THE UMAYYADS' ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE CHRISTIAN SACRED SITES IN ISLAMICJERUSALEM

NOUR ABU ASSAB

Jerusalem

ABSTRACT: *This paper aims to investigate the Umayyads' attitude towards Christian sacred places in Islamicjerusalem under the Umayyad rule. The paper tries to explore the Umayyads' way in dealing with the Christian sanctuaries in terms of the interaction of the formal figures with the venerated Christian sanctuaries, investigating whether the Umayyad's allowed the building, the rebuilding and the renovation of new churches or not. It will also try to examine how the Muslims dealt with the presentations related to the Christian sacred sites such as the feasts' parades and the displaying of crosses. In the same regard, this paper investigates how active the pilgrimage sites were, through eye-witness and pilgrims accounts. In order to achieve the previous goals, the researcher will survey the historical accounts with the support of the archaeological evidence in an attempt to identify the attitude held generally.*

KEYWORDS: *Christian, holy sites, churches, pilgrimage, ecclesiastical affairs, iconoclasm, Islam, Umayyad, archaeology.*

Formally, the Umayyads' first attitude could be seen when Mu'āwiyah was granted the allegiance to be a Caliph by his Levantine followers (Hawting 2000, 1, 24) in the city of Jerusalem (Hitti 1950, 435). The Caliph started his Caliphate by paying visits to some Christian sacred places, which might be perceived as a sign of their considerable presence in the area. Among the important sites he visited was the Gethsemane Church where he prayed. He, furthermore, prayed near the Tomb of the Blessed Mary (Maḥmūd 1998, 195; Schick 1995, 84, 85)[1].

Mu'āwiyah, with a crowd following him, also went to pray on the Mount Golgotha before he visited the Sepulchre of Mary at Gethsemane (Russell 1985, 47; Tritton 2002, 102). It is also said that he visited besides the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, the Church of Ascension (Graber 1996, 50). On the whole, Mu'āwiyah visited the most important sacred places in Jerusalem. In these incidents, it should be noted, that Mu'āwiyah was not any ordinary person in the Muslim society but was a high political and spiritual authority in the Muslim state. Therefore, a visit made by such a figure, reflects the formal respect to all the Christian sacred places in Palestine. In the same context, another clear example of his attitude is what is testified in the Christian literature and narrated by Arculf that a dispute occurred between Christians and Jews regarding the ownership of a sacred cloth of Christ. Thus, the Christians appealed to Mu'āwiyah who made a suggestion that resulted eventually in returning the holy cloth to the Christians (Wilkinson 2002, 175-176).   However some parts of the event appears to be legendary, it remains revealing to some extent, Arculf's satisfaction towards the Caliph's intervention in the dispute. This satisfaction could be seen in the acceptance of having the Muslim 'king' as a judge between the two disputed parties.

Interestingly the western writers also had the same attitude towards Mu'āwiyah to the extent that Arculf did not consider him as an infidel but more a '*quasi*'[2] Christian. Thomas even argues that this was sometimes the widely held attitude towards Muslims in general and not only towards Mu'āwiyah[3] (Thomas (*et al*) (eds.) 2009, v.1, 13). It might be perceived that this was part of Mu'āwiyah's policy to maintain a stable community. This positive attitude in a way resulted in keeping the peace between the non-Muslim subjects (Tritton 2002, 102) who were a vital part of the whole community in Islamicjerusalem. Mu'āwiyah's act was very important because the peace among the sects reflected peace in religious life.

Mu'āwiyah is not the only example of an Umayyad ruler in their dealings with the Christian sacred places as such. The Umayyads' attitude is also seen in the example recorded during the reign of the Caliph 'Umar ibn 'Abd Al-'Azīz (717- 720 CE). The Caliph

sent 'Abd Al-Raḥmān ibn Naʿīm, one of his employees, a letter, instructing him not to destroy any church among the ones that had existed when Muslims conquered the land (al-Ṭabarī 1997, v.4, 72). So, it was unlikely that Muslims sought the destruction of churches of Islamicjerusalem even though the dominant layout of the city of Jerusalem for example remained Christian (Peri 1999, 97).

For the same period, Al-Maqdisī mentions that when Hishām ibn 'Abd Al-Malik (reigned 724 -743 CE) started the building of the White Mosque in Al-Ramlah; huge marble pillars of a ruined church buried in the sand. The Caliph asked the Christians either to dig out the pillars or he would destroy the Church of Lud. To avoid the destruction of their church, Christians gave him the pillars which he used in the building of the mosque (al-Maqdisī 1909, 165). It is mentioned that, the Emperor gave Sulaymān the permission to take the pillars[4] (Schick 1995, 134) and taking the pillars of a church, which was out of use, was not a threat to the presence of churches. It was a common practice at that time to recycle materials from ruined sites[5]. Therefore, the researcher argues that the two Umayyad Caliphs, in relations to these two accounts, did not appear to disregard the places of worship because they did not affect the functioning of an active place, rather they made use of the available material in erecting other buildings.

In another place close to Jerusalem, the Umayyad dynasty appeared to show respect to the Christian places and the Christian religious figures. For example, the Caliph Hishām ibn 'Abd Al-Malik (reigned 724- 743 CE) ordered a house to be built for the Patriarch nearby a church, so that he would be able to hear the prayers and services (Tritton 2002, 106). The researcher argues that the Umayyad formal figures' attitude towards Christian sacred places appeared to be tolerant. In support of this argument, it is cited that the Caliph Sulaymān contributed to the constructions of the Christian worship places because he built a monastery for the Christians in the city of Ramlah from his own money ('Athāminah 2000, 145). Furthermore, William of Tyre states that the 'Arabs', after the conquest, allowed the Christians to rebuild their ruined churches (William of Tyre 2003, 144).

The sacred sites did not lose their charm and meaning for Christians over time. During the eighth century, John of Damascus expressed that he preferred living in a cave in the Desert of Judea rather than the places of Damascus (Piccirillo 2007, 198). So, the Christian churches and monasteries continued to function and there is evidence of having new institutions under the Muslim rule (Grabar 1996, 50). Along with the survival of the Christian population, the churches and monasteries of Islamicjerusalem also appeared to have survived. This is testified through the documents and inscriptions found in the churches of the Negev. Their availability could be seen as evidence for the continuation of their activities and their persistence to function regardless of the Muslim *fath*. These activities continued on a local level both as a framework and as a focal point of social life. The outcome of this continuation could have resulted in the ecclesiastical institutions maintaining their landed property and their income (Simonsohn 2010, 591).

Sometimes, new structures were added, during that period of time, to a main already existing compound. Such building extended with time to comprise additional churches erected inside or close to the ones of the Holy Sepulchre. The Church of the Virgin[6], the Chapel of the Chalice, the Chapel of the Cross and of the Holy Head-Cloth[7] were examples of such new churches erected and included to the court. It appears that those churches were active and had different activities, and definitely required more priests and monks to serve inside them (Linder 1996, 136).

However, the researcher has not found any explicit written text related to the Umayyad period to show a formal declaration to draw the lines of how Muslims should deal with the Christian sacred places, the above-mentioned examples, as performed by formal figures of the Caliphate, could be a source for depicting the lines of this policy. In other words, the Umayyad Caliphs' acts could reflect a sign of respect to the Christian sacred places by visiting them or by ordering the erection of buildings related to them. Furthermore, the researcher has found no historical text that called for any hostility against the Christian sacred sites by destroying or preventing the building or renovation.

To conclude, the absence of literature that calls for the destruction or the restriction of the Christian sacred places; besides the availability of practical examples, in historical sources, performed by officials suggest that formally, the Muslims endorsed attitude was more likely to be positive[8]. Thus, the Caliphs themselves contributed to the building of churches or other institutions.

Archaeological Evidence

In support of the above-mentioned historical evidence, archaeological evidence has revealed and unearthed more information about the Christian sacred places under the Umayyads. Under this section, some examples for newly built, rebuilt or renovated churches will be listed. In addition, other examples will be presented for churches that continued to function from the time of the conquest and ended during the Umayyad period, discussing the reasons why. One example of the rebuilding of a Christian sacred place is the rebuilding of the Church of Shepherd's Field (*Kanīsat Al-Ra'awāt*) in Bayt Sāḥūr. This church had been originally built in the Byzantine period but was destroyed later, like other monasteries, by previous invasions[9]. Schick mentions that the Shepherd's Field was rebuilt during the Umayyad period but on a smaller scale. It was converted into an ordinary monastery because there were no longer enough pilgrims to support it as a major pilgrimage site (Schick 1988, 239).

In short, it is shown that Christians continued to build new churches and rebuild the ruined ones; they also extensively repaired old ones during the Umayyad period. The archaeological evidence and the historical accounts both show that Muslims' were more likely to be tolerant in dealing with churches and the Christian sacred sites. Despite this fact, Schick argues that the number of churches declined in that period (Schick 1988, 239). However there is historical and archaeological evidence that some of the churches continued to function after the Muslim conquest yet some were hindered during the Umayyad period, such as Tell Ḥasan in Jericho, Ruḥayba[10], John the Baptist and Bayt El[11] (Schick 1995, 118,119). The following subtitle discusses this designated issue.

Name	Place	Date	Developments	Notes	Reference
Church of Visitation	ʿĀyn Kārem	firstly built around 5-6 century, then modified in the 6th century (Byzantine period)		remodified in the Medieval period	(Margalit 1995, 375-376)
Church of Shepherd's Field/ *Kanisat Al-Raʿawat*	Bayt Sāḥūr	Byzantine period	rebuilt during the Umayyad period	destroyed by Persians in 614 CE	the official site of the Monastery; (Schick 1988, 239)
The Holy Trinity	*Bayt Jibrīn* (near Hebron)	638 CE	newly built	for burying the Christians killed in fights with Muslims	(Schick 1995, 120)
Small oratory[12]	Jerusalem	638 CE	newly built	Sophronius built it in the ruins of St. Stephen church, which was destroyed during the Persian siege in 614 CE	(Schick 1995, 120)
The three churches of ʿĀbūd	ʿĀbūd (village to the north of Ramallah)	seventh or eighth century	newly built	-	(Schick 1995, 121)
Church in Mount Gerzīm	Nablus	after the Muslim conquest	remodelled	-	(Schick 1995, 123)
Church in Shiloh	South Nablus	After the Muslim conquest	remodelled	-	(Schick 1995, 123)

Table 1: list of churches constructed under the Umayyads, rebuilt or renovated during the Umayyad period

The table above shows some churches and monasteries, which were built, rebuilt or renovated during the early Muslim period (Table 1).

Reasons for the Decline in Church Numbers

This decline occurred because of several factors. The following section will delve into discussing reasons for this decline. The following factors appear to have contributed to the decline in church numbers under the Umayyad period such as the natural disasters, the political situation, the economic conditions, peaceful abandonment, and demographical change.

Natural Disasters

At that period of time natural disasters seemed to have influenced Islamicjerusalem affecting the whole population and accordingly the activities pertaining to the population. The region experienced the plague fifteen times during the Umayyad period (Abū Al-Robb 2002, 200). The plague of 'Imwās might be the most famous as it had started at the time of Caliph 'Umar ibn Al-Khaṭṭāb in 639 CE and spread all over Al-Shām causing the death of thousands (Al-Baladhurī 1983, 145; Al-Ḥamawī 1990, v. 4, 177-178). This is besides another plague in around 673 CE, during the reign of Mu'āwiyah (Abū Al-Robb 2002, 199). These various accounts show that there was a series of this epidemic. Ibn Kathīr records a severe plague in 698 CE, which affected the majority of the masses in Al-Shām (Ibn Kathīr 1987, V.5 (9), 23). Such epidemics had directly affected the number of the inhabitants of Islamicjerusalem. Thus the whole population of Islamicjerusalem, which included a large Christian population, would have declined, and inevitably would have been followed by the decline in the number of places of worship. Not only was it the epidemic that caused the decline in the number of Christians; the Christian conversion to Islam also had its effect, in particular among Arab Christians who were the majority of the inhabitants ('Athāminah 2000, 145). For example, Damascus changed its character from the moment it passed to the Muslim hands, as it became the residence of the Caliph and the Muslim population. The population increased because of immigration and by large conversion to Islam, where very quickly the natives found themselves as a minority (Kremer 1977, 148).

