prompted by the group of *ḥadīths* about *adhān*, 'call to prayers', and the necessity to convey this *adhān* to as many believers as possible (see 5.7.6).

7.9.3. *Qubbah* (dome)

The Dome of the Rock is traditionally known as the earliest dome in Islamic religious architecture. It is said that ʿUmar b. al-Khaṭṭāb was the first caliph to think of protecting the Holy Rock. He ordered a wooden *ẓullah*, 'canopy' to cover it. This *ẓullah* is said to have remained *in situ* until the time of ʿAbd al-Malik who saw that it should be replaced by a piece of fine art that would match the significance of the Rock for the Muslim people.[462] A description of the original dome, as built by ʿAbd al-Malik, was given by Ibn al-Faqīh who saw it in 290/903,[463] Ibn ʿAbd Rabbih (300/913),[464] and a more detailed description is given by al-Muqaddasī (375/985).[465]

In addition to the Dome of the Rock, small domes or cupolas rose on the transepts of some Umayyad mosques, such as the Umayyad mosque of Damascus and the mosque of Ḥarrān. Some of these usually stood right above the *miḥrāb* as an outer sign of its existence.[466]

What is the attitude of *Ḥadīth* towards domes?

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[461] See Muʾnis, p. 56.

[462] Muʾnis, p. 154.

[463] Ibn al-Faqīh, p. 151.

[464] Ibn ʿAbd Rabbih, VI, 263.

[465] See al-Muqaddasī (Collins's transl.), p. 154.

[466] Hillenbrand, *Islamic Architecture*, pp. 53-4.

Narrated Anas b. Mālik, the Prophet went out [one day], and saw a high dome [or a dome with battlements] (*qubbatan musharrafatan*). He asked: 'what is this?' His Companions answered him: 'it belongs to so and so, a man from Anṣār.' He, then, was silent and kept it in himself. Then, its owner came and greeted the Prophet amongst the people, but the Prophet did not reply (*aʿraḍa ʿanhū*). He [namely, the Prophet] did that many times until the man was sure of the Prophet's annoyance and displeasure. The man complained of that to his Companions; he said: 'By Allāh, I see in the face of the Prophet signs of resentment for which I ignore the reasons (*Innī laʿunkirū rasūlallāh*).' They said: 'when he [namely, the Prophet] went out, he saw your dome.' Thus, the man returned to his dome and pulled it down to the ground. When the Prophet went out another day and did not see it, he said: 'what happened to the dome?' They replied: 'its owner has complained to us of your resentment towards him (*iʿrāḍaka ʿanhū*), and we told him [about the reason]. So, he demolished it.' The Prophet, then, said: 'Verily, each [affair of] building is against (*wabāl*) his doer [or owner], except what is indispensable.'[467]

It is noticeable, however, that the erection of domes in the Umayyad period was not expressly criticized by the pious. Their silence may imply that they understood that the Prophet did not criticize the act of dome building in itself. His attitude as recorded above might rather be understood in the sense of not wanting well-off individuals to boast about their wealth.[468]

7.9.4. *Ḍarīḥs* (funerary domes)

[467] Abū Dāwūd, *ḥadīth* no. 5237; Ibn Mājah, *ḥadīth* no. 4161; Abū al-Qāsim al-Zamakhsharī, *Rabīʿ al-Abrār wa Nuṣūṣ al-Akhbār*, ed. by Amīr Muhannā 5 vols (Beirut: al-Aʿlamī, 1992), I, 297.

[468] Nūbī M. Ḥasan, *ʿImārat al-Masjid fī Ḍawʾ al-Qurʾān wal Sunnah*, (Cairo: Dār Nahḍat al-Sharq, 2002), pp. 86-7.

Although the influence of *Ḥadīth* on funerary architecture is a subject of much interest,[469] it will not be dealt with at length here as we do not possess information about tombs or mausoleums that were built in the Umayyad period.[470] Some historians attribute the absence of archaeological evidence for any Umayyad funerary structure to damage by the ʾAbbāsids who wanted to obliterate the memories of their former Umayyad rivals by removing their tombs, unearthing their graves and burying their bones in unknown places.[471] However, we cannot find any archaeological or historical backing for such an assumption, which also fails to explain the absence of any reference by the sources to any Umayyad tomb. Creswell states that the prohibition against building domes on graves had been observed until the third/ninth century, when the Dome of Ṣulaibiyyah (figure 32) was built in Samarra, Iraq in 248/862.[472]

Oleg Grabar provides us with a valuable chronological listing of the early Islamic mausolea and memorial constructions. The earliest is the Dome of the Rock (72/691) which, according to him, developed in later times into a shrine of the Ascension of the Prophet. The second earliest is the Qubbat al-Ṣulaibiyyah at Samarra (248/862),[473] while the earliest accepted dome to

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[469] See T. Leisten, 'Between Orthodoxy and Exegesis', pp. 12-22.

[470] Further, even if any funerary dome had existed in the Umayyad period, it would have to have been included in a mosque complex in order to be dealt with in this study.

[471] Shāfiʾī, *Imārah ʾArabiyyah*, p. 256. What about other Umayyad monuments, such as palaces and mosques? The ʾAbbāsid might have retained the Umayyad palaces because they deemed them as a great wealth, while mosques could not have been demolished because of their sanctity. Tombs, on the other hand, are closely related to whom they belonged to and thus their demolition would mean a lot.

[472] Creswell, *Muslim Architecture of Egypt*, I, 110.

[473] Grabar, 'The Earliest Islamic Commemorative Structures: Notes and Documents', *Jerusalem*, 4 (2005), pp. 65-110 (p.73), first published in *Ars Orientalis*, 4 (1966), pp. 7-46. On Ṣulaibiyyah, see also Alastair Northedge, *The Historical Topography of Samarra*, 2nd rev.edn, Samarra Studies, 1 (London: British School of Archaeology in Iraq, 2007).

have been built over the tomb of imām ʿAli at Najaf was erected in 289/902.[474]

On the authority of Ibn al-Faqīh and al-ʿUmarī, the builders of the Umayyad mosque found a cave (*maghārah*), and when they told al-Walīd about it, he descended to it and found a small subterranean shrine, three cubits square. It had a casket including the head of a corpse labelled as the head of Yūḥanna al-Miʿmidān, 'John the Baptist'. Yet, al-Walīd did not build a tomb on it and was content with leaving a column above the *maghārah* as a sign for its existence.[475] There is the possibility that al-Walīd refrained from building a tomb because *Ḥadīth* bans the building of tombs at mosques.[476]

7.9.5. *Minbar* (pulpit)

Muʿāwiyah is reported to have adopted for himself a movable wooden *minbar* of six steps. He is reported to have taken this *minbar* with him when he went to Mecca and left it there until the time of the ʿAbbāsid Caliph Hārūn al-Rashīd. We are also told that some of the Umayyad caliphs used to take their own *minbars* with them when they moved to other places. This has led some scholars to assume that the *minbar* represented a symbol of sovereignty in early Islam.[477] The *minbar* was not especially invented to satisfy the authoritarian aspiration of early rulers. It is possible that in the Umayyad period some monarchs were keen to take for themselves prestigious *minbars* so as to

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[474] Grabar, 'Earliest Islamic Commemorative Structures', p. 75.

[475] Ibn ʿAsākir, II, 241; Ibn al-Faqīh, p. 158; al-ʿUmarī, I, 188.

[476] ʿAlī Ṭanṭāwī, *al-Jamiʿ al-Umawī fī Dimashq: Waṣfun wa Taʾrīkh* (Jeddah: Dār al-Manāra, 1990), pp. 28-9.

[477] Karl H. Becker, p. 342, Lammens, 'Ziād ibn Abīhi', in *Rivista delgi Studi Orientali*, IV, pp. 31, 33 and 36. Horovitz, in *Der Islam*, XVI, pp. 258-9; Creswell, *Early Muslim Architecture*, I. I, 14; J. Pedersen and others, 'Minbar', in *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd edn, VII (1993), 73-80 (p. 74).

accentuate their authority, but as the first *minbar* in Islam was adopted by the Prophet himself, later *khaṭībs* must have desired to imitate him.

Did the Umayyad *minbars* evolve from that of the Prophet? Or were they derived from non-Islamic origin? As far as the origin of the *minbar* is concerned, a passage mentioned identically by al-Maqrīzī and Ibn Duqmāq is always considered. Speaking of the *minbar* that was put at the mosque of Fusṭāṭ when it was rebuilt by Qurrah b. Sharīk in 92-3/710-12 (figure 15), the passage reads:

> [...] and he [namely Qurrah] installed the new *minbar* in AH 94 and removed the *minbar* which was [previously] in the mosque, It was said that ʿAmr b. al-ʿĀṣ had put it [namely the older *minbar*] in it [namely the mosque]. Thus, [he] might have [adopted it] after the death of ʿUmar b. al-Khaṭṭāb. It was [also] said that it [namely the older one] was the *minbar* of ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz b. Marwān. It was reported that it had been brought to him from one of the Egyptian churches. It was said [as well] that it had been gifted to ʿAbdullah b. Saʿd b. Abī Sarḥ by Zakariyā b. Margana, the king of Nubia, who had sent with it a carpenter to install it.[478] The name of this carpenter was Buqṭur of Dendara. This *minbar* remained at the mosque until it was enlarged by Qurrah b. Sharīk [who] installed another one as mentioned above. In the villages, *khutba* was delivered [while the imām was standing] on sticks (*ʿiṣiy*) until ʿAbd al-Malik b. Marwān appointed Mūsā b. Nuṣayr al-Lakhmī by (*min qibal*) Marwān b. Muḥammad. [He] ordered *minbars* to be adopted in villages in AH 132. It was said that no *minbar* is known to be older than it, namely the *minbar* of Qurrah b. Sharīk, except the *minbar* of the Prophet [...].[479]

Scholars have read this passage variously. Creswell, for example, argued that the *minbar* which was brought to ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz b. Marwān from one of the churches of Egypt was inspired by a structure discovered by

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[478] ʿAbd Allāh b. Saʿd was the ruler of Egypt from 25/646 to 35/655.

[479] Ibn Duqmāq, IV, 63; al-Maqrīzī, II, 248.

Quibble in one of the monasteries of Saqqara, Egypt (see figure 46).[480] This opinion was denied by Sauvaget who argued that it was improbable.[481]

While al-Maqrīzī and Ibn Duqmāq mentioned three accounts about the older *minbar* of the mosque of ʿAmr, for no particular reason they accepted only the first. The other two were not mentioned by any earlier historian. Further, the passage contains some conflicting reports and ends with a statement that undoes its whole content,[482] that is the *minbar* of Qurrah was the second oldest after that of the Prophet's mosque at Madīnah,[483] and that would mean that the mosque of ʿAmr had had no *minbar* before 92/711.

Creswell linked the previous passage of al-Maqrīzī and Ibn Duqmāq with an account of al-Ṭabarī according to which the *minbar* of the Prophet was made for him by a Roman carpenter called Bāqūm.[484] In fact, some details betray the unreliability of al-Ṭabarī's account. This Bāqūm is also said to have supervised the Quraysh's rebuilding of the Kaʿbah some forty years earlier. Thus, if we are to believe that he was still alive, he would be too aged to make the *minabr* for the Prophet.

7.9.6. *Maqṣūrah*

According to Ibn Zabālah and others, ʿUthmān b. ʿAffān was the first to build a *maqṣūrah* of *labin* and it had *kuwa,* 'small windows' through which the people

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[480] K. A. C. Creswell, 'Coptic Influences on Early Muslim Architecture', *Bulletin de la Société d' Archéologie Copte*, 5 (1939), 25-42 (p. 30). Shāfiʿī, however, argues that the *minbar* of the monastery in Saqqara was derived from the Islamic *minbar*: *ʿImārah ʿArabiyyah*, p. 633.

[481] Sauvaget, p. 140. See also Sauvaget, 'Mosque and Palace', pp. 128, 130.

[482] See Sauvaget, 'Mosque and Palace', p. 129. Shāfiʿī, however, accepts that a *minbar* was adopted by ʿAmr.

[483] Shāfiʿī, *ʿImārah ʿArabiyyah*, pp. 632-3.

[484] Shāfiʿī doubted that 'Bāqūm' could be the name of a Roman. Shāfiʿī, *ʿImārah ʿArabiyyah*, pp. 625-8. While the name does not sound Roman, 'Roman' could embrace people anywhere in the Empire, if they were imperial servants for instance.

could see the *imām*.[485] On the authority of Mālik b. Anas, when ʿUthmān
became a caliph, he built a small *maqṣūrah* of *labin* for the people to pray
inside for fear of what had happened to his former the Caliph ʿUmar b. al-
Khaṭṭāb (when he was stabbed to death during his prayers). ʿUmar b. al-ʿAzīz is
said to have made it of teakwood.[486] According to others, the first to build a
maqṣūrah of dressed stones was Marwān b. al-Ḥakam, the governor of
Madīnah, after he was stabbed by a Yemeni man in 44/664.[487] He is also said to
have set a grid in it. Muʿāwiyah b. Abī Sufyān is also reported to have been the
first to introduce *maqṣūrah* in the mosque in 40/660-1, or four years later when
he was stabbed by a Khārijī.[488] According to others, he adopted it because he
saw a dog on the *minbar*.[489] Yet, other historians attributed this innovation to
Zīyād, Muʿāwiyah's governor at Baṣrah.[490]

According to the majority of historical accounts, the *maqṣūrah* was
adopted to protect the ruler who was also the *imām* in prayers. If so, it
would then mirror the violent episodes just described. Yet, Lammens
contested this argument as the Umayyad monarchs were always
accompanied by their own guards. He also did not agree with the idea which
says that it was introduced so as to distinguish the rulers from the laity.
According to him, the Umayyad caliphs did not need to do so as they were
already distinguished by their position on the *minbar*. For Lammens, the
maqṣūrah was a chamber dedicated to the caliph in the congregational

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[485] Ibn Zabālah, p. 116; Ibn al-Najjār, p. 174; al-Maṭarī, p. 50; al-Murjānī, p. 128, al-Marāghī, p.
48; al-Samhūdī, *Wafāʾ*, II, 510; al-Maqrīzī, II; 247; Pedersen, 'Masdjid', p. 661.

[486] Ibn Zabālah, p. 116; al-Samhūdī, II, 510; al-Maqrīzī, II, 247.

[487] Al-Ṭabarī, V, 215; Ibn Khaldūn, *Muqaddimah*, 269; Ibn Sayyid al-Nās, I, 316; Creswell, *Early
Muslim Architecture*, I. I, 42-3; Pedersen, 'Masdjid', p. 661.

[488] Ibn Khaldūn, *Muqaddimah*, 269; Ibn al-Faqīh, p. 159; al-Yaʿqūbī, *Tārīkh*, I, 314; Pedersen,
'Masdjid', p. 661. See also Ibn al-Ḥājj, II, 206; al-Samhūdī, *Wafāʾ*, II, 511-2.

[489] Ibn Rustah, 192; Ibn Qutaybah, p. 553.

[490] Al-Balādhurī, p. 485. On the introduction of *maqṣūrah* to Islam, see M. Bloom, 'Mosque', *EQ*,
III, 429.

mosque so that he could meditate. It also served as a place of retreat where he, namely the caliph, could rest between one meeting and another.[491] According to this interpretation of Lammens, the adoption of the *maqṣūrah* was moderately detested (if not totally accepted). Creswell, depending on archaeological testimony, seems inclined to accept the former views. He also states: 'the invention of the *maqṣūrah* dates from the time when the empire had become powerful, and when luxury had begun to appear. It has been the same with all the other practices which add to the pomp of sovereignty.'[492]

Sauvaget argued that the adoption of the *maqṣūrah* was mainly to 'enhance the majesty and prestige of the leader rather than to assure his security'.[493] *Maqṣūras* could have been first introduced by the Caliph ʿUthmān b. ʿAffān for security purpose, but then evolved into a symbol of sovereignty and solemnity. In all cases they were not related to church architecture.

We have already seen (see 5.7.10) that the adoption of the *maqṣūrah*, and in fact any other component of the mosque, would be reproached – as far as *Ḥadīth* is concerned – if it were taken as a symbol of pomp or sovereignty. It would also be inadvisable to adopt it if it were unnecessarily borrowed from foreign architectural types.

7.9.7. *Bayt al-māl* (the Treasure House)

It seems that the first instance of *bayt al-māl* in Islam was at the mosque of Fusṭāṭ. It was built by Usāmah b. Zayd al-Tanūkhī, the Director of Taxation by

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[491] See Lammens, 'Études sur Moʿâwia I^re', in the *M. F. O. B.*, II, 94-5.

[492] Creswell, *Early Muslim Architecture*, I. I, 42. This opinion was also adopted by Hillenbrand, *Islamic Architecture*, pp. 49-50.

[493] Sauvaget, 'Mosque and Palace', p. 141.

the Caliph Sulaymān b. ʿAbd al-Malik and that was in 99/717-8.[494] According to al-Maqrīzī, it was made in 97/716.[495] A description of it has reached us from Ibn Rustah who said:

> The *Bayt al-Māl* of Miṣr is in the congregational mosque in front (*quddām*) the *minbar*; it is separated from its roofs (*suṭūḥ*) and is not in contact with any part of them. It stands on stone pillars (*asāṭīn*) and is a kind of raised dome, beneath which people sit and pass to and fro [...].[496]

This seems very similar to the *bayt al-māl* at the mosque of Damascus.[497] Although the first instance of connecting *bayt al-māl* to the mosque was made as a result of a burglary,[498] some *ḥadīths* about the Prophet allocating spoils and bounties at the mosque might have taught later generations that the mosque could properly accommodate the State Treasury.[499]

7.9.8.   *Maṭāhir* (Baths and ablution places)

The emphasis of *Ḥadīth* on ablution and purification[500] led to the provision of ablution places in the form of basins at early mosques. However, in the earliest years of Islam baths were not reported to have been annexed to the mosque. This might be a direct influence of *Ḥadīth* which talks about the great reward of

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[494] Al-Maqrīzī, II, 249; Ibn Duqmāq quoted by Creswell, *Early Muslim Architecture*, I. II, 483. According to another account also mentioned by Ibn Duqmāq, it was made by Qurrah b. Sharīk, namely before 96/715.

[495] Al-Maqrīzī, II, 249.

[496] Ibn Rustah, p. 116, as translated by Creswell, *Early Muslim Architecture*, I. II, pp. 483-4.

[497] See al-Muqaddasī (Collins's transl.), p. 145.

[498] This happened at Kūfah during the caliphate of ʿUmar I. For more information about this event, see 6.5.2.

[499] It should be noted, however, that the Islamic *bayt al-māl* had a pre-Islamic precedent. A similar device existed in the court of Alexander, for example. See Patricia Crone, *Medieval Islamic Political Thought* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2005), p. 308.

[500] See Wensinck, pp. 258-63.

heading for the mosque after performing ablution at one's house.[501] Yet, this is not to say that such places should not be built. Early religious authorities such as Abū Hurayrah and Ibrāhīm al-Nakhʿī are reported to perform ablution at *maṭāhir al-masjid*.[502] Sometimes water was carried to worshippers through pipes. Nothing of these early devices has survived. According to Shāfiʿī, this is because they were not built with adequate care.[503] Later, these devices underwent a great extent of improvement. Al-Muqaddasī observed that on each of the four entrances of the Umayyad mosque, there was a pavilion for ablution. Each of which was tiled with marble and had closets (*buyūt*) where the water sprung and outer fountains which flowed in large basins (*qiṣaʿ*) of marble.[504] It is also said that when ʿUmar rebuilt the mosque of the Prophet, al-Walīd commanded him to build a *fawwārah*, 'fountain' at Madīnah. So, ʿUmar built it near the mosque and brought water to it.[505]

7.9.9.   *Shurrafāt* (crenellations)

According to most accounts, the first to introduce crenellations in the mosque of the Prophet was ʿUmar b. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz when he rebuilt it in the caliphate of al-Walīd.[506] This, however, was denied by al-Samhūdī who did not accept that such a pious personage as ʿUmar would adopt *shurrafāt*, 'crenellations' while they are denounced by *ḥadīths* (see 5.8). Al-Samhūdī, along with other

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[501] Muslim, *ḥadīth* no. 1521. See also *ḥadīths* no. 548-9, 1488. Purification is also an essential prerequisite for Jewish prayer (Berakoth 14a-15b), and there is evidence that performing ablution in places of prayer was a late antique Jewish practice. See Kimelman, pp. 575-7; Khaleel, pp. 27-8; Johns, 'House of the Prophet', p. 97

[502] Al-Zarkashī, p. 383.

[503] Shāfiʿī, *ʿImārah ʿArabiyyah*, pp. 258-8. While we do not have information about the technique and materials used to make those pipes, it is expected that attention must have been paid to preserve water which was, and still is, regarded in Arabia as a precious resource.

