

## CHRISTIAN HOLY SITES IN ISLAMICJERUSALEM UNDER THE MUSLIM RULE (636 - 969 CE)

NOUR ABU ASSAB  
University of Aberdeen

**ABSTRACT:** *IslamicJerusalem is a region that historically has witnessed plurality in religions, and is unique since it was where many of these religions were founded or have strong associations. In the seventh century, IslamicJerusalem witnessed a turning point with the arrival of the Muslims and it was no longer only Christian. However, Christians continued to live in IslamicJerusalem in large numbers. This also meant that the Christian holy places had now come under the rule of the new religious-doctrine. But how did Muslims deal with Christian holy sites especially with churches? In that regard, this article argues that a formal policy was developed by Muslims in dealing with the Christian holy sites. The objective of this article is namely to explore the Islamic approach regarding the Christian holy sites; and examine to what extent the Muslims applied the Islamic teachings in dealing with the Christian holy places especially churches from the time of the Muslim fath in 636 CE until 969 CE. Two different outcomes were found. The findings differ according to the period of time determined. It concludes that unlike the Persians who had devastated the churches and monasteries in IslamicJerusalem decades earlier, the Muslims were keen to protect these places forever, by giving the Christians the assurance of safety. In addition, protecting all the holy places and allowing the pilgrimage to keep flowing normally, proved that Muslims accepted that this city was to remain holy for Christians because it was the same for Muslims.*

**KEYWORDS:** *Christian, Muslim, holy sites, churches, Islamic teachings, pilgrims.*

### Introduction

IslamicJerusalem<sup>1</sup> is a region that historically has witnessed plurality in religions, and is unique since it was where many of these religions were founded or have strong associations. Therefore, the Jews, the Christians and the Muslims claim to have holy religious

places there. For Christians, the Holy Sepulchre and the Church of the Nativity have been considered the holiest places as they believe it has connections with the birth and crucifixion of Christ. Besides the churches, the region also includes other Christian holy places i.e. monasteries and tombs. The construction of churches prospered during the Byzantine period when Christianity was made the official religion in the fourth century. Since that time, the region remained solely Christian for three centuries. In the seventh century, IslamicJerusalem witnessed a turning point with the arrival of the Muslims and it was no longer only Christian. However, Christians continued to live in IslamicJerusalem in large numbers. This also meant that the Christian holy places had now come under the rule of the new religious-doctrine. But how did Muslims deal with Christian holy sites especially with churches? In that regard, I argue that a formal policy was developed by Muslims in dealing with the Christian holy sites.

In this article I aim to explore the Islamic approach regarding the Christian holy sites. This approach is rooted within Islamic Law (*shari'ah*). Therefore, a combination of Exegesis<sup>2</sup> (*tafsir*), Prophetic tradition (*hadith*) and Muslim jurisprudence (*fiqh*) methodologies are applied. For this part, referring to the books of *sira*<sup>3</sup> and the books of history is also essential to explore the practice of the Prophet and his Companions with the conquered lands. Therefore, the historical methodology will be applied where the textual analysis is the main approach. In the same way, I intend to determine whether Christians had been given the right to keep their churches safely, to build new churches, renovate the old ones and perform their rituals freely during the early Muslim era and the 'Abbāsid periods. Additionally, I attempt to find out whether the Christian pilgrims continued to come easily or not to the holy sites, during the period investigated. In order to achieve a broader understanding, archaeological evidence will be utilised by referring to some studies done by archaeologists. Then, I seek to examine to what extent the archaeological and historical facts, correspond with the Islamic teachings. I will finally draw my conclusion on the basis of the historical and archaeological evidence.

## The Islamic Theoretical Framework towards the Christian Holy Sites

The Qur'ān is the first source of the Muslim Law. Going through its verses, it is perceived that it calls for good treatment for both Christians and Jews. Qur'ān 3:55, 75, 113; 5:5; 29:46 are examples for that. Jews and Christians are referred to as *Ahl al-Kitāb* (People of the Book) because they have a special status since their religions were based on revealed books such as the Torah and the Bible (Al-Qaraḍāwī 1985, 6). More importantly is that the Christians are described in the Qur'ān as being the closest in faith to the Muslims (Qur'ān 5:83). In the Qur'ān, the places of worship for the different religions are mentioned only once by names (Qur'ān 22: 40). The verse was revealed to give the Muslims in Madinah the permission to fight against the oppressors who made them leave their land (Makkah) (Al-Wāḥidī<sup>4</sup> nd, 17).

﴿الذين أخرجوا من ديارهم بغير حق إلا أن يقولوا ربنا الله ولولا دفع الله الناس بعضهم ببعض لهدمت صوامع وبيع وصلوات ومساجد يذكر فيها اسم الله كثيرا ولينصرن الله من ينصره إن الله لقوي عزيز﴾ (الحج، 40)

The verse has been translated to the effect:

Those who were expelled from their homes without any right, merely for saying 'Our Lord is Allah' (the Only God) If Allah had not driven some people back by means of others, there would surely have pulled down monasteries, churches, synagogues and mosques in which the name of Allah is commemorated in abundant measure. Allah will certainly help those who help Him- Allah is all-Strong, Almighty (Qur'ān 22: 40)<sup>5</sup>.