Runciman asserts that Islam was very acceptable for many Christians who found Islam an updated version of Christianity and the religion of the ruling class. Therefore, the population of Syria who had been predominantly Christian, converted to Islam a century after the conquest (Runciman 1991, v.1, 21-23). The researcher argues that the decline in the number of Christian inhabitants would, necessarily, be followed with a relative decline in the number of institutions and places they needed. Therefore, many churches and monasteries fell out of use. Another natural disaster that affected Islamicjerusalem severely were the

earthquakes[13] (Russell 1985, 37-39). Both Muslim and Christian historical sources mention these earthquakes[14] and highlight the most destructive ones citing their grim consequences on the buildings of Islamicjerusalem including the Christian edifices. The first recorded earthquake in Islamicjerusalem was documented by Theophanes[15] during Muʿāwiyah's reign in 657/658 CE as he says, "*In the same year there was a violent earthquake and buildings collapsed in Syria and Palestine in the month of Daisios.*" (Theophanes 1997, 484).

Another earthquake also shook the area the following year, which could have been due to the stress along the tectonic plate structures caused by the 658 CE earthquake. Another earthquake took place at the year 971 CE. Russell quotes from the Maronite Chronicle that:

> … while the Arabs were gathered there with Muʿāwiyah, there was a foreshock and a violent earthquake, by which it overthrew the greater part of Jericho and all of its churches. And the Church of St. John, built next to the Jordan in honour of our Savior's Baptism, was destroyed to its foundations, along with the entire monastery. The Monastery of St. Euthymius, along with many habitations of monks and hermits and many villages, were also overthrown in this quake. (1899:324) (Russell 1985, 47)

In another example, Ibn ʿAsākir mentions a severe earthquake in 747 CE, which affected the coastal area of Islamicjerusalem and resulted in the destruction of the City of Jerusalem and the death of a large number of its inhabitants, including the offspring of Shaddād ibn Aws (Ibn ʿAsākir 1995, v. 22, 408). Theophanes mentions a destructive earthquake in 746 CE but it seems that his date is not accurate because it contradicts the Arabic sources that the same earthquake of 747 CE is meant to be recorded in Theophanes Chronicle (Theophanes 1997, 585).

The earthquakes under the Umayyads continued to shake Islamicjerusalem until nearly the end of their ruling. To elaborate, it is recorded that Islamicjerusalem suffered grievously from an earthquake dated in January 749 CE (Tsafrir and Foerster 1992). Without a doubt, the earthquakes would cause major destructions of all constructions including the churches and monasteries. The monastery of John the Baptist (Qaṣr Al-Yahūd) (in 747 or 748

CE), fort in Mo'āb, Khirbat Al-Mafjar[16] (in 749 CE) and the monasteries in the Wilderness of Judea[17] are examples of such institutions affected by the earthquakes. Therefore, it is assumed that Islamicjerusalem lost some of its Christian constructions due to earthquakes. Whether the churches were repaired or not depended on whether or not the Christian communities at the time of the earthquake were able to do so. When the churches were rebuilt after an earthquake, this means that the Christian community was still thriving at that site even after the earthquake while the absence of repairs suggests that the number of people declined as a result of the earthquake (Schick 1995, 123).

Archaeologically, the earthquake could be easily distinguished from wilful destruction as it could be characterised by the collapse of arch blocks in close alignment with a consistent orientation, while a wall which was deliberately destroyed would fall more randomly (Schick 1995, 124-127)[18]. It could be said that the natural disasters appeared to have a negative effect on the Christian sacred sites either by causing direct damage or by affecting population numbers. Nevertheless, the decline could also be due to political reasons.

Political Situation

Besides natural disasters, some political reasons would have had its impact on the decline of church numbers. The area seems to have remained mainly peaceful during the Umayyad period. However, the area was affected at times by civil wars. The impact of the movements of the armies had no direct impact on the Christian places. Nevertheless, the civil wars led to the weakening of government control and allowed the Byzantines to raid the coastal area (Al-Baladhurī 1983, 148; Schick 1995, 85, 86). 'Athāminah claims that these raids had a negative impact on the churches and monasteries of Islamicjerusalem (Athāminah 2000, 145).

Besides the Byzantine attacks and the civil wars, some extended tribal rebellions took place during the last years of the Umayyad Caliphate[19] also affecting the political stability (Schick 1998, 76) which in turn may have affected the Christian sacred places. In this regard, Runciman claims that the civil wars that led to the decline of the Umayyad Caliphate brought chaos to Islamicjerusalem

because the uncontrolled local governors raised money by confiscating churches, which the Christians had to redeem, thus many churches and monasteries were devastated (Runciman 1991, v.1, 26). Thus, at times, the political situation also contributed to the decline.

It could be argued that the natural disasters and the political instability would inevitably have affected economic life. 'Athāminah argues that the war between the Byzantines and the Arabs impeded the trade and the port's activities. This war resulted in many families losing their source of living and leaving to find other sources ('Athāminah 2000, 146). The researcher argues that this also would have meant leaving all the construction in these cities including the places of worship, which would expose them to abandonment. Schick states that many churches were badly preserved, so that the lack of evidence for deliberate destruction or earthquakes suggests that they might be abandoned peacefully (Schick 1995, 128) which seems to be the most common way to relinquish these churches and monasteries during the Umayyad period (Schick 1988, 239).

Peaceful Abandonment

The abandonment of the churches resulted in robbery of their marble liturgical furnishings[20] (Schick 1988, 239) as happened in 'Abdāt and Al-Khān Al-Aḥmar (Schick 1995, 132). In general, the abandoned churches later came to be used for domestic occupation usually used by nomads, or used as animals' pens, or for burials or for long term, used as dwellings. The evidence for the domestic occupation usually consists of secondary walls dividing the churches into rooms, blocked doors or windows, ovens and deposits of ash from cooking fires, and dung from animal pens. Al-Khān Al-Aḥmar, Bayt Gibrīn (Schick 1995, 130-131) and Khirbat Shuwaykah are examples of churches which were abandoned and later reoccupied (Abu Kalaf (et al) 2006, 44). In regards to Khirbat Shuwayka, it was revealed through excavation by Al-Quds University that this site (close to Ramallah) had a large Byzantine complex consisting of a residential complex, a wine installation and a church. The researchers assumed that the church was presumably dated third to fifth centuries. By this time, the

church had been abandoned for a time before being reoccupied sometime in the 'Abbāsid period 8th-11th centuries as a complex of simple domestic dwellings (Abu Kalaf *(et al)* 2006, 49- 50). The researcher argues that reusing the whole complex as domestic dwellings assures that Muslims did not seem to play any role in the abandonment of the church. If the church was the only abandoned building, the other buildings in the complex were to keep functioning. However, when the whole complex was abandoned that meant that the whole community in Khirbat Shuwaykah was declining, and no one was living there; neither Christians nor Muslims at the time of the early Muslim period until eventually reused at the early 'Abbāsid period.

The reasons for the abandonment of so many churches are related to the economic and population changes after the Muslim conquest. When the population of a site shifts, the need for churches also necessarily changes. It is also possible that having some churches abandoned while others continued to function could be due to a process of consolidation of individual congregations and a shift of population from villages to cities (Schick 1995, 135).

Demographical Change
Another factor that might not be undermined in its effect on the decline of number of churches is the demographical change. It could be logical to wonder why the decline in number of places of worship only applied to the Christian places while the sources do not mention the effect on the Muslim places, especially that the natural disasters and the political chaos usually affect a whole region and not a limited area. Here, the researcher argues that the radical change of demography between the followers of each religion appears to have played a major role but this does not mean the city of Jerusalem in particular but in Islamicjerusalem as a whole. It was not only due to the conversion to Islam, but also because of the Arab migration from the Arab Peninsula. These waves initially started during the Muslim conquest, when many of the fighters came with their families with the intention of staying in the conquered land ('Athāminah 2000, 25).

Despite the outcome, the previous discussion would suggest it is cited that there is an incident of a deliberate destruction of a church under the Umayyads. At the end of the Umayyad period, one of the Christian worship places was affected by the flight of Marwān II[21] (691-750 CE) to Egypt, as he was defeated in the battle of the Zāb by the 'Abbāsids. Marwān II robbed a monastery in an unsuccessful attempt to obtain money with which to stave off final defeat but the monastery was not destroyed, so it presumably continued to be inhabited afterwards[22] (Schick 1991, 64). Apart from this one event, the researcher did not find, through her research, any recorded case of assured deliberate destruction. Furthermore, there is no physical or recorded evidence to show that the Muslims converted churches into mosques[23] (Schick 1995, 130). This would suggest that the exceptional case happened during the transitional period between the Umayyads and the Abbasids. The researcher argues that having such an incident at the time of chaos could not be perceived as a potentially dangerous situation.

The previous discussion suggests that the Muslim state did not prevent the building, rebuilding, or renovation of churches in Islamicjerusalem and what caused the decline in the number of churches appears to be due to political reasons, the economic situation, peaceful abandonment, demographical change, and natural disasters. However, it is cited that the Muslims viewed the construction of churches to be threatening towards the Muslim presence. As a result, Caliph 'Abd Al-Malik ibn Marwān constructed the Dome of the Rock (Al-Maqdisī 1909, 159)[24].

Construction of the Dome of the Rock and the Holy Sepulchre
The researcher, in this section, intends to discuss the incident of erecting the Dome of the Rock, which was constructed in 692 CE[25] (Johns 2003, 426). Therefore, this section will attempt to disclose the Muslims' attitude towards the Christian sanctuaries only in Jerusalem at the time of the Caliph 'Abd Al-Malik ibn Marwān. This section is limited to the place and period of time investigated; because of the motivation for constructing which has been theorised to be a reaction against the threat of the dominant Christian layout of the city (Al-Maqdisī 1909, 159). In this regard,

Al-Maqdisī, the geographer and traveller, mentions in his book that the Umayyad Caliph constructed the Dome of the Rock as they feared that the splendid Christian architecture in Al-Shām would dazzle the minds of the Muslims (Al-Maqdisī 1909, 159).

For a thorough understanding, it may be logical to return to the context in which this statement was made. Actually, this commentary of Al-Maqdisī was included within a whole conversation that took place between him and his uncle. In that conversation, Al-Maqdisī (the nephew) criticised Al-Walīd ibn ‘Abd Al-Malik because he had not done well when he spent much of the Muslim money to construct the mosque of Damascus. From his point of view, it would have been better if Al-Walīd had spent it for the construction of the roads and factories and the renovation of the castles. Reflecting on his objection, Al-Maqdisī's uncle justified Al-Walīd's act. He believed that Al-Walīd was rightly guided because the Muslims in Al-Shām were amazed by the decorations of the churches and by the celebrity of churches such as the Church of the Sepulchre, the Church of Lud and the Church of Edessa, therefore he meant to build a great mosque for the Muslims (Al-Maqdisī 1909, 159).

From Al-Maqdisī's uncle's point of view, Al-Walīd traced the steps his father had stepped before. The Caliph ‘Abd Al-Malik ibn Marwān, in Al-Maqdisī's uncle's own understanding, was guided, by God, to do the best when he constructed the Dome of the Rock because of the same reason that urged Al-Walīd to build his mosque (Al-Maqdisī 1909, 159), which was to redirect the Muslims' attention from the Christian great edifices to a Muslim edifice. The commentary of Al-Maqdisī would clearly connote that the Christian churches were impressive and huge, therefore; it might be a cause for the Muslims to be attracted to. Strategically placing the Dome of the Rock would divert the focus from the dome of the Holy Sepulchre. However, Al-Ratrout, argues that Al-Maqdisī's account could be considered as a personal interpretation and not necessarily the only genuine motivation to erect the Dome of the Rock (Al-Ratrout 2004, 460). Al-Ratrout refutes the theory of a scholar called Mauss, who developed an opinion of a theory based on Al-Maqdisī's account. In that theory, Mauss claims that

the Dome of the Rock had been copied from the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, as a sign to be a rival. Al-Ratrout argues that the shape of the Holy Sepulchre had never been octagonal and the dissimilarities between the two constructions are obvious (Al-Ratrout 2004, 457, 458). Thus, it could not be a copy or a rival in erection.

Although the theory initiated by Al-Maqdisī, was refuted from this side, it seems that it has been backed by other authors who believed that 'Abd Al-Malik "wished the anti-Christian campaign to be public" (Robinson 2005, 78), because the Dome of the Rock symbolises the monotheism of Islam (Robinson 2005, 78). The author goes beyond to say that the construction of the Dome of the Rock appears to be the first signs of a systematic policy of 'Abd Al-Malik against Christianity which appears in 'Abd Al-Malik's coinage during the 690s. The coins minted altered the cross by eliminating the cross bar (Robinson 2005, 79). In response to the aforementioned points, the researcher found no literature or evidence in the Muslim classical sources that conveys that the building of the Dome of the Rock symbolises monotheism. In addition, the researcher perceives that eliminating the sign of the Cross from the coins was a sign of the political dominance rather than religious one. This was because the religion here represented the new identity of the new state. In evidence, Johns states that it might be probable to say that the Umayyads had learnt from their opponents to use the coinage to show their identity. Before 'Abd Al-Malik's reign, no Umayyad coin had borne any religious declaration[26] except the *basmalah*[27] (Johns 2003, 426).

