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The Mosque of Baybars al-Bunduqdārī in Cairo [avec 1 planche].

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THE MOSQUE OF BAYBARS AL-BUNDUQDĀRĪ IN CAIRO ⁽¹⁾

Jonathan M. BLOOM

When the Mamluk historian Taqī al-Dīn Aḥmad b. ʿAlī al-Maqrīzī summed up the patronage of pious constructions by Sultan al-Malik al-Zāhir Baybars al-Bunduqdārī (r. 650-76/1260-77), he had this to say :

He had a number of waqfs in Egypt, among them a *waqf al-turuḥā*ʾ for washing [the corpses of] indigent Muslims as well as shrouding and burying them. It was one of the most utilitarian of waqfs. In addition, [he founded] the Zāhiriyya tomb (*al-turbat al-Zāhiriyya*) in the Qarāfa cemetery, the Zāhiriyya madrasa in the district (*ḥaṭṭ*) of Bayn al-Qaṣrayn in al-Qāhira, and the Zāhiri congregational mosque (*ḡāmiʿ*) beyond the Bāb al-Futūḥ of al-Qāhira. The Sulṭān (ordered) constructed the causeway (*ḡisr*) leading to Damietta, on which he had sixteen bridges (*qaṭara*) built; the bridge on the canal of Abūʾl-Munaḡḡa, which is the finest in Egypt; and the Lion Bridges between al-Qāhira and Miṣr on the Great Canal (*ḥaliḡ*); he had dug the Alexandria canal, the Tanāḥ channel (*bahr*) and the Ṣamāṣam channel in the province of Qulyūbiyya; and the Sardūs canal, and he had the Damietta channel repaired ⁽²⁾.

In addition to these projects, still others — mainly repairing fortresses recovered by him from the Mongols or the Crusaders — are recorded in over fifty monumental inscriptions from Palestine and Syria ⁽³⁾.

Of these numerous foundations and restorations in Egypt, only five monuments attributed to Baybars have survived : the Zāhiriyya madrasa, the bridge on the canal

⁽¹⁾ This paper was first presented in somewhat different form in March 1981 at the annual meeting of the American Research Center in Egypt in Boston.

⁽²⁾ Taqī al-Dīn Aḥmad b. ʿAlī al-Maqrīzī, *Kitāb al-Sulūk li-Maʾrifat Duwal al-Mulūk*, ed., Muḥammad Muṣṭafā Ziyāda, vol. 1 (Cairo, 1934-39) [hereafter *Sulūk*], pp. 638-39; Etienne Quatre-

mère, *Histoire des sultans mamlouks de l'Égypte* (Paris, 1837-45) [hereafter *Sult. Maml.*], vol. 1, pt. 2, pp. 151-53.

⁽³⁾ For these inscriptions, the most convenient list is that of Gaston Wiet in *The Encyclopaedia of Islam* [hereafter *EI*], 2nd ed. (Leiden, 1954), s.v. *Baybars I*.

of Abū'l-Munağġa, the mosque of al-Zāhir, the regulator at Illāhūn, and the *hawš* of the 'Abbasid caliphs in the Qarāfa ⁽¹⁾. Creswell added to this list the now destroyed Qaṣr al-'Umayd which stood until the 1870's west of Alexandria, and Baybars' restoration of the Roda citadel, the Shobramant causeway near Giza, the reconstruction of the walls of Alexandria, and the building of a tower near Rosetta ⁽²⁾. Two of the five extant constructions — the bridge and the regulator — are of only routine interest; however, the three others — the madrasa, the *hawš*, and the mosque — are of singular importance for the development of Mamluk architecture in Egypt. Unfortunately, the remains of two of them — the madrasa and the *hawš* of the 'Abbasid caliphs — are quite fragmentary.

The madrasa was built on the site formerly occupied by the Hall of Tents and the Hall of the Lotus of the Great Fatimid palace, adjacent to the Ṣālihiyya madrasa. Already in ruins when al-Maqrīzī wrote in the ninth/fifteenth century, it nonetheless stood until 1874 when a road was cut right through it from the Maydān Bayt al-Qāḍī to the Sūq al-Naḥḥāsīn, opposite the mausoleum of Sultan Qalā'ūn. In June 1882 its minaret fell. All that remains today is an entirely unremarkable block about 5 by 11 meters, which formed the lower part of the west corner, containing a decorated relieving arch and joggled lintels ⁽³⁾. In addition, a superb pair of doors were moved from the madrasa to the old French Legation in Cairo during the nineteenth century ⁽⁴⁾. Creswell reconstructed the general organization of the plan as having four iwans : the one for the Shafī'is was in the southeast (*qibli*), for the Hanafis opposite, for the students of ḥadīṭ in the north-east, and for the students of Qur'ān-reading in the southwest ⁽⁵⁾. Using nineteenth-century views of the Sūq al-Naḥḥāsīn, Creswell could demonstrate that its portal was surmounted by a muqarnas hood or stalactite portal, the first instance of that form introduced into Egypt from Syria ⁽⁶⁾.

The *hawš* (enclosure) of the 'Abbasid caliphs is equally fragmentary. The mausoleum in its center, commonly referred to as the Mausoleum of the 'Abbasid caliphs is dated ca. 640/1242 on the basis of a wooden railing on an interior cenotaph which asks God's blessings for Abū Naḍla Ḥāšim, the ambassador for the 'Abbasid caliph. He died on

⁽¹⁾ K.A.C. Creswell, *The Muslim Architecture of Egypt* [hereafter *MAE*], vol 2 (Oxford, 1959), pp. 142-77.

⁽²⁾ *MAE* 2 : 175-77.

⁽³⁾ *MAE* 2 : 143-44.

⁽⁴⁾ *MAE* 2 : 144-46; Max van Berchem discussed these doors and their inscription in *Maté-*

riaux pour un Corpus Inscriptionum Arabicarum, I^{re} partie : Egypte, vol. 1 (Paris, 1903), p. 120.

⁽⁵⁾ *MAE* 2 : 143 and Taqī al-Dīn Aḥmad b. 'Alī al-Maqrīzī, *al-Mawā'iz wa'l-I'tibār bi-Dīkr al-Ḥiṭaṭ wa'l-Atār* [hereafter *Ḥiṭaṭ*] (Cairo, 1853), vol. 2, pp. 378-79.

⁽⁶⁾ *MAE* 2 : 145-47.

10 Rabīʿ II 640⁽¹⁾. In addition seventeen stelae record the burial there of members of the ʿAbbasid family in Egypt between 680/1281-2 and 826/1423, and two stelae, dated 664/1266 and 668/1269-70, record the burial of two infant sons of Baybars⁽²⁾. Creswell concluded that the mausoleum was built for Abū Naḍla and subsequently taken over by Baybars, who is presumed to have added the square enclosure because its seven miḥrābs and cresting are stylistically close to the so-called Mausoleum of Muṣṭafā Pāša, built about the same time⁽³⁾. While this attribution is generally accepted, apart from the date 640 on the wooden railing, the mausoleum seems to lack any historical inscription⁽⁴⁾. In addition, no contemporary source mentions either this ambassador or his burial place, let alone that of the ʿAbbasid caliphs. Al-Maqrizī records that al-Malik al-Šāliḥ Nağm al-Dīn Ayyūb received the ambassador from al-Mustansir, Muḥyī al-Dīn b. al-Ġawzī in 637/1239-40, but this man was still alive in 642/1244-45 as ambassador from al-Mustaʿsim⁽⁵⁾. Ninth/fifteenth-century sources, however, such as al-Maqrizī, al-Saḥāwī, and al-Suyūṭī, do mention that in 701/1301 the second ʿAbbasid caliph in Egypt, al-Ḥākim bi-amr Allāh Abū'l-ʿAbbās, « was buried near al-Sayyida Nafīsa, the first of them to do so. It has remained their burial place to this day »⁽⁶⁾. In short, there is no compelling reason to insist that this mausoleum was built around the year 640 for an ambassador from the ʿAbbasid caliph, nor — apart from stylistic evidence — is there any reason to assume that Baybars built the enclosure walls.

If not for the ʿAbbasid ambassador, for whom else might this mausoleum have been planned? It is an elegantly decorated domed cubical structure of the highest quality, measuring slightly under ten meters to a side and slightly over thirteen meters high. It is oriented almost directly to the south, the miḥrāb set at 173°⁽⁷⁾. The peculiar

(1) *MAE* 2 : 93 and Etienne Combe et al., *Répertoire chronologique d'épigraphie arabe* [hereafter *RCEA*] (Cairo, 1931-75), vol. 11, pp. 138-39. n° 4206.

(2) *MAE* 2 : 92-93.

(3) Creswell dates it to 667-72/1269-73 : *MAE* 2 : 93 and 174-75.

(4) To my knowledge, the extensive cycle of carved and painted inscriptions visible in photographs of the interior has not yet been read.

(5) R.J.C. Broadhurst, *A History of the Ayyūbid Sultans of Egypt* (Boston, 1980), pp. 258 and 276.

(6) Ġalāl al-Dīn ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Suyūṭī, *Tārīḥ al-Ḥulafāʾ* (Cairo, 1976), p. 766, and *MAE*

2 : 92 n. 5 and 6.

(7) Professor David King of New York University has generously provided me with a preliminary manuscript of his forthcoming study of qibla orientation in Islam, from which most of the following information is derived.

The mausoleum's unusual qibla differs significantly from the one used in other Cairene monuments of the same period. Al-Maqrizī (*Ḥiṭaṭ* 2 : 256-64) discusses four of the qibla orientations used in Egypt : the qibla of the Šaḥāba was 117°, which King determined was the direction of the rising sun at midwinter. In the Fatimid period, an astronomically calculated qibla was measured

orientation seems to indicate that it was planned to match the adjacent mausoleum of Sayyida Nafisa; its orientation is entirely different from any seventh/thirteenth-century monuments extant today ⁽¹⁾.

Among Baybars' pious foundations, al-Maqrīzī mentioned a *turbat al-Zāhiriyya* in the Qarāfa. Two lamps formerly in the Schefer collection which are decorated with inscriptions stating that they were made for this tomb are the only remaining evidence for this otherwise-unknown building ⁽²⁾. Apart from Abū Naḍla's wooden railing, nothing in the mausoleum of the 'Abbasid caliphs would prevent its identification with this *turba*: its lavish interior decoration, «one of the most ingenious decorative schemes ever executed in Egypt, or anywhere else in the Muslim world» ⁽³⁾, could be appropriate to Baybars' royal tomb. The cenotaphs of his two infant sons further support this hypothesis ⁽⁴⁾. That he was not buried in it signifies nothing, because he died in Damascus quite suddenly in 676/1277. According to al-Maqrīzī, in order to effect a smooth transfer of power, his body was secretly placed in the Qaṣr al-Ablaq, and the story was given out that the sultan was sick. A closed litter supposedly carrying the ailing sultan was taken to Egypt. Only when Baybars' son, al-Malik al-Sa'īd Baraka-Ḥān, was firmly established did he announce from the Citadel of Cairo, that his father had died ⁽⁵⁾. Later, he sent a letter ordering that his father be buried in Damascus, and the *nā'ib* of Syria bought the 'Aqīqī house opposite the 'Adiliyya madrasa for sixty thousand dirhams, made it into a madrasa, and built a qubba in it. Al-Zāhir Baybars' body was taken from the Qaṣr al-Ablaq and buried there in Raḡab 676 ⁽⁶⁾.

at 127° which was used in subsequent centuries. A third qibla, used for the mosque of Aḥmad ibn Ṭūlūn, measures 141°, a figure that was given various fanciful explanations. The fourth qibla mentioned by al-Maqrīzī was due south, and was used in the Qarāfa and in «the villages». The mausoleum conforms to none of al-Maqrīzī's directions, however, but does conform to the orientation of the now demolished mosque of Sayyida Nafisa, as shown in Herz Bey's plan of 1910, reproduced in Dorothea Russell, «A Note on the Cemetery of the Abbasid Caliphs of Cairo and the Shrine of Saiyida Nafisa», *Ars Islamica* 6 (1939) : 170, fig. 1. King has suggested that this was a compromise orientation between

the rising point of Canopus and due south.

⁽¹⁾ According to the plan of the mosque of Baybars in *MAE* 2 : fig. 90 opposite p. 160, the qibla measures 143°.

⁽²⁾ *RCEA* 4726-27.

⁽³⁾ *MAE* 2 : 89.

⁽⁴⁾ *RCEA* 4552 and 4608.

⁽⁵⁾ *Sult. Maml.* 1 : 2 : 147-56.

⁽⁶⁾ *Suluk* 1 : 646-47; *Sult. Maml.* 1 : 2 : 162-63; cf. also *MAE* 2 : 131, esp. n. 7. Layla 'Alī Ibrāhīm has also suggested that Baybars built the Mausoleum of the Abbasid Caliphs for himself («The Zāwiya of Ṣaiḥ Zain ad-Dīn Yūsuf in Cairo», *Mitteilungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts, Abteilung Kairo* 34 (1978) : 82 n. 23.