## The Accounts of the Exegetes

Based on the reason of the revelation, al-Ṣābūnī<sup>6</sup>, al-Zamakhsharī (d.<sup>7</sup> 1143 CE) and al-Fakhr al-Rāzī (d.1209 CE) argued that if God had not allowed the fighting, the unbelievers would prevent the people from performing their religious rituals. Therefore, if Muslims did not struggle against the unbelievers, no monasteries, churches, synagogues or mosques would survive (Al-Ṣābūnī 1976, v.2, 292; Al-Zamakhsharī 1995, v.3, 157; Al-Fakhr al-Rāzī 2002, v.12, 40) and places of worship will be under threat (Al-Alūsī<sup>8</sup>

1994, v.9, 154). The reason behind defending the places of worship is because the name of God is mentioned abundantly in all of them (Ibn Kathīr<sup>9</sup> 1998, v.3, 302) since the verse is not exclusive for mosques (Al- Suyūṭī<sup>10</sup> 2000, v.4, 657; Al-Rāzī 2006, v.6, 269). In the same regard, Ibn al-Qayyim (d.1349 CE) argues that God likes to be mentioned even by the polytheists; therefore, He likes defending their places however He dislikes their practices (Ibn al-Qayyim 2003, v.2, 456).<sup>11</sup>

*Dafʿ* is a keyword in this verse. It means driving back the oppression by justice (Al-Qurṭubī<sup>12</sup>1993, v.6, 66) or driving back the ignorant group by the knowledgeable one (Al-Māwardī<sup>13</sup> nd, v.4, 29). In addition, al-Ṭabarī argues that God checks those who are dishonest in their testimony by means of His worshippers, who are honest in bearing out witness. Therefore, oppression and bloodshed are avoided (Al-Ṭabarī 1999, v.9, 163). Sayyid Quṭub (d. 1966 CE) goes beyond the idea of fighting to infer a general rule to achieve the balance in protecting humanity. He argues that Muslims, who were driven out of their homes, were victims to absolute oppression. They fought not for personal interests, but for their faith. Therefore, the personal and national interests that give rise to conflicts, alliances and wars are of no demand to them. Hence, when the Muslims are part of an encounter this will benefit the whole humanity because Islam guarantees the freedom of belief for all. Beyond that lies the great rule for the importance of *dafʿ*, which is protecting the belief and faith (Quṭub 1996, v.4, 2424- 2425). Yet, the verse does not identify a particular group for the duty of *dafʿ* because all human beings in all communities are equivalent. Literally, the verse includes the word "*baʿḍ*" (some) to indicate that each side is capable to take the role of the counterbalance (Al-Shaʿrāwī 1991, v. 16, 9837-9840). That encounter can be achieved in both ways- fight and debate (Abū Ḥayyān<sup>14</sup> 2001, v.6, 347-348). In his comment on this verse, El-Awaisi argues that Islam favoured the method of *tadāfuʿ*<sup>15</sup> (counteraction) as a means of adjusting positions using movement instead of conflict. This is because Islam considers plurality as a norm. Therefore, rejects the conflict based on eliminating the other party (El-Awaisi 2007, 96). I argue that El-Awaisi's argument

corresponds with many of the aforementioned interpretations of the verse. This is because *tadāfu* 'is not only to preserve Muslims' sacred places, but also to preserve the sacred places of others.' (El-Awaisi 2007, 97)

### The Practice of the Prophet

To confirm the core theme of the Qur'ān, the Prophet also called for the good treatment of the People of the Book in several Prophetic traditions (*aḥādīth*) such as:

He who kills mu'āhed (who has a treaty with the Muslims)<sup>16</sup>, will not smell the fragrance of paradise, though its fragrance is perceived from distance of forty years (Al-Bukhārī 2000, v. 2, 618).

Furthermore, the Prophet had direct relations with non-Muslims. For example, when he migrated to Madinah there were many Jewish tribes who would have had a number of places of worship. These places were protected as the freedom of belief was granted by a general rule within the Constitution (*Ṣaḥīfah*) of Madinah<sup>17</sup>:

وإن لليهود دينهم

To Jews their religion (Ibn Hishām<sup>18</sup> 1955, v.1, 503).

Since there were no Christians in Madinah, they were not mentioned in the Constitution. But later, the Prophet granted assurances of safety to the Christians of Najrān<sup>19</sup> and Aylah<sup>20</sup> besides the Jews of Adhruh<sup>21</sup> and Maqnā<sup>22</sup>. In the first example, the Prophet gave an assurance of safety to people of Najrān by writing to their bishop Abū al-Ḥārith and all other religious figures

...No Bishop will be forced to renounce his bishopric nor any monk will be asked to forsake his monastery nor any diviner abandon his profession<sup>23</sup>. None of their rights, authorities or what they used to do will be changed. For them there is the protection of God and the compact of His Messenger... (Ibn Kathīr 1966, v.4, 106)<sup>24</sup>

I argue that the rights protected by this assurance look very general and deliberately left open to prove that every religious right is included within the text. It is also taken for granted that building churches or renovating the ruined ones comes under the authority

of the bishops and priests, and the text clearly states that their authorities and what they used to do will not be changed. The Prophet, when he wrote this assurance, was at the peak of his political power and he was aware of the situation around him. If building or renovating a church was prohibited, he would have mentioned that in the assurance.

In another case, the Prophet conquered Khaybar in Madinah, which was inhabited by Jews and did not destroy the places of worship there (Ibn al-Qayyim 2003, v.2, 469).<sup>25</sup> Therefore, the aforementioned incidents prove that non-Muslims had the right to practice their religions in their places of worship, and Muslims were to safeguard these places as the treaties were binding.

### **The Practice of the Companions of the Prophet**

During the life of the Prophet, most of the Arabian Peninsula was under his control and he was moving towards IslamicJerusalem and Syria where most of the inhabitants were Christian<sup>26</sup>. The leaders of the conquests towards these lands were the Companions. Their practice is of high importance because they were the closest to the Prophet and witnessed directly his way of dealing with non-Muslims. Abū Bakr<sup>27</sup> instructed Yazīd ibn Abī Sufyān and Rabī'ah ibn 'Āmer, the leaders in conquering al-Shām, not to kill the priests whom they would see in the monasteries, because these people dedicated themselves for worship (Al-Wāqidī<sup>28</sup> nd, 8). This means that the monasteries were protected even during the time of wars. In two different occasions, Khalid ibn al-Walīd wrote a treaty to the bishop of Damascus proving that the churches would not be destroyed or inhabited by Muslims (Al-Balādhurī 1983, 127-128), and Abū 'Ubaydah wrote to the Christians that he would not destroy any of the churches (Al-Wāqidī nd, 79).