[504] Al-Muqaddasī (Collins's transl.), p. 146.

[505] Ibn Kathīr, XII, 415.

[506] Ibn Zabālah, p. 122; Ibn Isḥāq al-Ḥarbī, *Manāsik*, p. 368; Ibn al-Najjār, p. 176; al-Marāghī, p. 51; al-Samhūdī, II, 525.

historians, attributes the introduction of crenellations to ʿAbd al-Wāḥid b. ʿAbd Allāh al-Naṣrī the ruler of Madīnah in 104/722.[507] Al-Samhūdī's assumption is contested by the reports about ʿUmar having applied gilding and mosaic to decorate the mosque. There are also reports that the adoption of crenellations by ʿUmar went uncriticized by contemporary legalists and *Ḥadīth* scholars. On the authority of Yaḥya b. al-Ḥusayn, when al-Qāsim[508] and Sālim [509] looked at the crenellations which were made by ʿUmar b. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz, they said: 'Verily, these are of [namely, they belong to] the decoration of the mosque (*innaha min zīnat al-masjid*).'[510] In fact, we cannot find in literature a clue to tell us whether this statement was intended negatively or positively by the two early scholars. Yet, its 'vague' tone could, *per se*, imply that it, at worst, was not a strong criticism. Al-Qāsim and Sālim seem to have had somewhat liberal views regarding the 'unavoidable' development of mosque architecture. We have already seen that they tolerated the adoption of the *maqṣūrah*.[511] According to al-Azraqī, the Holy mosque in Mecca was also adorned with crenellations after the works of al-Walīd in 91/710.

7.9.10. Decoration

Generally, Umayyad mosques were opulently ornamented. A multitude of materials, techniques and motifs were employed. The earliest instance of using

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[507] Al-Samhūdī, *Wafāʾ*, II, 525; His surname is 'al-Bahzī', according to Ibn Rustah. Ibn Rustah, p. 70. See also Ibn Isḥāq al Ḥarbī, *Manāsik*, p. 385. Al-Shihrī, however, argues that crenellations might have been made in the time of ʿUmar and renewed 14 years later in the time of al-Naṣrī. Al-Shihrī, *ʿImārat al-Masjid al-Nabawī*, p. 125.

[508] Al-Qāsim b. Muhammad b. Abī Bakr al-Ṣiddīq (d. 108/726) was a famous and trusted early legalist and *Ḥadīth* scholar. For more information about him, see Ibn Saʿd, VII, 186-93; Ibn ʿAsākir, XLIX, 157-93.

[509] He is Sālim b. ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿUmar b. al-Khaṭṭāb (d. 107), a *tābiʿī* who took knowledge from his father, ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿUmar, ʿĀʾishah, Abū Hurayrah, Saʿīd b. al-Musayyab and others. Ibn Saʿd, VII, 194-200; Sakhāwī, *Tuḥfah*, II, 106.

[510] Al-Samhūdī, II, 525.

[511] See chapter 5.

mosaic in Islam is attributed to the pious ʿAbd Allāh b. al-Zubayr when he rebuilt the Kaʿbah in 64-5/684.[512] According to al-Masʿūdī, Ibn al-Zubayr used mosaic taken from a church in Ṣanʿāʾ,[513] built by the Abyssinian Abraha.[514] According to al-Yaʿqūbī, the first to apply gold to the Kaʿbah in Islam was al-Walīd b. ʿAbd al-Malik.[515] The walls, columns and domes of the Great mosque of Damascus, for example, were lavishly decorated. Precious materials such as gold, turquoise, carnelian and variegated marble were employed.[516] According to al-Muqaddasī, the decoration of the Dome of the Rock was no less grand.[517]

According to Ibn Ḥajar, al-Walīd's decoration of mosques was witnessed by many of the late *ṣaḥābīs*. He added that many of them had refrained from criticizing it to avoid *fitnah*, 'division and tribulation'. Some of the early *faqīhs* even licensed (*rakhkhaṣa*) it. Abū Ḥanīfah (80/699–148/765), for example, saw that decorating mosques would be *jāʾiz*, 'allowed' if it was done to glorify them (namely mosques) and if the expenditure on that was not from the *bayt al-māl*, 'the state treasury'.[518] In some cases, such as the mosque of Damascus, both conditions of Abū Ḥanīfah seem to have been fulfilled.[519] When al-Walīd was told that the people spoke of him wasting the money of the state treasuries [in perfecting

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[512] Creswell states: 'this is the earliest instance of using mosaics in Islam, for it antedates those of the Dome of the Rock by eight years.' Creswell, *Early Muslim Architecture*, I. I, 63.

[513] Capital of Yemen.

[514] Al-Masʿūdī, *Murūj*, III

[515] Al-Yaʿqūbī, I, 199.

[516] For a detailed description, see al-Muqaddasī (Collins's transl.,), p. 145; al-ʿUmarī, I, 195; Ibn Kathīr, XII, 573.

[517] Al-Muqaddasī (Collins's transl.), p. 154; Shihāb al-Dīn, *Muthīr*, pp. 175-6. The decorations of the Dome of the Rock have been thoroughly studied by Marguerite van-Berchem (1927-8) and published by Creswell in 1932. See also Richard Ettinghausen: *Arab Painting*, 2nd edn (New York: Rizzoli, 1977).

[518] Ibn Hajar, *Fatḥ*, II, 86-7.

[519] On how far the first condition was fulfilled in the case of the Umayyad mosque and others, see above.

and decorating the mosque of Damascus],[520] he gathered them, ordered the money of the state treasuries to be presented before them and declared that the whole expenditure was of his own money. Then al-Walīd said: 'O people of Damascus! You are proud of four things [...] and I loved to add a fifth one to you, namely this mosque.'[521] According to less familiar accounts, building and decorating the mosque consumed the seven-year revenues of the Muslim empire and when the accounts were brought to al-Walīd, he ordered them to be burned and said: 'Why do we pursue some thing we have given for the sake of God?'[522]

In spite of the evident sophistication and pretension of the Umayyad decorations, there are reports that the Umayyad patrons observed, in a relative way, the Prophet's approach of 'frugality'. It is reported that al-Walīd, in order to give the Umayyad mosque a more striking appearance, desired to make the entire oval part of the dome of pure gold. The architect told him that this would be beyond the caliph's ability. After an attempt to mould one brick of solid gold, al-Walīd said that he still could do that, but it would be lavish and prodigal. According to a more plausible account, al-Walīd realized the impossibility of having the expenditure needed for such a project.[523] Al-Walīd commented that: 'It would be better if this [amount of money] is spent in the sake of God and for the benefit of the needy Muslims.'[524] It was reportedly also al-Walīd's concern about the benefit of the Muslim people which made him use lead in *lieu* of mud for the roof of the mosque: the people complained that because of the large amounts of mud used in the mosque, hardly any mud (*ṭīn*) was available for the roofs of

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[520] Ibn ʿAsākir, II, 267-9; al-ʿUmarī, I, 186; *Uyun wal Hadāʾiq*, I, 6.

[521] Ibn ʿAsākir, II, 269; al-ʿUmarī, I, 188; Ibn Kathīr, XII, 576; *Uyun wal Hadāʾiq*, I, 7. See also Yāqūt, II, 466.

[522] Ibn al-Faqīh, pp. 157-8; Yāqūt, II, 466.

[523] Ibn ʿAsākir, II, 262; al-ʿUmarī, I, 184.

[524] Ibn Kathīr, *Khulāṣat*, p. 319-11.

their own houses.[525]

With all this said, the influence of *Ḥadīth* on mosque decoration in the Umayyad period is more evidently represented in the avoidance of making representations of living creatures, such as humans, animals, or birds.

In compliance with *ḥadīths* of prohibition (see 5.8), the Umayyad mosque of Damascus was deliberately kept free from any images of animals.[526] The mosaic of the Dome of the Rock was similarly void of any representations of living creatures (see figure 44).[527] The fact that images of humans and animals were used to an extent in Umayyad secular architecture implies that their avoidance in mosques cannot be attributed to any inability to make them (see figure 43).[528]

We are told about the Islamic attitude against images by Theodore Abū Qurrah, the bishop of Ḥarrān who lived in the time of the ʿAbbāsid Caliphs Hārūn al-Rashid and al-Maʾmūn. Referring to the Muslim's abhorrence of images, Abū Qurrah said: 'those who assert that he who paints anything living, will be compelled on the Day of resurrection, to breathe into it a soul'.[529] This phrase of Abū Qurrah, which is almost a literal citation of a relevant *ḥadīth*, could mirror how *Ḥadīth* was prevalent and influential at that time. It has been argued, however, that *ḥadīths* about the abhorrence of making images did not occur before the second half of the

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[525] Al-ʿUmarī, I, 184; Ibn Kathīr, XII, 573-4.

[526] Yāqūt, II, 465.

[527] Al-Pāshā, *Madkhal*. p. 201.

[528] The stone facade of Qaṣr al-Mshatta, now on exhibition at the Museum of Berlin, includes all these exquisitely executed ornamental motifs. Examples of such ornaments were also found in the palace of Hishām at Khirbat al-Mafjar (figure 43). See Hamilton, *Khirbat al-Mafjar: an Arabian Mansion in the Jordan Valley* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1959); E. Baer, 'Khirbet al-Mafjar', in *The Encyclopaedia of Islam* 2nd edn, V (1986), pp. 10-17.

[529] Creswell, 'Lawfulness', p. 162

eighth century AD.[530] The ground for such opinion is the fact that John, the Patriarch of Damascus (d. *ca.* 132/750) who was contemporary to the decoration of Quṣyar ʿAmrah mentioned nothing about the Muslim's condemnation to pictures.[531] This tendency believes that such *ḥadīths* can only be taken to reflect attitudes that then existed. Should this be true, whence did the reluctance towards making images come? Grabar admits: 'the undeniable denunciations of artists and of representations found in many traditions about the life of the Prophet are taken as a genuine expression of an original Muslim attitude.'[532] Yet, he argues:

> Whatever reasons led to the growth of this position, it clearly clashed with a considerable body of authentic information about the presence of beautiful objects with figures—mostly textiles and metalwork—in the Prophet's immediate surroundings.[533]

In fact, the number of *ḥadīths* referred to by Grabar do not imply that the Prophet liked, or at least permitted, the presence of such objects in close proximity. It was the opposite. The group of *ḥadīths* to which Grabar refers as 'authentic' have a clear tone of prevention (see 5.8).

There is, however, another group of *ḥadīths* where the tone of prevention is milder:

> It is narrated that one day the Prophet went out while he was putting on himself *mirṭan muraḥḥal*, a 'garment with marks' of black hair. It is also narrated that the Prophet used to pray while he putting on him

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[530] This opinion was put forward by Creswell and agreed by Grabar. *Formation*, p. 83. Others, such as F. Shāfiʿī and H. al-Pāshā, argue that the *ḥadīths* of prevention were in effect only in the early years of Islam when there was a great fear of pagan practices.

[531] Creswell, 'Lawfulness', pp. 161-2.

[532] Grabar, *Formation*, p. 83. The same opinion was held by Arnold who stated that such attitude could be traced back to the time of the Prophet. Thomas W. Arnold, *Painting in Islam: A Study of the Place of Pictorial Art in Muslim Culture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1928), pp. 4-9, 19.

[533] Grabar, *Formation*, p. 83.

these *muraḥḥalāt*.[534]

Islam's abhorrence towards the decoration of mosques is closely related to another topic, the type of decoration permitted in Islam in general. The constraints put on drawings of humans and animals led early Muslim artists to develop other unique artistic types. These were mainly composed of geometric, vegetal and calligraphic ornamental motifs.[535]

How did contemporaries look upon the lawfulness of decorating mosques? Traditions do report instances of 'moderate' antipathy on the part of contemporary scholars. On the authority of *imām* Mālik, when the *qiblah* of the mosque of Madīnah was decorated in 89/708 the people were annoyed because it distracted them during their prayers.[536] Yet, there are indications that there was a parallel, and maybe stronger, trend of permissiveness. It seems that the act of decorating mosques was perceived in the context of the religiously-accepted appreciation of beauty. On the authority of al-Samhūdī, some of the mosaic-workers said: 'We did they [namely, the ornamental motifs in the mosque of the Prophet] after the model of what we have conceived of the images of the trees and palaces of Paradise'.[537] Ibn Thawbān is even reported to have said that none should be more eager to attain Heaven than the people of Damascus, the beauty of which was already anticipated in their mosque.[538]

Here is another aspect of the influence of *Ḥadīth*, which provides a lot of descriptive images for Paradise (see 5.10). This indicates that there were different influences at different times. In fact, there is evidence from

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[534] Ibn Manẓūr, III, 1610; al-Pāshā, *Mawsūʿat*, I, 129. See also Abū Yaʿlā, *ḥadīth* no. 7095.

[535] Irwin, p. 61; M. Bloom, 'Mosque', *EQ*, III, 435-7. For examples of Umayyad abstract figures and images, see Shāfiʿī, *ʿImārah ʿArabiyyah*, pp. 262-3.

[536] Malik, *Mudawwanah*, I, 197; al-Ṭarṭūshī, p. 106; Ibn al-Ḥājj, *Madkhal*, II, 214. On the disapproval of distraction during prayers, see Wensinck, p. 189.

[537] Al-Samhūdī, II, 519; Ibn al-Najjār, p. 176.

[538] Ibn ʿAsākir, II, 246; Yāqūt, II, 467

Islamic teachings that beautification was not generally forbidden; a verse in the *Qurʾān* reads:

> O children of Adam! Wear your beautiful apparel at every time and place of prayer [...]. Say: Who hath forbidden the beautiful (gifts) of Allah which He hath produced for His servants, and the things, clean and pure, (which he hath provided) for sustenance? [...].[539]

In brief, mosque decoration, and Islamic art in general, was subject to a superfluity of influences from different artistic styles such as the Roman, Byzantine, Coptic and Sassanian,[540] but the spirit of Islam likewise impacted it.

7.10. Conversion of churches into mosques

By the rise of the Umayyad period the Muslim conquerors had settled in Syria, Mesopotamia, Egypt and the countries of North Africa. They applied advanced methods in building their houses, palaces and other official and public buildings.[541] There is a widespread tendency to believe that the Umayyad mosques were significantly influenced by the pre-existing architectural types of the conquered territories. Although only a few examples are known, it is generally assumed that the conversion of churches and other non-Muslim sanctuaries into mosques was undertaken in the Umayyad period.

The most salient example may be that of the mosque of Damascus. Why did al-Walīd want to take the rest of the church—if he did— and add it to the already-existing mosque? A reason often given is that some Muslims were annoyed when they heard Christians reciting the Bible loudly during

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[539] *Qurʾān*, VII, 31-3. See also Ibn Taymiyyah, *Fatāwā*, XXII, 68.

[540] See, for example, Barbara Brend, *Islamic Art* (Harvard: Harvard University Press, 1991), pp. 20-46; Oleg Grabar, *Islamic Art and Beyond*, Constructing the Study of Islamic Art, 3 (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006).

[541] Al-Shihrī, 'Ṣaḥn', p. 5.

their prayers.[542] Another reason was that the number of the Muslims had increased and the old mosque no longer gave enough room for the congregation.[543]

Attention has already been drawn to those such as Rivoira and Creswell who have denied that the Umayyad mosque was built on the remnants of the church of St. John the Baptist.[544] It has also been argued by Sauvaget that the Umayyad mosque owes nothing of its architecture to the church which once stood in situ: '*Il a été établi qui ia mosque Omeyyade de Damas ne doit rien à l'église â laquelle elle a succeed.*'[545] Fikrī adds that the fact that the sanctuary of the Umayyad mosque is composed of three aisles cannot stand by itself as evidence that its plan was derived from that of a church.[546] According to Creswell, the form of the Umayyad mosque is unlike that of any church in Syria.[547] There are some reports that contemporaries saw the Umayyad mosque as unique in design. According to al-ʿUmarī, when the ʿAbbāsid Caliph al-Maʾmūn saw the mosque of the Umayyads, he was particularly amazed by the fact that it was built after the fashion of no precedent ' *ʿalā ghayri mithālin mutaqaddim*.'[548]

Due to the lack of architectural evidence, divergent views are held by modern scholars regarding the theory of converting houses of worship of other faiths into mosques. For example, Creswell, mainly depending on the already-mentioned account of al-Balādhurī (see 6.5.5), argues that the

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[542] Ibn Kathīr, XII, 566.

[543] Ibn ʿAsākir, II, 254-5; al-ʿUmarī, I, 179-80; Ibn Kathīr, XII, 566. See also al-Balādhurī, p. 171.

[544] See also F. Barry Flood, the *Great Mosque of Damascus: Studies on the Makings of an Umayyad Visual Culture*, Islamic History and Civilization: Studies and Texts 33 (Leiden: Brill, 2000).

[545] Sauvaget, p. 95.

[546] Fikrī, *Madkhal*, p. 273

[547] Creswell, *Early Muslim Architecture*, I. I, 191.

[548] Ibn ʿAsākir, II, 247; al-ʿUmarī, I, 192.

practice of converting churches into mosques was common in early Islam.[549] The mosque of Ḥamāh, for example, was erected on the ruins of a church.[550] This theory is criticized by Sauvaget who believes that Creswell adopted the idea without verification. Having studied the ruins of the mosque of Ḥamāh, Sauvaget produced a plan for the mosque that would, if accepted, show it to be completely different to the layout of contemporary churches.[551] It seems from the account of Arculf who lived in the later seventh century AD that the Arabs were performing *ṣalāt* at mosques which they built as early as the beginning of Islamic history.[552] The early Muslims might, and might not, have converted some of the houses of worship of other faiths into mosques, but it is notable that the latter shortly attained a considerable measure of architectural distinctiveness. While accepting that Muslim architects borrowed ideas from the religious architecture they found in conquered countries, Hillenbrand states:

> Yet the materials and ideas which they quarried from these buildings were not enough to make the mosque an Islamised church, fire sanctuary or temple. The places of worship used by the adherents of religions which Islam supplanted were basically ill-suited to Muslim needs. Churches emphasised depth rather than breadth, if they were of basilical form, and centrality if they were a variation of the martyrium type. The sanctuaries of fire worship in the Iranian empire were built for ceremonies involving a few priests, not large congregations—indeed, the congregation foregathered in the open air — while the temples of Arabia and India also put no premium on

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[549] Creswell, *Early Muslim Architecture*, I. I, p. 17.

[550] Creswell, *Early Muslim Architecture*, I. I, 17-21.

[551] Sauvaget, pp. 103-8, fig. no. 8. According to Fikrī, the practice of converting churches into mosques was rare and temporary, if not a legend. Fikrī, *Madkhal*, p. 270.

[552] Arculf, *The Pilgrimage of Arculfus in the Holy Land about the Year A.D.670*, Palestine Pilgrims Text Society, trans. and ed. by J.R. MacPherson (London 1895), p. 6; Creswell, *Early Muslim Architecture*, I. I, 188. Creswell believes that both converted and custom-built mosques existed side by side in early Islam.

housing great numbers of worshippers within a covered hall, let alone ensuring easy visibility between them. For these practical reasons the cultic centres of other religions were of limited value to early Muslim architects, who looked elsewhere for inspiration.[553]

Turning from complete buildings to spolia, there is archaeological evidence, however, that the Umayyads reused antique columns to build their mosques. The influence of *Ḥadīth* is represented in that the early Muslim masons restricted themselves to using the simplest types. For example, they used the Corinthian capital after reducing the number of leafs and the acanthus tiers. Such an example of that is found in the Roman side of the Umayyad mosque.[554] Afterwards, Muslim artists developed a capital more suitable for Muslim architecture by eliminating the acanthus and giving it the form of a calyx.

7.11. Conclusion

As in the period of the Rāshidūn Caliphs, we can find in literature clear, if few, references to the influence of *Ḥadīth* on mosque architecture in the Umayyad period. The fewness of such episodes might be attributable to the disputes which arose in the 2nd/8th century regarding the authoritativeness of *Ḥadīth* (see chapter 2). Yet, the ones we are told about could be really telling. ʿĀʾishah recounted:

> I once asked the Prophet—God's peace and blessings be upon him—whether the Hijr is part of the Sacred House. He answered, 'Yes.' I then asked him: 'Then why have they not included it in the House?' He said that the people fell short of funds for the cost. I also asked him concerning the door of the House, why it is raised above the ground. He replied: 'Your people did so that they might admit whom they willed to enter, and deny whom they willed. And indeed, were it not that your people had only recently been in contact with paganism, so that I

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[553] Hillenbrand, *Islamic Architecture*, p. 36.