Whether or not the mausoleum of the 'Abbasid caliphs was the *turbat al-Zāhiriyya*, both it and the madrasa are unsatisfactory records of Baybars architectural patronage when compared with al-Zāhir Baybars' congregational mosque (see fig. 1 and Pl. I),

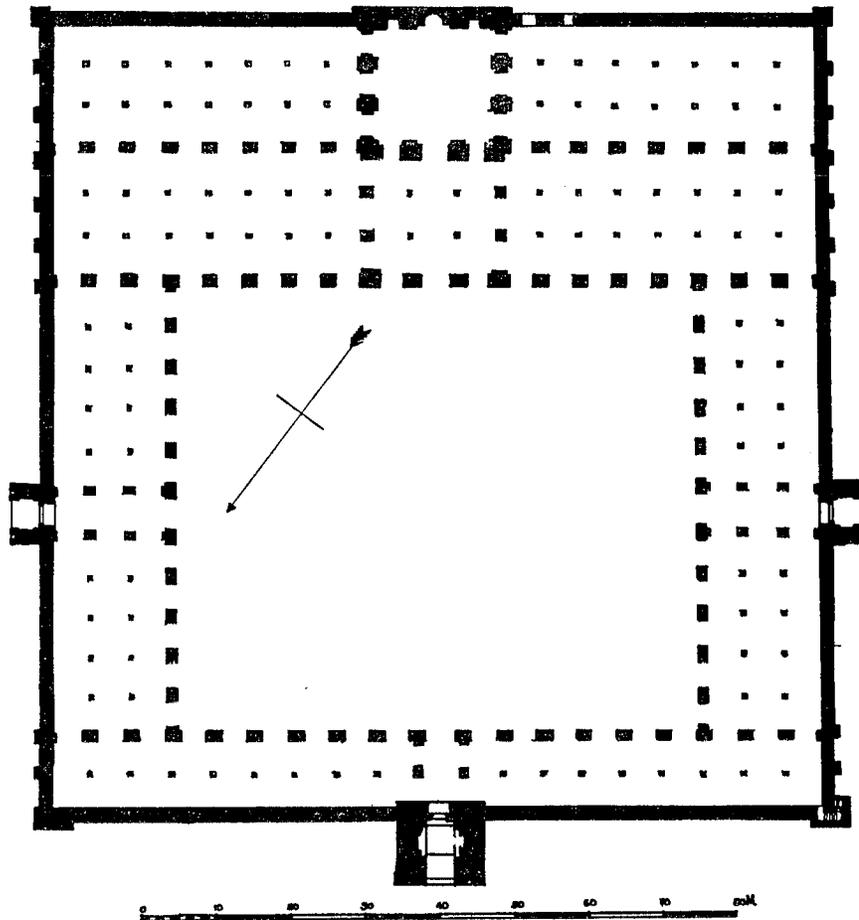


Fig. 1 — Cairo Mosque of Baybars al-Bunduqdārī : Plan (after Creswell).

even though it has suffered the depredations of over seven centuries of use and misuse⁽¹⁾. The mosque of Baybars is located north of the Fatimid city walls and forms the center-piece of the modern *Miḍān al-Zāhir*. The building measures some 100 meters square internally; three monumental entrances on the northeast, northwest, and southwest walls give access to the interior, an open courtyard some 60 by 75 meters surrounded on all four sides by covered arcades. The arcade on the northeast and on the southwest side of the court

⁽¹⁾ The modern history of the mosque is given in *MAE* 2 : 156.

was three bays deep, that on the northwest wall two bays deep, and that against the southeast wall, serving as the prayer hall, six bays deep. That the plan was conservative is evident when one considers that the mosque of al-Ḥākim bi-amr Allāh built some two and a half centuries earlier is similar in general plan, proportions, projecting portals, corner bastions, and support systems.

The mosque of Baybars does have three features that are not found in the earlier mosque, though none of the three ever became standard features in the Mamluk architectural vocabulary. The first of them is a single minaret surmounting the main entrance on the northwest side in place of the two — one at each end of the main façade — at the mosque of al-Ḥākim. According to an early nineteenth-century rendering ⁽¹⁾, the now destroyed square base above the portal was decorated with keel-arched panels similar in both placement and decoration to those on the base of the minaret which still stands on sultan Ṣāliḥ's madrasa built twenty-five years earlier ⁽²⁾. The single minaret and portal unit does, however, go back in form to prototypes found in the Fatimid period : the earliest use of the unit in Cairo is at the Mašhad al-Ġuyūšī, dated 478/1085. While the combination of portal and minaret appears again at the madrasa-mausoleum complex of al-Nāṣir Muḥammad, it never became standard in Cairene architecture — the relationship in the placement of minaret to portal continuing to vary.

Second, Baybars' architect placed a huge dome — some 15.5 meters in diameter — over the nine bays of the prayer hall in front of the miḥrāb; the Ḥākim mosque had a single axial aisle leading to a dome bay in front of the miḥrāb. The huge dome of the Baybars mosque was preceded by three triple-bayed aisles perpendicular to the qibla wall. While the arrangement of a huge dome in front of the miḥrāb appears in two other Baḥrī Mamluk mosques — the mosque of al-Nāṣir Muḥammad on the Citadel of 718-35/1318-35 and the mosque of Alṭunbuḡā al-Māridānī of 739-40/1339-40 — before passing into disuse, the three triple bays seem never to have been repeated in Cairene architecture.

Finally, these triple bays on the qibla side of the mosque are balanced on the three other sides by axial bays leading from the court to the three monumental entrances. Again, this arrangement is unique in the Mamluk architecture of Cairo.

Creswell's version of the mosque's architectural evolution acknowledges the debt to the Ḥākim mosque ignores the combination of minaret over portal, and deals extensively with the great dome over the miḥrāb, which he explains as a direct importation

⁽¹⁾ *MAE* 2 : fig. 87. — ⁽²⁾ *MAE* 2 : 157.

from the Artuqid mosque at Mayyāfāriqīn (Silvan). He goes to great lengths in that attribution to demonstrate a Cairo-Mayyāfāriqīn cultural axis in the seventh/thirteenth century, which he attributes to Cairo's having been the «refuge of Islam from the Mongols»⁽¹⁾. This gives him a chance to voice his disapproval of the Mongols as conquerors : «Other conquerors have been brutal and ruthless, but their object had been conquest followed by administration, whereas the Mongols had no such intentions . . . They represented not mere conquest but blind and wilful destruction : they left a desert behind them, and killed for killing's sake»⁽²⁾. Creswell then digresses to the migration of craftsmen, particularly metalworkers from Mosul, which allows him to explain various decorative features on the mosque which are more characteristic of Syrian and Crusader than of Egyptian architecture, and concludes that the mosque, though an Egyptian type, was «strongly modified both in plan and decoration by influences from northern Syria and northern Mesopotamia»⁽³⁾.

The limits of this entirely formalist approach to Mamluk architecture may have been what led R.S. Humphreys to propose quite a different explanation of the mosque⁽⁴⁾. After acknowledging his debt to Creswell's formal analysis, Humphreys argues that although the mosque's decorative modifications may be imported, the general plan remains entirely within the Egyptian hypostyle tradition, with two exceptions. The first is that it «has from the exterior a striking resemblance to a fortress, with its superb stone walls, its corner towers, and its massive projecting gate-ways». He finds this significant because the mosque was partially constructed from materials stripped from the fortifications of Jaffa. The second was its location on Baybars' own maydan in the still sparsely settled quarter of al-Ḥusayniyya, which involved no confiscation of land and ensured that the mosque was fully visible from all sides. All this led Humphreys to conclude that Baybars did not really want to build a congregational mosque but rather set out to construct a monument to «Sunni Islam militant and triumphant»⁽⁵⁾.

While one can only applaud Humphreys' attempt to elevate the level of discourse on Mamluk architecture, his findings are based more on twentieth-century visual identifications than they are on seventh/thirteenth-century perceptions. It is easy enough blithely to assert that the building looks like a «fortress», but difficult to produce any contemporary fortress it resembles. The fortress of Karak, for example, which Baybars

(1) *MAE* 2 : 162-65.

(2) *MAE* 2 : 168.

(3) *MAE* 2 : 172.

(4) R.S. Humphreys, «The Expressive Intent

of the Mamluk Architecture of Cairo, A Preliminary Essay», *Studia Islamica* 35 (1972): 69-119.

(5) *Ibid.*, pp. 88-90.

captured and restored in 661/1263, « looks like a fortress », but it does not look in the least like Baybars' mosque, having an irregular enclosure, irregularly placed projecting rectangular towers in the curtain walls and a paved glacis⁽¹⁾. Or, to take an example geographically closer at hand, the Cairo citadel where Baybars lived has round fronted towers and rusticated masonry, neither of which can be found in Baybars' mosque⁽²⁾. Humphreys' « massive projecting gateways (cubical entrance towers, really) » are also quite unlike contemporary or local entrances to fortifications, for which we have a series in Cairo beginning with the fifth/eleventh-century gates of al-Qāhira. The Fatimid gates are always set between projecting towers which are either square or rounded in plan. The major Ayyubid innovation in portal design appears to have been the bent entrance, as found, for example, in the Bāb al-Ġadīd on the Citadel⁽³⁾. Within the contemporary visual vocabulary, then, the mosque of Baybars cannot be said to have resembled a fortress; rather it bore a striking resemblance, as Creswell noted, to the mosque which al-Ḥākim built some 250 years before.

As a feature of mosque architecture, the projecting portal first appeared in the Fatimid mosques of North Africa of the fourth/tenth century and spread to Egypt from there. The original Azhar mosque probably had such a portal, and the Ḥākim mosque retains one to this day⁽⁴⁾. Later Fatimid mosques seem to have abandoned the deeply projecting portal, however, though they alluded to it in the design of façades. On the Aqmar mosque of 519/1125 and the mosque of al-Ṣāliḥ Ṭalā'i' of 555/1160, the projecting portal of the early Fatimid mosques is flattened to provide a focus for the overall design of the façade. The Fatimid portal « type » — two tiers of shallow niches surmounting a larger opening — which persisted over some 250 years, was, perhaps, a symbolic representation of the family of the Prophet⁽⁵⁾. Despite these associations, in the Ayyubid period and the return to Sunni orthodoxy, the « Fatimid portal » survives intact. Unfortunately, very few portals remain from the Ayyubid period in Egypt : the ones that do, such as that of the madrasa of Sulṭān Ṣāliḥ, illustrate the continuing tendency to integrate the portal into the wall while maintaining the tripartite division

⁽¹⁾ *EI*² s.v. *Karak*; T.S.R. Boase, *Castles and Churches of the Crusading Kingdom* (London, 1967), p. 69.

⁽²⁾ *MAE* 2 : 58.

⁽³⁾ *MAE* 2 : fig. 21 and pl. 16.

⁽⁴⁾ Jonathan M. Bloom, « Meaning in Early Fatimid Architecture : Islamic Art in North Africa

and Egypt in the Fourth Century A.H. (Tenth Century A.D.) » (Ph. D. Dissertation, Harvard University, 1980), pp. 94-112.

⁽⁵⁾ Caroline Williams, « The Fatimi Mausolea of Cairo », (Master's thesis, American University in Cairo, 1970), *passim*.

stemming from Fatimid sources. It is therefore all the more surprising that the mosque of Baybars returns to the deeply projecting monumental portal which, it would seem, had long been discarded. This deliberate archaism suggests that something more than standard form or some ill-defined fortress-like impression was sought in the design. To understand why these portals — or any of the other features — were chosen, we must first understand what connotations if any they might have had. Any such attempt to discuss the mosque ought reasonably to begin with al-Maqrīzī's account of it in the *Ḥiṭaṭ*, which appears to be a verbatim quotation from the *Ĝāmi' al-Sīrat al-Zāhiriyya*, a contemporary biography of Baybars⁽¹⁾.

All too often the modern historian is frustrated by al-Maqrīzī's accounts of Cairo's monuments : where one hopes he will supply details about the construction and appearance of now lost or transformed monuments, he indulges instead in irrelevant digressions. These very irrelevancies have their own uses, however, for they provide evidence of how al-Maqrīzī, a ninth/fifteenth-century Cairene, saw the city around him. Yet in the passage he quotes from the *Ĝāmi' al-Sīrat al-Zāhiriyya*, al-Maqrīzī's sensibility is filtered out, leaving us with a truly contemporary account of contemporary events.