From another side, the researcher tends to believe that the struggle in symbols does not appear to be very convincing because even the building itself of the Dome of the Rock did not have any inscription to show the rivalry between the two religions. Even the verses that show the status of Jesus in Islam were written in the inner facade of the octagon. It could be argued that if the matter was to define principally the position of Jesus being different from Christianity, it would be made more obvious on the outer façade (Johns 2003, 428). In the same regard, the researcher argues that setting the position of Jesus in Islam inside that important mosque

would have even been perceived as a sign of rapprochement between Islam and Christianity, as believing in his Prophethood, besides the other Prophets, is one of the pillars of belief in Islam.

The researcher argues that there are other more convincing opinions that would have led to the construction of the Dome of the Rock, rather than considering it as a confrontation to Christianity. Firstly, it could be said, that the Muslim Caliph had a religious motivation to construct this building. To elaborate, the Mosque is considered one amongst the first three mosques of Islam. In *Ṣaḥīḥ Al-Bukhārī*, it is recommended to travel to only three Mosques, Al-Masjid Al-Ḥarām of Makkah, Al-Masjid Al-Aqsa in Jerusalem and Al-Masjid Al-Nabawī in Medina (Al-Bukhārī 2000, v.1, 223). According to the Muslim belief, Al-Aqsa Mosque was the place from which Prophet Muḥammad ascended to the heavens (Qur'ān 17:1); (Muslim 2000, v.1, 82), and the reward of prayer is five hundred times multiplied in it (Al-Ḥanbalī (nd), v.1, 231). Imām Muslim also narrated in his *Ṣaḥīḥ* that Al-Aqsa Mosque was the second to be established on earth (Muslim 2000, v.1, 210)[28]. In addition, Al-Aqsa Mosque was also the first *Qiblah*[29] for Muslims before they turned to face Makkah in their prayers (Al-Bukhārī 2000, v.1, 35). Thus the Muslim state should have taken care of this holy place and make its building as significant as its religious position required. From this point of view, the researcher tends to believe that constructing such a great building was a normal duty of the Muslim state. Consequently, the new construction appears to be a necessity for the Muslim state because, referring to Arculf's description of Jerusalem when he visited it at the time of Mu'āwiyah, the building of Al-Aqsa Mosque was very simple during the early Muslim period as it was constructed from beams,

> ... Outside Mount Sion, which is approached by rising ground stretching north. But in the lower part of the city, there was a place where the Temple had been located near the eastern walls, and had been joined to the city by means of a road-bridge. But today in this place the Saracens have now built an oblong house of prayer- which they pieced together with upright planks and large beams over some ruined remains. This they attend for prayer, and it is said that this building can hold three thousand people (Wilkinson 2002, 219).

The researcher argues that this simplicity does not correspond to the significance of the place, which surely required a significant building. This necessarily required a new establishment that met its significance in Islam especially that taking over the custody of serving and protecting the holiest Muslim places of worship would give the rulers more legitimacy to rule over the Muslims.

Secondly, the Caliph had much concern to Islamicjerusalem in terms of erections. It is worth mentioning to add that the erection of the Dome of the Rock was not the only project the Caliph 'Abd Al-Malik had established in Jerusalem. Evidently, he had repaired the roads as one of his public works (Wilkinson 2002, 21) and rebuilt Caesarea and Ascalon ('Asqalān) which were destroyed by the Byzantines (Khoury (*et al*), 2002, 30). Initially, 'Abd Al-Malik started the formation of his state with economic reforms since 685 CE. Three years later, he advanced it to build the Dome of the Rock. That was part of the determined plan that included all areas of the complex of Al-Aqsa Mosque beside the construction of a network of roads leading to Jerusalem (Johns 2003, 424- 426).

Thirdly, it might be worthwhile to take in consideration that this concern was not exclusive to Jerusalem, but to Al-Shām as a whole, as the whole area was under the Umayyad dominance. This means that if the Caliph had this fear about Jerusalem, it should have appeared in Damascus as well at the same time. Yet, the construction of the Umayyad Mosque in Damascus was only established at the time of Al-Walīd ibn 'Abd Al-Malik and not his father 'Abd A-Malik ibn Marwān (Brockelmann 1998, 140).

Fourthly, from another angle, the researcher would find that the erection of the Dome of the Rock was unlikely to be the result of fearing the Christian sacred places because that period witnessed the dispute between 'Abd Al-Malik ibn Marwān and 'Abdullah ibn Al-Zubayr. It could be speculated that this struggle had surely caused such an effort from the Caliph which made him place much focus on solving Muslim internal matters.

Fifthly, the researcher argues that the structure of the Dome of the Rock could not be an imitation to the Holy Sepulchre because it did not include even one significant style of a Christian building;

Hitti argues that for it, 'Abd Al-Malik employed native architects and artisans trained in the Byzantine schools. Qāshānī and mosaic decoration are used in both the original and the renovated building. The materials used in the construction of the Dome came from different origins. For example, the Qāshānī goes back to Persian origin while the mosaic techniques can be traced to Babylonian days (Hitti 1950, 512). So, the structure of the Dome of the Rock was a combination of more than one style and including a Persian style is a proof that there is non-Christian style.

Therefore, it could be argued that the erection of the Dome of the Rock appears to have nothing to do with the Christian sacred places. This is because it was related to a series of achievements that signified that period of time especially when Jerusalem also gained a high status in Islam. In addition, Al-Aqsa Mosque is considered one among the three most sacred Mosques of Islam. This would lead the researcher to claim that the motivation for erecting the Dome of the Rock by 'Abd Al-Malik ibn Marwān in its fabulous way was to mark the achievements of the new state. It could also be said that the erection was also to articulate public declarations of the religious basis of the Umayyads (Johns 2003, 432). So, it aimed at showing the identity of the new state rather than competing with other communities or overlooking other cultures.

Finally, it could be said that the building of the Dome of the Rock was not a matter of religious competition or clash because the Muslim state wanted to mark its progress by incredibly beautiful shrines and mosques. The progress the Muslims wanted to mark was the remarkable speed of their religion in sweeping through northern Africa, Palestine and Asia Minor (Rhymer 2003, 111).

The researcher tends to believe that the erection of the Dome of the Rock, was not linked to a rivalry between Christianity and Islam nor a competition between Muslims rivalries either. John quotes from Elad that, 'Abd Al-Malik had it as part of his struggle with Ibn Al-Zubayr. This argument stipulates that the disagreement of both was clear because Ibn Al-Zubayr[30] had taken control of Makkah and, during the *ḥajj*, used to set out the immoralities of the Marwānid family. This dispute was considered

serious to an extent that some authors claimed that 'Abd Al-Malik himself forbade the Arabs of Syria from performing the pilgrimage during the time when Ibn Al-Zubayr dominated Makkah[31]. For the same reason, it is claimed that 'Abd Al-Malik built the Dome of the Rock in order to divert the attention of the Muslims of Syria from the *ḥajj* to Mecca (Johns 2003, 425; Brockelmann 1998, 140) and make it to Jerusalem instead by making Muslims circumambulate around it instead (Khoury (*et al*) 2002, 31). The researcher tends to believe that it could not be denied that the struggle between the two above-mentioned characters was strong and serious because according to Muslim *Sharī'ah* there should only be one Caliph in the Muslim World. However, it did not reach the extent to change a rite that has been considered as one of the pillars of Islam and the denial of any of them would lead a person to be considered as a non-believer[32] as stated in Qur'ān (1:158). In addition, the above-mentioned claim was refuted by other non-Muslims authors because this report was rejected as anti-Umayyad *Shī'ī* propaganda (Johns 2003, 425).

The researcher tends to agree with the idea that such a report appears to be biased by anti-Umayyads, however, it still connotes that there was real competition between the rivals during the civil war, but the researcher does not find it plausible to state that 'Abd Al-Malik aimed at replacing the position of Makkah with Jerusalem, especially that the books of history do not cite that event. By focusing on erecting the Dome of the Rock, the Muslims helped in retaining the Christian sanctuaries. In other words, the Umayyads retained the Christian institutions because the Muslims from religious prescriptive had the whole area of Al-Aqsa Mosque considered to be holy to construct impressive projects[33] inside it (Peri 1999, 98) and thus had no need to compete with the Christian sacred places outside that range. Here, the researcher claims that the time gap between the time of the event and the time of the claim of Al-Maqdisī was long because the event took place in the seventh century while the claim was developed during the tenth century. At the same time, Al-Maqdisī does not mention his source or reference. The time gap itself could suggest the invalidity of the claim.

Under the Umayyads, it could be argued that the change and effect was limited to the Muslim presence but had nothing to do with the Christians. This claim could be proved by the absence of evidence that shows that the Muslims, particularly under 'Abd Al-Malik, sought to harm the Holy Sepulchre or any other church. In the same regard, there is no proof that the Muslims during that era confiscated any of the Sepulchre's properties or denied any of the Christian rites.

To conclude, Al-Maqdisī's theory stating that the Dome of the Rock had been built to diverse the Muslims' attention from the attractive Christian churches particularly the Church of the Holy Sepulchre appears not to be very accurate. This is because there were other motivations that called the Caliph to construct it such as the special status of Al-Aqsa Mosque in Islam and because of the Umayyads' general concern about the city. In addition, supposing that the Christian places appeared to be rivals for Muslim places, building the Dome of the Rock helped in retaining the Christian places. Therefore, the religious clash such as fighting against the Christian buildings and the religious symbols do not appear to be a policy adopted by the Umayyad Caliphate. However historical and archaeological information were investigated in this paper, the Muslims' attitude is still not completely clarified. A fuller view might be achieved by investigating the issue of pilgrimage to the Christian sanctuaries for the sake of revealing some information and thus being able to serve in depicting a more comprehensive picture. The following section attempts to survey places visited and explore how the Muslims dealt with the pilgrims.

Pilgrimage during the Early Muslim Period
Pilgrims' Accounts

The accounts of pilgrims are considered vital because they include the names of the venerated places visited by Christian pilgrims. The seventh century witnessed an increase in the number of pilgrims for the sake of gaining spiritual cleansing. This trend had started in the fifth century but had its strong impact in the seventh century. The reason for launching on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land was derived from the pilgrim's need to pour out his/her sins through a long exhausting journey. Performing a pilgrimage to the

Holy Land had developed during the seventh and eighth centuries until it had become a common religious phenomenon in Europe ('Awaḍ 1992, 20).

Islamicjerusalem includes many sites of pilgrimage[34]. Thousands of pilgrims came to the Holy Land but few recorded their experiences (Wilkinson 2002, 18). Some had come to Jerusalem definitely as their only destination, while others had made Jerusalem part of their journey when 'making the rounds' of the centres of monasticism in the deserts of Egypt and Syria (Linder 1996, 134). Despite the fact that the Muslims conquered Jerusalem, pilgrimage was not interrupted (Wilkinson 2002, 18). Aghārziān argues that pilgrims continued to come to the city in great groups, and the native Christians continued to practise their religious rituals in churches and sanctuaries in a normal way in spite of the massive political changes that occurred in Jerusalem (Aghārziān 1998, 159). Besides visiting Jerusalem as a target under the Umayyads, the pilgrims continued to come to Bethlehem and other sanctuaries in the Holy Land ('Athāminah 2000, 144).

The first recorded account of a pilgrim during the early Muslim period was the account of Arculf the French Bishop who came to the Holy Land in around 670 CE[35] (Rubin 1999, 21). He stayed in the Holy Land for nine months and went to many Christian holy places on daily visits (Wilkinson 2002, 177-183). Janin argues that in the seventh century Arculf's experience stimulated Christian interest in the pilgrimage to the Holy Land (Janin 2002, 70). When an account urged others to come on a long journey, this indicates that the journey and the stay in the Holy Land were safe and feasible. Aghārziān adds that Arculf did not face any obstacle on his way to Jerusalem (Aghārziān 1998, 158). It is believed that Arculf was not the only pilgrim who came to the Holy Land and recorded his account. Janin adds that many early Christian pilgrims are thought to have come from Byzantium, Egypt and Iraq but few of their accounts survived (Janin 2002, 71).