[554] Shāfiʿī, *ʿImārah ʿArabiyyah*, p. 212.

feared that their hearts would be changed, I should certainly have considered including the Hijr in the House, and fixing the door on a level with the ground.'[555] Ibn al-Zubayr is said to have brought in ten of the chief Companions of the prophet to hear this from ʿĀʾisha herself. He then ordered the Kaʿbah to be pulled down. [...] and he rebuilt it in accord with what ʿĀʾisha had told him, [...].[556]

This account not only indicates that *Ḥadīth* was consulted in architectural affairs, but also shows us how this was implemented. When ʿAbd al-Malik had control over Mecca, al-Ḥajjāj wrote to him that Ibn al-Zubayr added to the Kaʿbah what had not been part of it and made another door in it. Al-Ḥajjāj asked ʿAbd al-Malik to permit him to return the holy structure to its original form (as it had been built by the Quraysh). So, ʿAbd al-Malik agreed and showed him how to do that without needing to pull down the whole structure of Ibn al-Zubayr.[557] After the work was finished, al-Ḥārith b. ʿAbd Allāh al-Makhzūmī came to [visit] ʿAbd al-Malik. The latter said: 'I do not assume that Abū Khubayb, an epithet of Ibn al-Zubayr, truly heard from ʿĀʾishah what he claimed he had heard from her regarding the Kaʿbah.' Al-Ḥārith said: 'I heard it from ʿĀʾishah.' ʿAbd al-Malik asked: 'What did you hear from her?' He replied: 'I heard her saying: "the Prophet told me [and he mentioned the above *ḥadīth*]."' ʿAbd al-Malik wondered: 'Did you [truly] hear her saying that?' Al-Ḥārith replied: 'Yes, Commander of the Faithful; I heard that from her.' ʿAbd al-Malik bowed his head and kept scratching the ground with a stick for a while and then said: 'By Allāh, I wish I had left Ibn al-Zubayr and what he said he had heard in this respect (*wama taḥammala min dhālik*).'[558] While this story, if it is authentic, does not say that ʿAbd al-Malik undertake any 'architectural' procedure in

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[555] On this, also see al-Bukhārī, *ḥadīths* no. 126, 1583-6, 3368, 4484, and 7243.

[556] Al-Muqaddasī (Collins's transl.), p. 74.

[557] Al-Azraqī, pp.305-7; Ibn ʿAbd Rabbih, VI, 256, Ibn Qutaybah, p. 560.

[558] Al-Azraqī, pp.305-7.

response, it could give a good example of how the Umayyad patrons of mosques appreciated relevant *ḥadīths*.

Another example of *Ḥadīth's* influence on Umayyad mosque architecture took place at Baṣrah. When Ziyād saw the *imām* going across the lines of prayers to reach the *minbar*, in compliance with *ḥadīth*,[559] he objected saying: 'It is not allowed for the emir to go across the people (*yatakhaṭṭā riqāb al-nās*). Ziyād accordingly moved the *dār al-imārah* so that it was situated in front of the mosque and turned the *minbar* to the front.[560] It is also noticeable that in the Umayyad period, and later, no doors were set in the *qiblah* wall. The Prophet criticized those who came late and wished to pray in the front lines, disturbing other worshippers.[561]

> Narrated Abū Juhaym, the Prophet said: 'If the one who passes in front of a prayer knows what he committed (*mādhā ʿalayhi*) [of sin], he would wait standing for forty (Abū al-Naḍr, a sub-narrator, said: "I forgot whether he said forty days, months or years"). This would be better for him than passing in front of him.'[562]

Ziyād also observed that when the people finished their prayers they dusted their hands. The floors of the mosques of Baṣrah and Kūfah were covered with sand. Ziyād said: 'I am afraid that by passage of time, the people might think that dusting hands in prayers is a *sunnah* [namely, a part of the Prophet's acts during prayers].[563] He accordingly commanded its floor

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[559] On *ḥadīths* which forbid such act, see Ibn Mājah, *ḥadīth* no. 1115-6; Ibn Hubayrah, *ḥadīth* no. 172.

[560] Al-Balādhurī, p. 484; Ibn al-Faqīh, p. 230; Yāqūt, I, p. 433.

[561] See al-Bājī, *Muntaqā*, II, 139-40.

[562] Mālik, *Muwaṭṭaʾ*, *ḥadīth* no. 409; al-Bukhārī, *ḥadīth* no. 510; al-Dārimī, *ḥadīths* no. 1456-7; al-Bayhaqī, *ḥadīths* no. 3452, 5886-9. See also Mālik *ḥadīths* no.408- 12.

[563] Al-Balādhurī, pp. 389, 468; Yāqūt, I, 433-4. Similar procedure is attributed to ʿUmar b. al-Khaṭṭāb when he rebuilt the mosque of the Prophet at Madīnah. See Ibn Saʿd, III, 264; Ibn al-Najjār, p. 173.

to be strewn with pebbles.[564] It was, allegedly, Ziyād's keenness to maintain the orthodox form of prayers that led him to do such 'architectural' improvement; the Prophet is reported to have said: 'pray [in the same way] as you have seen me praying.'[565] This episode gives an insight into a capacity to imagine forwards, to counter the risk of the emergence of a popular false assumption.

When the pious ʿUmar b. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz became the caliph, in compliance with the Prophet's approach of simplicity and frugality, he took away the 600 gilt chains of lanterns (*qanādīl*) which were in the Umayyad mosque and put them in the state treasury. Instead, he put new ones made of copper (*ṣufrah*) and iron.[566] It is also reported of ʿUmar that he intended to return to the Christians the church which had been taken from them by al-Walīd.[567]

There seems to be a consensus that the Umayyad hypaethral mosques such as Baṣrah, Kūfah (figure 12), Fusṭāṭ (figures 15 and 16), Ṣanʿāʾ (figure 35) and Ḥarrān (figure 34) were built after the mosque of the Prophet, which according to Ettinghausen and Grabar 'became the model in newly founded cities'.[568] Nonetheless, other Umayyad mosques, especially those built by ʿAbd al-Malik (see figures 18 and 19) and his son and successor al-Walīd (see figures 24 and 33) adopted different architectural types. The Dome of the Rock in particular is held to have been influenced by

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[564] Yāqūt, I, 434; al-Balādhurī, pp. 389-90.

[565] Al-Albānī, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Jāmiʿ al-Ṣaghīr wa Ziyādatuh (al-Fatḥ al-Kabīr)*, 2 vols, 3rd edn (Beirut: al-Maktab al-Islāmī, 1988), *ḥadīth* no. 893.

[566] Ibn ʿAsākir, II, 275; al-Diārbakrī, II, 348. See also al-Yaʿqūbī, *Tarīkh*, I, p. 214. According to al-Muqaddasī, the people of Damascus persuaded him to give up the idea. *Best Divisions*, p. 147.

[567] Al-Balādhurī, p. 171-2; Ibn ʿAsākir, II, 273-4; Ibn Kathīr, XII, 582. According to al-Balādhurī, he did return to the Christians of Damascus one of the churches. p. 169

[568] Ibid, p, 36.

late antique and Byzantine architectural types (see figure 20 and 21).[569] It represents a separate category of Umayyad architecture, distinguished from al-Walīd's mosques as one group, and the congregational hypaethral mosques as another.[570]

The plan of the Umayyad mosque (see figure 24 as an example of al-Walīd's mosques) was differed from the hypaethral style which had been familiar in Islamic architecture before the time of al-Walīd. The ṣaḥn, whose area usually occupied a quarter of the whole area of the mosque, was no longer set in the middle of it. What was the reason behind that? We can find nothing in literature to answer this question. According to al-Shihrī, the existence of an adequately high enclosure of the ancient temenos might have prompted the architect to make use of it, especially since it was set towards the qiblah (see figure 26).[571] If the architect followed the hypaethral form of the previous congregational mosques, the ẓullah of the qiblah would have been shallow and so deprived of adequate light and air.[572] While the influences of Byzantine architecture on the Umayyad mosque are almost unmistakable, the Umayyad mosque, in its main scheme, was chiefly influenced by the mosque of the Prophet and was built according to the requirements of Islamic rituals. A large part of its area was allocated to the ṣaḥn. Although the mosque of Damascus is seen by a majority of scholars to have introduced new architectural elements to Islam,[573] the influence of the Prophet's mosque on it is clear in the connection between

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[569] Bloom and Blair, p. 28. See also M. Bloom, 'Mosque', *EQ*, III, 430.

[570] Ettinghausen and Grabar, pp. 27-8. According to Mujīr al-Dīn, the model after which the Dome of the Rock was built is an earlier Umayyad structure called Qubbat a Silsilah, 'the Dome of the Chain', which was built by ʿAbd al Malik for this particular purpose. *Al-Uns al-Jalīl*, I, 241; Bahnasī, p. 70.

[571] Al-Shihrī, 'Ṣaḥn', p. 8.

[572] Al-Shihrī, 'Ṣaḥn', p. 8.

[573] These are the *miḥrāb*, the tripartite (three-aisled) division of the sanctuary, the axial nave and the dome in front of the *miḥrāb*.

the *ṣaḥn*, the porticoes and the *bayt al-ṣalāt*.[574]

Similarly, the special spatial conditions (Grabar's 'unique settings') explain why in the second construction of the Aqṣā mosque the *ṣaḥn* was replaced by a central nave (see figures 29 and 30).[575] The lack of the *ṣaḥn* and the use of gables could be attributed to the comparatively cold and wintry climate of Syria and Jerusalem. For reasons already given, the lack of the *ṣaḥn*, or indeed any other components of the mosque of the Prophet, is not necessarily to be regarded as a rebellion against his model, any more than the adoption of features of his mosque should be interpreted as compulsory.[576]

What does seem to have been compulsory, according to the teachings of the Prophet, was the avoidance of lavishness and pretentiousness, and the use of distractive features. Did the Umayyad mosques observe or break this principle? These mosques are a far cry form the model of the Prophet and the Rāshidūn. It may be enough here to quote Hayter Lewis' statement about the Umayyad Dome of the Rock which 'stands today essentially as it was built in the late seventh century'.[577] Lewis says: 'it is undoubtedly one of the most beautiful buildings existing, and I cordially agree with these eloquent words of Mr. Fergusson: — "[...]. There is an elegance of proportion [...] which does not exist in any other building I

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[574] For similar views, see Ettinghausen and Grabar, p. 38; Hillenbrand, *Islamic Art and Architecture*, p. 25; Oleg Grabar, 'Islamic Art and Byzantium', in *Early Islamic Art: 650*-1100, I Constructing the Study of Islamic Art (Hampshire: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2005), pp. 1-41 (p. 7).

[575] Grabar, *Formation*, p. 107. According to Antun (pp. 38, 169) open courtyard was the main theme of the first Aqṣā mosque which also had a wider central aisle. Also attributed to al-Walīd, the smaller mosques of ʿAnjar, Minya and Jabal Says also had no *ṣaḥn*. See Johns, 'House of the Prophet', p. 62.

[576] More on that is discussed in chapter 6.

[577] Bloom and Blair, p. 28. The same thinking is held by Creswell: *Early Muslim Architecture*, I. I, 68.

am acquainted with.'"[578]

Why did the Umayyads desire to perfect (*yuḥkimūn*) and elevate their mosques? We have seen some examples (see 7.5) in which perfection was sought to embody the conceit of the patrons, and others in which it served a religious and political agenda.

ʿUthmān b. Affān, having perfected the mosque of the Prophet, must have set a good example for the Umayyads to perfect their works at the mosque of the Prophet and elsewhere. While the ephemeral structures of the Prophet and that of ʿUmar b. al-Khaṭṭāb soon decayed, that of ʿUthmān stood for 58 years before it was replaced by the structure of al-Walīd,[579] and that even was not due to wear and tear caused by age. During this relatively long period, the only recorded work made at the mosque of the Prophet was that of Marwān b. al-Ḥakam who paved the area around the mosque in the caliphate of Muʿāwiyah.[580] There is historical evidence that the mosque of ʿUthmān remained durable even in the caliphate of ʿAbd al-Malik. Al-Azraqī, on the authority of al-Wāqidī, relates that [during the reign of ʿAbd al-Malik] the fabrics (*dībājj*) which were used to cover the Kaʿbah were sent each year to Madīnah and put on the columns of the Prophet's mosque.[581] We have seen (6.4) that ʿUthmān's adoption of advanced technique and material was inspired from *Ḥadīth*.

It seems that the idea of elaborating mosques began very early in

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[578] Hayter Lewis, *The Holy Places of Jerusalem*, pp. 26-7. The architecture of the Dome of the Rock has likewise been praised by other scholars such as Van Berchem (II, 224). Creswell, *Early Muslim Architecture*, I. I, 74.

[579] Ibn Isḥāq al-Ḥarbī, *Manāsik*, p 364; al-Samhūdī, II, 513.

[580] Al-Samhūdī, II, 735. The reason for these works was not the damage of any of the parts of ʿUthmān's building; al-Ḥakam, the father of Marwān, had been aged and so lagged his legs when he got out of the mosque. So, they were dusted. When Muʿāwiyah saw this pavement, he ordered the whole area around the mosque to be likewise paved. See also Ibn Shabba, pp. 7-8.

[581] Al-Azraqī, p. 359.

the Umayyad period. Al-Balādhurī expressly stated that Zīyād rebuilt the mosque of Kūfah (50/670) 'and perfected it (*fa ʾaḥkamahū*)'.[582] In a relative sense, it seems that every possible step was taken to guarantee the perfection of work. We are told that the workers who built the Umayyad mosque dug deep to lay the foundations of the great dome until they reached pure sweet water.[583] Yāqūt recounts that the workers, while digging, found a well-built wall which had been built by the Greeks and was in line with the proposed foundations. Therefore, they told al-Walīd about how strong this wall was and asked him to allow them to leave it *in situ* and use it as a part of the mosque foundations. Al-Walīd refused saying: 'I like nothing but perfection (*iḥkam*) and I like being sure of it (namely *iḥkam*), and I do not trust the perfection of this wall.'[584]

Likewise, after the work at the mosque of the Prophet was accomplished, al-Walīd came to Madīnah to do pilgrimage and went to the mosque to inspect the work and receive felicitations from the notables of Madīnah.[585] When he saw the roof of the *maqṣūrah* he appreciated it and said to ʿUmar: 'I wish you had made all the roof of the mosque like that.' ʿUmar replied: 'then, the expenditure would have been great.'[586] Al-Walīd said: 'Even if [it would have been so]'. In another account of Ibn Zabālah, ʿUmar told the caliph that he spent 45.000 *dinārs* on the *qiblah* wall and the part between the two roofs.[587] It is also reported that ʿUmar b. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz rewarded the worker who skilfully formed a big tree of mosaic with extra 30 *dirhams*.[588] This appreciation of perfecting work stems from *Ḥadīth*. The

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[582] Al-Balādhurī, p. 389.

[583] Ibn ʿAsākir, II, 261; Ibn Kathīr, XII, 572.

[584] Yāqūt, II, 466.

[585] Al-Dīnawrī, p. 331; al-Yaʿqūbī, *Tarīkh*, I, 199.

[586] Ibn Zabālah, p.121; al-Samhūdī, *Wafāʾ*, II, Ibn Rustah, p. 71; al-Barzanjī, p. 13.

[587] Ibn Zabālah, pp. 120-21; Ibn al-Najjār, p. 177.

[588] Al-Samhūdī, *Wafāʾ*, II, 519; Ibn al-Najjār, p. 176.

Prophet is reported to have said: 'Allāh loves it when anyone of you works to do perfectly.' It is natural that when much attention is paid to perfection, it turns into beautification and ornamentation.[589]

Apart from the clear advancement in form and material, the Umayyad mosques were distinctly different from each another. This could be attributed to the fact that, according to *Ḥadīth*, there is no fixed form for a mosque. Many details were left to be settled in the light of locally changeable conditions. Freedom of choice in planning mosques is further indicated by the fact that there are no ideal dimensions for a mosque, or any specifically favoured proportions for its constituent parts. Some argue that a certain proportion linked the length of the *qiblah* wall to the depth of the *bayt al-ṣalāt*, 'sanctuary'. In fact, measurement of these parts in many mosques reveals no such governing rule,[590] although in some cases parts of a mosque may have been later modified without taking initially-devised ratios into account.[591] The same possibility applies to comparing the space occupied by the *bayt al-ṣalāt* to that of the whole mosque. Fikrī argues that the length and depth of the *bayt al-ṣalāt* depended, both in the Umayyad period and later, on the following factors:

- The population of the town where the mosque would be erected and, accordingly, the estimated number of worshippers
- The number of the available antique columns, which would support the roof, or the accessibility of the material to be used in making new columns and piers
- The height of the roof of *bayt al-ṣalāt* and the method of supporting it. The higher the roof, and the more

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[589] Al-Pāsha, *Mawusūʿat*, I, 99.

[590] Fikrī, *Madkhal*, p. 302.

[591] Ibid.

illuminated the *bayt al-ṣalāt*, the more suitable it is to

increase the dimensions of *bayt al-ṣalāt*[592]

The division of *riwāqs* into horizontal spaces or aisles seems to have been prompted by the many *ḥadīths* which put emphasis on the significance of persuading worshippers to arrange themselves in straight lines. When building his mosque, the Prophet is reported to have said: 'ṣuffū al-nakhla qiblatan'.[593] The Prophet wanted the rows of palm trunks to be laid in parallel lines to the *qiblah*. Narrated Nuʿmān b. Bashīr, 'the Prophet said: "either you will straighten your lines, or Allāh will deform your faces [or He will let you be enemies to each other]."'[594] The Prophet is reported to have addressed the congregation before *ṣalāt* and order them to be arranged in straight lines.[595] In another *ḥadīth*, he says: '[...], and straighten the line [row] in prayers, as straightening the line is [one sign] of prayer's meritoriousness.'[596] To fulfil such requirement, the *ṣaḥābīs* used to touch the feet and shoulders of one another.[597]

Excavations have revealed that straight parallel ditches were dug in the *bayt al-ṣalāt* of some of the Umayyad mosques.[598] It is instructive that the foundations were not only made for the columns or piers, but also ran in connected lines from the right to the left so as to mark the aisles of the sanctuary.[599] Further, the Prophet is reported to have advised each person

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[592] Fikrī, *Madkhal*, p. 303.

[593] Al-ʿUmarī, I, p. 123-4.

[594] Al-Bukhārī, *ḥadīth* no. 717.

[595] Al-Bukhārī, *ḥadīth* no. 718. See also Ibn Mājah, *ḥadīths* no. 992-5; Ibn Ḥanbal, *ḥadīths* no. 5724, 11950, 81452; al-Khaṭṭābī, I, 183-4. The same thing is reported about ʿUmar and ʿUthmān. See Mālik, *Muwaṭṭaʾ*, *ḥadīths*, no. 422-3.

[596] Hammah b. Munabbih, *ḥadīth* no. 45; al-Dārimī, *ḥadīth* no. 1298; Ibn Ḥanbal, *ḥadīth* no 10239.

[597] Al-Bukhārī, *ḥadīth* no. 725. See also al-Tirmidhī, *ḥadīth* no. 277.

[598] Fikrī, *Madkhal*, p. 304.

[599] Fikrī, *Madkhal*, p. 304. See the plans of the Umayyad mosques.

to insert a cane or, at least, draw a line in front of him in order to delimit his area of prostration and, in turn, prevent anyone to pass before him.[600] While division of the *bayt al-ṣalāt* into parallel lines is likely to have been inspired by *Ḥadīth*, there is no rule to say into how many aisles it should be divided. There might be only one aisle, as in the mosque of Ukhayḍar, two as at Boṣra, three as in the mosques of Damascus (figure 24), four as at Ḥarrān (figure 34), or five as in the mosques of Madīnah (figure 8), Kūfah (figure 12), Wāsiṭ (figure 22) and Iskāf Banī Junayd.[601]

Likewise, the influence of *Ḥadīth* is reflected in the fact that, in many mosques, the first aisle was made wider than the others so as to accommodate as many lines of worshippers as possible. According to *Ḥadīth*, there is special virtue in coming early to mosque at the Friday sermon and there is also a special reward for praying the daily five prayers in the first line after the imām. Narrated Abū Hurayrah, the Prophet said: '[…], and if they [namely the Muslim people] knew what the front line has [of great reward], they will surely draw lots for it (*istahamū*)'.[602] On the authority of Bushayr b. Yasār al-Anṣārī, when Anas b. Mālik came back to Madīnah he was asked [by the people]: 'what have you denied [of our deeds] since you accompanied (*ʿāhidta*) the Prophet?' He said:' I have denied nothing except that you do not straighten (or complete) (*tuqīmūn*) your lines.'[603] This incident would reflect the keenness of the *tābiʿīn* generation to investigate whether their deeds, especially in ritual affairs, were sound and matching the teachings of the Prophet. It is notable that Anas said nothing about the architecture of the mosques, which indicates

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[600] Al-Bayhaqī, *ḥadīth*s no. 3466-70; al-Hindī, *Kanz*, *ḥadīth* no. 19206.

[601] Fikrī, *Madkhal*, p. 306.