⁽¹⁾ *Ḥiṭaṭ* 2 : 299-300. This passage is based entirely on the *Ĝāmi' al-Sīrat al-Zāhiriyya* which is thought to have been written by Muḥyī al-Dīn b. 'Abd al-Zāhir (620-92/1223-92) (R. Guest, «A List of Writers, Books and Other Authorities Mentioned by El-Maqrīzī in his *Khiṭaṭ*», *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* [1902] : 112). However, Ibn 'Abd al-Zāhir's biography of al-Zāhir Baybars, entitled *al-Rawḍ al-Zāhir fī sīrat al-Malik al-Zāhir*, has only recently been published in full. The first part of the text covering events up to 663 — was published from the British Museum manuscript (Add. 23,331) and translated by Fatima Sadeque (*Baybars I of Egypt* [Dacca, 1956]). The complete text in Istanbul (Fatih 4367) was published by 'Abd al-'Azīz Ḥuwayṭir (Abdul-Aziz Khowaiter) (Riyāḍ, 1396/1976) and has been used as the main source for his English biography, *Baibars the First : His Endeavours and Achievements* (London, 1978). While there are evident similarities between the Istanbul text and al-Maqrīzī's text in the *Ḥiṭaṭ*, the latter is far more

detailed than is the former (e.g. compare pp. 272-73 with *Ḥiṭaṭ* 2 : 299-300). Thus, al-Maqrīzī had a similar, but different text from which to work. Yet, despite the differences, the strong similarities suggest that the text under consideration was also by Ibn 'Abd al-Zāhir, who was secretary for state correspondence under Baybars (Khowaiter, 144) and wrote the *Sīra* for Baybars' royal library (Sadeque, 76), rather than another contemporary author.

This identification of the author of al-Maqrīzī's account as a close associate of the sultān and an eyewitness of many of the events described increases its value enormously. We have before us not only the record of how this major building was seen in its own time, but also how its builder wanted it to be remembered. It is inconceivable that Baybars would have allowed his chosen biographer to either add or omit any important information. (For a discussion of the historical value of Ibn 'Abd al-Zāhir, see Khowaiter, 158-63).

Creswell appreciated the crucial importance of this text, for his discussion of the mosque of Sultan Baybars is prefaced by a translation of virtually the entire passage ⁽¹⁾. The text has three parts relating three series of events relevant to the history of the mosque. The first part concerns the founding of the mosque in Rabi' II 665 : Baybars sent an atabeg and a *ṣāhib* to chose a suitable place in the Ḥusayniyya quarter, but they selected the royal camel-ground (*manāḥ*) which Baybars found inappropriate : he offered them his maydan instead. When the site had been selected, on Thursday, 8 Rabi' II 665, the sultan, accompanied by his favorite retainers, the vizier, and the qadis, visited it and settled details relative to the mosque's construction. He ordered the extra land put in waqf for the mosque and kept open in perpetuity; he had the plan of the mosque drawn out in his presence and he specified both that the portal of the mosque be similar to that at the Zāhiriyya madrasa and that a dome be built over the miḥrāb of the mosque that would equal in size that on the shrine of the Imām al-Šāfi'i. The sultan then saw to the procurement of some of the materials for construction as well as beasts of burden needed to bring them to the site. Having finished at the site, he visited the shrine of Šayḥ Ḥaḍir and then his madrasa in al-Qāhira, where he spoke with the resident Ḥanafī and Šafi'i fuqahā' about the waqf of the madrasa, saying : « This is a place I have dedicated to God and put in trust, divesting myself of it absolutely, so when I die do not bury me here or change any of the characteristics of the place, for I have given it up completely to God ». This section concludes with a visit to the near-by *qā'a* of his son, the appointment of officers to supervise the construction, and the date settled on for the groundbreaking.

The second section records the events of Ğumādā II 666 when the sultan left Egypt to conquer the citadel of Jaffa and demolish the town. The wood as well as slabs of marble from the citadel were sent to Cairo with instructions that the *maqṣūra* in the mosque be made of this wood and that the miḥrāb be made of the marble, which was done.

The final section concerns the completion of the mosque in Šawwāl 667. The sultan rode out to view it and was pleased with the result and the speed with which the work had been completed. He gave robes of honor to those responsible. Creswell's translation ends at this point. The text, however, adds that Baybars again visited Šayḥ Ḥaḍir and then returned to the Citadel. He appointed a Ḥanafī ḥaṭīb to the mosque and endowed

(1) *MAE* 2 : 155. Considering the amount he did translate, one wonders why he stopped short of the final two lines of the text as printed in

the Būlāq edition, indicating its omission in his translation by ellipsis points.

it with the land remaining from the maydan that was to be kept open. The sultan went to the mosque, assigned its endowment and tended to other matters ⁽¹⁾.

As Creswell noted, a similar account can be pieced together from various passages in al-Maqrīzī's history of the Mamluks, *al-Sulūk li-Ma'rifat Duwal al-Mulūk*, which would indicate that the text in the *Ḥiṭaṭ* was composed from scattered references drawn from the *Sīra* of Baybars under the appropriate years and months ⁽²⁾. This method of composition is common in the *Ḥiṭaṭ* where the text can be compared with al-Maqrīzī's other dynastic history, the *Itti'āz al-Ḥunafā'* which chronicles the Fatimid period, and it explains certain repetitions and awkwardness in the chronological sequence of events, especially in the third section. This explanation assumes that al-Maqrīzī had the biography before him from which he selected appropriate passages ⁽³⁾.

Despite these textual uncertainties, the information which the text presents is singularly important. It does not emphasize the physical aspect of the mosque — its size, its shape, or its decoration — so much as the matrix of events and activities in which the mosque was built. Thus we see first the process by which a site was selected and then rejected, the presentation of the client with the plans; the client's additional specifications and arrangements for supplying the wherewithal, and his activities immediately after the event. Then, we see the client having found a new — and cheap — source of material for construction. Finally, we see that the client was pleased with the work ordered, for it must have conformed with this expectations, and how he insured that the new building would remain staffed and supported. Thus, the contemporary eye saw three significant moments in the history of the mosque — foundation, construction, and completion. I shall examine each in turn.

FOUNDATION

Al-Maqrīzī tells us that the mosque was located in the district called al-Ḥusayniyya to the north of the Fatimid walls of al-Qāhira. Before al-Qāhira was built, this was largely agricultural land; with the establishment of the Fatimid city, detachments of the Fatimid army settled this now-suburban area. One of them, the Ḥusayniyya, gave

⁽¹⁾ *MAE* 2 : 155; *Ḥiṭaṭ* 2 : 299-300.

⁽²⁾ *MAE* 2 : 155 n. 2 and *Sulūk* 1 : 556, 564-65, 573 and 588.

⁽³⁾ Ibn 'Abd al-Zāhir also wrote a topographical work on the monuments of Cairo which was much

used by al-Maqrīzī as a source for his *Ḥiṭaṭ*. Since this text is also lost, there is no way to know what influence, if any, it might have had on al-Maqrīzī's account. Cf. *EI*² s.v. *Ibn 'Abd al-Zāhir*.

its name to the entire district. However, large tracts of this land, especially along the canal, remained agricultural, divided into gardens (*bustān*) in which the Fatimid caliphs built belvederes and pleasure pavilions. In addition, this area was the site of two other institutions : outside the Bāb al-Naṣr, a *muṣallā* (or outdoor praying place for the festival prayers) which Ğawhar had established immediately after the founding of al-Qāhira, and to the north, an assembly spot for ḥaḡḡ caravans about to depart on the pilgrimage ⁽¹⁾.

Apart from the construction of the Ḥākīm mosque immediately outside the Bāb al-Futūḥ, this area seems to have remained relatively unchanged until Badr al-Ġamālī decided to build a large tomb (*turba*) outside the Bāb al-Naṣr to the north of the *muṣallā* ⁽²⁾. Not only Badr but his son al-Afḍal and grandson Kutayfāt were buried there, and the area became increasingly popular as a cemetery for the people of al-Qāhira and al-Ḥusayniyya, suggesting that the population in the northern districts of the city and its suburbs was increasing and/or that it was unwilling to bury its dead in the older cemetery to the south of al-Qāhira ⁽³⁾. In any case, at this point the festival *muṣallā* became known as the « Muṣallā of the Dead ».

Little evidence remains to reconstruct the history of this area during the Ayyubid period. The Ayyubids decided to follow Šāfiʿī law and allow Friday prayer in only one congregational mosque in al-Qāhira; their choice of the Ḥākīm mosque was based on its being the largest in the city. However, its location — far from the seat of power on the Citadel — must again imply a fairly large settlement in the vicinity. Nevertheless, there is very little, if any, specific information on the history of this area during the Ayyubid period : texts do not mention buildings there, nor are any still extant.

According to al-Maqrīzī, in the middle of the seventh/thirteenth century the political upheaval in the eastern Islamic lands caused refugees to settle in this sparsely inhabited area ⁽⁴⁾. They came from the east (*mašriq*) and Iraq and inhabited al-Ḥusayniyya where they built residences. Among them was a group of two hundred Tartar horsemen who arrived in 660/1262 ⁽⁵⁾. At the same time, however, part of the land must have remained empty, for a *zāwiya* was built there for Šayḥ Ḥaḍir b. Abū Bakr b. Mūsā al-Mihrānī

⁽¹⁾ *Ḥiṭaṭ* 2 : 21-22 and 136.

⁽²⁾ On this tomb, which may be that known today as that of Šayḥ Yūnus, cf. *MAE* 1 : 232-34 and Yūsuf Rāḡib, « Le Mausolée de Yūnus al-Saʿdī, est-il celui de Badr al-Ġamālī ? », *Arabica* 20 (1973) : 503-7.

⁽³⁾ *Ḥiṭaṭ* 2 : 22.

⁽⁴⁾ *Ḥiṭaṭ* 2 : 22.

⁽⁵⁾ David Ayalon, « The Wafidiya in the Mamluk Kingdom », *Islamic Culture* (Hyderabad, 1951) [reprinted in David Ayalon, *Studies on the Mamlūks of Egypt (1250-1517)* (London, 1977)], p. 98.

al-ʿAdawī outside the Bāb al-Futūḥ overlooking the canal. This šayḥ, mentioned twice in al-Maqrīzī's text as having been visited by Baybars, was the sultan's spiritual adviser. While he was living as a hermit outside Damascus, he had sagely predicted Baybars' accession to the sultanate; Baybars rewarded him with new *zāwiyas* outside Damascus, Ba'albakk, Ḥamāh, Ḥimṣ, and al-Qāhira endowed with the generous annual income of 30,000 dirhams⁽¹⁾. The historian Mufaḍḍal b. Abū'l-Faḍā'il, who wrote slightly later, states that Baybars built the congregational mosque because of the great number of people who wanted to visit Šayḥ Ḥaḍīr, and elsewhere we learn that the šayḥ used to preach the Friday sermon there⁽²⁾.

The flourishing of al-Ḥusayniyya did not date from the building of the mosque of Baybars, but rather from the influx of Tartar horsemen called Oirats who arrived in 695/1296⁽³⁾. Then the district became one of the most populous of Miṣr and al-Qāhira, with numerous building projects sponsored by the amirs. In 732/1331-32, the amir Sayf al-Dīn al-Ḥāḡḡ Al-Malik built a mosque, a *dār* and a bath in the area; other people followed⁽⁴⁾.

The traditional view is that the mosque of Baybars was sited according to the supposed pattern of ḡāmi' mosque establishment in the Cairo metropolis, which gave each new settlement its own mosque. The mosque of ʿAmr served Fuṣṭāṭ, the mosque of Ibn Ṭulūn served al-Qaṭā'i', and the Azhar mosque served al-Qāhira. During the Fatimid period, however, the multiplication of ḡāmi' mosques does not conform to this model because the Fatimids did not follow the Šāfi'i law that sharply limited the number of congregational mosques in a given locality. It was only the return to a Šāfi'i policy which led the Ayyubids in 569/1174 to hold the Friday service in al-Qāhira only in the mosque of al-Ḥākīm⁽⁵⁾. While the Mamluks had no such restrictions, based solely on geographic grounds it is hard to argue that the siting of the mosque of Baybars, only 750 meters north of the mosque of al-Ḥākīm, was meant to serve a different congregation. While the population of al-Ḥusayniyya did increase significantly after the mosque was built, the evidence — albeit scanty — does not suggest that it was built to accommodate an overflow of worshippers.

⁽¹⁾ *Ḥiṭaṭ* 2 : 430. On this figure, see Louis Pouzet, « Ḥaḍīr ibn Abī Bakr al-Mihrānī », *Bulletin des Etudes Orientales* 30 (1978) : 173-83.

⁽²⁾ Mufaḍḍal b. Abū'l-Faḍā'il, *Histoire des Sultans Mamlouks*, ed. E. Blochet, in *Patrologia Orientalis* 12/3 : 161, and Pouzet, p. 177.

⁽³⁾ *Ḥiṭaṭ* 2 : 22 and Ayalon, « Wafdiya », p. 99.