In addition, within his move from Iraq to al-Shām, Khālīd ibn al-Walīd passed by a city called 'Ānāt<sup>29</sup> and made an agreement with its patriarch which stipulated not to destroy any church, not to prevent Christians from ringing their bells (*nawāqīs*) at any time, except for the prayer times of Muslims, and not to prevent them from displaying their crosses in their feasts. The same conditions

of ‘Ānāt also applied to the Christians of al-Nuqaib, al-Kawāthil<sup>30</sup> and Qurqasyā<sup>31</sup>. Abū Yūsuf argues that none of the four guided Caliphs rejected the treaties made by Khālid. Though, later on, some caliphs intended to destroy some churches, but they retreated after they saw the treaties (Abū Yūsuf<sup>32</sup> 1972, 146-147).

### Accounts of Jurists<sup>33</sup>

The jurists from the four schools classify the Muslim cities (*amsār*) into three categories and deal with each as a separate case i.e- what Muslims established (*ahyāb*) such as al-Baṣrah and al-Kūfah<sup>34</sup>, what they conquered by force (*‘anwāb*) and what subdued peacefully (by *sullb*) such as Aylah and the City of Islamic Jerusalem<sup>35</sup> (Ibn Qudāmah 1985, v.9, 284; Al-Māwardī 1999, v. 14, 321; Abū ‘Ubayd<sup>36</sup> 1986, 106). For the first type, the scholars agree that if the city is established and inhabited by Muslims alone, then Christians are not allowed to build any church (Abū ‘Ubayd 1986, 106). But they are allowed to do so in the neighbourhoods, of the newly established city, where there are no Muslims (Al-Māwardī 1999, v. 14, 321). For the second type the jurists are not all in agreement. The *Shāfi‘ī* jurists do not accept Christians to build churches. In addition, the old ones that fell out of use are not to be renovated (Al-Māwardī 1999, v. 14, 320-322). Unlike the *Shāfi‘ī* school, the *Mālikī* school does not prohibit Christians from renovating the old churches in the lands that are taken by force (Ibn ‘Abd al-Barr 2002, 220, 221). They can also build new ones in some cases i.e- if this is recorded as a condition in their treaty with Muslims (Al-Gharyānī 2002, v.2, 457), if the ruler (*imām*) permits that (Zaydān 1982, 96), if preventing that will lead to a greater problem (Al-Gharyānī 2002, v.2, 457) or if the cities are predominantly inhabited by Christians (Zaydān 1982, 96).

For the third category, the *Hanafī* jurists state that Muslims gave assurances of safety for churches; therefore, the Christians can keep their churches and monasteries but without the building of new ones (Abū Yūsuf 1972, 138)<sup>37</sup>. Some *Shāfi‘ī* and *Hanbalī* jurists accept to keep the old churches and can allow Christians to build new ones as they pay the *jizyah*, the property tax or both for Muslims. The same applies to the renovation of the old ones; some *Shāfi‘ī* jurists call to prevent the renovation while others

allow it (Al-Māwardī 1999, v. 14, 323; Ibn Qudāmah 1985, v.9, 284).

Most of the scholars, like Abū Yūsuf, Ibn al-Qayyim, al-Māwardī and Ibn Qudāmah base their arguments on either 'Umar's Pact (*al-Shurūṭ al-Umariyyah*<sup>38</sup>) or some other prophetic traditions (*ahādīth*). Actually this pact was examined by some scholars in terms of the series of narration and the content. Applying the *ḥadīth* methodology, al-Albānī found that one of the narrators of the Pact is untrustworthy (See Al-Albānī 1985, v.5, 103, 104 and Abu-Munshar 2007, 74). The internal criticism of the content also attests the shortcomings of it (See Abu-Munshar 2007, 74 and Tritton 2002, 8). These shortcomings make that pact unreliable. The scholars also examined the *ahādīth* on which the jurists based their opinions such as:

لا حصاء في الإسلام ولا كنيسة

Castrate and building churches are not permitted in Islam (Abū Ubayd 1986, 103).

And:

لا تبني كنيسة في الاسلام، ولا يجدد ما خرب منها.

Building new churches and renovating the ruined ones are not permissible in Islam (Ibn al-Qayyim 2003, v.2, 477).

Again, both the abovementioned *ahādīth* has unreliable or very weak narrators (See Abū 'Ubayd 1986, 103; Al-Dhahabī 1985, v.2, 333-335). Thus, it could be inferred that despite the unauthenticity of the Pact and the aforementioned *ahādīth*, many Muslim jurists did nevertheless depend on them. It is worth noting that the political situation contributed to the development of the juristic opinions. For example, Abū Yūsuf, the earliest jurist who developed a strict opinion towards the building of churches and renovating them, was close to the 'Abbāsīd Caliph Hārūn al-Rashīd. Therefore, I claim that, Abū Yūsuf was presenting the formal policy of the caliphate in this matter. At this period of time, the Muslim state was at its peak of power and hence, controlling the Christian presence was a strategic aim for the state. For this reason, the jurists used traditions, although unauthentic, to support their opinions.



In short, given that Muslims and non-Muslims lived together in parts of the Muslim state, a clear attitude towards their places of worship, based on the injunctions of Islam, was needed to be developed. The various accounts of Exegeses, the practice of the Prophet, the practice of his Companions and the opinions of the jurists from different schools all contribute to outline the way Muslims' should deal with churches and other places of worship. Based on the interpretation of (Qur'ān 22:40), all places of worship i.e. synagogues, churches, monasteries and mosques are to be protected by the law of God. This law is applied when a just group drives out the corrupted persecuting group which seeks the destruction of these places. Therefore, the Prophet, as a political leader when he engaged with non-Muslims, gave several assurances of safety to the Christians and Jews who came under the control of the Muslim state. Through these assurances, the freedom of faith and places of worship for all religions were protected. After the death of the Prophet, his Companions followed his example and kept the same legacy in the lands they took over. They also gave assurances that guaranteed the protection of the religious places. On the other hand, the jurists developed their opinions regarding the issues of keeping these places, the building of new ones and renovating them. Not all jurists were in agreement on all the different aspects of this issue. I argue that some jurists appeared to be more flexible on this issue than others who developed their opinions on unauthentic texts and undoubtedly influenced by the political situation.