[602] Al-Bukhārī, *ḥadīth* no. 721. On the virtue of praying in the first line, see Ibn Mājah, *ḥadīth*s no. 996-9; al-Dārimī, *ḥadīth* no. 1300; Wensinck, p. 193. On the meaning of *istahamū*, see Ibn Manẓūr, III, 2135.

[603] Al-Bukhārī, *ḥadīth* no. 724.

that he found nothing outrageous upon which to comment.[604] The first aisle was also made wider as it contained the *miḥrāb*, *minbar* and *maqṣūrah*. This, though, was not a regular procedure.[605] Further, the presence of the *qiblah* at the mosque front directed the major part of perfection and embellishment to *bayt al-ṣalāt*.[606]

Finally, the influence of *Ḥadīth* on the architecture of the Umayyad mosques represented in that no more columns or pillars were employed than necessary. The Prophet is reported to have forbidden the worshippers from arranging themselves between the columns (*sawārī*).[607]

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[604] This accident of Anas is not the one in which he said: 'I know nothing of what was [applied] in the time of the Prophet except prayer, and it has been wasted'. (Al-Bukhārī, *ḥadīth* no. 530).The latter accident took place at Damascus.

[605] Fikrī, *Madkhal*, pp. 306-7.

[606] Muʾnis, p. 64.

[607] Ibn Mājah, *ḥadīth* no. 1002. On the prohibition against praying between columns, also see: Ibn Abī Shaybah, *ḥadīths* no. 7578-84. Some authorities, particularly from the *tābiʿīs*, are reported to allow such act. Ibn Abī Shaybah, *ḥadīths* no. 7585-93.

Chapter 8: Conclusions

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To investigate the interactions between *Ḥadīth* and the architecture of early congregational mosques we have dealt with two main questions: what does *Ḥadīth* have to say about the building of mosques? How far did that view influence the architecture of early congregational mosques?

In addressing the first question, we are confronted by a large body of *Ḥadīth* which at first sight gives an impression of the Prophet's abhorrence, or at least lack of enthusiasm, towards the erection of massive mosques, their decoration, and in fact against building in general (see 5.8 and 5.10). However, a dilemma arises, for there are also indications that the Prophet wanted the work of his mosque to be properly performed. He not only supervised the work himself but also participated in it (see 4.3). We have seen that much effort was exerted to prepare the site, which had been occupied by dilapidated structures, graves and marshes. Palm trees were cut and arranged to form the *qiblah* wall, adobe was moulded, stone foundations were laid, and walls of sun-dried brick were built (see chapter 4).

Evidently, the Prophet was keen to build his mosque in a proper way. He praised one of the Companions for his skill in mixing mud and moulding adobe. The Prophet asked him to do nothing but mix mud, and asked the other Companions to leave this part of work to that Companion as he perfected it. To encourage others to play their parts, the Prophet asked God's mercy to be conferred upon those who work in a proper way (see 5.5). The Prophet's attitude, we find, was more nuanced than the dogmatic outlook that has been attributed to him by many commentators.

In chapters 3 and 4, we saw that it has been argued that the simple form of the mosque of the Prophet was due to inexperience and poor material. Yet, there are quite a number of *ḥadīths* which imply that the Prophet purposely wanted the mosque to be simple. It is said that some of

the Companions wanted to rebuild the mosque after the fashion of the more advanced buildings of Syria, but that the Prophet refused, saying that he wanted it to be in the form of a shelter (see 5.11). He then commented: 'the affair is not that long.' This last statement could be understood in two ways: either 'life is not that long', or 'we have other more important things to take care of at this early stage of the Islamic *da'wah*'.

To understand these apparently paradoxical statements and attitudes, we need to assess the mosque of the Prophet not as a thing alone but in the physical and cultural setting in which it was placed. The Prophet did not want his mosque to be built after the fashion of the Syrian buildings, as it was not in Syria. Rather, it was located in a much simpler environment. We could imagine the strong visual impact that an advanced structure might have had if it had been planted in such a simple locality as that of Madīnah, *in illo tempore*. The Prophet did not want the mosque to be exalted for its striking appearance, but for the religious, spiritual and social roles it was set to play. He was keen to take every precaution to resist idolatry which originated from eulogizing material objects (see 5.6.1 and 5.10).

In the same vein, we could understand the Prophet's annoyance when one of the Companions built a domed structure for himself (see 7.9.3). The Prophet did not mean that domes should not be built, but rather that he did not want the man to boast about a structure that must have seemed 'luxurious' in comparison with other contemporary lodgings. The Prophet also disapproved of the fact that the man paid much attention to such worldly and ephemeral concerns. Further, we saw that the theory about the Prophet's negative attitude towards building contradicts other *ḥadīths* with a higher degree of authenticity. According to some of these, one of the two fundamental reasons for which mankind were created is to populate the earth through activities such as cultivation and construction.

To conclude on this aspect, we could say that the mosque of the

Prophet was made in such simple form not because there was no way to build a more elaborate one, or because the Prophet disliked building. Rather, it was made simple to match the simplicity of its surroundings and the simplicity of Islamic ritual requirements, which needed no more than a clean levelled piece of land.

In the early caliphate, *Ḥadīth* played an important role in shaping mosque architecture. The form of the Prophet's mosque was retained (see 6.5.4). There are clear examples of *Ḥadīth* consultation (see 6.4). The large number of *ḥadīths* about the virtue of building mosques and attending them must have been an impetus for mosques to be built. And that, in turn, would have accelerated the architectural evolution of the mosque (see 6.5).

The latitude in the Prophet's *Ḥadīth* is mirrored in that diverse understandings were adopted by his Companions. The most salient example is the discrepancy between the attitudes of ʿUmar and ʿUthmān, the second and third caliphs in Islam, respectively, and two of the Prophet's closest Companions. As we saw in chapter 6, each of them rebuilt the mosque of the Prophet in a new milieu after the death of the latter. ʿUmar's structure was a *replica* of the Prophet's archetype. He retained the form and material of the Prophet's structure. Even the old wooden pillars were replaced with new wooden ones. ʿUmar said to the builder: 'Provide the people with a shelter from rain and do not use red or yellow paints lest the people should get distracted.' ʿUthmān, on the other hand, rebuilt the mosque on the same plan but in a more advanced form. The walls were built of carved stones and coated with stucco. He replaced the wooden pillars with columns of carved stones, and used teak for the roof.

The fact that some steps were taken by the Prophet's Companions to relieve old simplicity would imply that they realized that sheer simplicity was not intended by the Prophet for its own sake or for all time. The Prophet wanted the mosque to be built in a way that was 'frugal' but

'proper'. These two adjectives should be considered in the relative sense. Thus, being 'frugal' does not mean that it should be poor in form or material. Rather, it should be neither wasteful nor distracting. Likewise, 'proper' does not mean massive and striking but handsome and durable (see 5.11).

In the Umayyad period, we are not told about many cases in which *Ḥadīth* was considered when a mosque was to be built. Yet, this does not mean that such negotiations did not occur. In other words, rarity of evidence does not necessarily mean evidence of rarity. We have seen in chapter 7 that there are indications that *Ḥadīth* did influence the Umayyad mosques. These include:

- The *ḥadīths* about the necessity of facing the *qiblah* dictated that all mosques were orientated towards Mecca.

- The *ḥadīths* about the virtue of building mosques led to the building of a great number of them, which in turn provided a context for architectural evolution.

- The plan of the Prophet's mosque was reproduced by the majority of mosques. They were mainly composed of an open courtyard surrounded by porticoes.

- From the rise of Islam to the end of the Umayyad period, no mosques were built over tombs and no tombs were attached to mosques.

- The avoidance of making representations for humans and animals on the walls of mosques.

- The group of *ḥadīths* which command worshippers to be arranged in straight parallel lines, as well as the need to see the *imām*, put architectural emphasis on width rather than depth.

- The same group of *ḥadīths* led to the sanctuaries of the

Umayyad mosques being divided into horizontal spaces (or

aisles) that ran parallel to the *qiblah* wall.

- No more pillars or columns were used than necessary;

  according to *Ḥadīth* it is not advisable to cut a line of

  worshippers.

- The pulpit in some mosques was moved from the centre to the

  front (namely the *bayt al-ṣalāt*), as it is not allowed for the

  imām to go across the worshippers to reach it.

Under the Umayyads, the plan of the Prophet's prototype was

reproduced by a majority of mosques. However, there was betterment in

almost every way. The walls were made of cut stones in *lieu* of rubble. After

having been rough, they were coated with stucco and ornamented with fine

decorations and in many cases glass mosaics were employed. Floors were

paved instead of being covered with sand or strewn with pebbles. Palm

trunks were replaced with marble columns, roofs were made of teakwood as

a replacement of rushes, and in many cases domes or gables were used.

Thus, the clearest difference between the mosque of the Prophet and the

Umayyad mosques is the search for perfection and embellishment which

were applied to the latter. Tradition reports examples which reveal that the

Umayyad patrons were very keen to perfect their mosques (see chapter 7).

What were the reasons lay behind this? Were they consistent with

Ḥadīth? According to *Ḥadīth*, God loves those who perfect their work (see

5.11). And it is natural that when attention is paid to perfection, it should

gradually turn into beautification. Further, the fact that ʿUmar's mosque

soon decayed while the more advanced one of ʿUthmān lasted for longer

might have given provided an example to follow. We have cases (see 7.5) in

which the patrons expressly declared that their intention was to confer

majesty on the appearance of the mosque, lest the Muslim conquerors and

migrants should be over-fascinated by the architectural grandeur of the non-

Muslim places of worship. In other words, perfecting and decorating mosques, in many cases, formed a part of Islamic competitive propaganda.

Some rulers, however, seem to have been obsessed with the desire to have an imposing court, and the first place they thought to apply this aspiration was the mosque which was more important than the ruler's residence (see 7.5). The mosque *in illo tempore* was not simply a place for prayers, but it held other religious, political, military, and social functions. It should be noted that in Islam the two realms of secular and religious are difficult to separate. However, in most cases, the work was perfected to pursue durability and not merely to catch the eye.

We have noted (see 7.8) that the practice of erecting massive and lavishly decorated mosques was not effectively criticized by the contemporary legalists and *Ḥadīth* scholars. It is true that there was a kind of condemnation, but it was in no way a stark one. It might have been deemed inevitable that such mosques should be erected, to match the general advancement in cultural life. Would it have seemed reasonable to build mosques that were structurally inferior to the houses of Muslim individuals? We can imagine the negative impact that could have been caused by the sight of a mosque built of rubble and *labin*, roofed with rushes and lit with *suruj* in a setting of modern appealing buildings. This view is backed by the fact that one of the primary reasons for the late *ṣaḥābīs* and early *tābi ʿīs* to criticize the elaboration of mosques was their belief that the money spent on these activities should have been preferably spent for the benefit of the needy. Such limitation was mitigated in later times by the general advancement that happened to the cultural life of the Muslim community.

Further, as Islam pays certain attention to *a ʿmāl al-qalb*, 'actions of the heart', the religious acceptability of mosque architecture could be judged by the builder's purpose and intention which are naturally imponderable. A

mosque could be elaborated and decorated and still regarded as religiously accepted if that was done for God's pleasure, and to dignify mosques which are defined as 'the houses of God'. On the other hand, a mosque could be built in a modest way and using ephemeral materials, but still not regarded to follow the model of the Prophet (if this, for example, was the only option available at the time). It could be even against the builder if he did so out of stinginess.

It is notable, however, that while mosque building usually brought good reputation for the patrons, in some cases the competition in elevating mosques and beautifying them led to pride which is also criticized by *Ḥadīth*. There are also rare instances where building mosques was a cause of notoriety, for they were built to hold malevolent schemes against the believers. The most famous example is the *masjid al-ḍirār* which was reproached by the *Qurʾān* (see 3.6).

Next, what about the new components which were added to the mosque in the Umayyad period such as the minaret and the concave prayer niche? It has been argued that the germs of many of these components were already included in the mosque of the Prophet. The minaret, for example, was prefigured by the fact that the Prophet's muezzin used to call to prayers from the highest roof in the vicinity of the mosque. There are also reports that the minaret could have been a direct development of the *isṭiwān*, 'column' which was mounted by the Prophet's muezzin for the same purpose (see 5.7.6). Equally, external architectural influences on the minaret are very clear. Hence, the need for a raised place to call to prayers, a convention which goes back to the Prophet, was prompted by *ḥadīths* about *adhān*, while the architectural realization of form and height of the raised place influenced variously.

Similarly, the concave prayer niche could have derived from the fact that the Prophet used to thrust a spear in front of him before praying so as

to mark the *qiblah*, and to preclude anyone from passing in front of him (see 5.7.5). The group of *ḥadīths* about the necessity of the *imām*, 'prayer leader', to put something in front of him (namely *sutrah*) and to leave a space between him and that thing might well have prompted the introduction of the concave prayer niche, especially as its adoption would save a complete line for other worshippers. Some have argued that simpler recessed prayer niches already existed in the time of the Prophet (see 5.7.5). Likewise, the Umayyad *minbar* must have been inspired by the three-step wooden pulpit which had been made for the Prophet to use at sermons. More basically, the group of *ḥadīths* about the *qiblah* and the necessity of being orientated towards it during prayers should have led to attention being paid to the *qiblah* wall and the *miḥrāb*.

All these architectural elements derived from two sources: *Ḥadīth*, in terms of devotional origin; and an array of variable influences, in terms of architectural form. The point to underscore here is that the effect of one source does not necessarily invalidate that of the other.

The process of building mosques was governed by both Islamic law and the convention of Muslim people at the time. It was governed by Islamic law because the act of building mosques to provide the worshippers with a place to pray is itself worship, while the form and materials of these mosques were governed by the convention of Muslim people since the Prophet did not specify a fixed form of the mosque. We have seen that the latter changed from time to time and from a place to another.

In the time of the Prophet and the Companions, the convention was to build simple mosques, but in later times, for reasons already given (see 7.5), this changed. In the Umayyad period, the mosque of the Prophet, for example, was rebuilt in a more advanced form. Many architectural features were introduced for the first time: minarets, concave prayer niche, *maqṣūrah*, crenellations and decoration. It is noticeable, however, that these

elements, which became the main architectural components of later
mosques, were introduced to the Prophet's site by a renowned *Ḥadīth*
scholar, Ṣāliḥ b, Kaysān who narrated the most significant *ḥadīth* about the
form of the mosque in the time of the Prophet and the Rāshidūn Caliphs
(see 7.3). This *ḥadīth* is reported through him by the compilers of canonical
collections. What may give more significance to these architectural works is
that they were done under supervision of the pious ʿUmar b. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz
and in a time where the consent of Medinese community (*ʿamal ahlil
Madīnah*) was considered as an important source of Islamic jurisprudence.[1]
This same thing also applies to the convention of the Muslim nation, at any
time; the Prophet is reported to have said: 'God has protected my *ummah*,
'nation' from consenting a perversity.'[2]

Under the Umayyads, a foreign component: namely the central nave
was introduced in some mosques. While in the Aqṣā mosque the central
nave completely replaced the open courtyard, in the mosque of Damascus
the latter was retained, but in a smaller size. The Dome of the Rock, on the
other hand, is a unique type of religious building not only in the Umayyad
period but in Islamic history overall (see 7.11).

Did these architectural changes violate the Prophet's model? Some
of the recent Ḥanafīs believe that the mosque should be simple in form and
material just as that built by the Prophet more than fourteen centuries ago.
They build unpretentious mosques of no minarets, domes, concave prayer
niches, etc. and call them '*masājid aṣḥāb al-ḥadīth*, 'the mosques of the

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[1] The Prophet is reported to have said: 'Soon, the people will ride their camels (*yūshiku an
yaḍriba al-nāsu akbād al-ibil*) asking for knowledge and they will find nobody more
knowledgeable than the scholar of Madīnah.' Al-Tirmidhī, *ḥadīth* no. 2680. On the weight of
ʿamal ahlil Madīnah in Islamic jurisprudence, see Ibn al-Qayyim, *Iʿlām al-Muwaqqiʿīn*, I, 175.

[2] See Abū Dāwūd, *ḥadīth* no. 4253; Ibn Mājah, *ḥadīth* no. 395; al-Albānī, *Ṣaḥīḥah* (abridged),
III, 319.

people of *Ḥadīth*,[3] and some Shīʿīs continued to call to prayer from a doorway or a roof.[4] The Wahhābīs' mosques in Arabia (eighteenth century onwards) also typify this conservative approach.[5] Yet, the Prophet's model, as already said, does not include a must-follow architectural form of the mosque. We have no *ḥadīth* or historical account to say that he commanded, or even advised, that the plan of his mosque should be copied by others. So whether a mosque had a courtyard or any other component was left to the builders to determine according to climate, space, and other local conditions (see 6.5.4). The seasonally cold and rainy weather of Syria and Jerusalem dictated that a spacious courtyard should be replaced by another architectural element that would permit light and air but protect the mosques from rains. A central nave best fitted these needs (see figures 24 and 27). Equally, the nature of the activities which the courtyard had accommodated since the time of the Prophet, along with its suitability for the summer months, led patrons to retain it, albeit in a smaller size (see 7.11).

Next, what does *Ḥadīth* have to say regarding the influence of non-Muslim architectural types on mosque architecture? It is known that the central nave, for example, was borrowed from church design. Does *Ḥadīth* say any thing about how the Prophet appreciated the architectural forms of the places of worship of other nations? We have seen that when one of the Prophet's wives told him about a church she had seen in Abyssinia, he criticized the practice of dedicating churches to saints, and that of adorning

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[3] See Al-Khuḍayrī, 'Aḥkām', p. 35.

[4] M. Bloom, 'Mosque', *EQ*, III, 430.

[5] The latter is reported to even have destroyed a number of early Islamic sites including historic mosques, mausolea and artefacts on the grounds that material objects and sites related to the dead should not be venerated. See Daniel Howden, 'The Destruction of Mecca: Saudi Hardliners are Wiping out their Own Heritage', *The Independent,* 6 August 2005; Salah Nasrawi, 'Mecca's Ancient Heritage is Under Attack', *Los Angles Times*, 16, September, 2007.

them with icons and other representations (see 5.6.1.1). What he denounced was exalting the dead and venerating material objects. The statement he made when some of his Companions wanted to rebuild his mosque after the Syrian buildings may give us another clue. It would imply that he objected not because the adoption of other architectural forms was disallowed, but because he considered the transitory nature of this life. He, in a similar situation, agreed to adopt the *minbar*, in spite of the fact that it was referred to by Tamīm, the Companion who proposed the idea and reported the incident, as a Syrian habit (see 5.7.7).[6]

It is true that the Prophet was keen to render the rites of Islam distinct from those of other religions (see 5.8 and 5.11). Nonetheless, it seems that the adoption of foreign architectural elements, such as the central nave and the dome, could not be regarded as a breach of the Prophet's model on the only grounds that they were not parts of his own mosque. It could be so only if these elements breached the general principles which he set for the form of the mosque, namely it should not be lavish, pretentious, distracting, and more importantly it should not include any representations of humans or animals.

The latter condition is *par excellence* realized. The deliberate avoidance of making representing living creatures could be one of the clearest aspects of *Ḥadīth* influence on the Umayyad mosques. This very restrictiveness led Muslim artists to invest their effort and talent in developing uniquely intricate vegetal, geometric and calligraphic decorative motifs.

Finally, did the mosque and its architecture influence *Ḥadīth*? There are a number of indications that the architectural development of the mosque, particularly, in the Umayyad period could have influenced *Ḥadīth*

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[6] Ibn al-Najjār, p. 158. See also al-Bayhaqī, *ḥadīths* no. 5698-9.

literature.

First, quite a number of *ḥadīths*, whose authenticity is controversial, praise specific mosques and talk about the big reward of performing prayers at them.[7] Many of such *ḥadīths* are typically mentioned by the chroniclers of Muslim towns. For instance, Ibn Asākir reported, on the authority of Muʿāwiyah b. Qurrah, that ʿUmar b. al-Khaṭṭāb said: 'He who performs an enjoined prayer at the mosque of one of the *amṣār*, 'territories' will be rewarded as if he performed an accepted pilgrimage, and if he performs a supererogatory prayer [there], he will gain the reward of a blessed *ʿumrah*.'[8] It should be noted that such *ḥadīths* about the *faḍāʾil*, 'merits or special qualities' of specific people, or places, have been always looked at with skepticism by modern scholarship.[9]

Some *Ḥadīth* compilations, such as the *Muṣannaf* of Ibn Abī Shaybah and that of ʿAbd al-Razzāq include chapters about what were by then new architectural elements of the mosque such as the minaret (see 5.7.6) , the *maqṣūrah* (see 5.7.10) and the *miḥrāb*, or rather *al-ṭāq* (see 5.7.5.2). With the exception of few pseudo *ḥadīths* which linked the Prophet to such elements, these were mainly reports about the *ṣaḥābīs'* different attitudes towards the adoption of these elements.