⁽⁴⁾ Doris Behrens-Abouseif, « A Circassian Mamluk Suburb », *AARP* 14 (1978) : 17-23.

⁽⁵⁾ H.A.R. Gibb and J.H. Kramers, eds., *Shorter Encyclopaedia of Islam* (Ithaca, 1953) [hereafter *Short EI*], p. 337.

A closer look at the historical record for the years in which the mosque of Baybars was planned and built reveals some likelier reasons for constructing a new congregational mosque in the year 665. Some of them stem from developments in the Islamic world generally, some from developments in Mamluk Egypt in particular, and some from developments specifically in seventh/thirteenth-century Cairo.

The international circumstances — the fall of Baghdad to the Mongol armies in 656/1258, the Mamluk defeat of the Mongols in 658/1260 at ʿAyn Ğālūt in Syria, and the resulting consolidation of Mamluk power under al-Ẓāhir Baybars, and finally the reestablishment in Cairo of the ʿAbbasid caliphate in 659/1261 — were all interrelated. The fall of Baghdad to Hulegu’s forces led, as Creswell demonstrated, to Cairo’s having become a refuge of Islam from the Mongols. Recent scholarship suggests that the Mongol invasions were less destructive than Creswell thought, but they surely produced a climate unfavorable to artistic patronage and encouraged artists and craftsmen to seek safer and more hospitable places to live and work. Mosuli metalworkers migrated to Cairo as a direct consequence of the Mongol capture of that city in 653/1255; the introduction of Iranian mosaic faience technique into Anatolia had a similar source ⁽¹⁾.

When the seemingly invincible Mongol armies were finally routed by the Mamluks at ʿAyn Ğālūt in 658/1260, al-Malik al-Muẓaffar Quṭuz, who had recently deposed the Ayyubid sultan, led the Mamluk forces. Its vanguard was commanded by Baybars, and it was he who captured and beheaded Kitbuġā, the Mongol general, and then, turning on his own rival Quṭuz, had him assassinated as well and assumed the sultanate. The victory itself was more psychological than real, however. Although the sources speak of it as a decisive victory which saved all Islam from the Mongol menace, it had been accomplished by an army composed largely of recently Islamicized Turkish ethnics using the same methods as their foes, and that, too, did not escape contemporary commentators. Nor did it signal the end of the Mongol danger, although at first Hulegu was prevented from sending a punitive expedition against the Mamluks by struggles within the Mongol Empire further east. Mongol attacks continued to threaten Syria, but in the meantime the psychological advantage had gone to the Mamluk side, and they played it for all it was worth ⁽²⁾.

In the first decade of Mamluk rule Egypt had had a succession of four rulers. Now Baybars established a relatively stable rule that lasted for seventeen years — a record until al-Nāṣir Muḥammad’s third reign which lasted thirty-one (709-41/1309-40). Although

⁽¹⁾ See, for example, Donald N. Wilber, *The Architecture of Islamic Iran : The Il Khānid Period* (Princeton, 1955), pp. 84-87.

⁽²⁾ *EI*² s.v. ʿAyn Djālūt.

Baybars' accession to the sultanate had not been greeted with universal approval, he so carefully consolidated his power that he was able to concentrate his forces against his enemies : first by eliminating rival Mamluk claimants to the sultanate and Ayyubid princes in Syria, then by turning towards the more important problems of the continuing Mongol threat and the Crusaders who still held strategic positions along the Syrian littoral.

Later opinion — both medieval and modern — interpreted Baybars' reestablishment of the 'Abbasid caliphate in Egypt in 659/1261 as part of his attempt to confer legitimacy on his crown and lend prestige to his rule in Cairo as the principal metropolis of Islam ⁽¹⁾. While it would be naive to attribute Baybars' move strictly to pious motives, how it was interpreted in its own time should also not be ignored. A figurehead caliphate had existed quite happily for centuries in Baghdad, conferring legitimacy on a series of strongmen rulers, maintaining order and providing a sense of continuity with the past. Since the death of the Prophet there had always been a caliph — indeed, sometimes more than one — and it would have been unthinkable to have a world without one ⁽²⁾. The events speak for themselves.

On Thursday, 9 Raġab 659/1261, Baybars, accompanied by the vizier, the chief qadi, the amirs, the army, the principal inhabitants of al-Qāhira and Fuṣṭāṭ, notaries and muezzins, Jews bearing the Torah and Christians carrying the Gospels, went out to the Bāb al-Naṣr to greet the amir Abū'l-Qāsim Aḥmad, a son of the 'Abbasid caliph, al-Zāhir Abū Naṣr Muḥammad and an uncle of the last 'Abbasid al-Musta'sim ⁽³⁾. The amir was quickly installed in luxurious surroundings in the Citadel, where he received the homage of all Egypt, including that of Baybars himself, who sat beside him but wore nothing to reveal his rank ⁽⁴⁾. The amir's genealogy was certified by all concerned, and finally Baybars offered his fealty to the Commander of the Believers, al-Mustaṣir bi'llāh Abū'l-Qāsim Aḥmad, who took the *laqab* of his deceased brother al-Mustaṣir bi'llāh Abū Ġa'far al-Manṣūr (623-40/1226-42) ⁽⁵⁾. A message was quickly sent to the provinces enjoining provincial governors to recognize the new caliph in Cairo. Eight

⁽¹⁾ E.g. Philip K. Hitti, *History of the Arabs*, 10th ed. (New York, 1970), p. 676; C.E. Bosworth, *The Islamic Dynasties* [Islamic Surveys 5] (Edinburgh, 1967), p. 10; Marshall G.S. Hodgson, *The Venture of Islam*, vol. 2 (Chicago, 1974), p. 418.

⁽²⁾ Cf. David Ayalon, « Studies on the Transfer of the 'Abbāsīd Caliphate from Baġdād to Cairo »,

Arabica 7 (1960) : 41-59 [reprinted in *Studies*] on whether the Mamluks briefly recognized the Hafsīd caliph.

⁽³⁾ *Sult. Maml.* 1 : 1 : 146-47.

⁽⁴⁾ *Sult. Maml.* 1 : 1 : 174.

⁽⁵⁾ On the singular choice of names, see Ayalon, « Transfer ».

days later, the caliph gave the ḥuṭba in the mosque on the Citadel, asking God's blessings for the Companions of the Prophet, the descendants of al-ʿAbbās, and al-Malik al-Zāhir Baybars. After a few weeks of festivities — guided tours through the city and diplomatic receptions — they got down to business : the chief of the chancellery made public the diploma of investiture accorded to the sultan by the caliph. In return for rescuing and rejuvenating the caliphate, Baybars was made sultan over « Egypt, Syria, Diyarbakr, the Ḥiğāz, the Yemen, Mesopotamia, and all other lands which he might conquer »⁽¹⁾. Evidence survives of the importance placed on this investiture : the first coins to be struck in Baybars' reign use only the title *al-malik*, for the leader had not yet become the sultan⁽²⁾. An inscription at the Citadel of Damascus dated 659/1261 must have been made in the months that followed Baybars' nomination, since it calls him the sultan of Islam and the Muslims as well as associate of the Commander of the Believers⁽³⁾.

The new caliph left for Damascus with Baybars and his army in Šawwāl 659/1261 and ultimately for Baghdad, which the caliph would attempt to reconquer so he could sit once again on the throne of his ancestors⁽⁴⁾. Al-Maqrizī took Baybars' reluctance to support this expedition as an indication that he suspected that establishing a powerful caliph might rival his own pretensions in Egypt⁽⁵⁾. Yet, when the Mongol governor of Baghdad, Karabuğā, handily massacred the caliph and his small band of adventurers early in 660/1261, Baybars was quick to seize upon another member of the ʿAbbasid family, Abū'l-ʿAbbās Aḥmad, to succeed al-Mustaṣir. Had Baybars really wanted to do away with the caliphate, he would hardly have welcomed the arrival of Abū'l-ʿAbbās Aḥmad in Cairo some two months later and seen him proclaimed al-Ḥākim bi-amr Allāh at the beginning of the following year (Muḥarram 661) in a ceremony that virtually duplicated that of a year and a half earlier⁽⁶⁾.

Just as Abū'l-Qāsim Aḥmad's choice of the *laqab* al-Mustaṣir provoked comment, Abū'l-ʿAbbās' choice of al-Ḥākim bi-amr Allāh (« the one who upholds the law of God ») for his *laqab* must not have been an idle gesture. In response to ʿAlid challenges to their legitimacy, the ʿAbbasids had assumed these honorific names that proclaimed their dependence on God and the divine support given their rule⁽⁷⁾. There is no doubt that by the seventh/thirteenth century all titles had been debased with overuse and had

(1) *Sult. Maml.* 1 : 1 : 152.

(2) Michael Bates, « The Coinage of the Mamluk Sultan Baybars I : Additions and Corrections », *American Numismatic Society Museum Notes* 22 (1977) : 164.

(3) *RCEA* 4476.

(4) *Sult. Maml.* 1 : 1 : 163 f.

(5) Khowaiter, p. 35.

(6) Sadeque, pp. 158-64.

(7) Bosworth, *Islamic Dynasties*, p. 9.

lost much of their original power and status, yet the deliberate repetition of the name al-Mustanşir and the revival of the potent name al-Ḥākim must be related. Although the ‘Abbasids had never used the name al-Ḥākim, it must still have had a strong association with the notoriously eccentric Fatimid caliph of two centuries before. Al-Maqrīzī noticed this choice of names in Baybars’ obituary : « after the death of al-Ḥākim bi-amr Allāh the Fatimid, the ḥuṭba in Egypt was to al-Zāhir li-i’zāz Dīn Allāh, and the ḥuṭba in the name of the caliph al-Ḥākim bi-amr Allāh the ‘Abbasid was followed by al-Malik al-Zāhir Baybars ⁽¹⁾. The metaphor is admittedly a bit strained; nevertheless it is most tempting to think that al-Ḥākim’s choice signaled an honest attempt to establish the caliphate of one who upholds God’s law in Egypt. Furthermore, this deliberate revival of the name al-Ḥākim is paralleled by the equally deliberate revival of the physical form of that same caliph’s mosque that has already been noted.

The building of the mosque of Baybars was preceded by an event of utmost importance to the history of Egyptian Islam : the breaking of the Šāfi’ī monopoly on justice. The imām Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad b. Idrīs al-Šāfi’ī had died in Egypt in 204/820. At first Cairo and Baghdad had been the chief centers of his teaching, but the advent of Fatimid rule in the former and the prominence of the *ahl al-ra’y* in the latter brought other centers into prominence. However, the Šāfi’īs again became the predominant school of law under Šalāḥ al-Dīn after 564/1169, enjoying a virtual monopoly on the administration of law in Egypt ⁽²⁾. In 572/1176-77 Šalāḥ al-Dīn ordered a madrasa built near Šāfi’ī’s grave ⁽³⁾, and Ibn Ḡubayr records that a celebrated and large mašhad surmounted it ⁽⁴⁾. The mausoleum that is there today, however, is ascribed to al-Malik

⁽¹⁾ *Sulūk* 1 : 639; *Sult. Maml.* 1 : 2 : 153. Al-Maqrīzī relates another story on the authority of the *Sīrat al-Zāhir* suggesting that the parallels between the Fatimid and Mamluk rulers were noticed in Baybars’ lifetime. On ‘Ašūrā’ 672, the Bāb al-Baḥr of the old Fatimid palace was torn down. In addition to a brass scribe statuette with hieroglyphs on the base, a tablet was found in the rubble with writing on it. Except for the first and last lines, the inscription was incoherent. It was interpreted as the writing of the [Fatimid] caliph al-Ḥākim. When the sultān saw it, he demanded that it be read, so they called in someone who could read *qibṭi* (hieroglyphics), who determined that it was a talisman written for al-Zāhir,

the son of al-Ḥākim, in which his mother Rašād was named. On it were the names of angels, magic formulae, drawings of supernatural beings « who mostly protect Egypt and its frontiers ». Cf. *Ḥiṭaṭ* 1 : 434 and Paul Ravaisse, « Essai sur l’histoire et la topographie du Caire d’après Maqrīzī », *Mémoires de la Mission Archéologique Française* [au Caire] 1 (1886) : 463.

⁽²⁾ *Short EI* : 514.

⁽³⁾ *MAE* 2 : 64.

⁽⁴⁾ Abū al-Ḥusayn Muḥammad b. Aḥmad b. Ḡubayr, *Riḥla* (Beirut, 1384/1964), p. 22; idem., *Voyages*, ed. and trans. Maurice Gaudfroy-Demombynes (Paris, 1949-65), p. 51.

al-Kāmil, who built it in 608/1211, for his mother (or son) was buried there in that year. The importance given to this site encouraged the development of this area — the Small Qarāfa (*al-Qarāfa al-Ṣuġrā*) — for burials, replacing the Great Qarāfa ⁽¹⁾.