### **The Muslims' Attitude towards Christian Holy Sites**

The Madaba map dated back to the middle of the sixth century shows that the region was full of Christian religious institutions as many churches, convents and hospices were erected<sup>39</sup> (Piccirillo 1993, 86-91). The region remained under the Byzantines until the Persians marched towards the Holy Land in 614 CE (Millgram 1998, 52, 53). They besieged the Walled City for 20 days then captured it. During the siege they destroyed the church of Saint Stephen then they spent three days sacking the City. The first constructions they destroyed were the churches of Gethsemane

and the Elona (Schick 2007, 179-180). The Persians also burned the churches after the siege (Ibn al-Baṭrīq 1909, 5) such as the Church of the Holy Sepulchre and the Church of the Holy Sion. The Jews also shared in destroying churches such as the Church of the Theotokos<sup>40</sup> (Schick 2007, 180). Later, the Patriarch Modestus travelled to find funds to repair the destroyed churches (Ibn al-Baṭrīq 1905, 218). However, not everything was repaired (Schick 2007, 180-181). In 628 CE, Emperor Heraclius, after campaigns against Persians, succeeded to return the Byzantine provinces (Wilkinson 1990, 102). Meanwhile, the Muslim state was expanding. The Muslims faced the Byzantines in many battles. Al-Yarmūk in 634 CE was decisive because it resulted in the takeover of al-Shām by Muslims. After it, the Muslims besieged Aelia for about four months. Finally, in 636 CE, the Byzantines handed over the keys of the City to the Muslim Caliph ʿUmar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb (El-Awaisi 1992, 66-70).

### **The Assurance of Safety**

Unlike the Persian conquerors, the Caliph ʿUmar did not sack the City or seek its destruction. On the contrary, he dealt with the Christian City with respect in terms of people, land and churches. Following the teachings of Prophet Muḥammad in dealing with non-Muslims, the Caliph wrote an Assurance of Safety to the citizens of Aelia which included:

... He has given them an assurance of safety for themselves, for their property, their churches, their crosses, the sick and the healthy, and for the rest of its religious communities. Their churches will not be inhabited nor destroyed. Neither they, nor the land on which the stand, nor their cross, nor their property will be damaged...<sup>41</sup> (Al-Ṭabarī 1997, v. 2, 449)

This treaty was not exclusive for the inhabitants of Aelia. The Caliph wrote nearly a similar letter to the residents of Lud<sup>42</sup>, in which he confirmed the assurance of the safety of churches and crosses in their city and all the other cities of "Palestine"<sup>43</sup> (Al-Ṭabarī 1997, v. 2, 449). Moreover, the Caliph visited Bethlehem and granted its Patriarch a similar assurance of safety (Abū al-Robb 2000, 142). Besides the churches and crosses, the

monasteries were inevitably secured by this assurance. And al-'Umarī mentions that the priests of Aelia inherited an assurance of safety, exclusively, for their monasteries (Al-'Umarī 2003, v.1. 431-432). In addition, Mu'āwiyah, the first Umayyad<sup>44</sup> Caliph, visited the Gethsemane Church where he also prayed. He, furthermore, prayed near the Tomb of the Blessed Mary (Maḥmūd 1998, 195; Schick 1995, 84, 85<sup>45</sup>). It is also said that he visited the Church of the Holy Sepulchre and the Church of Ascension (Graber 1996, 50). The visits made by such an important political figure, reflects the formal respect to all the Christian holy places in Islamicjerusalem. Mu'āwiyah in this visit, had put the Qur'anic and *hadīth* teachings in practice. Mu'āwiyah is not the only example for an Umayyad ruler to deal with the Christian holy 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 Na'īm, one of his employees, a letter instructing him not to destroy any church among the ones that had already existed when Muslims conquered the land (Al-Ṭabarī 1997, v.4, 72).

It was thus clear that Muslims did not seek the destruction of churches in the City of Islamicjerusalem though the dominant layout of the City was Christian (Peri 1999, 97). In support to this argument, I argue that the Caliph 'Abd al-Malik ibn Marwān (reigned 685- 705 CE) intended to construct the Dome of the Rock in order to change the Christian layout of the City without destroying any of the Christian institutions. Al-Maqdisī claims that the Caliph erected the Dome of the Rock because he feared that the splendid Christian architecture in historical Syria and Islamicjerusalem would dazzle the minds of the Muslims (Al-Maqdisī 1909, 159), strategically placing the Dome of the Rock would divert the focus from the dome of the Holy Sepulchre. This shows that the Christian institutions were more obvious and attractive than the Muslim ones. It is also 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 *fath*,

allowed the Christians to rebuild their ruined churches (William of Tyre 2003, 144). The holy sites did not lose their charm and meaning for Christians by 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).

The historical facts are not adequate if taken apart from the archaeological evidence. The consultation of archaeology will contribute to a greater extent in revealing more about the perception of Muslims' towards churches. One example for the construction of new Christian holy places, which was revealed by archaeological studies, is the monastery at Tel Masos near Beersheba. This monastery was established by the Nestorian Christians before 700 CE, and remained as evidence for their presence in Islamic Jerusalem (Schick 1998, 86).

Besides the newly built places, there are examples for rebuilding others such as 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<sup>46</sup>. Schick mentions that the Shepherd's Field was rebuilt in 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). 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 churches and monasteries which were built, rebuilt or renovated during the early Muslim period (Table 1).

Several accounts have been recorded for churches which were newly built, restored or rebuilt during the 'Abbāsīd<sup>47</sup> period. In fact, most of the churches which were functioning in the Umayyad period continued to function in the 'Abbāsīd. A clear example is the church and monastery of Saint Mary (Miller 1978, 729).