Significantly, the architectural development of mosques influenced the style of grouping *ḥadīths* in the 3rd/ 9th century compilations. Al-Bayhaqī, for example, reported a number of *ḥadīths* about the preferable piety of the muezzin under the heading of 'none is allowed to call for

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[7] On the virtue of the mosque of Kūfah, see Ibn Abī Shaybah, V, p. 174; Ibn al-Faqīh, p. 210. On the virtue of the mosque of Damascus and the merit of performing prayers in it, see Ibn ʿAsākir, II, 236-48.

[8] Ibn ʿAsākir, II, 244; al-Hindī, *Kanz*, *ḥadīth* no. 23073; al-Maqrīzī, II, 246. For similar views on the virtue of conducting prayers in the mosque of Kūfah, see Ibn al-Faqīh, *Mukhtaṣar Kitāb al-Buldān*, (Leiden: Brill, 1885), p. 173-4.

[9] See Juynboll*, Muslim Tradition*, pp. 12-4, 17; Juynboll, *Studies*, pp. 70-2.

prayers unless he is trustworthy and honest for he could catch sight of the people's private life'. Al-Bayhaqī's choice of such a rubric is, of course, attributed to later adoption of the minaret. This is in spite of the fact that none of the *ḥadīths* he mentions under this heading talks about the reasons why the muezzin should be trustworthy and honest. In the same manner, al-Bukhārī mentioned the *ḥadīth* about the maker of the *minbar* under the heading of 'asking the help of carpenters and craftsmen in [making] the *minbar* and [building] the mosque' (see 5.5).

While the architectural evolution of the mosque progressed, the expositors of *Ḥadīth* like Ibn Ḥajar, al-ʿAynī and al-Nawawī found themselves obligated to discuss, in their *Ḥadīth* commentaries, the ordinances of mosques, the specification of their sites and the lawfulness of adopting new architectural elements.

Islamic architecture cannot be studied apart from the religious context in which it originally emerged. In this study we have seen clear cases in which *Ḥadīth* did influence the architecture of early congregational mosques, and others where – in contrast to the perceived picture of dogmatic inflexibility – its approach towards certain architectural features was nuanced. Of course, due to limitations of time and length, not all such points have received attention. Hence, while the present theory is mainly based on literary evidence, we hope that coming years will bring forth archaeological evidence that will help us go further with the study – on a firmer ground – of the various factors that shaped early Islamic architecture*...wa ākhiru daʿwānā an al-ḥamdulillāhi rabb al-ʿālamīn*.

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Note on *Qurʾān*

The passages of the *Qurʾān* are quoted from *The Holy Quran: English Translation of the meanings and Commentary*, ed. by the presidency of Islamic Researches, Iftāʾ, Call and Guidance (Medina: King Fahd complex for the printing of the Holy Quran, 1992)

Ḥadīth and Arabic accounts are my own translation unless otherwise specified.

Later references

Should more than one work by an author be used, the following details are given: author's name, title (in a shortened form), volume number (if applicable), page reference. If only one work by an author is cited, then the title is not given.

Abbreviations

After their first citations, where full details are given, *The Encyclopaedia of Islam* and *Encyclopaedia of the Qurʾān* have been abbreviated to *IE* and *IQ* respectively.

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Plans, illustrations and tables

(a)

(b)

(c)
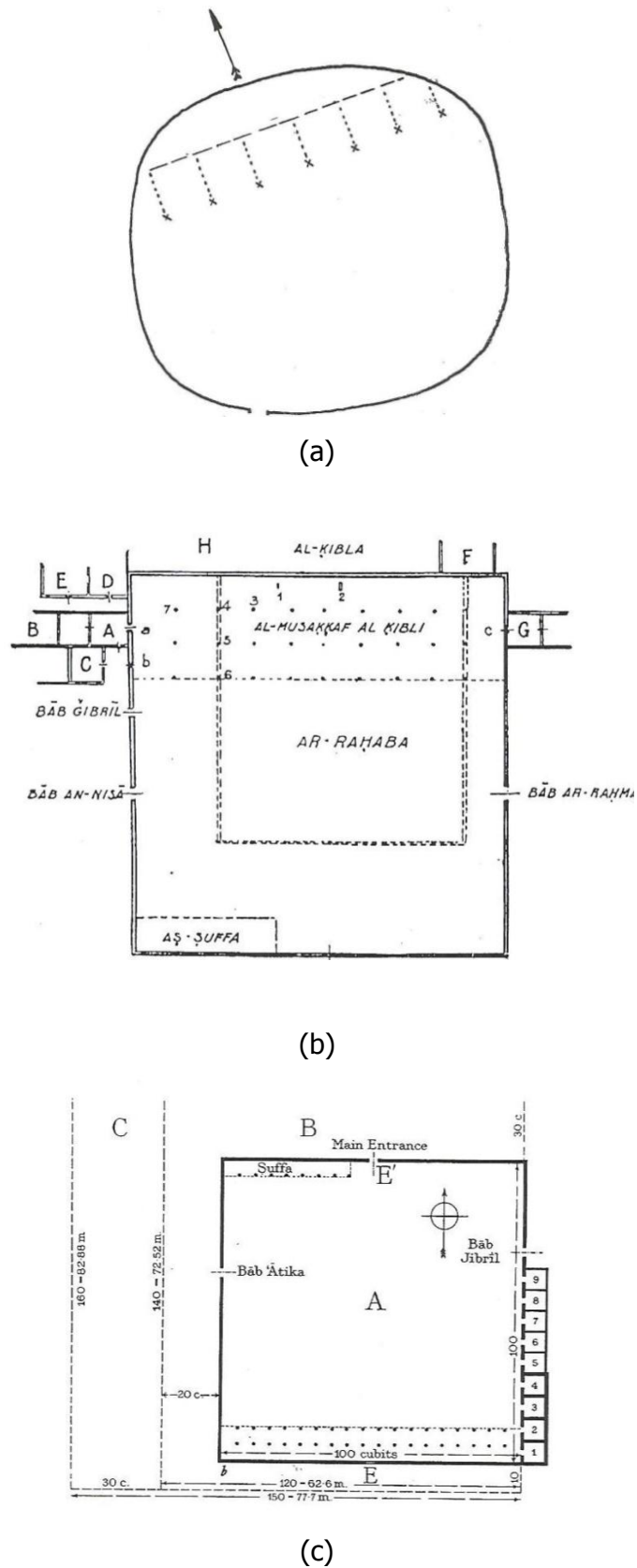
Figure 1: Madīnah, reconstruction of the plan of the Prophet's mosque and dwellings
(top to bottom: Pauty 1932; Akkouche 1935; and Creswell 1969)
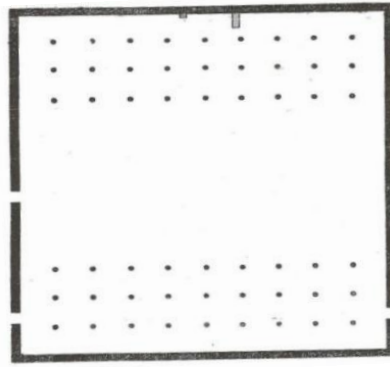
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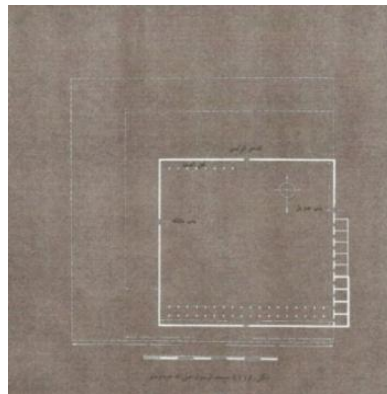
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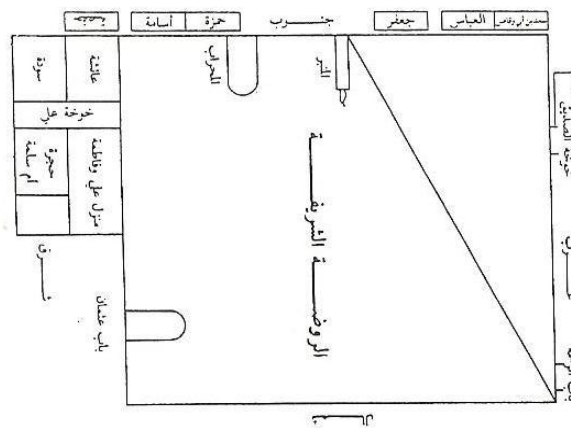
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Figure 2: Madīnah, reconstruction of the plan of the Prophet's mosque and dwellings
(top to bottom: Fikrī 1963; Māhir 1971; and al-Shanqīṭī 1991)
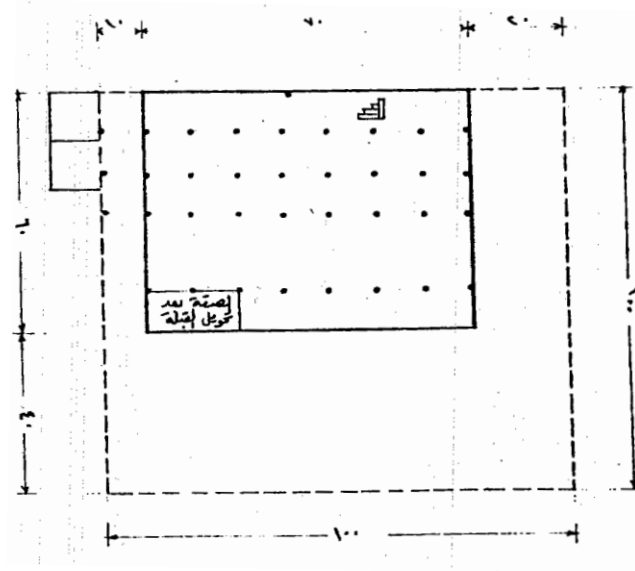
Figure 3: Plan of the mosque of the Prophet after the change of the qiblah (al-Shihrī 2001)
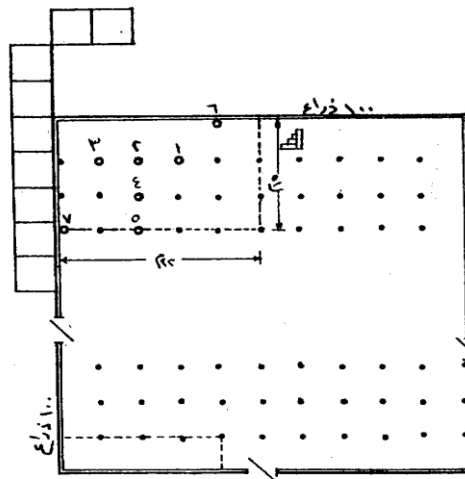
Figure 4: Plan of the final shape of the mosque in the time of the Prophet with the positions of the famous *isṭiwānāt* indicated (al-Shihrī 2001)
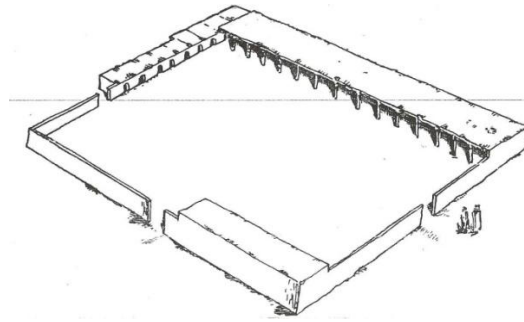
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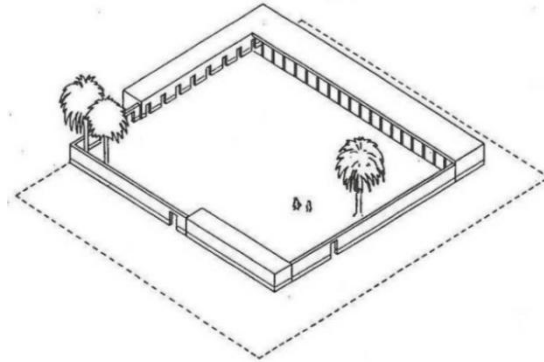
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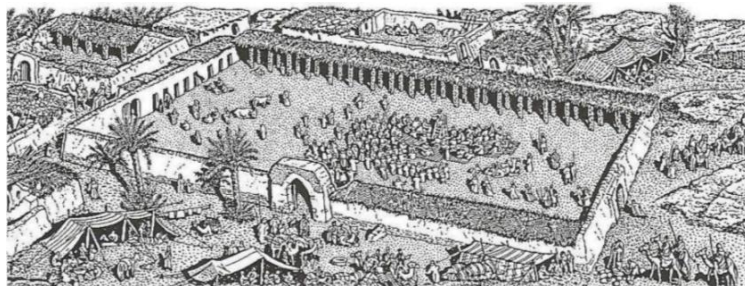
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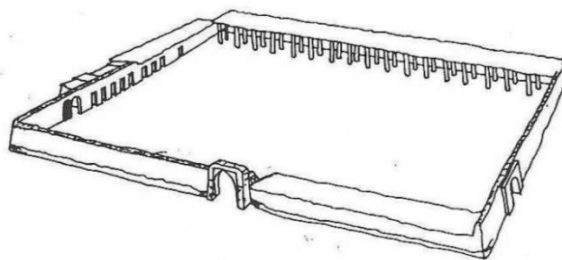
(d)

Figure 5: Isometric reconstructions of the Prophet's mosque
(top to bottom: Shāfiʿī 1970; Kuban 1974; Helen and Richard Leacroft 1976; and Hillenbrand 1994)
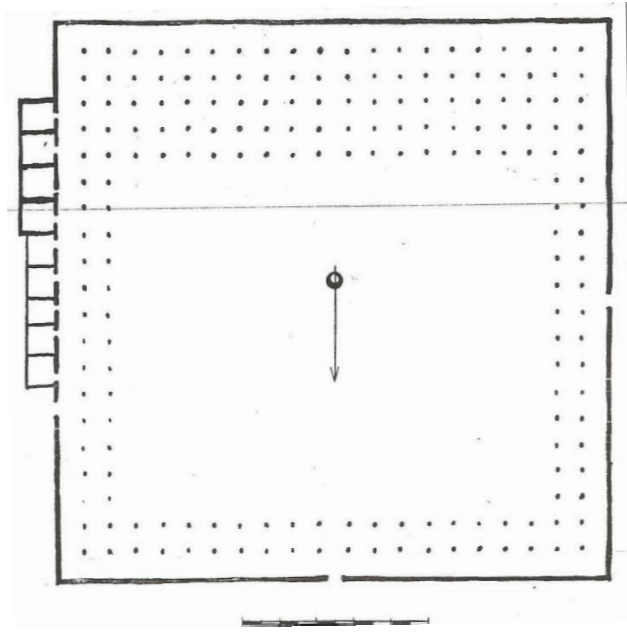
Figure 6: Plan of the Prophet's mosque as rebuilt by ʿUthmān in 29/650 (Shāfiʿī 1970)
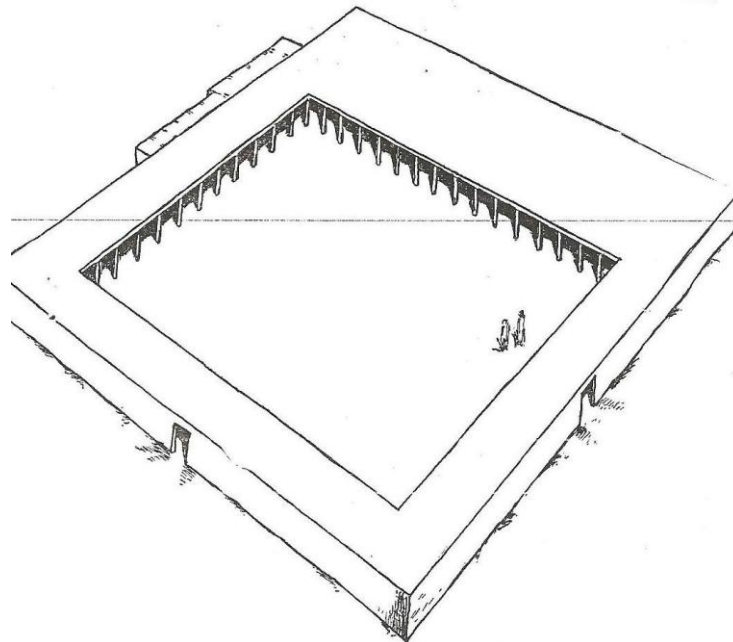
Figure 7: Isometric view of the Prophet's mosque as rebuilt by ʿUthmān in 29/650
(Shāfiʿī 1970)
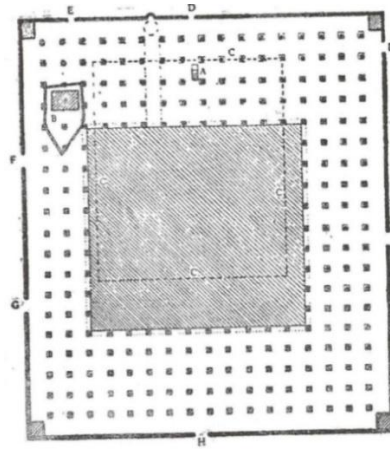
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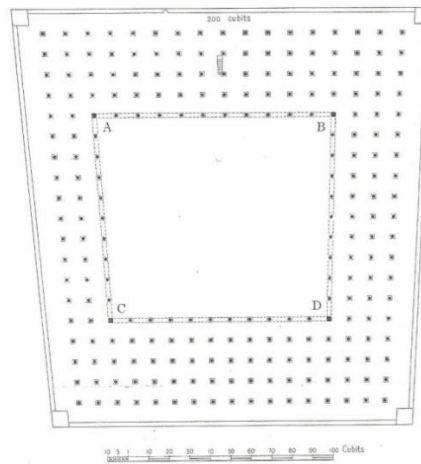
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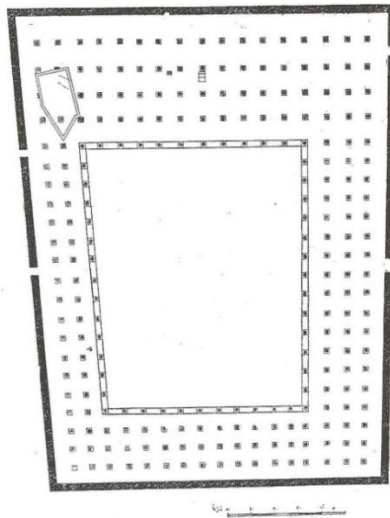
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Figure 8: Plan of the Prophet's mosque in the time of al-Walīd (top to bottom: Sauvaget 1947; Creswell 1969; and Fikrī 1963)