The strength of the Ṣāfi'īs in Egypt was reflected in the power of their qadis who, in addition to their judicial functions in disputes, controlled the estates of orphans and the administration of waqf properties, which often generated considerable revenues. However, in 663/1264, al-Malik al-Zāhir Baybars appointed three more qadis — a Ḥanafī, a Ḥanbalī, and a Malikī — to the rank of *qāḍī al-quḍāt*, previously held only by the Ṣāfi'īs. According to al-Maqrīzī ⁽²⁾ and Qalqašandī ⁽³⁾, the enmity felt by one of Baybars' amirs for the incumbent Ṣāfi'ī qadī, Tāġ al-Dīn b. Bint al-A'azz, led to a scandal over the administration and sale of certain waqf properties. The sultan did not agree with the Ṣāfi'ī's opinion, and proceeded to pack the court. Al-Maqrīzī, who had strong Ṣāfi'ī convictions, does not put Baybars in a favorable light ⁽⁴⁾. A more realistic view of Baybars' action, however, is that the Ṣāfi'ī monopoly on justice did not meet with universal approval from an increasingly heterogeneous population, that by then included large numbers of Ḥanafīs fleeing the Mongol conquest to the east and Malikīs fleeing the Spanish reconquista in the Muslim west ⁽⁵⁾. Thus Baybars' decision to expand the number of qadis can be taken as his effort to give fair representation to adherents of the four major rites as well as an attempt to limit the power of Ibn Bint al-A'azz ⁽⁶⁾. But, while provision was made for four courts of justice, effectively only the Ṣāfi'īs and the Ḥanafīs were numerous enough to matter. Baybars' own madrasa, it will be recalled, was staffed with Ṣāfi'ī and Ḥanafī ṣayḥs as well as professors of ḥadīṭ and Qur'ān reading. A Ḥanafī ḥaṭīb was appointed to Baybars' mosque ⁽⁷⁾.

The most important of the local events that inspired the building of Baybars' mosque was the decision by the amir 'Izz al-Dīn Aydamūr al-Ḥilli to restore the Azhar mosque to ḥuṭba status. As a result of the Ayyubid conquest of Egypt and the return to a Sunni-Ṣāfi'ī policy a hundred years earlier, Friday prayer in the mosque had been discontinued in favor of the larger mosque of al-Ḥākim. According to al-Maqrīzī,

⁽¹⁾ *MAE* 2 : 64.

⁽²⁾ *Sulūk* 1 : 538-40; *Sult. Maml.* 1 : 2 : 19-21.

⁽³⁾ Annemarie Schimmel, « Kalif und Kadi im spätmittelalterlichen Ägypten », *Die Welt des Islams* 24 (1942) : 30.

⁽⁴⁾ Sadeque, 16-23.

⁽⁵⁾ On this latter influence, see *MAE* 2 : 228-29.

⁽⁶⁾ Sadeque, 72.

⁽⁷⁾ Al-Maqrīzī provides evidence that the Ḥanbalīs were not particularly satisfied with this situation. On the first day of the year 662/1263, an accusation was lodged against the Ḥanbalī ṣayḥ in Cairo, alleging that he had intrigued against Baybars because he had not provided a place for the Ḥanbalīs in his madrasa. Cf. *MAE* 2 : 143 n. 4 with complete references.

ʿIzz al-Dīn had built a fine residence near al-Azhar in al-Qāhira and wished to restore the mosque so that it could be used for Friday services⁽¹⁾. He undertook considerable restoration, repairing walls and corners, whitewashing the interior, repairing the roof, repaving the floor, furnishing it with mats and hangings, and restoring the maqṣūra⁽²⁾. Three sources financed these works, completed in Rabīʿ I 665 : the revenues from al-Azhar's remaining endowments, contributions by the amir, and contributions from the sultan. Baybars' contribution is recorded in part by a fragment from a minbar which he ordered for the mosque on 13 Rabīʿ I 665⁽³⁾.

Al-Ḥillī's dream of restoring al-Azhar to ḥuṭba status met with opposition from the Šāfiʿī chief qadi, Ibn Bint al-Aʿazz, although other legists saw no problem. The Šāfiʿī's adamant refusal to grant ḥuṭba status to a second mosque in al-Qāhira brought the sultan himself into the matter, but he was unable to force the qadi to capitulate. Finally, al-Ḥillī obtained a fatwa from those who agreed with him and proceeded to prepare for Friday prayer in the mosque. The amir invited the sultan to come, but he refused, citing the continued opposition of the qadi. On the first Friday, 18 Rabīʿ I 665, only the atabeg, the vizier Bahāʾ al-Dīn, a number of amirs and agreeing *fuqahāʾ* were present for the ḥuṭba; both the qadi Ibn Bint al-Aʿazz, and the sultan were conspicuous by their absence⁽⁴⁾. Afterwards, the amir Badr al-Dīn Bilik, the *Ḥāzindār*, had a maqṣūra made for the mosque. A mudarris and a group of Šāfiʿī *fuqahāʾ* were assigned to it, as were a muḥaddiṭ to teach tradition and the *Raqāʾiq* and seven readers to recite the Qurʾān. Sufficient endowments were established to ensure their continued support⁽⁵⁾.

Ibn Bint al-Aʿazz was not to exercise such power for long : he died four months later on 17 Raġab and was replaced by two men, one designated as qadi for al-Qāhira and Lower Egypt, the other for Miṣr and Upper Egypt⁽⁶⁾. However, before he died he had had the chance to inspect the mosque of ʿAmr and had found parts of it in need of repair. Eventually the vizier Bahāʾ al-Dīn ʿAlī b. Ḥinnā met with the sultan and arranged the necessary repairs which were completed in Raġab 666⁽⁷⁾.

(1) *Ḥiṭaṭ* 2 : 276 and Ibn ʿAbd al-Zāhir, ed. Khowaiter, p. 277.

(2) *MAE* 1 : 38; *Sulūk* 1 : 556; *Ḥiṭaṭ* 2 : 275.

(3) *RCEA* 4562. Incidentally, this minbar, formerly in the Schefer collection, corrects the generally accepted date of Rabīʿ II given in *Sulūk* 1 : 556, *Sult. Maml.* 1 : 2 : 39, and followed by Creswell in *MAE* 1 : 38.

(4) The date is given in *Ḥiṭaṭ* 2 : 275, the rest of the account is from *Sulūk* 1 : 556-57 (*Sult. Maml.* 1 : 2 : 39).

(5) *Sulūk* 1 : 556 and Ibn ʿAbd al-Zāhir, ed. Khowaiter, p. 277.

(6) *Sulūk* 1 : 561-62; *Sult. Maml.* 1 : 2 : 45.

(7) *Ḥiṭaṭ* 2 : 252; K.A.C. Creswell, *Early Muslim Architecture*, vol. 2 (Oxford, 1940), p. 174.

The restoration of the mosque of 'Amr can be seen as one response to the attempt to reinstate the ḥuṭba at al-Azhar by placating Ibn Bint al-A'azz; another reaction was Baybars' order of two weeks later, 29 Rabi' I 665, sending the atabeg Fāris al-Dīn to look for a place in which to build a new mosque ⁽¹⁾.

Once the site for the new mosque was chosen, the actual planning of the mosque could begin. According to al-Maqrīzī's text, the patron specified only two formal elements : the portal of the mosque was to be similar to that of the Zāhiriyya madrasa and the dome was to be the same size as the one over the tomb of Šāfi'i.

Creswell was able to establish that the portal of the Zāhiriyya madrasa had been surmounted by a stalactite hood, in contrast to the portals of Baybars' mosque, where projecting blocks enclose deep archways which are either cross-vaulted or domed, but could not explain this difference, especially since the sultan himself had stipulated that both doors should be alike ⁽²⁾. It is highly unlikely that a sultan's request would have been cavalierly ignored by the architects; surely they must have followed the sultan's wishes. Creswell had simply applied the wrong criterion for comparison when he decided that the significant feature of the madrasa portal was its stalactite hood.

Creswell had reconstructed the madrasa portal from a group of late-eighteenth and nineteenth-century representations of the Sūq al-Naḥḥāsīn by Cassas, Roberts and others ⁽³⁾. Cassas' painting clearly shows a minaret extending above the roofline of the madrasa, whose base can be located from Roberts' painting in the general area around the portal. Unfortunately, neither Roberts nor the anonymous painter of the same scene included the minaret itself. Creswell judged Cassas' work to be inaccurate : « the minaret is a poorer affair than one would have imagined », and concluded that his work was completed afterwards from rough sketches made on the spot ⁽⁴⁾.

The minaret collapsed in June 1882 ⁽⁵⁾, but the madrasa's nearest corner, about ten meters south, still stands ⁽⁶⁾. The painting of about 1850 reproduced by Creswell (pl. 45 a) shows no minaret base along the façade of the madrasa, and this strongly suggests that the minaret was directly above the portal, just as Cassas' painting shows it. Creswell's judgment that Cassas' minaret is « a poorer affair » than the original minaret

⁽¹⁾ *Sulūk* 1 : 556; *Sult. Maml.* 1 : 2 : 38; Creswell in *MAE* 2 : 155 (following *Ḥiṭaṭ* 2 : 299-300) seemingly places the decision sometime in Rabi' II, but it is not quite clear. The account in the *Ḥiṭaṭ* also adds the full names of the others involved in addition to the atabeg : the *ṣāhib* Faḥr al-Dīn Muḥammad, the son of the vizier Bahā'

al-Dīn 'Alī b. Hinnā, and a number of architects (muhāndīs).

⁽²⁾ *MAE* 2 : 154, line 13 of extract.

⁽³⁾ *MAE* 2 : fig. 72, 73; pl. 45 a and 45 b.

⁽⁴⁾ *MAE* 2 : 145.

⁽⁵⁾ *MAE* 2 : 145.

⁽⁶⁾ Ravaisse, « Essai », p. 453 and pl. 3.

is correct : the minaret he drew was an Ottoman replacement for the original, which must have fallen at some earlier date. The madrasa of Baybars therefore did have a minaret over its portal in exactly the same arrangement as is found in Baybars' mosque, and it was that arrangement that Baybars referred to when he directed his architect to make the mosque's portal like that of the madrasa.

The next question is, of course, why the sultan wanted the two portals to be built alike. One answer is that the combination of portal and minaret had become identified in some way with Baybars' patronage. If that is the case, it could be interpreted as his attempt to establish an immediately recognizable Baybars style. While this theory has its attractions, the minaret and portal unit was not his innovation. It first appeared in Egypt in the Mašhad al-Ġuyūšī (478/1085) and entered the common architectural vocabulary of Egypt in the seventh/thirteenth century when it is used four times : at the mosque of Sayyidnā al-Ḥusayn (634/1237), the madrasa of Sultān Šāliḥ Nağm al-Dīn Ayyūb (640-41/1242-44), the Zāwiyat al-Hunūd (ca. 658/1260), and the madrasa of al-Nāšir Muḥammad (695-703/1295-1303) in addition to the madrasa and mosque of Baybars. This combination of forms, therefore, cannot be associated specifically with Baybars' patronage, even though, surprisingly, after this group of examples, the combination of a minaret directly over a portal does not appear again. In his mosque on the Citadel, al-Nāšir Muḥammad had a minaret built over the portal block, but to the right of the entrance itself. Later in the century, paired minarets frame portals or mosques as a whole, probably under the influence of developments in Anatolia and Iran.

A second possible explanation is that when the sultan specified this combination he meant to copy or allude to monuments outside Cairo. The earliest known use of this combination is at the gates of the Mašğid al-Ḥarām in Mecca. Ibn Ġubayr, who visited there in 580/1184-85, noted seven minarets, four at the corners of the mašğid and one each over the Dār al-Nadwa, the Bāb al-Šafā, and the Bāb Ibrāhīm. Ibn Ġubayr's description of these minarets mentions that they had muqarnas cornices, a feature which first appears in the minarets of Cairo at the Mašhad al-Ġuyūšī (478/1085). The Mašhad al-Ġuyūšī minaret also shares many features with a group of upper Egyptian minarets, and the whole group — dated to the period of Badr al-Ġamālī — can be seen as having been directly inspired by the Meccan minarets to remind the onlooker of their function as markers for the pilgrimage route through Upper Egypt ⁽¹⁾.