Griffith mentions that numerous inscriptions left behind by the pilgrims would testify that the Armenians had been coming to the Holy Land because of pilgrimage. Their influx constituted in their presence in the Holy Land. It is suggested that the number of

pilgrims increased considerably in the seventh century because the Muslim state faced the obstacles that might have been placed by the Chalcedonian government of Byzantium in facing the Jacobite Armenians coming for pilgrimage (Griffith 1997, 30). The table below shows the names of some pilgrims and the sites they visited (table 2). Concerning pilgrimage, eyewitness accounts prove that there were many places to be visited during the early Muslim period. In other words, the pilgrimage activities were flourishing and the number of churches, monasteries, and tombs were vast.

Name of Pilgrim/place	Year	Places visited
Arculf/ France	670CE	Bethlehem: the birthplace of Christ; The Tombs of King David, the Shepherds, Rachel, and St. Jerome; Hebron: The tombs of The Patriarchs and their wives; Church in Mamre; dwellings of nuns. Nablus: a church; a well (Wilkinson 2002, 184-193); Jerusalem: The Church of St. Mary; The Tower of Jehoshaphat; The Church of Ascension and other places; The Sepulchre; the Golgotha[36]; The Basilica near it; The Tom of Simon and Joseph; The gate of David; The Great Basilics built on the Mount Sion[37]; The Church built on the site of the Lord's Ascension; Lazarus Tomb and the Church surmounts it; the adjoining monastery; Church built to the right of Bethany; The Martyrium; Anastasis and a chapel between the Golgotha and the Martyrium (Wilkinson 2002, 177-183)
St. Vulpy / Rue (France)	late 7th century	no information (Runciman 1991, 42)
Bercaire and his friend Waimer / Burgundy (region in west Europe)	late 7th century	no information (Runciman 1991, 42)
Willibald/ England (with seven people)	722 CE	Mount Tabor; a monastery; Age Mons[38]; The City of Tiberias; a large number of churches there[39];T The City of Magdalena, the City of Capernaum, A church on The River Jordan; a Church in Chorazin[40]; Monastery of St. John the Baptism[41]; A church in Caesarea, Church in Gilgal; Monastery of St. Eustochius[42] (Wilkinson 2002, 233-241) The Church of Calvary; the Saviour's Tomb; The Holy Sepulchre; The Nativity; The Holy Sion; Solomon's porch; Mount of Olives; Tekoa and Sebastia (Wilkinson 2002, 241)

Table 2: Names of pilgrims and the places they visited in Jerusalem during the early Muslim period until 749 CE

It is also important to bear in mind that the aforementioned accounts did not record any obstacles faced during the pilgrimage journey, apart from the seven who were accompanying Willibald[43]. Those pilgrims were accused of being spies; but, later on, when they disclosed their destination, they were released. Even this incident might reflect to an extent the good way the seven pilgrims had gained. When they had arrived the coastal city Antaradus[44], it was noticed that they were strange travellers. After taking them as prisoners, they were sent to a 'rich gentleman', who had a look at them and asked them what kind of business they had been sent to do. After he had listened to their reply, the man said that such people do not cause any harm. His reply could clearly indicate that he was familiar with the visits of pilgrims, whom he testified to be peaceful. The attitude of this man could show Muslim's regard towards this particular Christian rite because he saw the pilgrims as people who wanted to 'fulfil their law'. However, the interference of the governor prevented their immediate release and kept them in prison for a while during which the pilgrims received good treatment. The account mentions that they were sent lunches, had baths, and sent to the church through the market and were bought goods on one business person's expense. The most important point about these pilgrims is that they were released when the Caliph heard about them. The Caliph showed his surprise in them being taken as detainees because he believed that these worshippers committed no crime against Muslims. Therefore, he himself allowed them to gain permission to access Jerusalem. Interestingly, contrary to the custom applied when releasing prisoners in making them pay money, the pilgrims were exempted from paying tax (Wilkinson 2002, 236, 237)[45]. This incident ended with the pilgrims being allowed to access Jerusalem, which was the aim behind the trip. However, from going through the details of other pilgrimage eyewitness, this story is exceptional in terms of questioning and imprisoning the pilgrims.

It was not only the pilgrims' accounts that reflected the flourishing pilgrimage activities, as there was also a pamphlet written as a guide which contributes to the depiction of their activities as well. During the reign of the Caliph 'Abd Al-Malik ibn Marwān (685-705 CE), Bede compiled a pamphlet, in 702/703 CE, about the

holiest sites in the Holy Land. Bede did not visit the Holy Land himself but based his pamphlet on his predecessors' works on the holy sites of Jerusalem (Wilkinson 2002, 21, 223). In his pamphlet, he mentions or describes many sacred places in Jerusalem, Hebron, Nablus[46], Jericho, Tiberias, Capernaum[47], Nazareth and the area of the Dead Sea and the River Jordan. This is besides adding plans of churches such as the plan of Sion Church and the plan of the Ascension (Wilkinson 2002, 216- 223).

In addition, the researcher tends to believe that the number of pilgrims was vast; therefore, Bede might have composed the guide as a response to their needs to learn about the sites they wanted to visit. In another interesting point, one view was revealed about the interaction between the local community and the outside visitors. It might be assumed that when there were many venerated places to be visited meaning that there was prosperity in the pilgrimage activities and there might be flexibility in the access to many places. From another view, the aforementioned eyewitness of Arculf might show the openness in the relations between the pilgrims and the local community of Jerusalem. Arculf during his stay in Jerusalem, besides visiting the Christian sacred places, he also visited Al-Aqsa Mosque and described it in his account. This incident might reflect the easiness of access of the Christian pilgrim to the Muslim holy places. In other words, Arculf's visit to Al-Aqsa Mosque seemed not to face opposition from the Muslims side; because the Muslims allowed a bishop to enter their Mosque which they considered to be holy (Wilkinson 2002, 170).

Another side that could be uncovered by exploring the pilgrims' accounts is the greatness of erection and the significance of building of the religious edifices. Arculf's account enables the researcher to depict the greatness of the Holy Sepulchre. In his account, he mentions that the building has a round shape 'the Round-Shaped Church built over The Lord's Sepulchre' (Wilkinson 2002, 171). When Arculf describes the Martyrium, he says that 'the church was very large, entirely made of stone and built on remarkable round plan' (Wilkinson 2002, 171). On the same place, he described the Anastasis, which is the Resurrection. This building adjoins the round church and has a rectangular

shape. As a sign of its greatness, Arculf mentions that it was supported by 'twelve columns'. He also adds that the church has three walls, which were separated by a 'width of a street' and included three altars arranged in a special emplacement in the middle wall. This Church had eight entries. He also reports that other buildings there were built inside it such as the small building that could accommodate nine men. This building contained the Lord's Sepulchre and was covered from outside with marble. Its roof was decorated with gold and supported a huge golden cross[48] (Wilkinson 2002, 171). Besides the Sepulchre, Arculf mentions that there were three other churches (Wilkinson 2002, 172)[49].

Another sacred place of significance mentioned is the Calvary of the Golgotha. The church included a bronze wheel for lamps, silver cross, lights and an altar. He also describes Constantine's church the *Martyrium*[50], located to the East of the Resurrection and adjoining the Basilica of the King. Between the Golgotha and *Martyrium* stood Abraham's altar, where he wanted to sacrifice his son according to the Christian belief. Interestingly, the place appeared to be active when Arculf visited it because he adds that the wooden table was still located there, and the alms were still offered to the poor. In the same area, between the Basilica of Constantine and the Anastasis, a court was located. This place also appeared to be lively because Arculf mentions that the lamps were burning in that place continuously, 'day and night' (Wilkinson 2002, 173, 174).

So, Islamicjerusalem appears to have massive pilgrimage sites with huge number of pilgrims flowing to the different cities, especially in Jerusalem. This would suggest that the city needed to be properly prepared for having the guests. In this regard, the researcher says that the city itself appears to be well suited for welcoming pilgrims and guests and having plenty of water because Arculf mentions when describing it that:

> A few water cisterns for supplying water are to be seen. In the neighbourhood of the Temple is the Pool of Bethesda, distinguished by its twin pools. One is usually filled by winter rains, but the other is filled with dirty red water. On the steep rocky side of Mount Sion which faces east, inside the walls and at the bottom of the hill rises the Spring of Siloam. (Wilkinson 2002, 192)

It is worth mentioning that the pilgrimage was not limited to the pilgrims coming from abroad. The Christian population of Jerusalem also made pilgrimage with veneration. In this regard, Arculf mentions that 'The whole population of the city makes pilgrimage to this Cup with the greatest reverence' (Wilkinson 2002, 174) as evidence of their active contribution.

On the other hand, this situation did not always prevail. 'Athāminah claims that in spite of the fact that the pilgrims continued to flow to Jerusalem, some Christians feared to come for pilgrimage because of the constant wars between the Muslims and the Byzantine Empire ('Athāminah 2000, 144). In this regard, Gil mentions that seventy pilgrims from Iconium were accused of being spies and killed in Caesarea between (717- 741 CE), while others were crucified in Jerusalem at the time of 'Abd Al-Malik ibn Marwān (715-717 CE) or 'Umar ibn 'Abd Al-'Azīz (717-720 CE)[51] (Gil 1992, 473). On one of the Muslim Christian works documented by an anonymous author, it is mentioned that the Byzantine pilgrims were 'martyred' during a seven-year truce concluded between Sulaymān ibn 'Abd Al-Malik and Leo III in 717 CE (Efthymiadis 2008, v.1, 328)[52].

Runciman mentions another reason for the possible decline in the number of pilgrims- the economic situation. This was caused by the lack of money in Christendom. Runciman reports that the Syrian merchants stopped coming to the coasts of Italy and France to bring wares after the Muslim conquest, and the pilgrimage journey was difficult and expensive and there was little wealth left in western Christendom (Runciman 1991, 42), and thus had its impact on the pilgrimage activities. According to Runciman, western Christians, despite the hardship and poverty, still thought of the eastern sacred places with sympathy and longing. As an example for that, he tells that in 682 CE Pope Martin I was accused of friendly dealings with the Muslims, he explained that his motive was to seek permission to send alms to Jerusalem (Runciman 1991, 43).

To conclude, the pilgrimage activities had not stopped under the Umayyads. As mentioned previously, the pilgrims who visited the sacred sanctuaries were either native citizens of Islamicjerusalem or visitors coming from abroad. Exploring the pilgrims' accounts

has revealed that the Christians maintained the sanctuaries, which they used to visit prior to the Muslim conquest. In addition, the eyewitness shows the greatness of many of the edifices because the pilgrims usually described them and reflected their impression. It has also been revealed that Jerusalem was well prepared to welcome the huge number of pilgrims and visitors.

Furthermore, the number of the sacred places has shown the prosperity in the pilgrimage activities because the pilgrims sometimes mentioned that there were charities, which were 'still' offered to the poor, besides the availability of lights which were 'still' lit daily. The rarity of events documented where pilgrims were attacked or were affected by hardships would suggest that the pilgrims travel and access to the Holy Land had, more likely, been secured. However, due to the war relations between the Muslim Caliphate and Byzantium, and due to the financial decline in the Christian World, the pilgrimage activities regressed for sometimes. For a more comprehensive depiction of the Muslim attitude, the position of monasteries is to be investigated. In the following section, the researcher will examine the Muslim attitude towards the building, rebuilding and repairing of the monasteries besides their activities, as they comprise a major component of the Christian sacred places.

Monasteries
Development of the Monasteries
Monasticism began in Islamicjerusalem in the third century and spread to the cities, desert, and countryside[53] (Bar 2005, 49-51). Monasticism prospered because of the number of monks who came to Islamicjerusalem originally as pilgrims. Then they decided to remain in Islamicjerusalem contributing to the development of Monasticism there. The original areas they came from were Egypt and then perhaps Syria. Most of the religious men and women who came to Islamicjerusalem came from other parts of the Empire such as Armenia, Greece, Cappadocia (Asia Minor), Rome, Egypt, and Syria, making Islamicjerusalem a centre for monasticism (Wilken 1988, 233). The posts of the religious figures inside the monasteries and churches were diverse. Actually, not only the priests and monks were serving in the churches and

monasteries but also the hermits and stylites. The monks and priests mixed thoroughly in both churches and monasteries (Linder 1996, 135).

During the fourth century, monasticism spread throughout Islamicjerusalem and monasteries were established in Jerusalem, Bethlehem, and in other sacred places connected with Christ's life (Patrich 1995, 3). It could be argued that the activities of the monasteries continued to operate dynamically under the Muslim rule. To elaborate, the monks of Islamicjerusalem played a significant role in serving the local ascetics (Linder 1996, 143).