↑

Qiblah direction
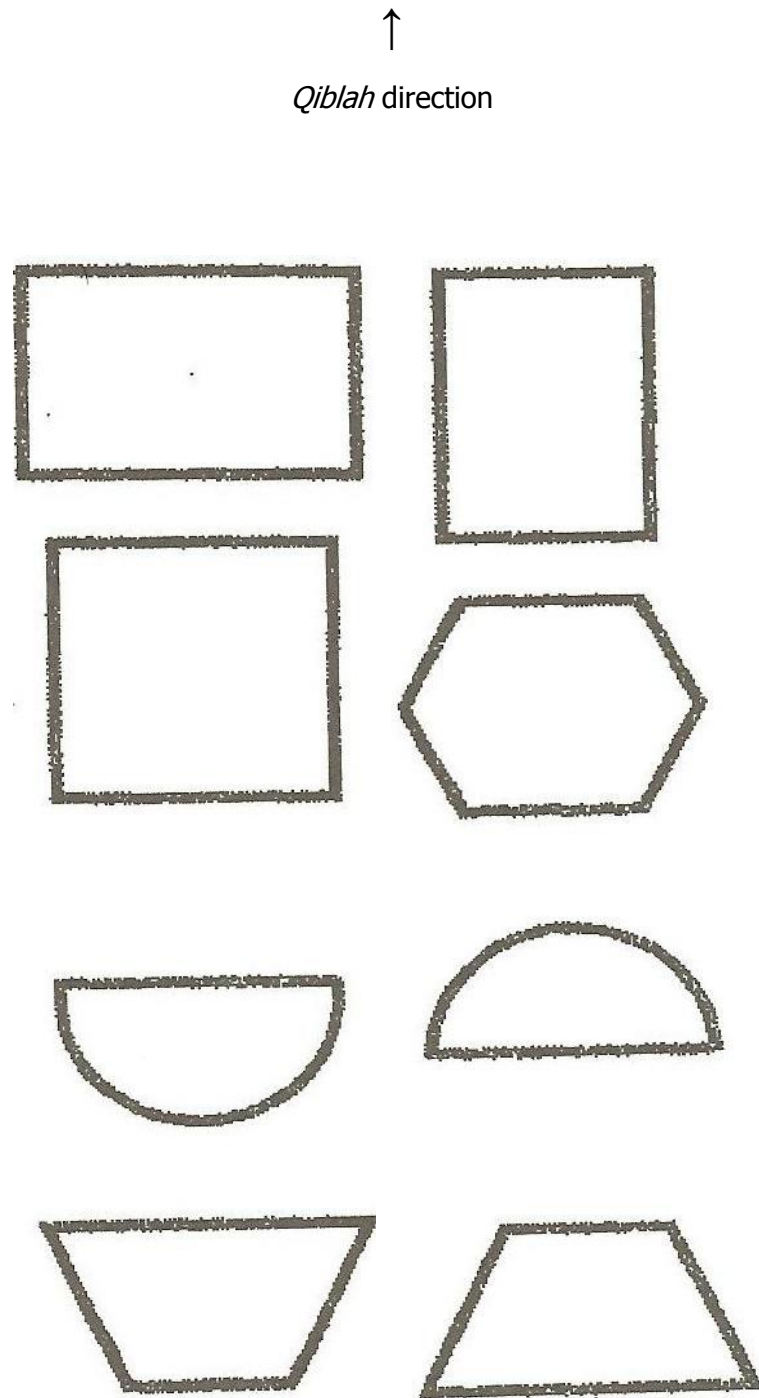
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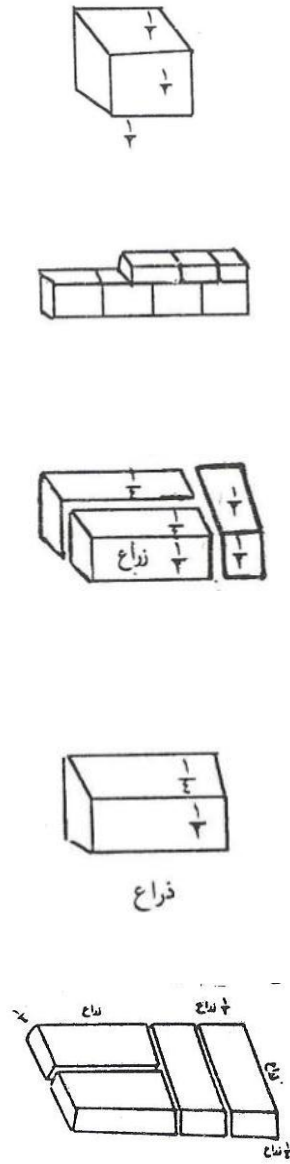
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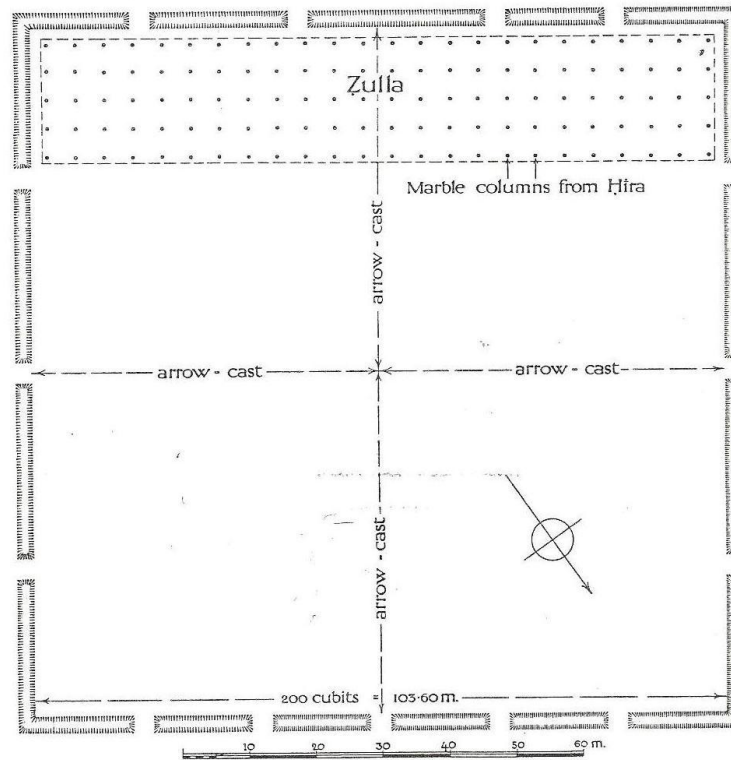
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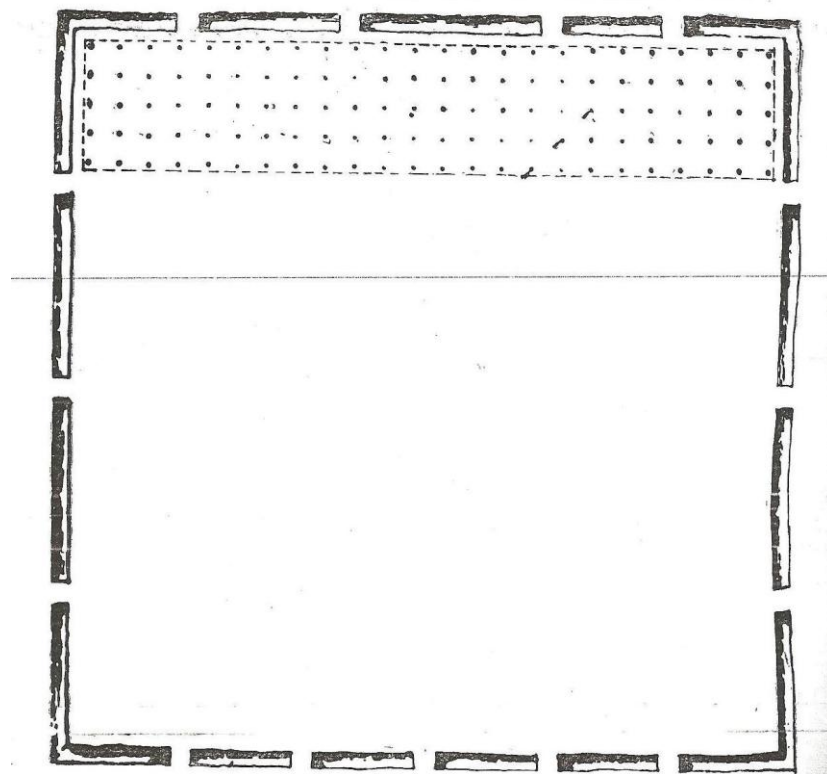
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Figure 11: Kūfah, plan of the first mosque, (Creswell 1969 [top]; and Shāfiʿī 1970)
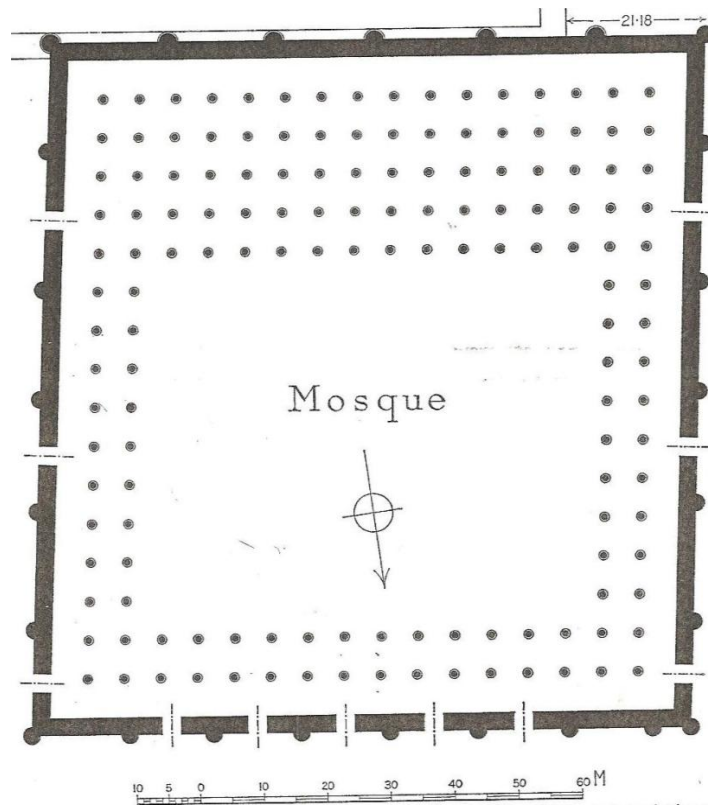
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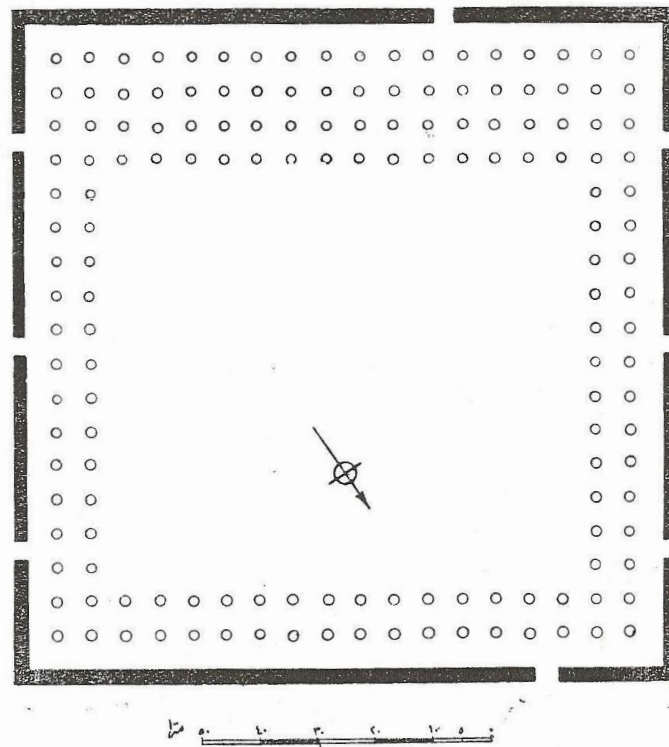
(b)

Figure 12: Kūfah, reconstruction of the plan of the mosque as rebuilt by Ziyād in 50/670 (Creswell 1969 [top]; and Fikrī 1963)
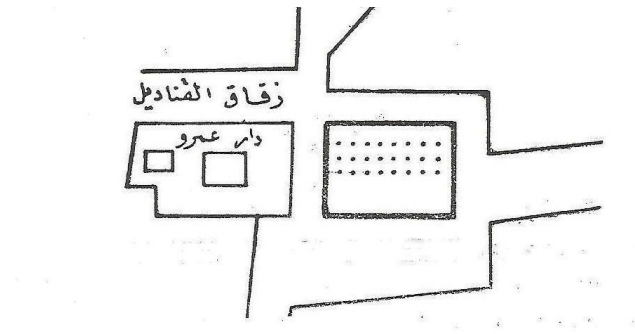
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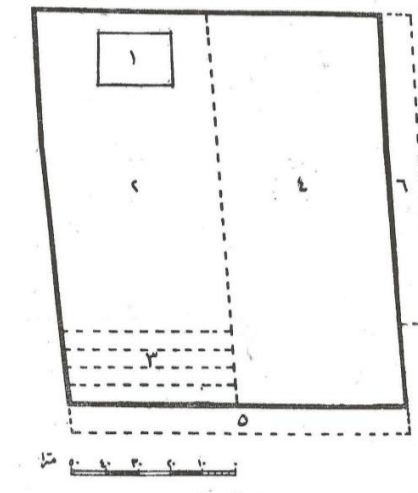
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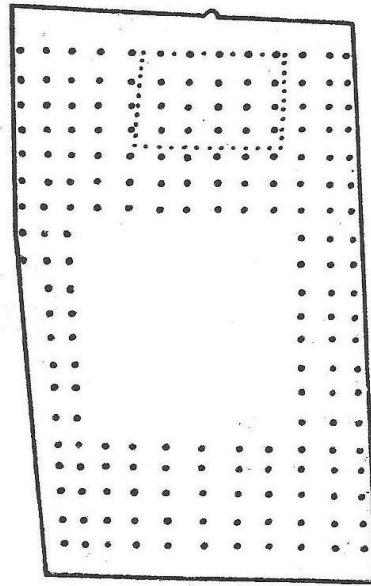
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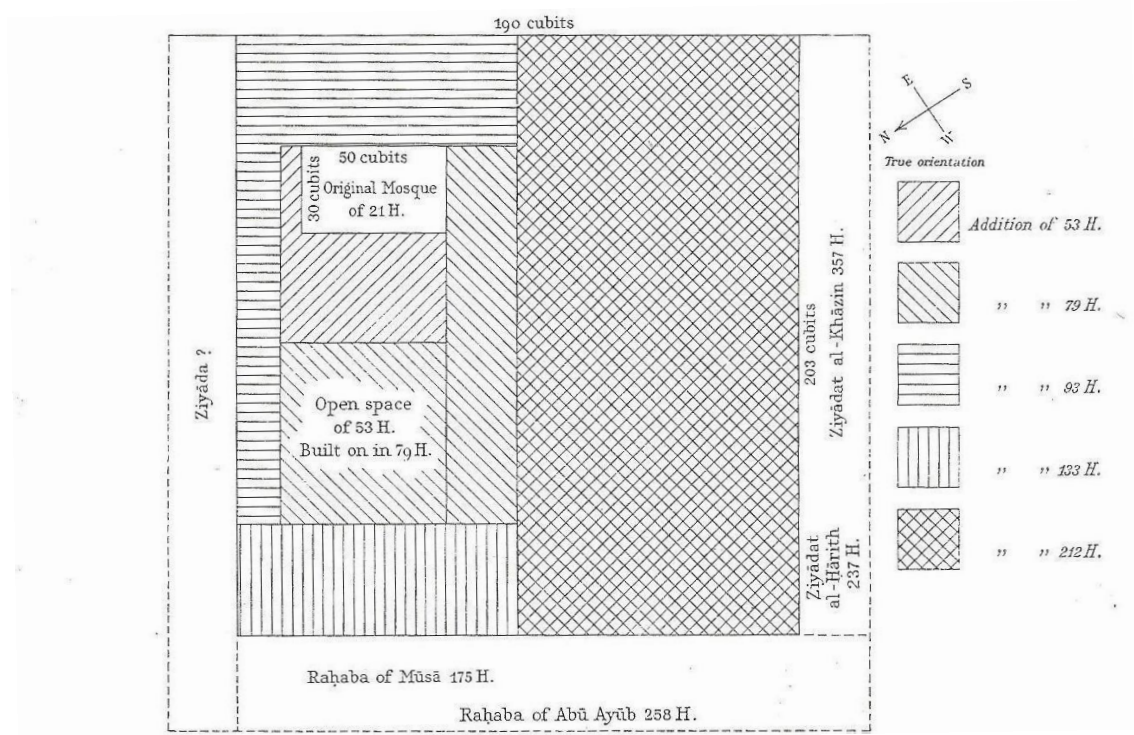
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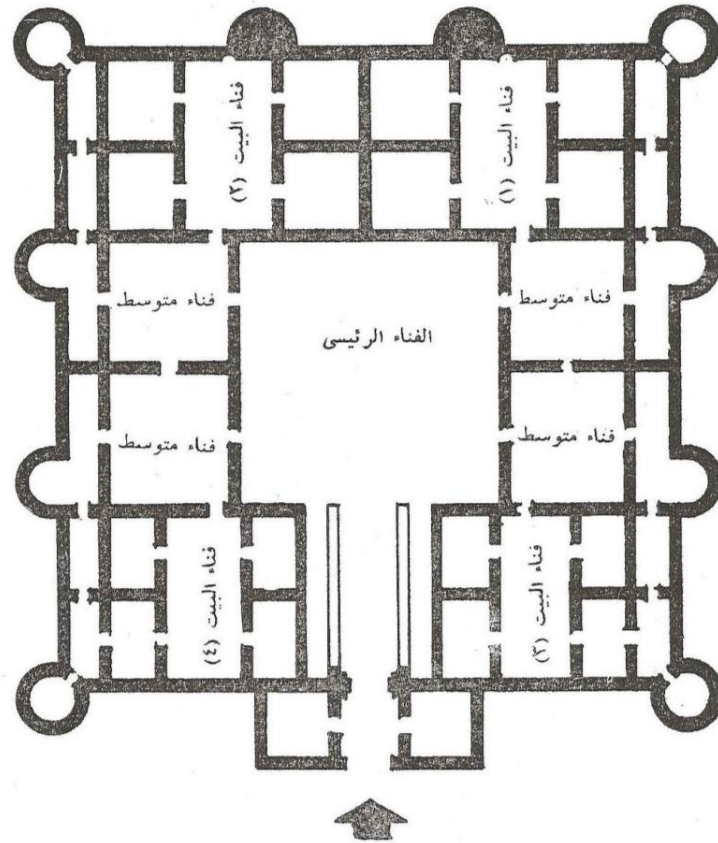
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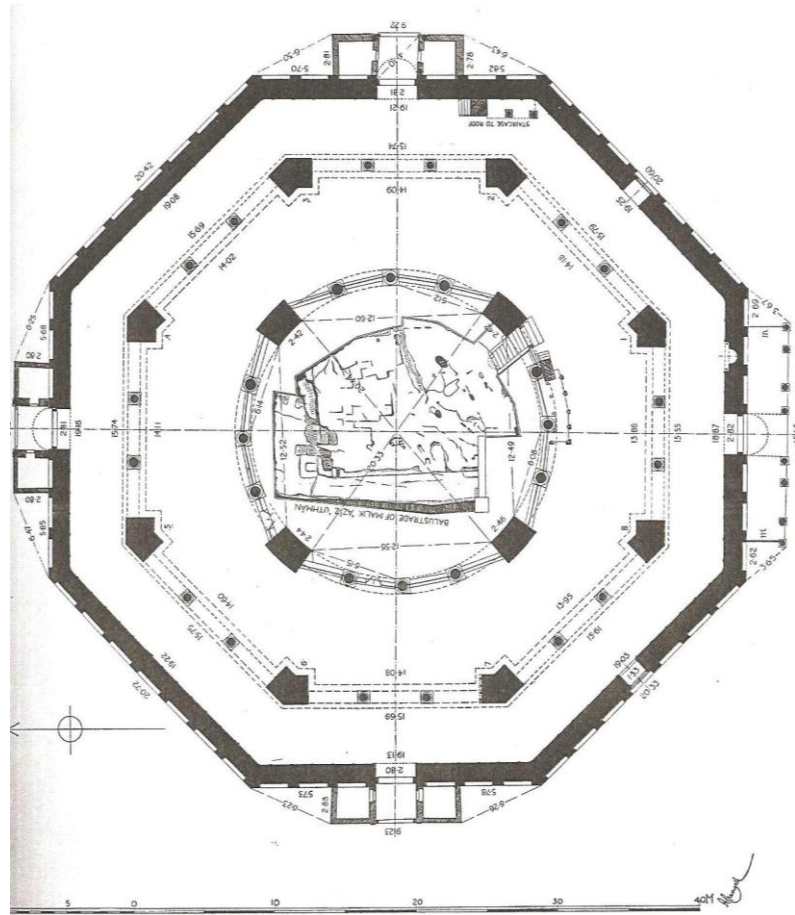
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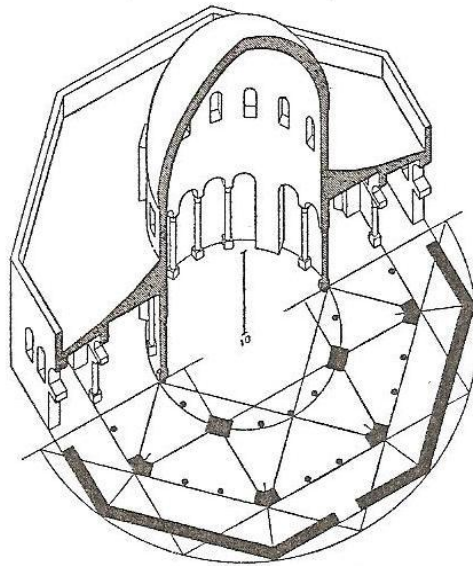
Figure 19: Jerusalem, plan of the Dome of the Rock (Choisy 1899)
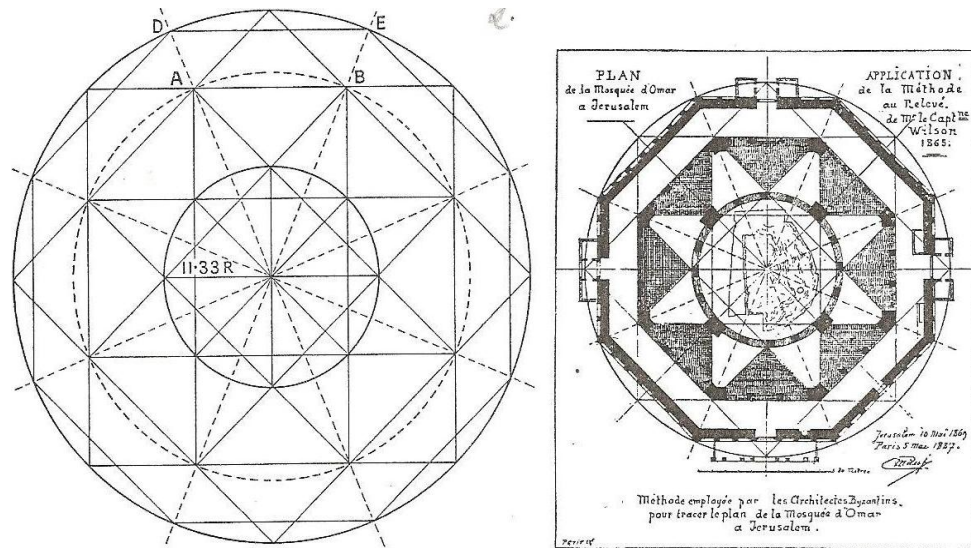
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(Creswell 1969)
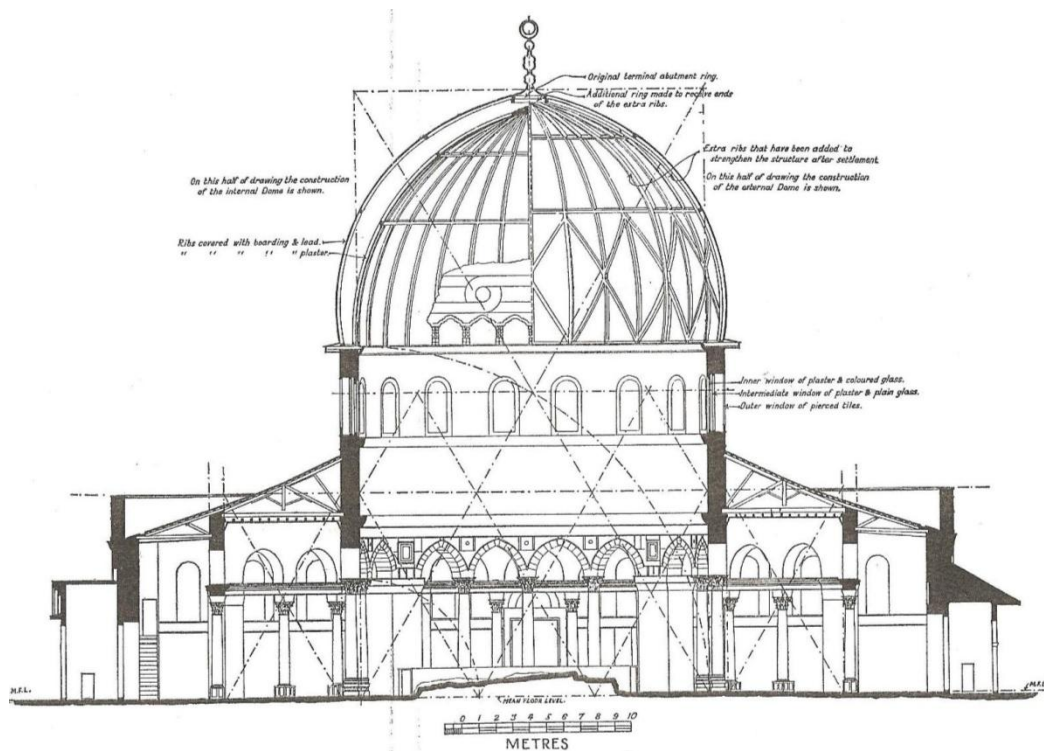
Figure 21: The late Ernest Richmond's drawing of the Dome of the Rock, section on
east and west axis looking south (Creswell 1969)
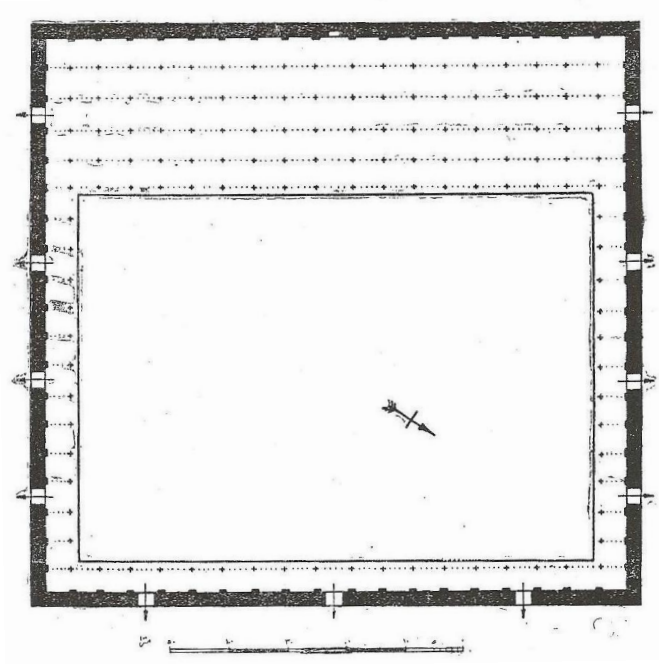
Figure 22: Wāsiṭ, plan of al-Ḥajjāj's mosque (Safar 1945)
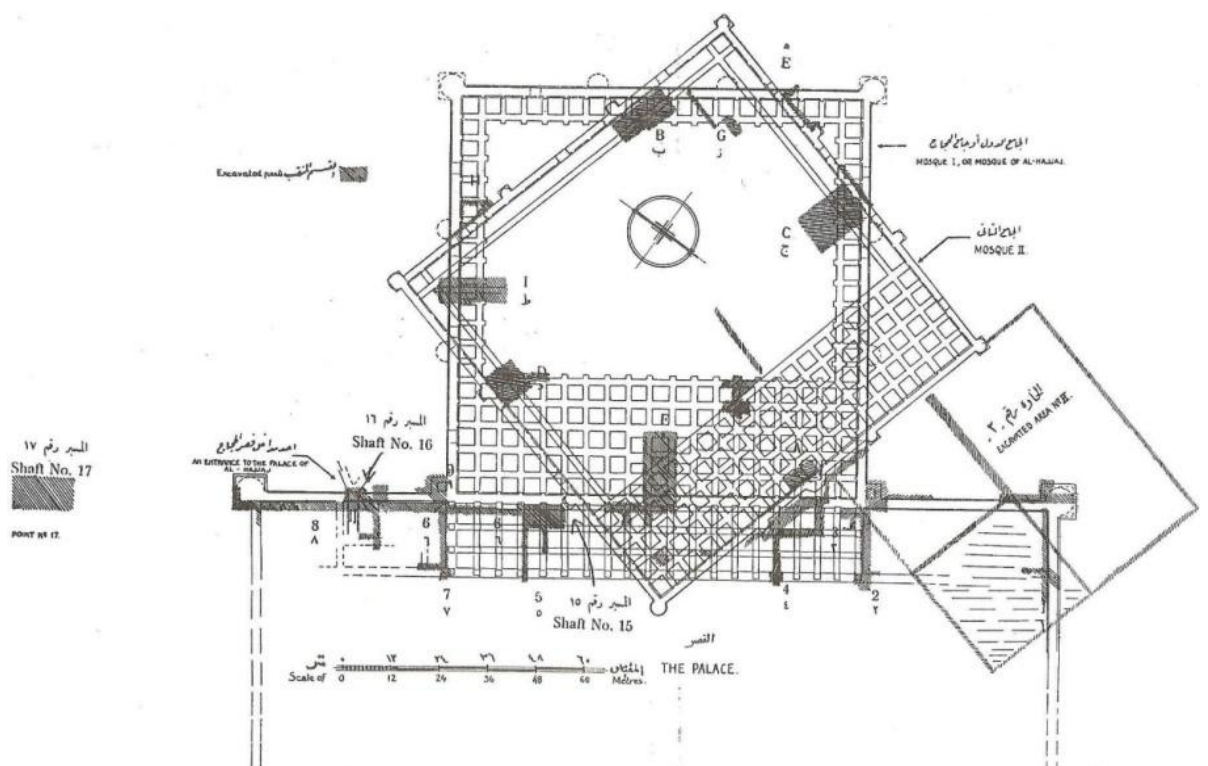
Figure 23: Wāsiṭ, ground plan of mosque I and II (mosque III is identical) and the palace (Safar 1945)