The proliferation of these minarets over portals in Ayyubid and early Mamluk Cairo might well have served as evidence that they had by then lost any such symbolic content

⁽¹⁾ Jonathan M. Bloom, « The Mosque of al-Ḥākīm in Cairo », *Muqarnas* 1 (1982).

were it not for the existence of a foundation inscription on the minaret at the mosque of Sayyidnā al-Ḥusayn which suggests quite the opposite. It states that « the pilgrim to the House of God, Abū'l-Qāsim b. Yaḥyā b. Nāṣir al-Sukkārī, known as al-Zarzūr » ordered the foundation of « this blessed *mi'dana* ... in order to be closer to God and to make visible the *manār* of Islam »⁽¹⁾. The emphasis on the patron as a ḥaḡḡī and the Islamic content of the minaret suggests that the Fatimid monument played no role whatsoever in inspiring the Ayyubid minaret. If it was so heavily charged with meaning, it comes as no surprise that Sultan Ṣāliḥ Naḡm al-Dīn Ayyūb ordered a similar minaret six years later to be built over the portal of his madrasa nearby, or that in the next twenty-five years three others were built, including the two at Baybars' madrasa and mosque. Baybars insisted on these minarets, however, not merely as a formal emulation of previous local monuments, for since his accession to the sultanate he had been most interested in the welfare of the holy places. Inscriptions from the Citadel of Damascus dated 659/1261 give him the titles « master of the two qiblas » and « servant of the two sanctuaries » which then become standard in his titulature, and he supported those titles with both action and money⁽²⁾. However, his motives were not entirely pious : the fall of the 'Abbasid caliphs in Baghdad had left the Holy Cities without a sovereign, and the two major contenders for the title were Baybars and the Rasulid sultan of the Yemen. In 659 the latter made the pilgrimage, distributed many alms, washed the Ka'ba and perfumed it, strewed gold and silver about, provided the kiswa and undertook various restorations of the Ḥaram, in return for which he was mentioned in the ḥuṭba⁽³⁾. Baybars was justly apprehensive that he would buy the allegiance of the Holy Cities and thereby fill the power vacuum, and Baybars' establishment of the 'Abbasid caliph in Cairo was one measure to make certain that his sovereignty prevailed there instead⁽⁴⁾. Other measures were more direct : he undertook the restoration of the Mosque of the Prophet in Medina after the destructive fire of 654/1256⁽⁵⁾. In 662, report was received in Cairo of the ḥuṭba in Mecca being given in the sultan's name; his envoy had kept the Ka'ba open for three days and allowed all who wished to enter.

In 664, Baybars became the first ruler to send the *maḥmal* — the richly embroidered, empty, tentlike litter carried on a camel — to Mecca, thereby proclaiming his lordship and protection over the Holy Places⁽⁶⁾. In 665, the amir al-Ḥillī and the ṣāḥib Muḥyi

(1) RCEA 4110.

(2) RCEA 4476-77.

(3) F. Wüstenfeld, *Geschichte der Stadt Mekka* (Beirūt, 1964), vol. 2, p. 271 and Ayalon, « Transfer », for the role of the Hafsīd caliph.

(4) *Sulūk* 1 : 505; *Sult. Maml.* 1 : 1 : 230.

(5) Jean Sauvaget, *La Mosquée omeyyade de Médine* (Paris, 1947), pp. 42-44.

(6) Jacques Jomier, *Le Maḥmal et la caravane égyptienne des pèlerins de la Mecque* (Cairo, 1953).

al-Dīn b. Bahā' al-Dīn b. Ḥinnā distributed alms on the sultan's behalf in Mecca ⁽¹⁾. In 667, the sultan himself made the pilgrimage, having first settled a dispute between the sharifs of Mecca by assigning them each an annual income of a thousand pieces of silver on condition that no payments be demanded of any pilgrims, that all be allowed to visit the *bayt*, that merchants not be hindered, that the ḥuṭba be given in the sultan's name in and around Mecca, and that coins be struck in his name ⁽²⁾. If a single minaret over the portal was an appropriate way to make the *manār* of Islam visible at the mosque of Sayyidnā al-Ḥusayn and recall the efforts of the « pilgrim to the House of God », that same combination was at least as appropriate for Baybars' buildings, concerned as the patron was with his role as protector of the Holy Cities and his position as sultan of Islam and the Muslims.

The association is confirmed by the three foundation inscriptions that decorate the portals of Baybars' mosque ⁽³⁾. All three begin with an invocation and continue with the recording of the act of foundation of the mosque. The first and third, over the northeast and southwest portals, give Baybars' titles as the sultan al-Malik al-Zāhir Rukn al-Dunyā wa'l-Dīn, sultan of Islam and the Muslims*, Abū'l-Faṭḥ Baybars al-Ṣāliḥī, associate of the Commander of the Believers. The second inscription, over the main portal (and under the now destroyed minaret), expands these epithets at the point marked with an asterisk with « master of the two qiblas », « he who ordered the recognition of two caliphs », and « servant of the two noble sanctuaries ». While this is not the first appearance of these attributes ⁽⁴⁾, they were not standard and do not appear on all of Baybars' earlier inscriptions.

The role of the minaret as a potent symbol of Islamic holy places not only explains why Baybars particularly requested this specific combination of minaret and portal, but also validates an explanation proposed for the Ḥākim mosque, also planned in a similar situation, though this time it was the Fatimids who wanted to establish their sovereignty over the Holy Cities ⁽⁵⁾. While Anatolian builders were experimenting with multiple minarets as part of a decorative composition, as in the Gök Medrese in Sivas (670/1271), Egyptian architects used the minaret as far more than a decorative composition element. The use of eight minarets at the Mausoleum of Ulğaytu in Sultaniyya in the early eighth/fourteenth century indicates that its Islamic symbolism was not restricted to Egypt alone ⁽⁶⁾.

⁽¹⁾ *Sulūk* 1 : 562; *Sult. Maml.* 1 : 2 : 45.

⁽²⁾ *Sulūk* 1 : 579; *Sult. Maml.* 1 : 2 : 69.

⁽³⁾ *RCEA* 4563-64.

⁽⁴⁾ See, for example, the Damascus Citadel inscription, *RCEA* 4476, or that on the Mosque

in Kara, *RCEA* 4554.

⁽⁵⁾ Bloom, « al-Ḥākim ».

⁽⁶⁾ Sheila S. Blair, « The inscription of the Mausoleum of Ulğaytu at Sultaniyya », *Islamic Art* 1 (forthcoming).

Another feature Baybars required of his architects was that the dome over the mihrāb be the same size as that over the shrine of Imām al-Šāfi‘ī. Creswell’s attribution of this dome to an imported Mayyāfāriqīn mosque plan can be discarded for a much more local explanation that al-Maqrīzī provides in an off-hand remark which apparently escaped Creswell’s notice, but which al-Suyūṭī repeated in his brief notice of the mosque :

In the year 665 the sultan ordered the building of the mosque in al-Ḥusayniyya. It was finished in the year [6]67, and a Ḥanafī ḥatib was appointed to it ⁽¹⁾.

Clearly the esthetic quality of the dome over the Imām al-Šāfi‘ī’s grave was not the issue, but rather the need to placate the Ḥanafī faction by giving them a dome exactly as large as that belonging to the Šāfi‘īs. As Creswell noted, Baybars’ mosque had the largest dome in contemporary Cairo, the actual difference between the two domes being a mere 24 centimeters ⁽²⁾.

The offhandedness of al-Maqrīzī’s remark reflects his own bias. He was raised as a Ḥanafī by his eminent grandfather; eventually he turned into a vehement opponent of the Ḥanafīs and an ardent Šāfi‘ī. His doctrinal affiliations strongly colored his interpretation of Baybars’ reign, because al-Maqrīzī held Baybars responsible for breaking the power of the Šāfi‘ī qadis. He relates a peculiar incident which throws into relief his own beliefs : Baybars appears in a dream to someone; when asked how he was being treated in the afterlife, he replies that he had been reproached for no other thing so sharply as he had been blamed for appointing qadis of the four rites in place of the Šāfi‘ī rite only ⁽³⁾.

In the Zāhiriyya Madrasa, Baybars had made provision for both Šāfi‘īs and Ḥanafīs; in his mosque for Ḥanafīs only. The rivalry between the two maḍhabs suggests that more than mere chance led Baybars to specify a site in al-Ḥusayniyya. It was as far as one could get from the Qarāfa al-Šuḡrā where the Shrine of Šāfi‘ī was located and still be within greater Cairo. In addition to the tomb, the Ayyubid sultans had built a madrasa there, and in 607/1210-11 the number of people visiting the shrine and madrasa had grown so large that al-Malik al-Kāmil Muḥammad b. al-‘Ādil increased the small maṣḡid and gave it a minbar, so that the ḥuṭba could be said there ⁽⁴⁾. The Šāfi‘ī leanings

⁽¹⁾ Al-Suyūṭī, 763.

⁽²⁾ *MAE* 2 : 156 n. 6. Similar examples of competitive emulation of the size of former monuments are found in the descriptions of the Maṣḡid-i Ğāmi‘ of ‘Alī Šāḥ at Tabrīz, which was described by Ḥamd-Allah Mustawfī as being larger than

the iwan at Ctesiphon (Wilber, 147), or the iwan in the madrasa of Sultān Ḥasan in Cairo, which al-Maqrīzī described as being five cubits larger than the iwan at Ctesiphon (*Ḥiṭaṭ* 2 : 316).

⁽³⁾ Sadeque, 21-21.

⁽⁴⁾ *Ḥiṭaṭ* 2 : 296.

of this district are obvious; Baybars was wise enough to choose a place far enough away so as not to exacerbate the friction. The Ḥanafī learnings of al-Ḥusayniyya are suggested by what little we know of its population, for they were immigrants from the east, where the Ḥanafī rite was favored by many.

It is not specified in the sources which maḥab Baybars himself followed, but we know that he was accompanied throughout his pilgrimage of 667 by the Ḥanafī chief qadi of Egypt, Ṣadr al-Dīn Sulaymān b. ʿAbd al-Ḥaqq, whom he consulted and who instructed him in religious matters ⁽¹⁾. A Ḥanafī affiliation would make it likely that he would build a mosque especially for them, since the Ṣāfiʿīs already had ḥaṭībīs in the mosque of ʿAmr (which was the seat of the qadi for Miṣr and Upper Egypt) and the al-Azhar mosque. It is indeed possible that the *zāwiya* of Ṣayḥ Ḥadir, Baybars' spiritual adviser, may have had Ḥanafī-Ṣūfī activities, since exactly this combination is known in a *zāwiya* of some decades later ⁽²⁾.

The direct inspiration for the large dome over the miḥrāb in Baybars' mosque was, then, an equally large dome across the city. Nevertheless, its insertion is a feature that has obvious parallels not only in contemporary Mayyāfāriqīn — as Creswell suggested — but also in Selḡūq Iran, so recently ravaged by the Mongols. « Iranian » origins are called to mind not only by the large dome, but also, and perhaps more significantly, by the vestigial use of a cross-axial plan. The novel miḥrāb dome is preceded by an ante-maqṣūra area of nine bays, which establishes a strong axis from the court to the miḥrāb. This axis is reflected in the differentiated supports of the arcades between the court façade and the main portal opposite the miḥrāb and is counterbalanced by similar differentiated supports for the lateral arcades leading from the side entrances into the court. The mosque's interior is so totally destroyed that it is impossible to determine what constituted the original superstructure of these areas, but the wider intercolumnations at these three points suggest that these axes were emphasized in the elevation as well, probably by wider and higher transverse arcades. The location of these subsidiary entrances is similar to that of the Ḥākīm mosque, except that the latter does not indicate the exterior lateral entrances by any structural change on the court façade. It is quite different from that adopted at the two other mosques in Cairo that have large domes over the miḥrāb area — al-Nāṣir Muḥammad's mosque on the Citadel and the Mosque of al-Māridānī. In these, the court arcades do not reflect the features that lie behind them, be they domes or entrances. The emphasis on cross-axiality and the nine-bay ante-miḥrāb

⁽¹⁾ *Sulūk* 1 : 581; *Sult. Maml.* 1 : 2 : 72.

Islām (Oxford, 1973), p. 170 n. 5 and *Ḥiṭaṭ* 2 :

⁽²⁾ J. Spencer Trimingham, *The Sufi Orders in* 312.

area both suggest that the plan of the mosque of Baybars does not represent a hodge-podge of ideas gleaned from northern Syria and Mesopotamia but was a local interpretation of the four-iwan and qibla dome plan fashionable in the Islamic east at that time ⁽¹⁾.

Creswell was aware of the visual parallel between the big dome in Cairo and similar domes in the Selġūq mosques of Iran, but ignored it because of its association with André Godard's *mosquée-kiosque* controversy that then still raged. Many scholars now accept that Niẓām al-Mulk's introduction of a dome chamber to the Isfahan mosque ultimately generated the new typical Iranian mosque plan and that by the middle of the sixth/twelfth century the four-iwan/qibla-dome plan was firmly established in Iran as a result of the enormous influence exerted by his renovations in the late fifth/eleventh century. The origin of the dome he chose is imperfectly understood because of the dearth of early monuments, but it seems to be related to squinch and vaulting developments in northeastern Iran in the previous century. However, the decision to so radically transform the interior space of the mosque by the addition of the dome chamber itself has not been sufficiently explained.