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

Name	Place	Date	Developments	Notes	Reference
Church of Visitation	‘Āyn 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/ Kanīsat Al-Ra‘awāt	Bayt Sāhūr	Byzantine period	rebuilt at 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 fight with Muslims	Schick 1995, 120
small oratory <sup>48</sup>	Islamicjerusalem	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 ‘Ābūd	‘Ābūd (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

Furthermore, when al-Mas'ūdī (d. 954 CE) describes Islamic Jerusalem he mentions that the Christians had many churches in the City such as the Gethsemane, Sion and the Holy Sepulcher (Al-Mas'ūdī 1985, v.1, 54), which indicates that all these churches were functioning actively. In addition, in 764 CE Islamic Jerusalem experienced a catastrophic earthquake that resulted in great damage to the Church of the Sepulchre. Therefore, the fifth 'Abbāsīd Caliph Hārūn al-Rashīd (reigned 786-809 CE) agreed to enter into a political treaty with Charlemagne<sup>49</sup> who sent money for the upkeep, repair and renovation of Christian holy places in Islamic Jerusalem (Duncaan 1986, 35). In this case, besides the Muslim tolerance, the political aspect would not have been undermined by encouraging al-Rashīd to allow these constructions and restoration. To elaborate, 'Awaḍ claims that Charlemagne and Hārūn al-Rashīd cooperated to this extent because they both had the same enemy-the Umayyads in Andalusia ('Awaḍ 1992, 21). This is in addition to their alliance against the Byzantines whom al-Rashīd was already campaigning against (Duncaan 1986, 35). But whatever the motivations, it is clear that some hostels and a library were established by Charlemagne at that time (Duri 1990, 113). And more importantly, when Bernard the Wise had arrived in 870 CE, he found Charlemagne's establishment was still in working order (Runciman 1991, 42- 44). When Ibn Tūlūn<sup>50</sup>(reigned 878- 884 CE) appointed a Christian governor for Islamic Jerusalem, the new governor issued orders to rebuild and renovate the ruined churches. At that time, the churches were described as having "fallen in miserable state of decay"<sup>51</sup> (Macpherson 1892, 435). Therefore, Elias, the Patriarch of Islamic Jerusalem, sent a letter in 881 CE to all the bishops, princes and nobility of the Frankish Kingdom asking them for funds needed for rebuilding the churches. Gil adds that there are sources which speak of large donations that arrived from England<sup>52</sup> (Gil 1997, 479) for this purpose. The Holy Sepulchre and another church were renovated during the reign of the 'Abbāsīd Caliph al-Ma'mūn (Maḥmūd 1998, 222) (reigned 813-819 CE). It is mentioned that the Patriarch Thomas was generously supplied with funds by Bocam, a wealthy Egyptian, for the restoration of the buildings of the Holy Sepulchre (Macpherson 1892, 435). In

later years, the Caliph al-Rādī (reigned 934-940 CE) ordered the restoration of the Holy Sepulchre because some rioters had entered it, carried things from inside and destroyed the church (Khoury nd, 36).<sup>53</sup> Regarding rebuilding, the Church of Sion is an example of a church that was rebuilt in 965 CE (Wilkinson 1988, 29) by a learned Jacobite called Ali Suwar (Wilkinson 1988, 46).

Apart from the new constructions of Hārūn al-Rāshīd, the aforementioned examples were all for renovation and rebuilding of churches and places of worship. The Coptic Church of the Magdalene in Islamic Jerusalem which was built between 819 – 830 CE (Schick 1995, 121) was the only example of a new church being built in the 'Abbāsīd period. This shows that although the official policy was not to allow the building of new churches, rebuilding them or doing major restoration, there were cases when the opposite occurred as illustrated above.

### **Flourishing of Monasteries**

The activities and writings done by priests were true evidence that the monasteries were flourishing. The letters written by Theodore the Studite to the monasteries of Saint Saba, Saint Chariton and Saint Euthymius prove that these places were functioning (Schick 1991, 79). This can be shown by the life of Saint Stephen of the Monastery of Mar Saba (Schick 1988, 239). Saint Stephen (d. 794 CE) wrote his Vita which was filled with incidental references to sites and local monasteries thriving in Judaea besides names of Christians from the different places of the world who came and dedicated their lives to the places of worship (Schick 1991, 64-66). Another document that proves the flourishing life of the Christian places of worship is mentioned by 'Awaḍ and named "Commeroratorium"<sup>54</sup> on the Churches of Jerusalem". This document (dated 808 CE) is considered an important source because it includes a survey for all churches and monasteries in addition to the names and number of the priests, deacons and bishops ('Awaḍ 1992, 22). Thus, it could be inferred that the churches and monasteries were prosperous, flourishing and full of priests at that time, and having a survey means that these places were well-organised.

### Performing Rituals:

As the places of worship were saved and protected, the right to perform the religious rituals freely and publicly was also protected in the early Muslim period. The native Christians continued to practice their religious rituals in churches and sanctuaries in a normal way (Aghārziān 1998, 159). Therefore, Muslims used to hear the ringing of the Christians' bell (*nāqūs*) even in the Muslims' places. For example, it is recorded that whenever Khulayd ibn Saʿīd, the servant of Umm al-Dardā', heard the *nāqūs*, he directly used to go and pray on the rock (Ibn ʿAsāker 1995, v.17, 27).<sup>55</sup>

Respecting the Christian rituals expanded to places outside the churches. This made the Caliph ʿUmar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb instruct Abū ʿUbaydah 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). Muslims also continued to allow Christians to perform their rituals freely during the ʿAbbāsīd period. They sometimes shared the ceremonies with the Christians. In one account Gil mentions that the Muslim governor in Islamicjerusalem was the first to light the candle in the ceremony in the Holy Sepulchre in the first half of the tenth century (Gil 1997, 467)<sup>56</sup>. Nonetheless, this does not appear to have been the same attitude all the time. In 947 CE the governor of Baghdad ordered the governor of al-Ramla to forbid a ritual unless the Christians pay 7000 dinars (Gil 1997, 465,466).