(a)

(b)
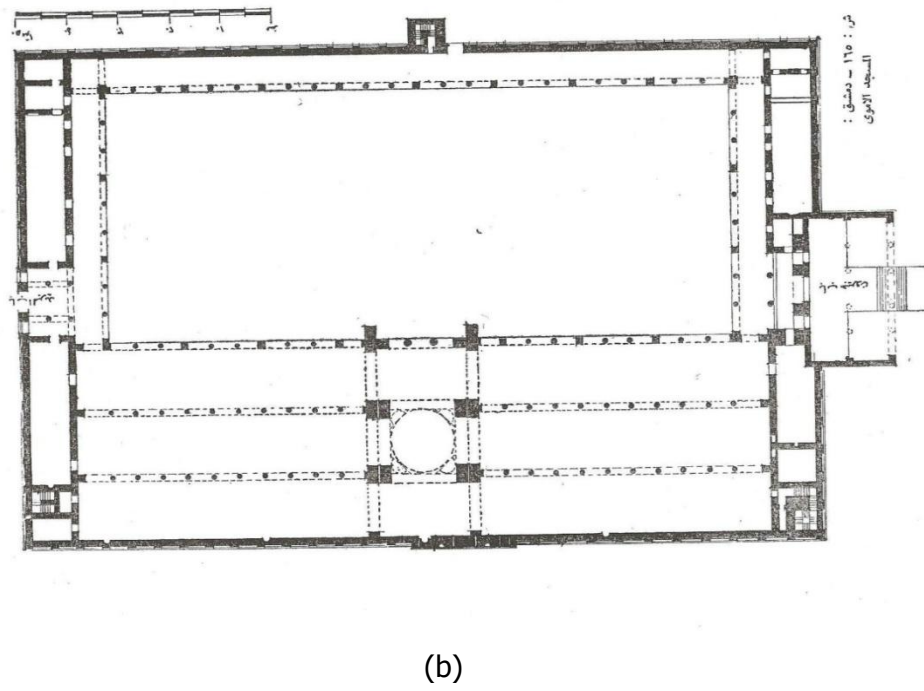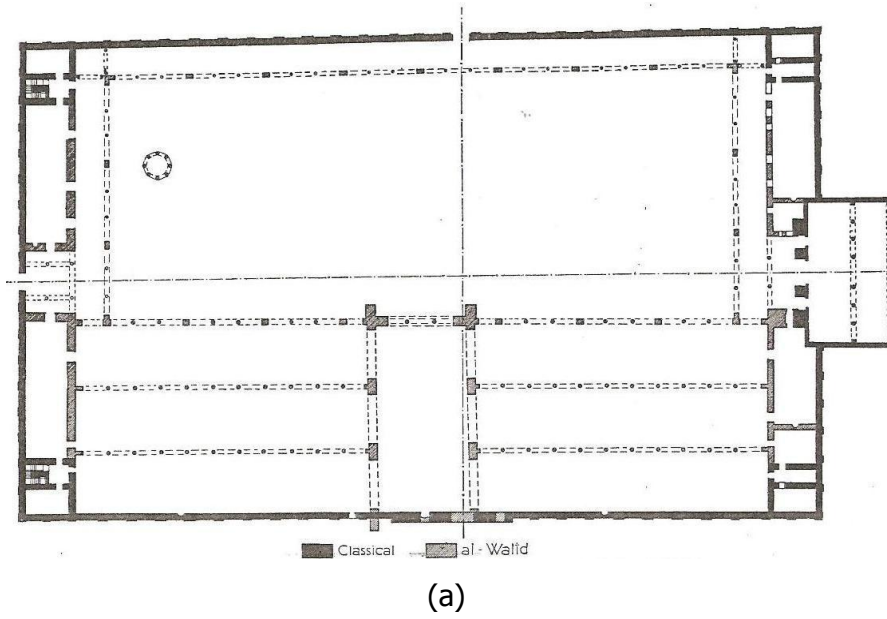
Figure 24: Damascus, plan of the Umayyad mosque (Creswell 1969 [top]; and Shāfiʿī 1970)
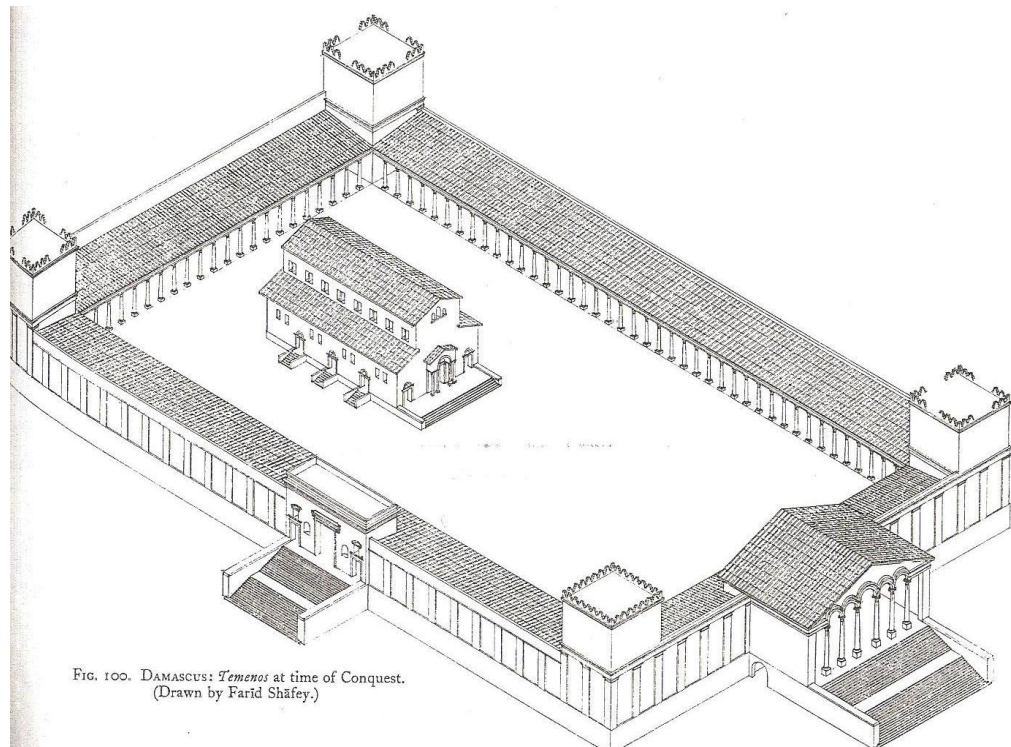
Figure 25: Damascus, Shāfiʿī's drawing of the Temenos at time of conquest (Creswell 1969)
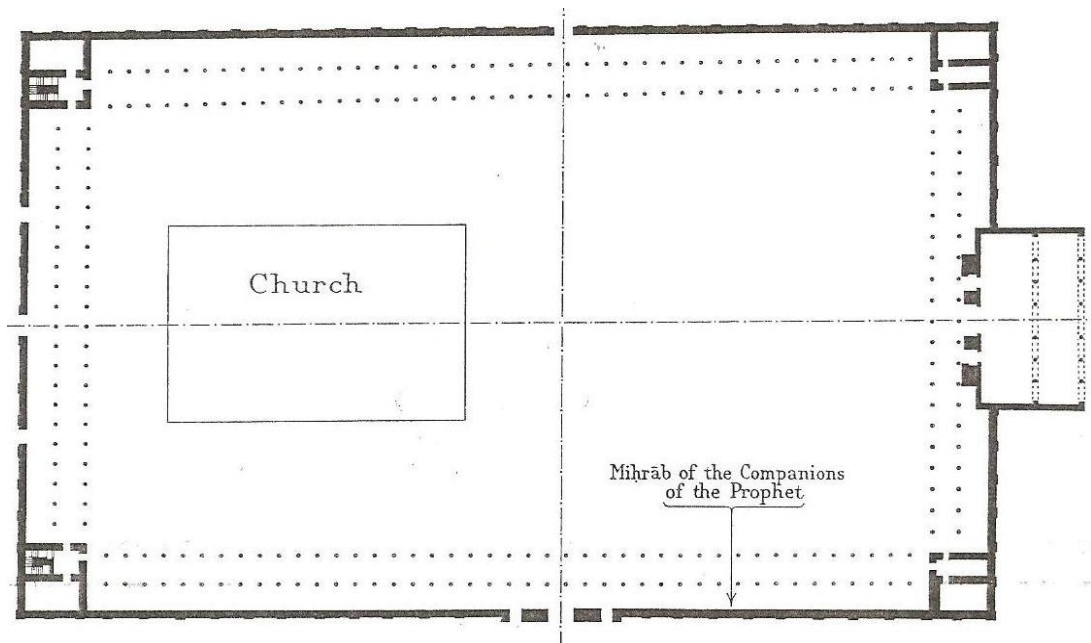
Figure 26: Damascus, state of the Temenos from 14/635 to 85/705 (Creswell 1969)
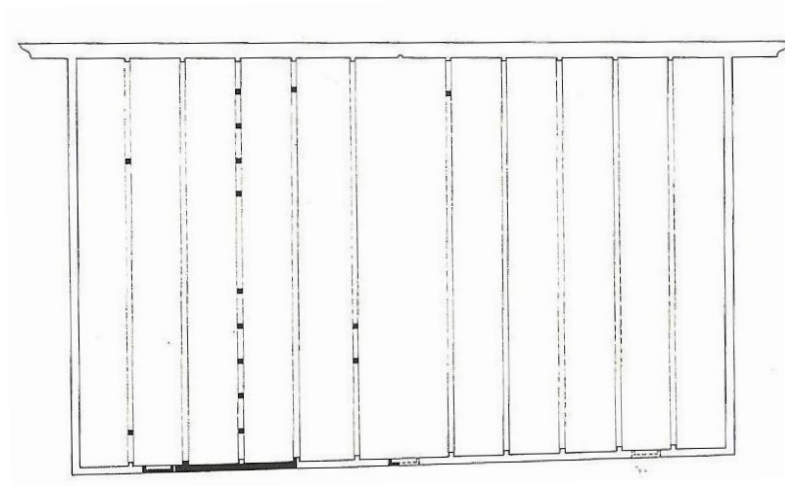
Scale approximately 1:1000

Figure 27: Jerusalem, Raby's reconstruction of the pre-Marwānīd Aqṣā mosque (Johns 1999)
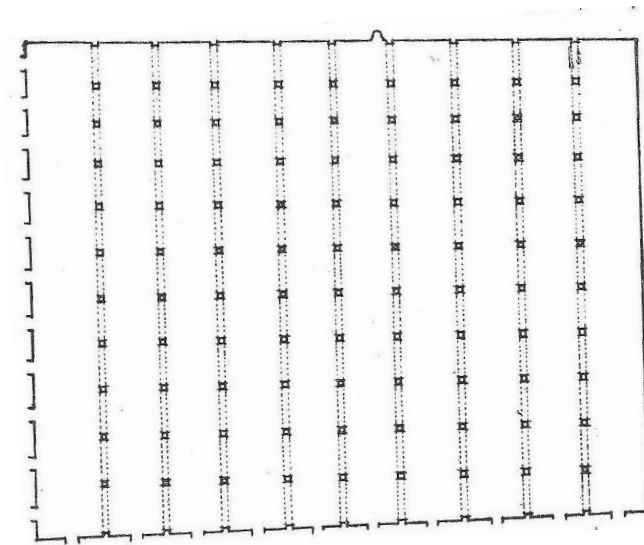
Figure 28: Jerusalem, plan of the Aqṣā mosque (Fikrī 1999)
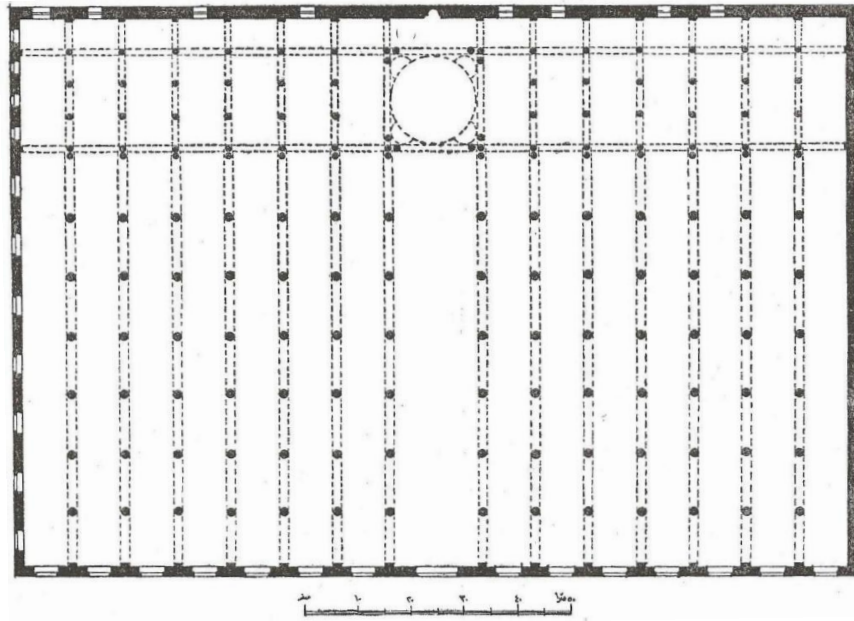
Figure 29: Jerusalem, plan of the Marwānīd Aqṣā mosque (Shāfiʿī 1970)
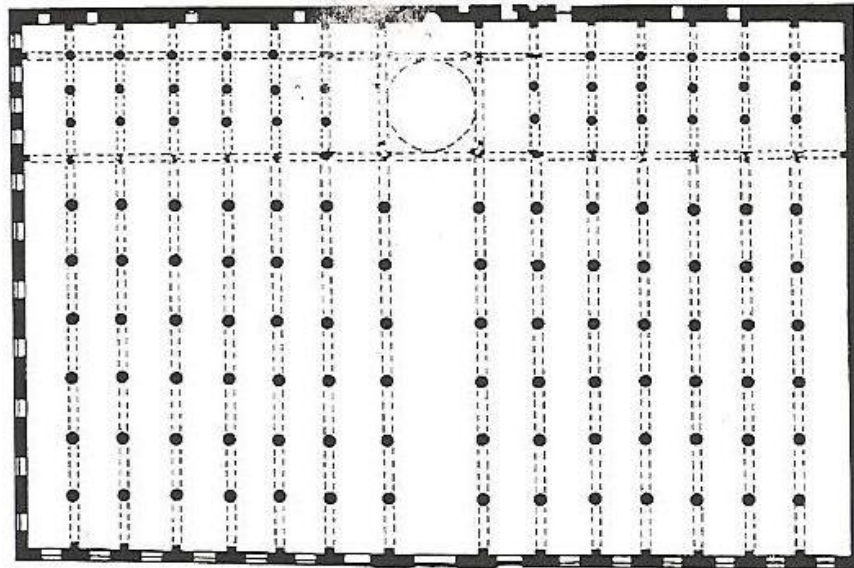
Scale approximately 1:1600