To attempt to explain more about their role, the researcher refers to the Monastery of Saint Saba. During the seventh century, the Monastery of Saint Saba became a prominent centre for spiritual activities. Therefore, some active monks and religious figures became involved in its activities. Among the famous figures, John of Damascus[54], Cosmas and Stephen[55] (Gil 1992, 443). By having St John of Damascus, Umayyad Palestine reared one of the chief theologians and hymnologists of the Eastern Church as his works were translated into Latin, and both the Greek and Latin Churches regarded him as a saint[56] (Hitti 1950, 484).

Principally, within the Palestinian monasteries of Mar Saba and Mar Chariton, which had long been known as important centres of Christian culture in the Holy Land, John of Damascus wrote in Greek, the traditional ecclesiastical language of the Melkite Patriarchates in the East, and began to oppose the religious challenge of Islam (Gil 1992, 443). This endeavour on behalf of the Christians reflects the vital intellectual activities inside the monasteries, which could be a sign of their dynamic functioning. Interestingly, John of Damascus considered Islam as a forerunner of the Antichrist (Meyendroff 1964, 115), thus, it could be anticipated that the opposition led by John of Damascus was mainly theological, but its presence reflects the vitality of these monasteries. The activities of the monasteries appear to affect the universal monastic movement because the hierarchy of priests and monks accepted and sheltered other priests coming from different places of the world (Linder 1996, 134).

Construction of Monasteries

In regard to the building, rebuilding and renovating, archaeological studies unearthed that under the Umayyads, the monastery at Tel Masos near Beersheba was newly constructed. This monastery was established by the Nestorian Christians before 700 CE and remained as evidence for their presence in Islamicjerusalem. Similarly, the monastery of Khirbet Al-Nitla located to the east of Jericho, revealed evidence of several occasions of rebuilding during the early Muslim period up to the ninth century (Schick 1998, 86). The table below shows some examples of monasteries established, rebuilt, or renovated during the Umayyad period.

Name	Place	Date	Developments	Notes	Ref
A monastery for Nestorians	Tell Masos (Beersheba)	before 700 AC, in the early Umayyad period	-	-	(Schick 1998, 86) (Schick 1988, 221)
Monastery for Nestorians	Mount of Olives	739 CE	newly built	-	(Schick 1995, 179)
The Armenian Monastery	Morasha (Muṣrārah)	-	expanded in the seventh Century	after the Muslim conquest	(Schick 1995, 122)
Monastery of Saint Euthymius	Al-Khān Al-Aḥmar	-	Repaired	because of an earthquake in 659-660 AC	(Schick 1988, 221)
Monastery of John the Baptist (Qaṣr el-Yahūd)	Jerusalem	-	repaired in the Umayyad period	because of an earthquake in 659-660 CE	(Schick 1988,221) (Schick 1995, 125)

Table 3: list of monasteries constructed, rebuilt or renovated during the Umayyad period.

The table below indicates that some monasteries were built, expanded, or repaired under the Umayyad period. However, Linder adds that the reconstruction was easier in the monasteries situated in the Wilderness around Jerusalem than those in the city itself. This could be due to the location in the uninhabited areas

were less noticeable than the populated one, thus were not under the focused observation of the authority (Linder 1996, 141).

Language of the Monasteries

Corresponding to the shift taking place during the early Muslim period, Christians were affected by the new Muslim culture. In other words, the Christians learned how to pray in Arabic, the language of both the Qur'ān and the Muslim conquerors. Moreover, they produced devotional and theological literature in Arabic besides translating the Gospels into it. In addition, the monks of the monasteries of Islamicjerusalem began to write theological texts and the saints' lives in Arabic, and to translate the Bible, liturgical texts, hagiographies[57], patristic texts and other ecclesiastical works from Greek and Syriac into the language of the Muslim Caliphate (O'Mahony 2003, 3).

Griffith mentions that in the early Islamic period, when Arabic was quickly becoming the lingua franca of a new world order, Greek inscriptions persisted in ecclesiastical premises, and Greek in theology but at the same time, Arabic was becoming an ecclesiastical language. Arabic was not only used but also started to challenge even Greek in the monastic communities of the Judean Desert as the spoken language of the local communities, especially the Melkite community in the Muslim World. It could be argued that Arabic itself was seen as one of the defining features of the Melkite identity.

The Georgian monks also contributed to the activities of translation in the Judean Desert during the early Muslim period. Numerous texts have been preserved to modern times because they had been translated into Georgian, while originally been written in Greek and Arabic. The centre for the Georgian monks was the Monastery of Saint Saba. It is also cited that other Palestinian monasteries, were also active in translation (Griffith 1997, 24-31).

As an example for the use of Arabic by the religious figures, Hitti mentions that John of Damascus wrote in Greek and spoke Aramaic besides Arabic, which enabled him to launch debates with Muslims (Hitti 1950, 499). The monastic communities of the Holy

Land were famously diverse and multilingual in the Byzantine and early Muslim periods. Greek was the dominant language of the ecclesiastical culture there from the fourth century until the eighth century and beyond. It is cited that Jerusalem and the neighbouring monasteries were the most active centres of Greek. Alongside Greek, there was the writing in the pilgrims' languages besides the indigenous languages of the Levant i.e. Aramaic and Arabic. After the eighth century, in these same monastic communities, Greek underwent a decline in currency (Griffith 1997, 11).

Still, the effect of Muslim culture on the language of the monastery could not be decisively determined due to the Muslim interference in the monastic life especially when other changes took place after the Muslim ruling. For example, Laḥḥām adds that the Syriac language had been replaced in the liturgy of Jerusalem into Greek due to political and cultural factors (Laḥḥām 1998, 172).

Taxes

Concerning paying taxes, like all the monasteries of Al-Shām, the monasteries of Islamicjerusalem were exempted from paying the land taxes. The only financial demand for them was to host the Muslims in case they came to their areas ('Athāminah 2000, 144). However what has been discussed previously could tell that some monasteries were newly built, rebuilt and renovated under the Umayyad rule, and they were left to function freely and serve the local and universal communities, there are cases where monks had been maltreated by Muslims. For example, Ekonomou says that "A repentant Arab confessed to having approached a monk with the intention of robbing possibly even killing him, only to remain frozen in the act of assault for two days and two nights until released by his putative victim…" (Ekonomou 2007, 62). However, the book mentions several examples of Muslim exploitation against monks and Christians, the incidents listed could be seen as informal acts, as none were considered as a formal act or a decree declared by the state. When it comes to robbery, usually at the times of instability, the thieves would not differentiate between people according to their religions. Especially that by referring to the Islamic core sources, robbery is prohibited

to rob Muslims, Christians or any other people (Al-Shāfiʿī 1993, v.4, 381).

To sum up, under the Umayyads, some monasteries were newly constructed, rebuilt and renovated. Consequently, their activities continued to prosper especially the Monastery of Saint Saba which remained the centre of Monasticism. As a result of the cultural shift, Arabic was used with other languages inside the Monasteries of Islamicjerusalem which could not be determined to be a kind of interference, because the good treatment appeared to be obvious in exempting the priests and monasteries from taxes. Still, this does not negate that there was slight maltreatment against some priests. Having such prosperous institutions would importantly suggest that there were celebrations or rites related to these places. Therefore, the following section will investigate the Umayyads' attitude towards the Christian rites and feasts.

Rites and Celebrations

The places of worship are always connected to the rites and feasts performed inside, therefore, the way the Muslims dealt with the rites and feasts can reflect the Muslims' attitude towards an important part of the Christian sacred places. Based on that, this subtitle will examine how the Muslim rulers dealt with the Christian religious symbols, marches, celebrations and feasts. In regard to the symbols, the researcher means mainly the displaying of the crosses, which were usually placed at the top of the churches or held during the religious marches.

Theoretically, as the places of worship were saved and protected, the right to perform the religious rituals freely and publically should also be protected in the early Muslim period. Like the previous matter, this could be examined through examples cited in the books of history. The examples show that the Christians were performing their rituals to the extent that the Muslims were able to listen to their bells (nawaqīs) ringing even when Muslims were in their own places. For example, it is recorded that whenever Khulayd ibn Saʿīd, the servant of Umm Al-Dardāʼ, heard the nāqūs, he directly used to go and pray on the rock (Ibn ʿAsāker 1995, v.17, 27). A similar example was the act of the follower of the

Prophet (*Tābi'ī*) Mālik ibn 'Abdullah, who used to go to his home to pray whenever he heard the *nāqūs* in the city of Lud (Abū Al-Robb 2000, 217).

Displaying the crosses expanded even to places outside the churches. In the same regard, this made the Caliph 'Umar ibn Al-Khaṭṭāb[58] instruct Abū 'Ubaydah not to disturb the Christians when they were taking the crosses out of the churches during their feasts for one day in the year (Abū Yūsuf 1972, 41-42). At that period of time, some churches functioned for certain celebrations. To elaborate, the Church of the Martyrium mainly functioned for a different role than that of the Anastasis. The first chiefly served the public and the masses being celebrated there on Sundays and major holidays. While in the Anastasis some sixty Saints' Days were commemorated besides holding a large number of Masses on the main holidays. In Golgotha, for example, a few Masses were held serving the entire complex of churches was the duty of the monks living in the adjacent Spudaei monastery beside having other capacities in the compound (Linder 1996, 136).

Regarding the display of crosses, Willibad, as an eyewitness, mentions that there were three crosses standing outside the Church of Calvary to commemorate the Holy Cross of Christ (Wilkinson 2002, 241). Such information regarding the crosses being exhibited publically outside the church could mean that the practice of displaying the crosses was allowed under the Umayyad ruling. For the religious marching, the researcher has not found any resource that mentions this particular issue; nevertheless, late evidence was cited in Al-Maqdisī's book about the different feasts and marches the Christians used to celebrate publically in Jerusalem, while the Muslims were watching. Al-Maqdisī's information states that the Muslim inhabitants appeared to be familiar with the Christian feasts and occasions because he mentioned them listing the season and timing of each celebration (Al-Maqdisī 1909, 182, 183).

Actually, this information was cited during the period of the Fāṭimids. Nevertheless, it could be expected that the celebrations lasted under the Umayyads as well, because the Christians used to

have these celebrations before the Muslim rulings. Their persistence until the tenth century could strongly suggest that the celebrations had not stopped, as the Christian community also continued to thrive in the city.

In summary, the historical evidence, like the available pilgrims' accounts, could illustrate that the Muslim state allowed the exhibition of crosses publically and allowed the *naqūs* to be used aloud. Both the two previously discussed topics would make it logical to examine whether the Umayyads interfered in the Christian internal matters and the ecclesiastical affairs.

Hierarchy and Ecclesiastical Affairs

The aim behind this part of the paper is to examine whether the Muslims interfered in Christian ecclesiastical affairs. Within the same discussion, the researcher will explore the clerical system in Jerusalem before and after the Muslim conquest and how it functioned under the Umayyads. The Greek Orthodox community was the largest Christian community in Islamicjerusalem in comparison to the other Christian communities and had its fullest control over the priestly hierarchy of the Jerusalem Patriarchate (Linder 1996, 124). However, the role of the other communities would appear to be clear at that period, for example; the Georgians were intimately involved with the management of the See of Jerusalem (Griffith 1997, 31). At the time of the conquest, this hierarchy expanded all over Islamicjerusalem and its distributed population was reflected in its organisation and residential administrative centres (Linder 1996, 124). In the light of Linder's argument that the effect of the Muslim conquest was not harmful to the clerical system, the researcher argues that to understand how the Christian clergy and their sacred places functioned under the Muslim rule, it is important to know how it had functioned under the Christian rule prior to the conquest. Yet, it is not clear on what source Linder based his argument, but he emphasises that before the Muslim conquest, the Patriarch of Jerusalem headed a hierarchy of priests and monks[59]. These religious figures used to live and officiate in a large number of churches and monasteries in Jerusalem and the surrounding area[60] (Linder 1996, 134).

It seems that after the Muslim conquest, the ecclesiastical leaders appear to continue to assert their control over their clergy, churches, monasteries, and schools. This sustenance could be due to the devices the Christians used or due to the authorities they were granted by the Muslims (Simonsohn 2010, 584)[61]; although there is still no clear evidence for its reason. The hierarchy was of a mainly local nature, which functioned according to the needs of the community (Linder 1996, 134). In this way, the Christian community was able to keep its communal organisations and retain its cultural affiliations. Additional possessors of social power might have shared the same duties with church leaders however they did not acquire a formal judicial post because they were not part of the ecclesiastical administration (Simonsohn 2010, 584-590). The researcher would assume that the role of the additional possessors would have served the continuity of the Christian activities.