### Pilgrimage

Islamicjerusalem includes many sites of pilgrimage<sup>57</sup>. Despite the fact that the Muslims conquered Islamicjerusalem, pilgrimage was not interrupted (Wilkinson 2002, 18). The pilgrims continued to come to the City in great groups (Aghārziān 1998, 159). 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<sup>58</sup> (Rubin 1999, 21). It is believed that Arculf was not the only pilgrim who 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). Later on, during the eighth century, the



number of pilgrims increased. To support this argument, Runciman says that the pilgrimage activities were reorganised under the patronage of Charlemagne (Runciman 1991, v.1, 43). Inns and hotels were erected to accommodate the pilgrims and the nuns who were sent to serve the Holy Sepulchre. Interestingly, these activities were arranged with Muslims. That appeared obvious when Bernard the Wise was asked to obtain a passport to be able to make his visit (Runciman 1991, v.1, 43). In the tenth century, there was a whole network organising pilgrimage activities and being aware of pilgrims' needs ('Awaḍ 1992, 22). And the access to the holy sites was also becoming easier (Runciman 1991, v.1, 44). I believe that the Islamic teachings were the major motivation for the Muslims' tolerance of Christian pilgrimage. But this does not mean that it was the only motivation for them to welcome the pilgrims. Runciman claims that pilgrimage was an important financial source for the country's budget (Runciman 1991, v. 1, 44). That could be another reason for Muslims to allow the development and prosperity for the pilgrimage activities.

The eye-witness accounts prove that the pilgrimage activities were flourishing and the number of churches, monasteries and tombs were vast (Table 2). It is also important to bear in mind that the aforementioned accounts did not record any obstacles faced during the pilgrimage, apart from the seven who were accompanying Willibald. Those pilgrims were accused of being spies but later on released when they disclosed their destination (Wilkinson 2002, 236)<sup>59</sup>. 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 (Wilkinson 2002, 21). In his pamphlet, he mentions or describes many holy places in the City of Islamic Jerusalem, Hebron, Jericho and the area of the Dead Sea (Wilkinson 2002, 216). I tend to believe that the number of pilgrims was vast; therefore, Bede composed the guide as a response to their needs to know about the sites they wanted to visit. On the other hand, 'Athāminah claims that in spite of the

fact that pilgrims continued to flow to Islamicjerusalem, some Christians feared to come because of the constant wars between the Muslims and the Byzantine Empire ('Athāminah 2000, 144). 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 1991, 42) and thus affected the pilgrimage activities.

Name of Pilgrim/ place	Year	places visited <sup>60</sup>
Arculf/ France	670 CE	Bethlehem: birthplace of Christ; Tombs of King David, Shepherds, Rachel, and St. Jerome; Hebron: tombs of Patriarchs and their wives; Church in Mamre; dwellings of nuns. Nablus: a church; well (Wilkinson 2002, 184-193); Islamicjerusalem Church of St. Mary; Tower of Jehoshaphat; Church of Ascension and other places (Wilkinson 2002, 177-183)
Epiphanius the Monk	before 692 CE	'Jerusalem': Tombs of Christ and Adam; Garden of Joseph; Holy Sepulchre; Sheep Pool; Holy Sion, Pool of Siloam, Gethsemane Church, Kidron and Jehoshaphat Valleys; Mount of Olives; Bethany; St. Euthymius; Church of Holy Trinity; monastery of St. Zosima; graves of Saints; place of Baptism; the track of the River Jordan; South to 'Jerusalem': Tomb of Rachel, Nativity Church, Monastery of Sheepfield, Monasteries of Saba and Chariton. West to 'Jerusalem' Church of St. George (Ramlah); fortress of Ascalon (Wilkinson 2002, 207-215).
St. Vulpy / Rue (France)	late 7 <sup>th</sup> century	no information (Runciman 1991, 42)
Bercaire and his friend Waimer/ Burgundy region in west Europe	late 7 <sup>th</sup> century	no information (Runciman 1991, 42)

Willibald/ England (with seven people)	722 CE	River Jordan side; Bethsaida; place of Baptism; Holy Sepulchre; Nativity; Holy Sion; Solomon's porch; Mount of Olives; Tekoa and Sebastia (Wilkinson 2002, 241-249)
Mark/Egypt	8 <sup>th</sup> century	Mar Saba (Schick 1991, 66).
Elia of Castrogiovanni / in Sicily	around 850 CE	Islamic Jerusalem (stayed for three years)(Gil 1997, 484).
Frotmund/ France	858 CE	no information (Gil 1997, 484).
Photius	867 CE	Tomb of the Lord (Wilkinson 2002, 258)
Bernard the Monk (with his companions)	870 CE	Holy Sepulchre, Church of Saint Simeon, Church of St. Stephen, Valley of Jehoshaphat, Church of St Mary, Church of St. John (Mt. Of Olives), Bethany, Tomb of Lazarus, Nativity, Monastery of St. John Baptist, Church of St. Mamilla and Church of St. Peter (Wilkinson 2002, 266-268)
Hilda the Countess of Swabia	d.969 CE	no information ('Awad 1992, 22)
Judith the Duchess of Bavaria	10 <sup>th</sup> century	no information ('Awad 1992, 22)
Saint Conrad, the Bishop of Constance	10 <sup>th</sup> century	He visited Islamic Jerusalem three times (Runciman 1991, v.1, 45 <sup>61</sup> ).

Table 2: names of some pilgrims and the sites they visited

### Decline and Attacks on churches:

Despite the building, rebuilding and the renovation of churches, Schick argues that the number of churches declined in the early Muslim period (Schick 1988, 239). However, some of the churches continued to function after the Muslim *fath* yet were hindered during the Umayyad period, such as Tell Ḥasan in Jericho, Khirbat Dīrān<sup>62</sup>, John the Baptist and Bayt El<sup>63</sup> (Schick 1995, 118,119). This