Figure 30: Jerusalem, Hamilton's (1949) plan of the Marwānīd Aqṣā mosque (Johns 1999)

شكل (٨٦) — المسجد الجامع
بالقيروان — رسم تخطيطى لنظامه
فى عهد هشام بن عبد الملك ، سنة
١٠٥ (٧٢٣ م) ، (من تصميم
المؤلف ورسمه) .
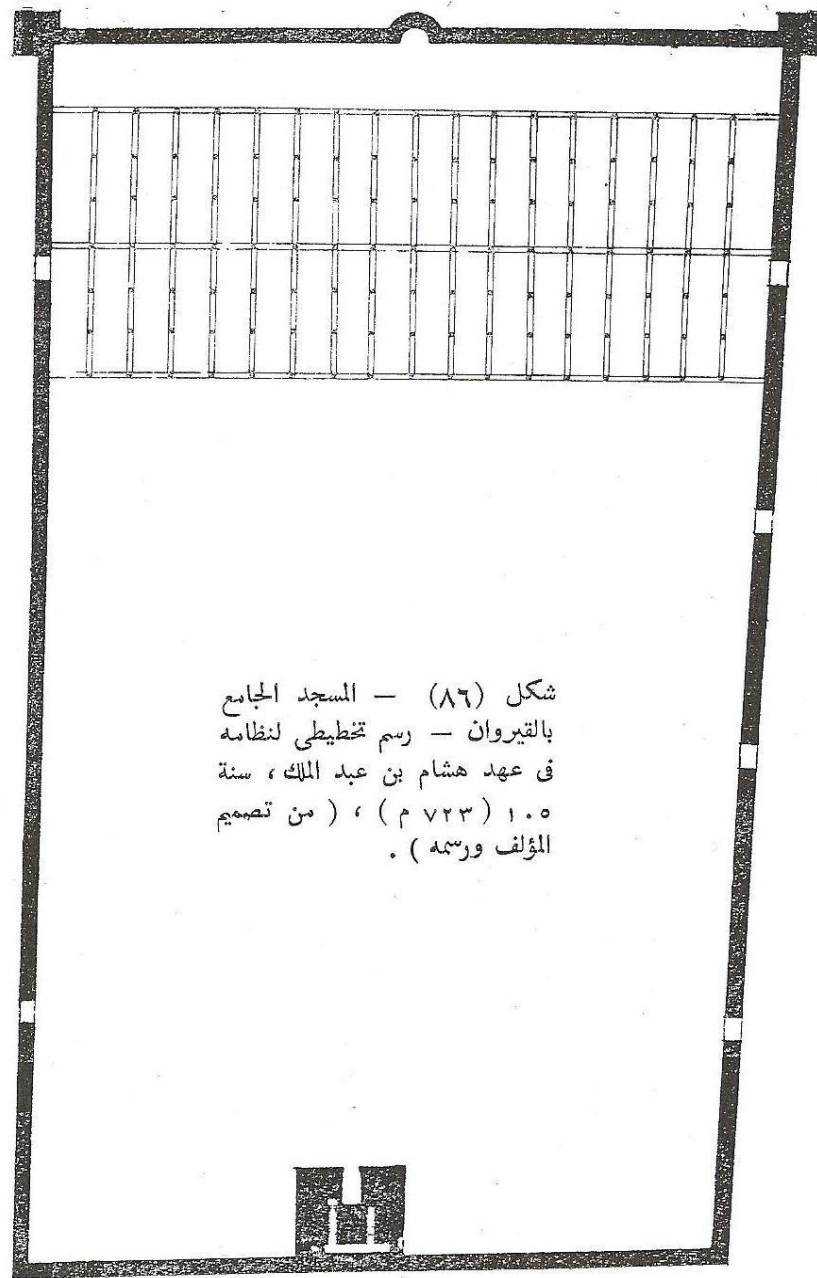
Figure 31: Qayrawān, plan of the great mosque in the time of Hishām b. ʿAbd al-Malik
in 105/723 (Fikrī 1963)
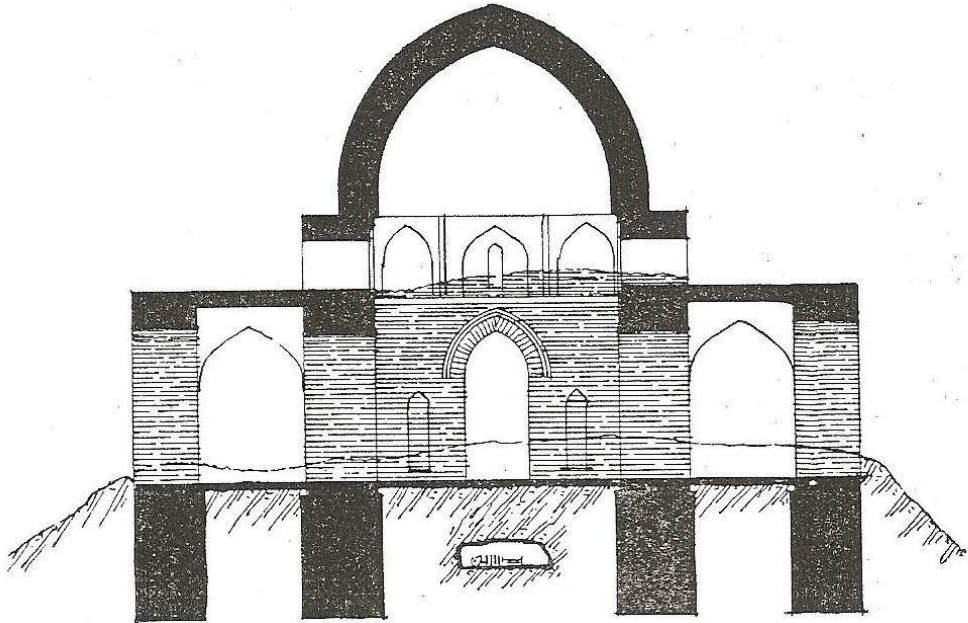
Figure 32: Samarra, Qubbat al-Ṣulaibiyyah (Shāfiʿī 1970)
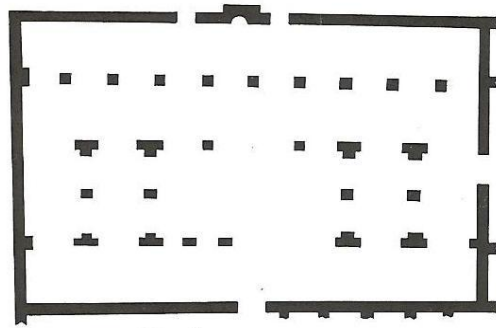
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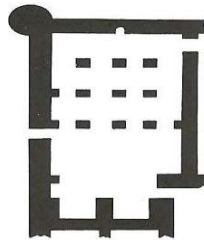
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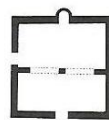
(c)

Scale approximately 1:300

Figure 33: Creswell's reconstruction of the mosques of ʿAnjar (a), Khirbat al-Minyah (b) and Jabal Says (c) (Johns 1999)
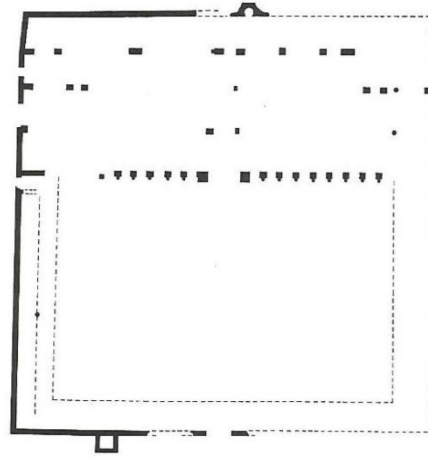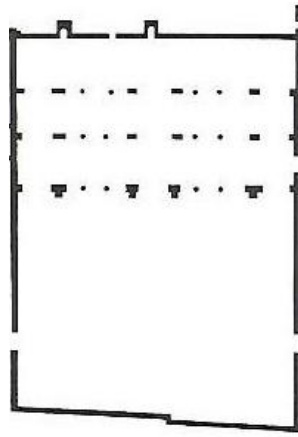
Scale approximately 1:700

Figure 34: Ḥarrān, Creswell and Allan's (1989) reconstruction of the mosque (Johns 1999)
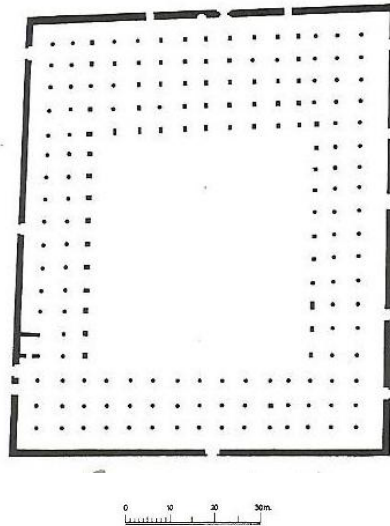
Scale approximately 1:1600

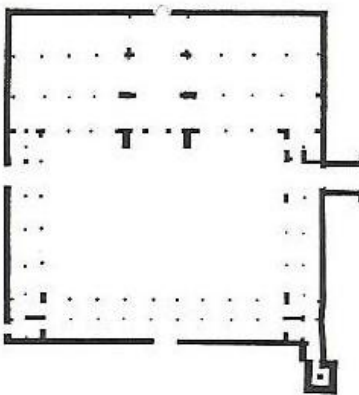Figure 35: Ṣanʿāʾ, Finster's (1978) reconstruction of al-Walīd's mosque (Johns 1999)

Scale approximately 1:700

Figure 36: Ruṣāfah, Ulbert's (1990) reconstruction plan of the mosque (Johns 1999)

Scale approximately 1:700

Figure 37: ʿAmmān, Northedge's (1992) reconstruction of the plan of the mosque (Johns 1999)

Scale approximately 1:700

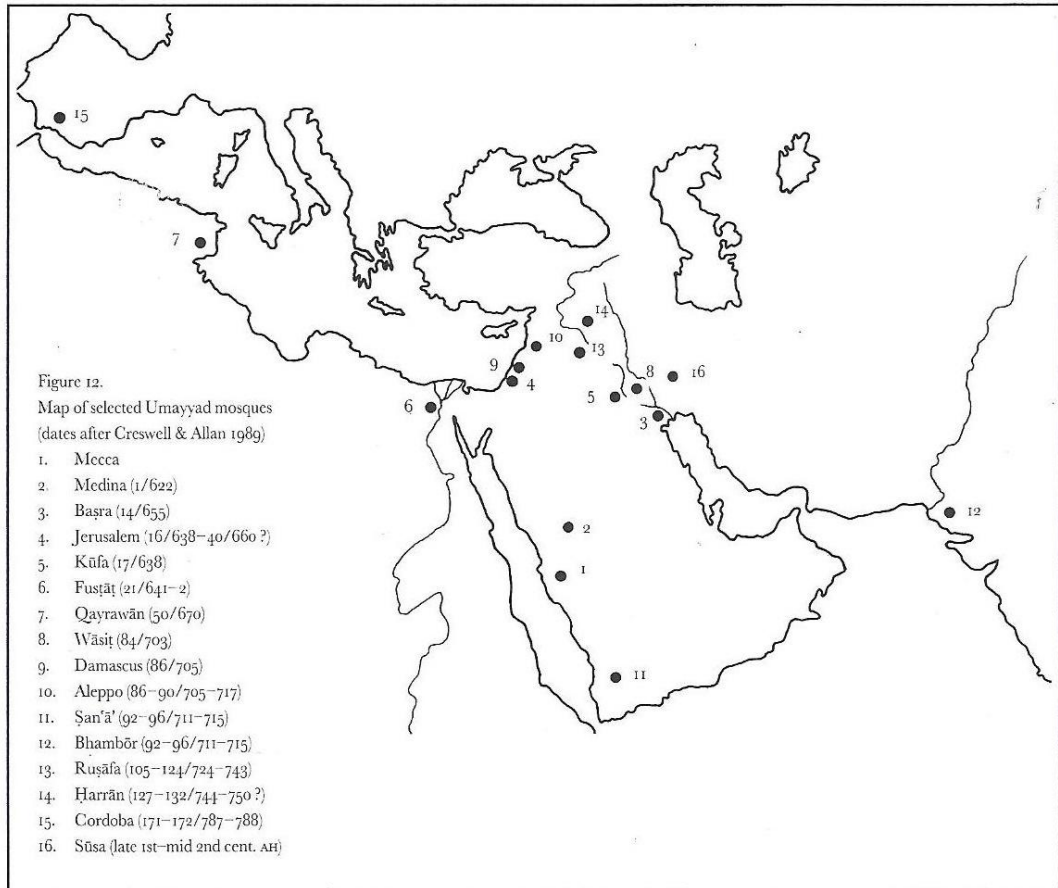Figure 38: Darʿah, Creswell's reconstruction of the plan of the mosque (Johns 1999)

Figure 12.

Map of selected Umayyad mosques
(dates after Creswell & Allan 1989)

1. Mecca
2. Medina (1/622)
3. Baṣra (14/655)
4. Jerusalem (16/638–40/660 ?)
5. Kūfa (17/638)
6. Fusṭāṭ (21/641–2)
7. Qayrawān (50/670)
8. Wāsiṭ (84/703)
9. Damascus (86/705)
10. Aleppo (86–90/705–717)
11. Ṣan'ā' (92–96/711–715)
12. Bhambōr (92–96/711–715)
13. Ruṣāfa (105–124/724–743)
14. Ḥarrān (127–132/744–750 ?)
15. Cordoba (171–172/787–788)
16. Sūsa (late 1st–mid 2nd cent. AH)

Figure 39: Map of selected Umayyad mosques (Johns 1999)

Figure 40: Jerusalem, the so called '*miḥrāb* of Sulaymān' under Qubbat al-Ṣakhrah (72/962) (Fehérvári 1993)

Figure 41: The reverse of the so-called 'Miḥrāb and ʿAnazah' dirhem (Miles 2002)

Figure 42: The *miḥrāb* at the mosque of Qaṣr al-Ukhayḍar (Shāfiʿī 1970)

Figure 43: The palace of Khirbat al-Mafjar, a piece of mosaic floor containing images of animals (Ettinghausen 2002)
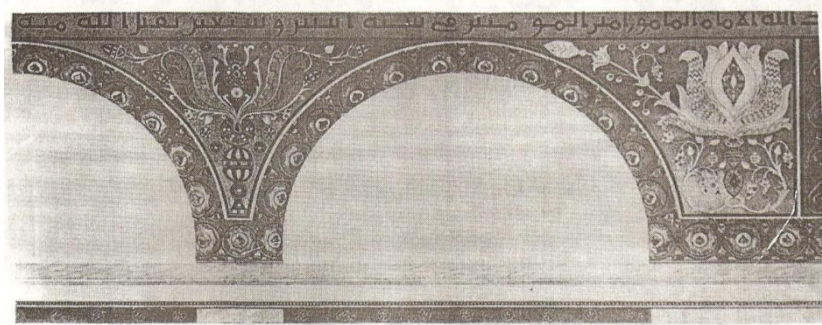

Figure 44: Calligraphic band and mosaic showing floral designs on the arches of the Dome of the Rock (al-Pāsha 1990)
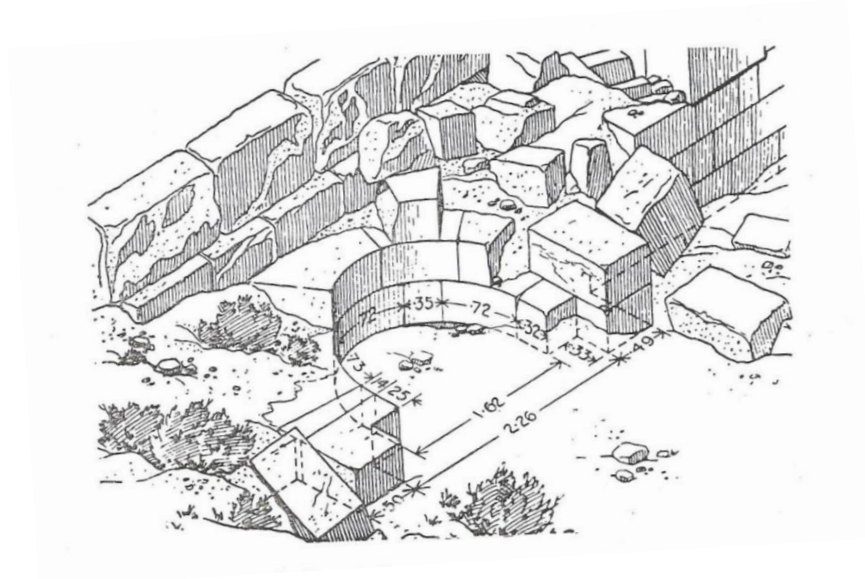
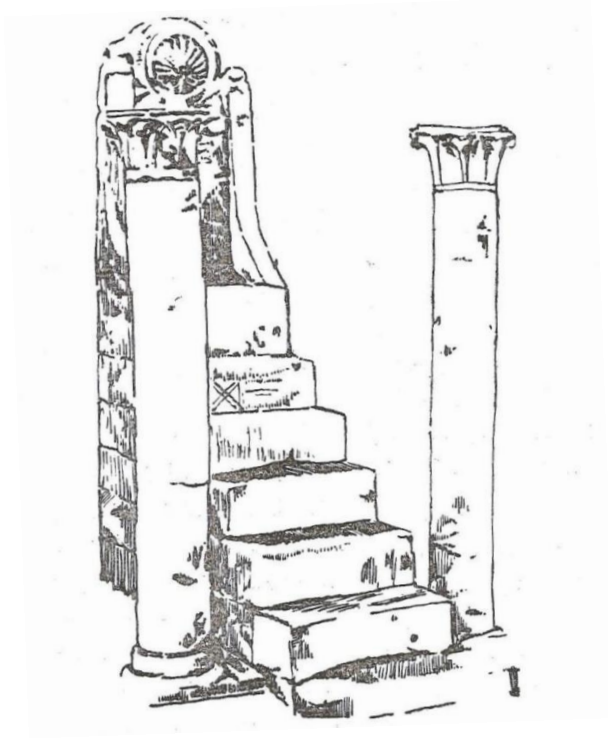Figure 45: A stone *miḥrāb* at Qaṣr al-Mshatta (Shāfiʿī 1970)

Figure 46: A drawing of the pulpit found by Quibble at Saqqara, Egypt (Shāfiʿī 1970)