Under the Umayyad, it seems that the Christians of Islamicjerusalem remained active and sharing in the activities of the Christian World. As an example, it is cited that Priest Theodore, Jerusalem's Patriarchal deputy, sent a representative, Priest Georgius (from Sebastia) to the Sixth Ecumenical Council in 681 CE. The activeness of the monks of Jerusalem appears to be important here as Theodore sent his approval to the Byzantine Emperor with three monks among whom was Andrew from Jerusalem, who later on was ordained Bishop of Crete in 711 CE. Similarly, Priest Georgius became the Bishop of Antioch in 702 CE (Khoury 2002 (*et al*), 30).

The system and the duties of the clergy of Jerusalem appeared to be highly developed. However the Patriarch was at the top of the hierarchy after the conquest, complicating the situation, the hierarchy did not stop functioning according to the resources available. The privileges and responsibilities held by the Patriarch appear to be huge; however, the absence of that significant figure had not stopped the functioning[62] of the clergy as a whole system. This might be due to two main reasons that could overlap the Christians well-organised system and the Muslims' way in dealing with the religious life of the Christians. Eventually, it could be argued that the Muslim conquest caused minimal destruction to

the network of churches and monasteries which had been functioning for over a period of three hundred years of the Christian rule.

The Vacant Patriarchate of Jerusalem after the Muslim Conquest

When Muslims conquered Islamicjerusalem around 636 CE,

> The Christians in Palestine were only one decade away from the terrible distress brought on by the Persian conquest, which caused enormous loss of life and property to the ecclesiastic system. Many captives from among the clergy and the monks were taken to Persia; only a small remnant after the final victory over the Persians, bringing with them the Holy Cross. (Gil 1992, 432).

Given the fact that the system had already suffered from the Persian invasion, it could be inferred that the Christians of Islamicjerusalem had already inherited a burdensome system.

Together with the new conquest, it might appear that the system gained more suffering immediately after the Muslim conquest especially after Sophronius (the Patriarch of Aelia from 634 until 638 CE) passed away and his seat remained unoccupied until 681 CE (Gil 1992, 433). Sophronius passed away shortly after the Muslim conquest and his death was followed with chaos in the Jerusalem Patriarchate. The critical point is that the Patriarchal seat remained vacant for around sixty years (Gil 1992, 433). The interruption in that vital position might give the impression that the new conquest caused the interruption, however, 'Athāminah refers to the reason, the internal Christian dispute between the local Christians and the Byzantine Church in Constantinople. At that time the church in Constantinople threatened to stop the recognition of the Monophysitism which was adopted by the Patriarchate of Jerusalem and the majority of the Christian Palestinians ('Athāminah 2000, 144).

Evidently, Sophronius represented the Orthodox religiosity, the strong opponent of the doctrine of the Monophysitism. Heraclius wanted to instil that doctrine on the Patriarchate of Jerusalem and its followers (Gil 1992, 432). This could also be observed in the developments after Sophronius. When this dispute was resolved

after the Sixth Ecumenical Council of 680-681 CE, a new Patriarch was appointed to Jerusalem ('Athāminah 2000, 144), where the Muslim rulers appeared to have played no role in this interruption.

To understand the relationship between them, the researcher refers to some examples such as the letter between the two different groups. One, regarding the appointment of John the Bishop of 'Ammān, sent from Pope Martin (in Papacy 649 – 653 CE), could be clear evidence to highlight the impact of the Christian dispute on the interruption of relations between the Christians of Jerusalem and Byzantine and the Papacy Institution. The Pope states that it was Stephen, the Bishop of Dor in Islamicjerusalem, and his people, the monks of the Monastery of Theodosius, were the group who recommended the appointment of John as his representative in the east. Being his representative would give John the authority to appoint Bishops and other ecclesiastical offices in the regions within the jurisdiction of Jerusalem and Antioch. The focal point behind this appointment was to encounter the Monotheists, the opponents of John and Pope Martin. At that time, the Monotheists appointed Macedonius and Petrus on behalf of the Church of Alexandria[63]. As a reaction, John, the Abbot of the Monastery of Saint Saba and other monasteries appealed to Pope Martin that Lateran Council 649 CE should take action against Monothelitism (Gil 1992, 433-434).

Thus, it could be inferred that there was much tension among the Christians themselves. At times, the Christian dispute expanded and the complexity in relations between the Papacy and Byzantium might have its impact on the Christian places. For example, the Papacy Institution sought to establish relations with the Muslims. As mentioned previously, it is recorded that Pope Martin I was accused by Byzantium of such relations. However, the Pope explained away this accusation by saying that he only intended to send donations to Jerusalem (Runciman 1991, 43). After the dispute was solved among the Christians, the Christians continued to practise their right in appointing the Patriarch of Jerusalem ('Athāminah 2000, 144).

Nevertheless, the Muslims seemed to have interfered in appointing the Patriarchs in other Patriarchates outside Islamicjerusalem

(Maḥmūd 1989, 213). The approval of the Caliph was a major condition in appointing the Patriarchs (Tritton 2002, 81, 82)[64]. Tritton gives some examples for governor interference in appointing certain religious figures. For example, he mentions that when John of Sanya died, Al-Ḥajjāj (d. 714 CE) forbade the Christians to appoint another Catholicus[65], so they remained without one until Al-Ḥajjāj died. In another example, he mentions that when the Patriarch of Antioch died, the Caliph Al-Walīd did not allow the appointment of another (Tritton 2002, 79). Nevertheless, the researcher found no literature to prove that this is the case in the situation of Jerusalem. On this basis, it could be concluded that the Christian internal dispute was behind the Patriarchate seat vacancy[66], as the Muslim Caliphate does not appear to have interfered in the appointment of the Patriarch. Yet, some sources use the issue of Iconoclasm as proof to accuse the Umayyads of interfering in a Christian matter. This particular matter will be discussed in the following subtitle.

Iconoclasm

Iconoclasm is another issue that might indicate that the Muslims had interfered in the Christian sacred places. The aim behind this part of the paper is to examine to what extent the Muslim Caliphate had its impact on the call for iconoclasm during the Muslim period.   Iconoclasm is the breaking or destruction of images set up as objects of veneration (Simpson and Weiner 2004, v.7, 609). In Islamicjerusalem, dating to the early Muslim period, it has been revealed by archaeologists that deliberate damage was inflicted on images of people and animals in churches (Schick 1988, 218). The Christian religious figures of Islamicjerusalem had a major role during the time of the iconoclasm. John of Damascus, from Saint Saba, was active in his defence of images, during the reign of Emperor Leo the Isaurian. John of Damascus before his death toured Syria fighting the iconoclasts[67] (Hitti 1950, 501). These images were depicted on the mosaic floors of churches, and the dating referred them to the late Umayyad and early 'Abbāsid period as at Nitl (Schick 1988, 218)[68], but what was the reason behind the damage?

By verifying Latin, Greek and Syriac sources, Vasiliev states that Umayyad Caliph Yazid II (reigned 720-724 CE) issued an edict, which called for the destruction of all images of any living creature in the Muslim state and expanded this to be applied to the Christian churches (Vasiliev 1956, 25). It is worth mentioning that the determined year for this edict was 721 CE (Vasiliev 1956, 47). Interestingly, a similar edict was also issued by the Byzantine Emperor Leo III in 726 CE[69] (Vasiliev 1956, 27).

The Muslim core sources, mainly the *aḥādīth,* take account of many traditions that explicitly call for the prohibition of drawing images of living creatures that have souls i.e. the human beings and animals. Abū Dawūd in his *Sunan* reports one of these traditions[70]. This call was adopted by jurists and has also been discussed within their opinions. Having origins in the Muslim traditions could be a reason to expect that this tradition might have urged the Caliph Yazid II to issue his edict.   As the time between the two edicts was so close, some scholars claim that Yazid's inspired the edict of the Emperor. However, it is recorded that the iconoclast was known to the Byzantine Empire before Leo's edict (Vasiliev 1956, 26-27), which means that it had its roots in the Oriental Christian Church, especially that both Islam and Christianity are Divine religions[71].Therefore, the researcher argues that the destruction of images during the late Umayyad period and the early 'Abbāsid was very probably due to both: Leo's edict and the calls of iconoclasm before him.

This seems to be acceptable because the Christian population of Islamicjerusalem would have put this edict into practice as a religious order. This corresponds with Schick's inference that the damage was done carefully by the Christians themselves and was repaired by the Christians as well. If Muslims wanted to act this way, they would have damaged the whole image without having concern to retain its good appearance. The different cases examined by archaeologists show that only the offensive parts of the images were only removed leaving the rest in entirety. This happened by taking out the cubes of the mosaic and putting them back in. In some cases, these changes were made with artistic ability as in Khirbet Asida[72] (Schick 1988, 218)

The researcher tends to believe, that the iconoclasm of the Oriental churches was the main reason for the destruction of images rather than the implementation of Yazid's edict. The researcher disagrees with Schick in one of his assumptions, where he states that the Christians might have adopted the Islamic point of view under social pressure (Schick 1988, 220). This does not look convincing because the Muslims, as verified in previous parts of the paper, tended to allow the Christians to practise their religious rituals, display their crosses and ring their bells as a sign of freedom of worship so it is unlikely that social pressure was the cause.

Interestingly, iconoclasm is an important indication for archaeologists; Schick argues that the damage took place everywhere simultaneously; thus, all the churches that suffered this damage were in use into the early 'Abbāsid period. However, if the depictions were not deliberately damaged that meant they were no longer in use and their mosaic floors were no longer visible in that period (Schick 1998, 87). Vesiliev claims that the individual who convinced Yazīd II about iconoclasm was more probably the same who did so shortly after with Emperor Leo III (Vesiliev 1956, 31). In response to this claim, King comments that the Iconoclast party might be encouraged with the Edict of Yazīd, but in regards to doctrine and iconography, iconoclasm had its deep roots in Christianity. So, the Muslim point of view was not needed to create a Christian opposition to images. The excessive use of images and icons was sufficient to motivate Christians that the pagan-like practices had intervened into their religion encouraging them to adopt that point of view (King 1985, 268).

It is also worth mentioning that absence of evidence for the damaging of images in Islamicjerusalem before the Edict of Yazīd II implies that this attitude appears to be an exception and limited it only to Yazīd II. Under normal circumstances, it seems that Muslims left the Christians to use icons and images or remove them as the Christians themselves wished (King 1985, 267, 268).

From another view, the Umayyads do not appear to be very strict in the banning of representations of living souls in direct

contradiction with the teaching of Islam and they themselves even erected statues. For example, in the Umayyad palace of Khirbat Al-Mafjar[73], there is a plaster statue of the Caliph standing over two lions, painted with emphasised features. In the same palace, the Umayyad erected another statue representing a fully armed soldier (Baramki 1996, 210) and again in the same place, there was a statue representing a girl beside a menagerie of animals such as birds and rabbits (Hitti 1950, 506).

In an overview of the texts of history, the researcher has found no incidents that might indicate the opposition of Christian practices or worship or of serious concern against them although there are abundant opinions cited in the books of jurisprudence which explicitly oppose the issues of belief in the Christian doctrine when it comes to contradicting Islamic belief[74] but not the practices.

Conclusion

Referring to the information found in this paper based on historical facts and archaeological evidence, the number of the churches built, rebuilt, renovated all would show that the Umayyad Caliphate had a positive attitude towards the existence and the establishing of Christian sacred places. The position of Christian sanctuaries and continuous access to the places of pilgrimage by local and international pilgrims, the prosperous life of monasteries and of the active figures dwelling within and the writings produced also would suggest that the Umayyad attitude was positive. Showing the Crosses and hearing the bells of the churches would also reflect that Christian rituals and religious acts were respected in the Muslim state. Furthermore, the continuity of functioning of the Christian religious activities and the expected independent administration of the ecclesiastical system could indicate that the Umayyad attitude could be described as being most probably tolerant.

The general policy appears to be indulgent regarding the building, rebuilding, and renovation of Christian sanctuaries, allowing the pilgrims to visit the sanctuaries. For administrating the internal affairs and appointing the Patriarch, there is evidence that the Christian activities continued after the Muslim conquest, while

there is a lack of evidence about Muslim interference in the Christians' administration of their internal and ecclesiastical affairs and the appointing of the Patriarchs. It is also important to mention that this paper has revealed that the internal Christian disputes are not to be ignored because they appeared to contribute also to the Christians' attitude towards the Muslim rule besides affecting their internal matters like leaving the Patriarchate seat vacant.