Unquestionably, the earliest extant examples of the four-iwan/qibla dome mosque plan are found in Iran, but that is no reason to believe that the plan originated there. There are no monuments remaining from the capital province of Iraq, for example, but we know that many mosques were either built or restored in Baghdad in the late fifth and sixth / eleventh and twelfth centuries — the Ĝāmi' al-Qaṣr was renewed in 475/1082, and in the following century, Ibn Ĝubayr mentions eleven congregational mosques of which some must have been built fairly recently ⁽²⁾. It is hard to imagine that those responsible for these buildings in the capital city, the seat of the caliphate, were not aware of the new ideas introduced in Iran. Whatever the ultimate origins of the plan may have been, there was ample opportunity for it to have been known and used in Iraq.

It is then at least possible that the plan of the mosque of Baybars was inspired, not by Artuqid mosques, but by now lost Seljuq mosques in Iraq. The fall of Baghdad to the Mongols sent people scurrying to havens such as Cairo. While the Seljuq style mosque was not a new invention, there was hardly any possibility that it could have been introduced into Egypt in the Fatimid period, and, as we have seen, the Ayyubids were doctrinally opposed to adding more congregational mosques to a city which — in their eyes — had too many already ⁽³⁾. Thus, the early Mamluk period is the first in

⁽¹⁾ *MAE* 2 : 164.

⁽²⁾ *EI*² s.v. *Baghdād*, p. 901.

⁽³⁾ Seljuq dome building was not limited to Iran

alone : in 475/1082 the vizier Abū Naṣr Aḥmad ordered the construction of a dome (*qubba*) and a maṣūra for the Umayyad mosque of Damascus

Egypt when such a plan — already common in the eastern Islamic lands — could be expected to appear. As far as we can tell, many of the inhabitants of the area were immigrants from the east where this plan had long been standard. Without wading into the muddied waters of the origin of the cruciform madrasa in Egypt, it is significant that the first four-iwan cruciform madrasa was the *Zāhiriyya*, built by sultan Baybars.

The four-iwan plan eventually became common for Egyptian madrasas, but never found favor as a design for congregational mosques. The combination of the large dome over the miḥrāb and the opposite portal surmounted by a minaret takes an extraordinary appearance in the mosque of *Maṣūra*, outside Tlemcen, constructed at the beginning of the eighth/fourteenth century ⁽¹⁾, but so aberrant is this type within the development of mosque plans in the Muslim west otherwise that its plan seems most likely to have been inspired by some traveler or pilgrim returning via Cairo to the Merinid court.

CONSTRUCTION

Al-Maqrīzī provides little information about the actual construction of the mosque of Baybars. Baybars procured the materials for its construction, writing « letters to different places requiring marble columns to be sent from every place, also that camels, buffaloes, kine, and other beasts of burden should be sent from each province. He wrote likewise for iron appliances and good timber for the doors and ceilings, etc. » ⁽²⁾. When his business in Egypt was complete, he left for his annual campaign in Syria.

The following year, he did the same, and, in Ğumādā II 666, besieged the Crusader stronghold at Jaffa, quickly taking the citadel and dismantling it as part of a program to defend the Syrian heartland from further European attacks ⁽³⁾. The sultan himself took part in the demolition, taking « a quantity of the wood found in it and slabs of marble », and putting them « in one of the ships at Jaffa ». He sent the ship to Cairo, having « ordered that the *maqṣūra* of the Mosque ... be made of this wood, and the mihrab be made of the marble » ⁽⁴⁾.

(RCEA 2736). While this huge dome probably replaced an earlier one, it is nevertheless significant that domes were being added or replaced in existing congregational mosques at opposite ends of the Seljuq sultanate.

⁽¹⁾ Rachid Bourouiba, *L'Art religieux musulman*

en Algérie (Algiers, 1973), pp. 159 ff.

⁽²⁾ *MAE* 2 : 154; *Ḥiṭaṭ* 2 : 300.

⁽³⁾ Ira Marvin Lapidus, *Muslim Cities in the Later Middle Ages* (Cambridge, 1967), p. 12.

⁽⁴⁾ *MAE* 2 : 155; *Ḥiṭaṭ* 2 : 300.

It is unclear from the text and the context what the word *maqṣūra* means here. While it could have been a screened enclosure for the ruler in a mosque — such as the one Badr al-Dīn Bilik ordered for al-Azhar ⁽¹⁾ — it is more likely that the word was synonymous with the word *qubba*, which al-Maqrīzī's text uses to describe both the dome over the grave of al-Šāfi'ī and the dome over the mihrāb in Baybars' mosque ⁽²⁾. This supposition is confirmed by an inscription from the mosque, which records that Baybars ordered the « foundation of this blessed dome [*qubba*] » in 666, the same year as the destruction of the Jaffa citadel and presumably in its five remaining months ⁽³⁾.

The Jaffa citadel also provided slabs of marble which Baybars specified were to be used for the mihrāb. Unfortunately, the mihrāb is now devoid of decoration, but the slabs were clearly meant for revetment ⁽⁴⁾. While marble mihrāb revetments do not become a common feature of mosques until Mamluk times, the earliest extant example in Egypt is at Sultan Šāliḥ's mausoleum of 648 ⁽⁵⁾. They must have appeared in Egypt even earlier, since al-Ḥāfiẓ ordered the marble in the mihrāb for the shrine of Sayyida Nafisa in 532 ⁽⁶⁾. However, they were more commonly found in Syria. The capture of the citadel provided Baybars with a ready source of cheap materials, but the transfer of the wood and the marble was also a symbolic affirmation — specifically, of Baybars' power over the Crusaders and more generally of Islam's superiority over Christendom.

But this kind of transfer of materials from one building to another also had a long and involved history. Perhaps the most famous example is the still extant portal of the madrasa and mausoleum of Sultan al-Nāṣir Muḥammad, which in 690/1291 was taken by Sultan Ḥalil from a Christian church in Acre and eventually made its way, through various owners, into al-Nāṣir's possession ⁽⁷⁾. Much earlier, the Fatimid general Ġawhar transferred an iron gate from the Maydān al-Iḥṣīdī to his defensive constructions to the

⁽¹⁾ Above, p. 63.

⁽²⁾ In his discussion of the Azhar mosque, al-Maqrīzī quotes Ibn 'Abd al-Zāhir to the effect that the Fatimid caliph al-Ḥāfiẓ li-Dīn Allah erected a « fine maqṣura near the western door of the ḡami' in the front part of the mosque inside the riwaqs. It was known as the Maqṣura of Fāṭima because Fāṭima was seen there in a dream ». (*Ḥiṭaṭ* 2 : 275, 11. 15-16). This maqṣura corresponds exactly with the domed pavilion added in front of the axial aisle of the mosque as part of the restoration of the court facades, which Creswell

attributed stylistically to the caliphate of al-Ḥāfiẓ (*MAE* 1 : 256). Another text quoted by al-Maqrīzī refers to the domed bay before the mihrāb in a Fatimid mosque as a maqṣura (*Ḥiṭaṭ* 2 : 318). Creswell assumed that maqṣura was synonymous here with qubba, but did not discuss it.

⁽³⁾ *RCEA* 4586.

⁽⁴⁾ *MAE* 2 : 160.

⁽⁵⁾ *MAE* 2 : 102.

⁽⁶⁾ *Ḥiṭaṭ* 2 : 422.

⁽⁷⁾ *Ḥiṭaṭ* 2 : 382; *MAE* 2 : 234.

north of al-Qāhira ⁽¹⁾. The former instance had an openly symbolic content, the latter also had its practical side although it is one in a long tradition of symbolic transfers of gates in Islam ⁽²⁾.

Other such activities during Baybars' reign attest to the dual nature of these transfers — utilitarian or symbolic. When he recaptured Aleppo from the Mongols, Baybars removed the iron plates and nails from the Bāb Qinnasrīn at Aleppo and took them to Damascus and Cairo for some unstated purpose ⁽³⁾. In 662 Baybars moved the gate of the Bāb al-Īd, one of the gates of the Fatimid palace in al-Qāhira, to a khan which he was building in Jerusalem ⁽⁴⁾. Where the transfer from Aleppo seems frankly utilitarian, the Cairo transfer appears to be at least partly symbolic.

Spoils of war and gifts as symbolic affirmations of a *prise de possession* have a long history; in the Islamic world it begins with the gifts and spoils displayed in the Ka'ba and the representations of jewels and crowns at the Dome of the Rock ⁽⁵⁾. In 666, just before attacking Jaffa, Baybars received an ambassador from the ruler of the Yemen, who was vying with him for power in the Hijaz. The ambassador presented him with twenty horses caparisoned for war, an elephant, and a wild ass of unusual color, as well as other curiosities. In return, Baybars sent a garment from his wardrobe and various weapons with the message, « We have sent you utensils for peace and utensils for war which we have ourselves carried in the lands of the ġihād » ⁽⁶⁾. The gifts to Baybars were expensive or at least unusual presents, the gifts from Baybars were ordinary items charged with the symbolic power of his prior use. Clearly, Baybars well appreciated the value of symbolic power that comes from transferring items from one context to another.

A number of inscriptions from this same campaign in Syria also suggest that this transfer of materials was meant to affirm Baybars' victories over the Crusaders. An inscription from the White Mosque at Ramla records Baybars' building in 666 of a dome (or edicule) over the minaret and a portal ⁽⁷⁾. It begins with the standard bismillah followed by Qur'ān 9 : 18, but continues unusually with Baybars' titles and a history of the campaign against Jaffa, rather than the expected order of construction. « He left

⁽¹⁾ MAE 1 : 32; Bloom, « Meaning », p. 72.

⁽²⁾ Else Reitemeyer, *Die Städtegrundungen der Araber im Islam* (Leipzig, 1912).

⁽³⁾ Ernst Herzfeld, *Matériaux pour un corpus inscriptionum arabicarum*, 2^e partie : Syrie du nord : *Inscriptions et monuments d'Alep* (Cairo, 1955), p. 60.

⁽⁴⁾ *Sulūk* 1 : 491.

⁽⁵⁾ Mehmet Aga-Oglu, « Remarks on the Character of Islamic Art », *Art Bulletin* 36 (1954); 181-83 and Oleg Grabar, « The Umayyad Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem », *Ars Orientalis* 3 (1959) : 46 ff.

⁽⁶⁾ *Sulūk* 1 : 565; *Sult. Maml.* 1 : 2 : 49.

⁽⁷⁾ RCEA 4588.

Egypt at the head of his victorious army on the tenth of Raġab the unique, intending to undertake a holy war to fight the polytheists and resisters. He stopped at the port of Jaffa in the morning and conquered it by the grace of God in the third hour of the day ».

A second inscription from Safad is known only through the text preserved by al-Maqrīzī ⁽¹⁾. It begins with two unusual Qur'anic citations, 22 : 105 and 58 : 22, the first of which states that it was written in the Psalms that the earth shall be the inheritance of [God's] righteous servants; the second of which specifies that among the most abject are those who oppose God and His Messenger. The inscription then tells us that the restoration of the Citadel was ordered « after it had been taken from the hands of the accursed Franks and given over to the Muslims, transferred from the possession of the Templars to that of the believers that it might be returned to its original state, that it might cause loss and pain to the infidels, and, as a result of their efforts and their battles, substitute the true faith for error, the call to prayer for the sound of bells, and the Qur'an for the Gospels » ⁽²⁾.

Baybars' emphasis on his role as the champion warrior of the faith in these two inscriptions explains the unusual invocation on the inscription of the northeast portal of his mosque in Cairo, in which he asks God to make Islam and its armies strong, and to give it a final victory ⁽³⁾. The inscription over the main portal which supported the minaret emphasized Baybars' role as protector of the two qiblas, the two caliphs, and the two noble sanctuaries; the frankly militaristic tone of this inscription reflects another aspect of Baybars' self-image, that of the vanquisher of the enemies of the faith, most particularly the Crusaders. His carting off of materials from the destroyed Crusader citadel at Jaffa to his mosque in Cairo so that he could incorporate them into the two most symbolically charged areas of the mosque — the mihrāb and the dome above it — must have had more than mere thrift as its inspiration. It symbolized — as the second of the portal inscriptions even says — his victory over the enemies of Islam.

COMPLETION

At the beginning of the year 667, according to al-Maqrīzī, Baybars visited his mosque and built a mastaba in the Maydān al-ʿĪd outside the Bāb al-Naṣr (later in Muḥarram) ⁽⁴⁾. He then left for Syria once again, having named his son al-Malik al-Saʿīd Baraka-Ḥān

⁽¹⁾ *Sulūk* 1 : 563.

⁽²⁾ *RCEA* 4589.

⁽³⁾ *RCEA* 4563.