Besides the decline in number, some attacks on churches are recorded. At the end of the Umayyad period, a Christian worship place was affected by the flight of Marwān II to Egypt as he was defeated in the battle of the Zāb by the 'Abbasid. 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 (Schick 1991, 64). During the 'Abbāsīd period, many incidents occurred and negatively affected the presence of churches and places of worship. William of Tyre claims that whenever a new governor came to authority, he would threaten to destroy the churches in the cities of Islamic Jerusalem, Bethlehem and Tqū' unless they submit to him (William 2003, v.1, 151). However, William of Tyre gives neither examples nor explanations of certain incidents. But the ongoing threat to destroy churches indicates that practically the governors did not destroy them. The churches and the Christian holy places seemed to have some difficult experiences during the reign of the second 'Abbāsīd Caliph 'Abū Ja'far al-Manṣūr (reigned 754 - 775 CE). In the first visit in 758 CE (Ibn 'Asākir 1996, v.32, 299) the Caliph intensified the *jizyah*<sup>67</sup> on the religious figures (Theophanes 1997, 595). In the second visit, in 771 CE, (Ibn 'Asākir 1996, v. 32, 299) all the Christians, including priests, were ordered to tattoo their arms. Thus, many Christians left Islamic Jerusalem and went to Byzantium (Theophanes 1997, 616). The context of the event was the time of war where Muslims invaded Mopsouestia and 1000 of them were killed (Theophanes 1997, 616). Therefore, I tend to believe that the Caliph ordered this as a kind of revenge and not for the sake of humiliating the religious figures. But in both cases, the act of the Caliph, if true, looks to be a temporary measure and is linked to the war and the security of the state rather than religious persecution.

Another event that can be probably related to the war situation between the Byzantines and Muslims is what happened in 966 CE. In revenge for Byzantine campaigning far away in the north, the Patriarch John VII was murdered by Muslims and the Church of the Holy Sepulchre was pillaged (Duncaan 1986, 36). Al-Kilani adds that the Patriarch John provoked the Muslims when he called

the Byzantines to carry on their victories until they approach Jerusalem (Al-Kīlānī 2000, 165). However, the Ikhshidī<sup>68</sup> ruler, Kāfūr, was ready to restore what had been destroyed (Gil 1997, 480; Al-Kīlānī 2000, 165). In the reign of the eleventh ‘Abbāsīd Caliph al-Mutawakīl (reigned 847-861 CE) there was another incident. Some Muslims destroyed the monasteries of Saint John and Saint Kiryakes, because the Byzantines had besieged Damietta<sup>69</sup> (Khoury nd, 35). And again religion was used as justification in the political arena.

It is important to bear in mind that the rule of the ‘Abbasids lasted for nearly two centuries, thus it was exposed to several political troubles, besides times of stability. The reasons for instability were due to the general decline of the ‘Abbāsīd Caliphate in Baghdad, especially after the Turks dominance. The provinces related to the Caliphate centre became no more than sources of funding and suffered from the corruption of the governors. As a result, the peasants had to pay high taxes and sometimes their properties were sequestrated. Thus, both commercial and agricultural projects declined. Al-Shām, including Islamic Jerusalem, was directly affected by the economic decline of the ‘Abbāsīd Caliphate. This effect led the people to share in several rebellions<sup>70</sup> which came as a reaction to oppression and bad economic situation. The rebellions and uprisings resulted in chaos and insecurity. In this situation, the Bedouins started to attack the caravans, some villages, public places and buildings (Ziūd 1992, 14-17). The attacks of the Bedouin tribes had a negative influence on the Christian places of worship as well. One obvious example was the rebellion that finished in plundering Islamic Jerusalem in 811-812 CE. As a result of this rebellion, some raids targeted the monasteries such as the monastery of Saint Saba (Schick 1991, 79; Gil 1997, 474)<sup>71</sup>. In addition to that event, there was an Arab attack on the monastery of Saint Theodosius, near Bethlehem. The monastery was sacked and many of the monks were slaughtered. The attackers also destroyed two churches near the monastery (Gil 1997, 474). In 842 CE, during the reign of al-Mu‘taṣīm (819-843 CE), a peasant rebellion led by al-Mubarqa‘ al-Yamānī shook Islamic Jerusalem (Al-Ṭabarī 1997, v.5, 260-270). When he entered

the City, the population, both Muslims and others, fled and the places of worship were pillaged (Duri 1990, 113). Macpherson claims that the churches, in that situation, were saved from complete demolition only by the payment of a large ransom by the patriarch (Macpherson 1892, 435).

When the separatist officials dominated Islamic Jerusalem, sectarian uprising arose and the riots targeted the churches in some cities. For example in 924 CE the masses rioted in al-Ramlah and attacked two churches of the Melkites<sup>72</sup> which were the Church of Saint Cosmas and the Church of Saint Cyriac (Ibn al-Baṭṭīq 1909, 82; Gil 1997, 475). Contemporary to this riot, the masses in Caesarea<sup>73</sup> rioted and demolished a church there. In reaction to this, some hierarchs<sup>74</sup> of Islamic Jerusalem complained to the Muslim Caliph in Baghdad, who issued a decree to rebuild the demolished church. And in the same year, Muslims rose up in Ascalon and destroyed a great church called Mariam Al-Khaḍrā'. They robbed its contents with the encouragement of Jews, while its bishop fled to Ramlah (Al-Maqrīzī 2006, v4, p 2; Ibn al-Baṭṭīq 1909, 82). After that, the bishop of Ascalon went to Baghdad and complained to the Caliph, but this time the Caliph did not order the church to be rebuilt (Athāminah 2000, 148). In fact, this is a clear reflection of the weak authority of the 'Abbāsīd caliph in relation to the sovereignty over Islamic Jerusalem. These events that occurred at the time of separation reflected the political chaos rather than the formal united policy of the 'Abbāsīd whom had no real authority on Islamic Jerusalem.

In short, based on historical facts and archaeological evidence, great numbers of churches and monasteries were newly built, rebuilt or renovated in Islamic Jerusalem during the early Muslim period. This output indicates that the Muslims, to a large extent, put the Islamic injunctions into practice in dealing with the Christian holy sites. The decline in the number of churches was primarily the result of socio-economic factors rather than due to an escalation in the Christian-Muslim relations. This is besides the political situation and the natural disasters that affected the whole area at that time. On the other hand, during the 'Abbāsīd period,

the historical accounts show that rarely churches were built or rebuilt during that time. Additionally, some restoration was done to maintain the old ones especially the Holy Sepulchre. This restriction was due to the jurists' opinions. While the destruction and attacks of some churches were the result of political and economic situations. However, in the whole investigated periods the flourishing of the monasteries, the thriving pilgrimage activities, and the easy access to the holy sanctuaries proved the Muslims' tolerance towards these places.