The information explored in this paper shows that without the natural disasters or some exceptional political and economic circumstances, more Christian places would have survived. In addition to that, the paper demonstrates that neither the iconoclasm nor the rivalry with the Christian buildings had anything to do with the Umayyad Caliphate policy towards Christian sacred sites, because 'Abd Al-Malik ibn Marwān had reasonable motivations to construct the Dome of the Rock which were mainly religious and political. Besides the motivations, the claim of rivalry with the Holy Sepulchre was refuted within the discussions as it has been revealed that the Christian sacred places had not been seen as a threat to the Muslim presence. If the Muslim state found that these sanctuaries were threatening the Muslim presence, they would have asked for their demolition or at least placed much more restrictions on their building, rebuilding, renovating and the access of the pilgrims to the Holy Land.

Bibliography

Abū Al-Robb, Hānī. 2002. *Tarīkh Filisṭīn fī Ṣadr Al-Islām.* Jordan: Dār Al-Shurūk: Bayt Al-Maqdis li Al-Nashr wa Al-Tawzī'.

Aghārziān, Albert. 1998. Ahammiyyat Al-Quds bi al- Nisbah lil-Masīḥḥyyīn. In *Al-Masīḥyyūn fīl Ard Al-Muqaddash.* Eds. Maykel Brayer and Wiliam Tailor. Trans. Lorans Sammūr. London: Amānat Al-Tājer Lil-Ālam Al-Islāmī.

'Athaminah, Khalīl. 2000. *Filisṭīn fī Khamsat Qurūn min Al-Fatḥ Al-Islāmī Ḥattā Al-Ghazw Al-Firinjī (634-1099).* Beirut: Mu'assasat Al-Dirāsāt Al-Filisṭīniyyah.

'Awaḍ, Muḥammad. 1992. *Al-Raḥḥālah Al-Ūrūbbiyyūn fī Mamlakat Bayt Al-Maqdis Al-Ṣalībbiyyah 1099- 1187 Mīlādiyyah*. Cairo: Maktabat Madbūlī.

Al-Balādhurī, Abū Al-Ḥasan. 1983. *Futūḥ Al-Buldān*, ed. Raḍwān Raḍwān. Beirut: Dār Al-Kutub Al-'Ilmiyyah.

Bar, Doron. 2005. Rural monasticism as a key element in the Christianization of Byzantine Palestine. In *Harvard Theological Review* 98, no. 1: 49-65. http://web.ebscohost.com/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?sid=78491bb6-2877-4bf1-8fce-469a7e1ec86a%40sessionmgr10&vid=2&hid=15 (Accessed on October 27, 2011).

Baramki, D. 1996. *The Art and Architecture of Ancient Palestine A Survey of the Archaeology of Palestine from the Earliest Times to the Ottoman Conquest*. Palestine Books, No. 23. Palestine Liberation Organization. Research Centre: Beirut.

Brockelmann, Carl. 1998. *Tārikh al-Shu'ūb al-Islāmiyyah*. Trans. Nabīh Fāris and Munīr Ba'labkī. Beirut: Dār Al-'Ilm lilmalayīn.

Brubaker, L. and John and Haldon. 2001. *Byzantine in the Iconoclast Era (ca 680-850): The Sources an Annotated survey. Birmingham Byzantine and Ottoman Monographs*. V. 7. eds. Anthony Bryer and John Haldon. Centre for Byzantine, Ottoman and Modern Greek Studies. University of Birmingham. Ashgate: England. USA.

Al-Bukhārī, Muḥammad ibn Ismā'īl. 2000. *Ṣaḥīḥ Al-Bukhārī*. Cairo: Jam'iyyat Al-Maknaz Al-Islāmī.

Ekonomou, Andrew. 2007. *Byzantine Rome and the Greek Popes*. United Kingdom: Lexington.

El-Awaisi, Khalid. 2006. *Mapping Islamicjerusalem; A rediscovery of geographical boundaries*. Dundee: Al-Maktoum Institute Academic Press.

Efthymiadis, Stepanos. 2008. The Sixty Martyrs of Jerusalem. In *Christian Muslim Realtions. A Bibliographical History*. 2009. eds. David Thomas (et al). Leiden. Boston. Brill.

Graber, Oleg. 1996. *The Shape of the Holy Early Islamic Jerusalem*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Griffith, Sidney. 1997. From Aramaic to Arabic: The Languages of the Monasteries of Palestine in the Byzantine and Early Islamic Periods. In *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*. V.51. Pp, 11-31.

Gil, Moshe.1992. *A History of Palestine 634-1099*, trans. Ethnal Broido. Cambridge University Press. http://www.jstor.org/stable/1291760 Accessed on 4/6/2012.

Al-Ḥamawī, Yāqūt. 1990. *Muʿjam Al-Buldān*. ed. Farīd Al-Jundī. Beirut: Dār Al-Kutub Al-ʿIlmiyyah.

Al-Ḥanbalī, Mujīr Al-Dīn. Nd. Al-Uns Al-Jalīl bitārīkh Al-Quds wa Al-Khalīl. np.

Hawting, G. R. 2000. *The First Dynasty of Islam The Umayyad Caliphate AD 661-750*. London. New York: Routlege Taylor and Francis Group.

Hitti, Philip. 1952. *The History of Syria*. London: Macmillan.

Ibn Abī Shaybah, ʿAbdullah ibn Muḥammad. 1994. *Al-Muṣannaf fī Al-Āḥādīth wa Al-Āthār*, ed. Saʿīd Al-Laḥḥām. Beirut: Dār Al-Fikr.

Ibn Kathīr, Abū Al-Fidāʾ. 1987. *Al-Bidāyah wa Al-Nihāyah*. eds. ʿAlī ʿAwaḍ (*et al*). Beirut: Dār Al-Kutub Al-ʿIlmiyyah.

Ibn ʿAsākir, ʿAlī ibn Al-Ḥasan. 1995. *Tārīkh Madīnat Dimashq*. Beirut: Dār Al-Fikr li Al-Ṭibāʿah wa Al-Nashr wa Al-Tawzīʿ.

Janin, Hunt. 2002. *Four Paths to Jerusalem Jewish, Christian, Muslim, and Secular Pilgrimages, 1000 BCE to 2001*. North Carolina: McFarland.

Johns, Jeremy. 2003. Archaeology and the History of Early Islam: The First Seventy Years. In Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient, v.46, pp. 411-436 (26). Brill. http://www.ingenta connect.com/content/brill/sho;jsessionid=73gsuul2tl8d0.alexandra

Khoury, Shahadeh (*et al*). 2002. *A Survey of The History of The Orthodox Church of Jerusalem*. Amman: Dar Al-Shorouk for Publishing and Distribution.

Linder, Amnon. 1996. Christian Communities in Jerusalem. In *The History of Jerusalem The Early Muslim Period 638-1099*. eds. Joshua Prawer and Haggai Ben-Shammai. New York: New York University Press.

Maḥmūd, Shafīq. 1989. Tārīkh *Al-Quds wa Al-ʿAlāqah bayna Al-Muslimīn wAl-Masīḥyyīn fīhā ḥattā Al-Ḥurūb Al-Ṣalībiyyah*. Jordan: Maṭābiʿ Al-Imān.

Mansour, Atallah. 2004. *Narrow Gate Churches. The Christian Presence in the Holy Land Under Muslim and Jewish Rule.* California: Pasadena. Hope Publishing House.

Al-Maqdisī, Muḥammad. 1909. *Kitāb Aḥsan Al-Taqāsīm fī Maʻrifat Al-Aqālim.*

Marwan Abu Kalaf (*et al*). 2006. The Byzantine and the Early Islamic Settlement of Khirbet in Shuwayka. In *Webjournal on Cultural Patrimony.* v.2. www.webjournal.unior.it

Muslim. 2000. *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim Jamʻ Jawāmiʻ Al-Aḥādṭh wa Al-Asānīd wa Maknaz Al-Ṣiḥāḥ wa Al-Sunan wa Al-Masānīd.* Cairo: Jamʻiyyat Al-Maknaz Al-Islāmī.

Nasr, Hossein (ed) 1977. *Ismaʻīlī Contribution to Islamic Culture.* Tehran: Imperial Iranian Academy of Philosophy.

O'Mahony, Anthony. 2003. *The Christian Communities of Jerusalem and the Holy Land: Studies in History, Religion, and Politics.* Cardif: University of Wales Press.

Peri, O. 1999. Islamic Law and the Christian Holy Sites: Jerusalem and its Vicinity in early Ottoman Times. In *Islamic Law and Society.* 6 (1999), pp, 97-111 *http://heinonline.org/HOL/Page?handle=hein.journals /islamls6&div=8&g_sent=1&collection=journals#197*

Piccirillo, Michele. 2007. Churches in Jerusalem. In *Jerusalem Before Islam*, eds. Robert Schick and Zeidan Kafafi, 189-199. England: Bar International Series.

Al-Ratrout, Haithem. 2004. *The Architectural Development of Al-Aqsa Mosque in the Early Islamic Period Sacred Architecture in the Shape of the 'Holy'.* Dundee: Al-Maktoum Institute Academic Press.

Rhymer, Joseph. 2003. *New Illustrated Atlas of the Bible.* USA: Chartwell Books.

Rubin, Rehav. 1999. *Image and Reality Jerusalem in Maps and Views.* Jerusalem: The Hebrew University Magners Press.

Runciman, Steven.1991. *A History of the Crusade.* England: Penguin Books.

Russel, Kenneth. 1985. The Earthquake Chronology of Palestine and Northwest Arabia from the 2nd Through the Mid-8th Century A.D. In *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research.* 260, autumn, pp. 37-59. The American Schools of Oriental Research.

Schick, Robert. 1988. Christian Life in Palestine during the Early Islamic Period. In *The Biblical Archaeologist*.v. 51(4) pp.218-221+239-240 http://www.jstor.org/stable/3210074 Accessed: 08/06/2009.

Schick, Robert. 1991. Christianity in the Patriarchate of Jerusalem in the Early Abbasid Period, 132-198/750-813. In *Bilād al-Shām During the Abbasid Period 132 A.H/750 A.D- 451 A.H 1059A.D*. History of Bilād al-Shām Committee, eds. Muhammad al-Bakhit and Robert Schick. Amman.

Schick, Robert .1995. *The Christian Communities of Palestine From Byzantine To Islamic Rule A historical and Archaeological Study*. Princton: the Darwin Press, Inc.

Schick, Robert. 1998. Archaeological Sources for the History of Palestine: Palestine in the Early Islamic Period: Luxuriant Legacy. In *Near Eastern Archaeology*. 61 (2) http://www.jstor.org/stable/3210639 Accessed: 08/06/2009.

Schick, Robert. 2007. Byzantine Jerusalem. In *Jerusalem before Islam*. eds, Robert Schick and Zeidan Kafafi, 169-188. England: Bar International Series.

Al-Shāfiʻī, Muḥammad ibn Idrīs. 1993. *Al-Umm*. ed. Maḥmūd Maṭarjī. Beirut: Dār Al-Kutub Al-ʻIlmiyyah.

Simonsohn, U. 2010. The Christians Whose Force is Hard Non-Ecclesiastical Judicial Authorities in the Early Islamic Period. In *Journal of Economic and Social History of the Orient*, 53, 579- 620 http://docserver.ingentaconnect.com/deliver/connect/brill/00224995/v53n4/s2.pdf?expires=1319724971&id=65183523&titleid=1343&accname=University+of+Aberdeen&checksum=B857A3F7C63895A672A5A11E29AF9B03

Simpson, J.A and E.S.C. Weiner, eds. 2004. *The Oxford English Dictionary*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Al-Ṭabarī, Muḥammad Ibn Jarīr. 1997. *Tārikh Al-Ṭabarī Tārikh Al-Umam wa Al-Mulūk*. Beirut: Dār Al-Kutub Al-ʻIlmiyyah.

Theophanes Confessor: *Byzantine and the Near Eastern History, A.D. 284-813*. trans. Cyril Mango *et al*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Thomas, David (*et al*) (eds). 2009. *Christian-Muslim Relations*. Leiden. Boston. Brill.

Wilkinson, John. 2002. *Jerusalem Pilgrims before the Crusades*. England. Warminster: Airs & Phillips Ltd.

Tritton, A.S. 2002. *Caliphs and their Non-Muslim Subjects*. Delhi: Idarah-i-Adabiyat-i-Delli.

Tsafrir and Foerster. 1992. The Dating of the "Earthquake of the Sabbatical Year" of 749 C.E. in Palestine. In Bulletin *of the School of Oriental and African Studies* (55):231-35. Quoted in Schick, Robert.1998. Archaeological Sources for the History of Palestine: Palestine in the Early Islamic Period: Luxuriant Legacy. *In Near Eastern Archaeology*. 61:2.