⁽⁴⁾ *Sulūk* 1 : 573.

to the sultanate to act for him in his absence from Egypt⁽¹⁾. Six months later, he secretly made his way back to Egypt to see how both his son and his domain were faring. Apparently his judgment on both counts was negative, for one result of his secret inspection tour was that taverns were closed and other practices he disapproved or forbidden⁽²⁾. His orders were reminiscent of al-Ḥākim's eccentric prohibitions and are evidence also of another aspect of Baybars' self-image as a pious ruler maintaining the morality of Islam in his domain.

Almost immediately after returning from his secret trip, Baybars came back officially, for in Ramaḍān (?) he had received both the ḥaṭīb of Medina and the chief of the servants of the Prophet's tomb and had arbitrated the conflicting claims between the two amirs in Mecca⁽³⁾. His mosque was completed in Šawwāl, and he was pleased enough with it to present robes of honor to those responsible, commending them on the speed and care with which his orders had been carried out. Later in the month, he departed again, ostensibly to visit the fortresses of Karak and Šawbak, but actually to perform the rites of the pilgrimage, which he kept secret to avoid a renewed attack in Syria in his absence. The speed with which he accomplished it speaks to the same point, for he stopped only two days in Medina and a week in Mecca. Within that short time, however, he not only performed all the rites of the pilgrimage, but also met with local notables and wrote condescendingly to the ruler of the Yemen to assert his primacy once again⁽⁴⁾. The mark of a true king, he wrote, was fighting a holy war; were the ruler of the Yemen really a king, he would go and fight the Mongols⁽⁵⁾.

By the beginning of the new year, Baybars was back at Karak, but he departed quickly again, still wearing his pilgrim's garments, for a tour of Syria, visiting Jerusalem, Damascus and Aleppo in quick succession⁽⁶⁾. According to an inscription along the way, this expedition was not strictly military. He stopped to the south of Jericho at a reddish mound locally identified as the tomb of Moses, and, according to the inscription, « ordered the construction of this honorable shrine [*maqām*] over the tomb of Moses who spoke with God ... after the return of his mighty following [*rikāb*] from the pious pilgrimage and his pious visit [*ziyāra*] to Jerusalem the noble, may God accept this offering from him ... »⁽⁷⁾. In this inscription, Baybars is given all his titles : « the most illustrious lord, the wise, the just, the God-assisted, the victorious, the vanquisher, pillar

(1) *Sulūk* 1 : 573; *Sult. Maml.* 1 : 2 : 61.

(2) *Sulūk* 1 : 574-78; *Sult. Maml.* 1 : 2 : 61-67.

(3) *Sulūk* 1 : 579-80; *Sult. Maml.* 1 : 2 : 69-70;

see above, p. 67.

(4) *Sulūk* 1 : 581-82.

(5) Jomier, *Maḥmal*, 33.

(6) *Sulūk* 1 : 583.

(7) *RCEA* 4612.

of the world and the faith, sultan of Islam and the Muslims, lord of kings and sultans, conqueror of great cities, exterminator of Franks and Tatars, extirpator of citadels from the infidels, inheritor of royalty, sultan of the Arabs, Persians, and Turks, Alexander of time, master of the stellar conjunctions, returner of the strayers from Islam from the hands of tyranny, king of the two seas, sovereign of the two qiblas, servant of the two noble sanctuaries, and he who ordered the recognition of two caliphs ».

In the same month, Baybars also visited [zāra] Hebron and distributed alms there ⁽¹⁾. He had been interested in the tomb of Abraham for a decade : in 659 when he ordered the restoration of the Prophet's mosque in Medina and sent workers and materials to restore the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem, he expropriated what had been the amirs' *iqṭā's* from the waqf endowments of Hebron ⁽²⁾. Next, in 664, he banned Christians and Jews from visiting the sanctuary, and two years after that he allocated large sums to endow the shrine, support its attendants, and pay for extensive repairs ⁽³⁾.

This concern with the shrines of the major prophets of Islam — Moses, Abraham, and Muḥammad — helps explain the third of the foundation inscriptions on Baybars' mosque in Cairo. The main portal emphasized Baybars' protection of the Islamic holy places; the northeast portal emphasized his military role. The inscription on the southwest portal states that Baybars ordered the construction of the mosque to « get closer to God the Magnificent and to manifest the power of the solid faith » ⁽⁴⁾. It is clear that Baybars' interest in Mecca was in part political — witness his introduction of the symbolic *mahmal* accompanying the ḥaḡḡ caravan. Nevertheless, his interest in all the holy places — whether traditionally important such as Hebron, or newly discovered, such as Nabī Mūsā — points to genuinely pious motives.

The interior of the mosque in Cairo is virtually destroyed, but the few fragments of the decoration that remain suggest that it was once almost entirely covered with bands of Qur'anic inscriptions as were the earlier Cairene mosques — Ibn Ṭūlūn, al-Azhar, and al-Ḥākim ⁽⁵⁾. While it is possible that their contents were as programmatic as those at al-Azhar, in the absence of any other evidence it seems safer to assume that they were probably extensive quotations from various suras, like those at al-Ḥākim. In either case, extensive cycles of Qur'anic quotations would serve to emphasize the pious motives behind Baybars' decision to build the mosque. It would hardly be surprising if one of them had been Qur'ān 9 : 18, perhaps the most frequently used verse for the foundation

⁽¹⁾ *Sulūk* 1 : 583.

⁽²⁾ *Sulūk* 1 : 445.

⁽³⁾ *Sulūk* 1 : 544, 563, 565 and *ET*² s.v. *Khalil*.

⁽⁴⁾ *RCEA* 4565.

⁽⁵⁾ Bloom, « Meaning », ch. 5 and 7.

of mosques : « Only he shall inhabit God's places of worship who believes in God and the Last Day, and performs the prayer, and pays the alms, and fears none but God alone; it may be that those will be among the guided ».

The events that surrounded Baybars' founding of a mosque in the suburb of al-Ḥusayniyya between 665 and 667 produced a whole range of circumstances and ideas that conditioned Baybars' decisions and choices. The vast numbers who fled the eastern Islamic lands ahead of the Mongol invasions led to the development of the area in which Baybars decided to build. The religious affiliations of those newcomers upset the religious equilibrium in Egypt that had been preserved under a Šāfi'ī monopoly over religious matters. In one sense, Baybars' mosque was a direct response to the religious affiliations of the newcomers.

The Mongol invasions also opened the way for the Mamluks, who broke the Mongol monopoly on military successes. While the Mamluks had existed since 648/1250, Baybars consolidated their power by successfully asserting the prestige of Mamluk Egypt against Mongols and Crusaders, over Syria and the Ḥiğāz. The Muslim world saw him — and he saw himself — as the preserver of Islam in its darkest hour, not only in turning the tide of Mongol and Crusader advance, but also in restoring the 'Abbasid caliphate. While the 'Abbasid shadow caliphs lingered on for another two hundred and fifty years as virtual prisoners of the Mamluk sultans, there is no reason to believe that Baybars originally intended them to be figureheads. His recognition of not one but two caliphs in quick succession speaks eloquently of his desire to reestablish the primacy of Islam.

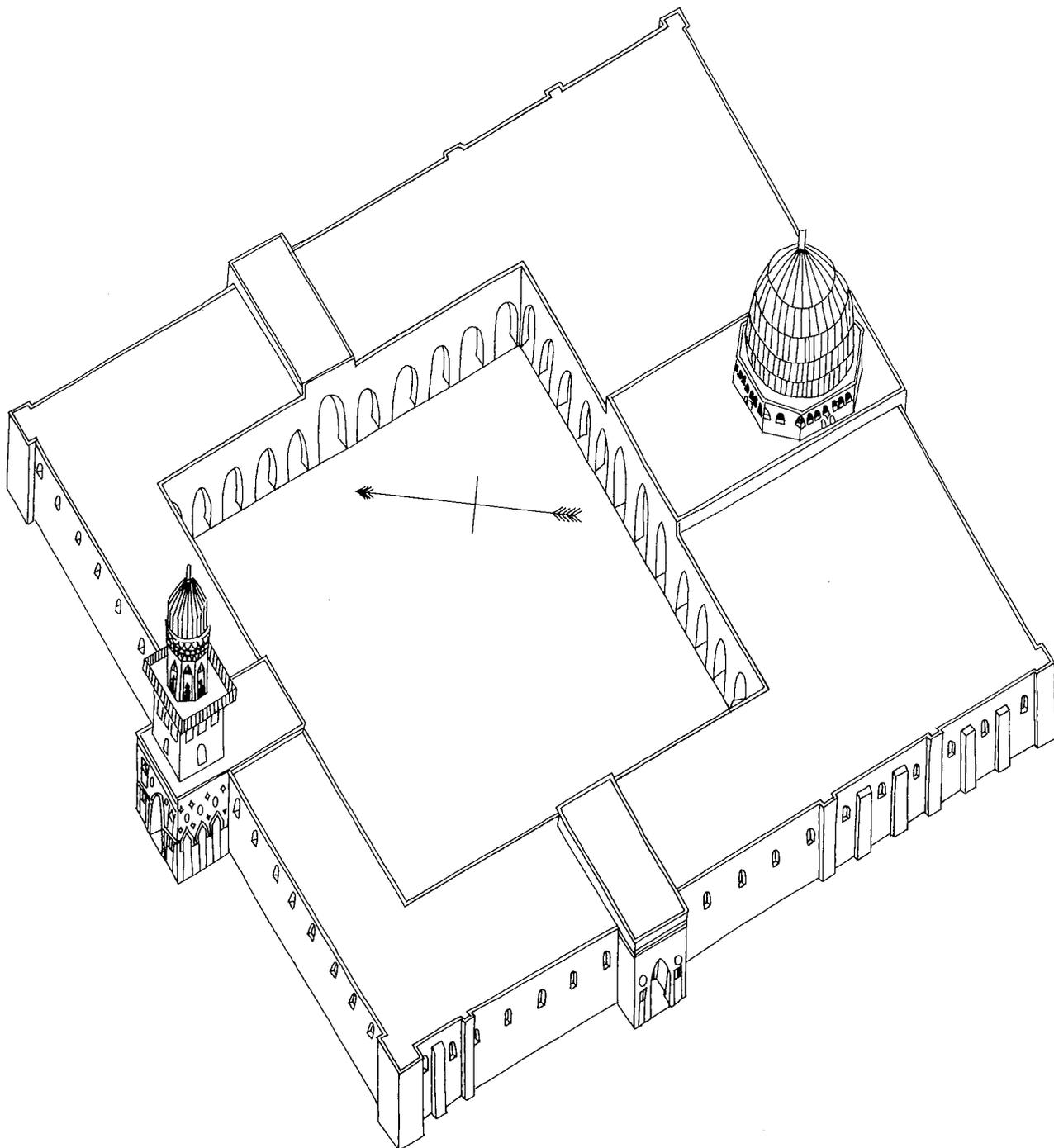
Titulature is prone to rampant inflation, but Baybars' list of grandiose titles had some basis in fact. He was sultan of Islam and the Muslims, master of the two qīblas, recognizer of two caliphs, servant of the two noble sanctuaries, and associate of the Commander of the Believers. Baybars had worked harder and longer than many other rulers accorded such grandiose epithets to earn them. His three objectives — to be sultan of the lands of Islam, to fight the enemies of Islam, and to be a pious Muslim — are clearly expressed in the three inscriptions recording the foundation of his mosque.

In form the mosque resembles the mosque of al-Ḥākīm, built some two and a half centuries earlier. The references to the earlier building, far from being accidental or the product of mere stylistic evolution, are deliberate and suggest that Baybars was perfectly aware that history repeats itself. The Fatimids had arrived in Egypt intending to make the entire Muslim world recognize their rightful caliphate. Their policy in the late fourth/tenth century was directed toward both Syria and the Ḥiğāz. The former would

open the way to the conquest of lands further east; the latter would give them control of the holy cities and consequently, enormous prestige in the eyes of all Muslims. The Fatimid caliph al-ʿAzīz and his son al-Ḥākim built their mosque in this context : its references to the buildings of the holy places in Arabia indicate how essential they felt this need for control to be.

Two hundred and fifty years later the actors had changed, but the stage and the script remained the same : Syria and the Ḥiǧāz were essential for Egyptian security and prestige. The battle for Syria was fought with weapons; the battle for the Ḥiǧāz, site of the two sanctuaries where arms were to be laid down, with symbols. In both cases — the Fatimid and the Mamluk — mosques were built in Cairo at the end of the pilgrimage road.

The mosque of Baybars cannot be explained away as merely a hodge-podge of foreign ideas and influences. It is a coherent meaningful statement with a vocabulary taken in part from the mosque of al-Ḥākim — an equally meaningful architectural statement — to express similar motives behind their creation.



Cairo, Mosque of Baybars al-Bunduqdāri : Hypothetical reconstruction, axonometric sketch.