## Conclusion

This article examined to what extent the Muslims applied the Islamic teachings in dealing with the Christian holy places especially churches from the time of the Muslim *fath* in 636 CE until 969 CE. The research was focused on the region of Islamic Jerusalem, which is distinguished by its religious significance for both Christians and Muslims. The study initially outlined the theoretical framework which the Muslims were supposed, in theory, to adopt in their dealings with the Christian holy places. This outline was based on the various opinions of the exegetes for (Qur'an 22:40), the practice of the Prophet in dealing with the People of the Book and the practice of the Companions when they conquered the lands. These three sources indicated that the destruction of any place of worship is considered to be an outrage to the law of God under which the plurality of places of worship is guaranteed because plurality is a norm in Islam. Therefore, although the Companions would not accept the fundamentals of these religions, they clearly set out their protection.

In addition to these sources, the opinions of the jurists are also considered vital in outlining the legal status of the Christian holy places in Muslim Jurisprudence. But not all the opinions correspond to the same approach. The political and strategic circumstances that surrounded the development of the juristic opinions had their impacts on the jurists' approach. Therefore, some jurists appeared to be less flexible than others.

When this study set out to determine to what extent the Muslims applied the Islamic teachings towards churches and other Christian holy places, two different outcomes were found. The findings differ according to the period of time determined. For example, in regard to the early Muslim period, both the historical accounts and the archaeological evidence indicated that at this stage the old churches and monasteries were kept protected, many new churches and monasteries were erected, several of the ruined ones were rebuilt and renovation was made. These findings show that the Muslims' attitude in the early Muslim period was a reflection of the Islamic principles and teachings of justice and plurality in Islam in addition to the aspects of IslamicJerusalem. But the economic decline during that period, the natural disasters, the political situation and the peaceful abandonment were the reasons that stood behind the decline in the number of churches, rather than a change in the Muslims' attitude towards the Christian holy places.

In relation to the second period, the findings of the study reveals that in 'some' aspects the 'Abbāsids had the same attitude the Umayyads had. For example, under the 'Abbāsids the pilgrimage activities flourished; the pilgrims were welcomed by Muslims and inns were established to accommodate them. In addition, the monasteries were flourishing. On the other hand, the historical accounts and the archaeological evidence proved that few churches were built or rebuilt. Even the renovation recorded was mostly limited. This indicated that the 'Abbāsids, in this aspect, followed a certain policy, which was strengthened by the juristic opinions. I argue that strategic and political circumstances played a pivotal role in elevating the juristic opinions, but the jurists, unfortunately, also depended on unreliable texts in deriving the verdict for this issue. In spite of this restriction, no physical evidence showed a deliberate destruction of churches and monasteries based on the formal policy. All the sources of the recorded attacks showed that they were informal reactions of the masses against the Byzantines attacking other Muslim lands. In other times, the attacks were caused by the Bedouins who used to assault all public constructions at times of instability.



To conclude, when Muslims took over Islamic Jerusalem, they made a u-turn from the approach of the conquerors who dealt with places of worship at that time. Unlike the Persians who had devastated the churches and monasteries in Islamic Jerusalem decades earlier, the Muslims were keen to protect these places forever, by giving the Christians the assurance of safety (as well as to other cities in the region). Equally for mosques, Muslims looked at churches and monasteries as places of mentioning the name of God in an abundant way, thus to be protected. In addition, protecting all the holy places and allowing the pilgrimage to keep flowing normally, proved that Muslims accepted that this city was to remain holy for Christians because it was the same for Muslims.

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- 55 A similar example was the act of the Follower (*Ṭābiʿ*) Mālik ibn ʿAbdullah, who used to go to his home to pray whenever he heard the *nāqūs* in the city of Lud (Abū al-Robb 2000, 217).
- 56 Gil attributes the source to al-Bayhaqī, but unfortunately he does not mention either the book or the page.
- 57 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 and the Holy Sepulchre. 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).
- 58 Arculf did not himself write down his experience but it was documented by an abbot called Adomnan (Rubin 1999, 21).
- 59 They were jailed before reaching Islamicjerusalem (Wilkinson 2002, 236).
- 60 I omitted the word "The" which comes before the names of Churches to avoid repetition.
- 61 Runciman tells that the names recorded are only for the people of great personages who brought groups with them to pilgrimage, but definitely the names of the ordinary people are not recorded (Runciman 1991, v.1, 44).
- 62 Known today as Rehovot
- 63 The churches places in these continued to function in the early Umayyad period but went out within the same period (Schick 1995, 118).
- 64 Runciman claims 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).
- 65 Depending on archaeological studies there are many churches that were not rebuilt after the earthquakes but all are located outside the boundaries of Islamicjerusalem such as the Church of Saint Theodore at Jerash (Schick 1995, 127).
- 66 Unfortunately, the sources do not give examples or names for any of the destroyed churches.
- 67 It is mentioned in chapter one that Abū Yūsuf says that the priests and the ones who dedicated their lives for worship were not to pay the *jizyah* unless they were wealthy (see Abū Yūsuf 1972, 122).
- 68 Ikhshids ruled from 945 until 969 CE.
- 69 This is located in Egypt.
- 70 People in what was then Palestine shared in Abu al-Haydhām al-Mirri's rebellion in 792-794 CE, and the al-Mubaraqʿ al-Yamānī's rebellion in 842 CE (ʿAbbās 1992 b, 41,64).
- 71 In this piece of information Gil refers to primary sources from languages I am not familiar with, therefore, I could not have the access to it.
- 72 The central sect connected to Byzantines.
- 73 Caesarea is not part of the region of Islamicjerusalem, but it is mentioned here because the events in the city had their reaction in the City of Islamicjerusalem.
- 74 Hierarch is a high priest