Vasiliev, A. 1956. The Iconoclastic Edict of the Caliph Yazid II A.D. 721. In *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* (9): 23-47 http://www.jstor.org/stable/1291091 Accessed on 12/8/2009.

Wilken, Robert. 1988. Loving the Jerusalem Below: The Monks of Palestine. In *Jerusalem Its Sanctity and Centrality to Judaism, Christianity and Islam*. ed. Lee Levine. New York: Continuum.

William of Tyre. 2003. *History of Deeds Done Beyond the Sea (Tārīkh Al-Ḥurūb Al-Ṣalībiyyah Al-A'māl Al-Munjazah fīmā Warā'a Al-Biḥār)*. trans. Suheil Zakkār. Beirut: Dār Al-Fikr.

Endnotes

1   Schick here refers to a Maronite source which the researcher is not able to read.

2   This world means seemingly.

3   Thomas argues that when the authors spoke about Muslims they referred to them either as savage idolaters or *quasi*-Christians (Thomas (*et al*) ed, v.1, 13).

4   This also reflects the connection between Christians and the Byzantine Empire, which continued after the conquest, but not in the same way as before the conquest (Schick 1995, 101, 102).

5   An example for the reuses of old materials took place in the second century CE is what was done by the Romans. The Romans reused the stones of the Herodian Jerusalem in reconstructing it when building Aelia Capitolina (a previous Roman name for Palestine) (Wilkinson 1990, 88).

6   This Church was founded by the Patriarch Elias in 494 CE.

7   This Church preserved a portrayal of Jesus' features.

8   Though, some other historical incidents that could reflect hostility towards the Christian sanctuaries would be discussed in this thesis within their political context.

9   The official site of the Shepherds' Field. http://www.greekorthodoxsf.com/about1.htm (Accessed on 21/6/2009)

10   It is located in the Negev Desert and currently known as Rohovot.

11   The churches in these places continued to function in the early Umayyad period but went out within the same period (Schick 1995, 118).

12   Small church

13   Due to border faults and some structural elements, the entire length of the rift valley (of Palestine and nowadays Jordan) is exposed to earthquakes (Russell 1985, 37). Russell adds that the area had suffered from the earthquakes. There are records citing earthquakes during the Byzantine times and during the initial Muslim assaults. For example Michael the Syrian records an earthquake in 633 CE which was less destructive than the ones during the Byzantine period (Russell 1985, 46).

14   The *Chronicle* of Theophanes is considered one of the most important sources for the eighth century. It covers the period from Diocletian to the reigns of Michael I and his son Theophylact (Brubaker and Haldon 2001, 168).

15   Theophanes the Confessor is a Byzantine and lived in 758/760 – March 12, 817/818 CE.

16   It is located near Jericho.

17   Depending on archaeological studies there are many churches that were not rebuilt after the earthquakes but all are located outside the boundaries of Palestine such as the Church of Saint Theodore at Jerash (Schick 1995, 127).

18   Earthquakes may result in a fire that would leave as deposits (Schick 1995, 123).

19   Unfortunately, the sources do not give examples or names of any of the destroyed churches.

20   Besides marble, building stones and channel screen panels were also targets of stone robbers for reuse elsewhere (Schick 1995, 132).

21   The last Umayyad Caliph in Damascus.

22   During the Muslim conquest (prior to the Umayyad), 'Abdāt might be deliberately burned, including its churches, as shown by a wide-spread ash layer. It is proved that the churches were not robbed before they were burnt, but the destroying of an entire city was not a normal characteristic of the conquest. Therefore, the reason for the destruction could not be determined, especially that Shivta (near 'Abdāt), did not suffer any destruction (Schick 1995, 77, 78).

23   But there is evidence that the church of Umm El-Jimal in Jordan was converted into a mosque, but the motivation for that could not be determined (Schick 1995, 130).

24   The Dome of The Rock is part of Al-Aqsa Mosque .The erection of the Dome of the Rock had begun in 692 CE (Wilkinson 2002, 21).

25   That is 72 AH.

26   In 685/686 CE the Zubayrid governor of Bīshāpūr issued a silver drachm that bore the short *Shahādah*, a similar incident took place in 686/687 CE by another rebel in Bīshāpūr (Johns 2003, 426).

27   *Basmallah* is the saying of *Bismillah arrahmaan arraheem*, which means in the name of Allah the Most Compassionate the Most Graceful.

28 عن أبي ذر قال: قلت يا رسول الله أي مسجد وضع في الأرض أول؟ قال : المسجد الحرام. قلت : كم بينهما؟ قال أربعون

سنة ، وأينما ادركتك الصلاة فصله فإنه مسجد" (Muslim 2000, v.1, 210)

29 Prophet Muḥammad and the Muslims faced Al-Aqsa Mosque in their prayer during the Makkan period and after the *Hijrah* for sixteen or seventeen months (Al-Qazqī 2003, 41).

30 The Muslims justified the fight between ʿAbd Al-Malik ibn Marwān and his rival Ibn Al-Zubayr basing their argument on the Ḥadīth "*When oath of allegiance has been taken for two caliphs, kill the one for whom the oath was taken later*" (Muslim 2000, v.2, 817) (Muslim 2000, v.2, 817) (إذا بويع لخليفتين فاقتلوا الآخر منهما)

31 Ibn AL-Zubayr dominated Makkah and expelled the Umayyad from Madina (Al-Yaʿqūbī (nd) v.2, 256).

32 The five pillars of Islam are making the testimony that there is no God but Allah and Muḥammad is His Messenger, performing prayers, giving charity, fasting in Ramadan, and performing pilgrimage to Makkah.

33 Such as the Dome of the Chain.

34 The idea of making pilgrimage to the Holy Land developed at the time of Constantine. The major motivation for it was to ask God for redemption for sins committed through a hard and long journey to the Holy Land, because of its spiritual effect. In the eighth century, this idea developed further and appeared as religious phenomenon (ʿAwaḍ 1992, 17, 20). Some of the pilgrimage sites are mentioned in the Bible, such as the pool of Siloam, the Pool of Bethesda, the Golgotha (The place where Jesus was crucified according to the Christian theology) and the Holy Sepulchre (The place where Jesus was buried according to the Christian theology). Additionally, the places related to crucifixion are also visited for pilgrimage. There were also some places which did not correspond to places in the Bible, but were based on the stories told by local guides (Wilkinson 1990, 84-85).

35 Arculf did not himself write down his experience but it was documented by an Abbot called Adomnan (Rubin 1999, 21).

36 Arculf mentions that Golgotha is the Hebrew name of Calvary (Wilkinson 2002, 173)

37 Arculf also drew four diagrams on wax tablets for the Basilica on the Mount Sion, the Ascension Church, buildings on Golgotha and Church of Jacob's Well. Adomnan drew plans of those diagrams, therefore they survived (Wilkinson 2002, 375-381).

38 It is a Church dedicated to Jesus, Moses and Elijah near Mount Tabor in Lower Galilee. Mount Tabor is considered sacred because it witnessed the Transfiguration. The area of Galilee extends from the Mediterranean in the west to the River Jordan in the East, and from Mount Carmel, Nazareth and the Sea of Galilee in the south to Tyre Ladder and Mount Hermon in the North (Mansour 2004, 25, 26).

39 The pilgrim also mentions that the place had synagogues as well.

40 A place in northern Galilee.

41 There were about twenty monks there.

---

42 It is in the country half way between Jericho and Jerusalem.

43 Willibald (700 -787 CE) is a pilgrim to the Holy Land in 722 CE during the Umayyad period, his eye-witness will be investigated in details under the pilgrims' account in this paper.

44 Nowadays Tartus.

45 They were jailed in nowadays Syria before reaching Jerusalem (Wilkinson 2002, 236).

46 Nablus is mentioned as Shechem.

47 An ancient city located to the north of the lake of Tiberias.

48 Arculf gives too many details about the building, and clarifies what the people think wrongly about the Tomb of the Lord.

49 Adomnan who wrote Arculf's account.

50 This is the place where the cross was discovered (Wilkinson 2002, 174).

51 Gil depends on a Syriac source translated into Greek, which unfortunately the researcher has no access to because she is not familiar with the language. But Schick states that this claim is more probably fabricated (Schick 1995, 109).

52 The same anonymous author mentions that these seventy were tortured to convert to Islam but they refused to change their religion, thus taken to prison. Ten died, while the remaining sixty were shot by arrows and buried in a place outside the walls of Jerusalem near the Church of Saint Stephen by a Christian named John (Efthymiadis 2008, v.1, 328).

53 The books usually shed the light on the Judean monasteries and the urban ones. But archaeological evidence could show that there were many monasteries in the villages and rural areas such as Ein el Jedide, khirbet Beit 'Anūn (south Jerusalem) and khirbet Sarona near Beit Shan (Bar 2005, 52).

54 John of Damascus had debates with Muslims about Islam such as the free will and predestination with the presence of the caliphs. He had many works; the chief of all is *Fountain of Wisdom*. Within this work, John of Damascus narrates two dialogues between a Christian and a Muslim in which they discuss some theologian issues. Hitti says that the dialogues most probably took place with the presence of the Caliph. This work could be considered important because it epitomized the ideas of the leading ecclesiastical writers who preceded him, therefore, became the standard of the scholars later on (Hitti 1950, 499, 500). After he finished this work evidently in 743 CE, John of Damascus wrote numerous minor works (Glei 2007, v.1, 296).

55 This was the nephew of John of Damascus; he became the monk of the monastery in 735. It is also worth mentioning that the late Umayyad time witnessed the birth of Theodore Abu Qurra (born around 740 CE), who was a monk in the monastery and lately became the bishop of Haran (Gil 1992, 443)

56 John of Damascus devoted his life for ascetism during the reign of Hishām Ibn 'Abd Al-Al-Malik (reigned 724 CE- 743 CE).

57 The writing of the life of saints.

58 The researcher uses this example however it is related to a period after the Umayyad because, firstly she has not found a text that might contradict this teaching during the time of the Umayyads, secondly because of the proximity in

time between the two periods. Thirdly, this teaching was still referred to and cited by jurists like Abū Yūsuf, who lived under the Abbasids (the Dynasty that ruled after the Umayyads).

59   The Patriarch of Jerusalem, besides heading the Clerical system, also had a practical role. The dominance of the priesthood and Christian places to the Patriarch had also a practical level. To elaborate, the maintaining of the buildings and affording the costs to renovate or rebuild the edifices were made under the subordination to the Patriarch (Linder 1996, 136).

60   The Melkite Orthodoxy compelled the Monophysite to leave the Monastery of Saint Saba.

61   However, the Patriarchate Seat remained vacant for some time after the Muslim conquest, which will be discussed within this part of the paper.

62   After 641 CE, , Bishop of Doora, administered the Church of Jerusalem, followed by John, Bishop of Philadelphia, then Priest Theodore (from Caesarea in Palestine), whose deputyship continued until 685 CE (Khoury (*et al*) 2002, 29).

63   The Church of Alexandria adopted the Monotheist creed, which was opponent to the creed adopted in Byzantium and Constantinople.

64   Tritton gives more examples for the formal interference in appointing the Patriarchs of Alexandria and other places (Tritton 2002, 86). The examples given do not include the Patriarchs of Jerusalem but could apply to all the Patriarchates as they all located under the same Muslim rule.

65   It is a Christian religious title.

66   It is mentioned that Patriarch John V became Patriarch in Jerusalem from 706-745 CE (Khoury (*et al*) 2002, 31).

67   It might be worth mentioning that the Christian figures appeared to have interacted with the issue of the iconoclasm with other figures outside Palestine who also opposed it and considered it as a heresy such as Istafanus the Bishop of Basra (Khoury (*et al*) 2002, 31).

68   In other places like 'Ein El-Kenieseh the damage took place after 762 which is after the Umayyads' period in the early 'Abbāsid period (Schick 1998, 87).

69   The Emperor seemed to be serious in applying his iconoclastic policy. As a result, he deposed the Patriarch Germanus who strongly opposed it (Vasiliev 1956, 27).

70   "Angels do not inter a place of images or dogs" (Al-Tarmadhī 2007, 741).

71   Depicting of living creatures is also prohibited in Judaism.

72   It is located near Beit Fujjār between Hebron and Bethlehem.

73   It is located to the north of Jericho.

74   Muslims destroyed all the idols in Makkah when Prophet Muhammad entered it. It is believed that this act can be understood as an opposition of the pre-Islamic period (*jahiliyyah*).