FROM THE FIRE TEMPLE TO THE MOSQUE: THE RELIGIOUS URBAN LANDSCAPE IN LATE ANTIQUE ĒRĀNŠAHR

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Cardiff University Press
Gwasg Prifysgol Caerdydd

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Abstract:
This paper is an analysis of the change in urban spaces in the former Sasanian empire after the Arab-Muslim conquest. How events shaped the population's life is reflected by how urban society shaped the spaces within the city. Paradigmatic of this is the case of religious spaces. In a syncretic empire such as the Sasanian Ērānšahr (224–650 CE), places of worship were not limited to fire altars and temples, there were also churches and synagogues as vital parts of the religious environment. According to the archaeological and historiographic attestations, religious spaces in Sasanian times were prevalent in a rural dimension. In 650 CE, the empire was turned upside down by the Arab-Muslim conquest and the transition period to a unified Islamic society is known as Islamisation. This event is often described as a rupture; however, it can be better represented as acculturation because of the cultural exchange taking place during the conversion and the elaboration of Islamic social institutions.[1] One of the primary marks of this process includes constructing new religious urban spaces, the mosques both inside and outside city walls. Religious spaces marked both the territory and the identity of the people inhabiting it. However, crucial to the construction of mosques is a parallel shift of the religious space from a rural to an urban environment.

Keywords
Sasanian urbanism – early Islam urbanism – transition – religious urban spaces.

Shape the space – Urban patterns

> *Space is fundamental in any form of communal life;*
> *space is fundamental in any exercise of power.*[2]

One of the most significant events that transformed the world during Late Antiquity was the Arab-Muslim conquest (*c.*638–650 CE). Key Byzantine territories in Western Asia and North Africa, and all of the Sasanian territories, went through a process of changing their ruling élites and their religion. Over the years, the substrate of the former Byzantine and Sasanian population converted to Islam, completing that process nowadays known as 'Islamisation'. From a historical point of view, this event marked one of the key milestones in the passage from Late Antiquity to Medieval times. To better understand this process, this article will consider the religious urban spaces in the Sasanian empire and their transformation after the conquest. This is because a change of religion was likely to have been mirrored in the urban spaces shaped by their inhabitants' needs.

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[1] Richard W. Bulliet, *Conversion to Islam in the Medieval Period* (Cambridge, Mass. & London: Harvard University Press, 1979), 3.

[2] Michel Foucault, 'The Meshes of Power,' in *Space, Knowledge, and Power. Foucault and Geography*, eds. Jeremy W. Crampton and Stuart Elden (Farnham, Surrey: Ashgate, 2007), 157.

Before starting this journey, however, some premises are due. The first methodological issue faced by scholars studying the former Sasanian territories (*c*.224–650 CE), or Ērānšahr, is the terminology, especially that inherent to toponyms. Present day Iran and Iraq constitute the 'core' of the Sasanian empire, a multi-cultural entity that stretched up to modern Turkmenistan [Figure 1].

<Figure 1>
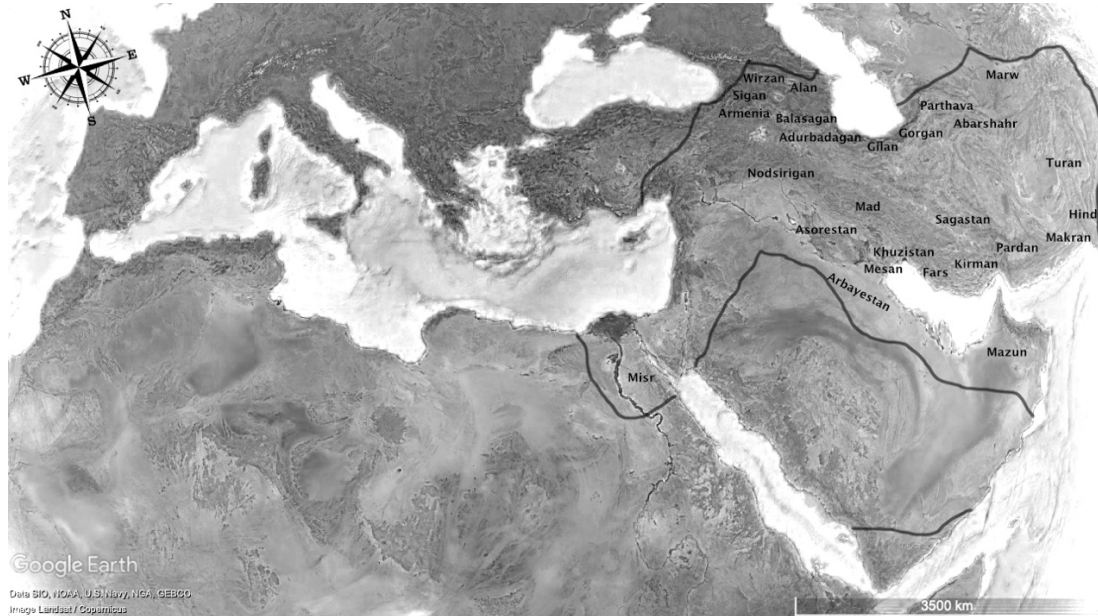
This means that, when studying the Ērānšahr, many different regionalities must be taken into account, and terms such as 'Iran' comprehend a much broader reality. After the Arab-Muslim conquest and the consequent fall of the empire, this reality was even broader as, at the dawn of the 'Ummayyad dynasty (*c*.661–750 CE), the new Caliphate occupied almost twice the area of the former Sasanian territories [Figure 2].

<Figure 2>

The existence of even more regionalities involved in this new political and religious entity, stressed out their differences in backgrounds, influences, and cultures. As Islam became the main religion of the newly converted populations unified under the same belief and central authority, the different and various regions started to identify themselves with this unifying religion.

The matters of 'identity' and 'regionality' are vital in unravelling cultural and religious entities during Late Antiquity and how they evolved to what is nowadays called 'Medieval'. To achieve a piece of understanding on this topic, this paper will mainly focus on the cities of modern Iran and Iraq; however, some comparisons with Turkmenistan (i.e., Merv) and the Arabian Peninsula (Medina and Mecca) will be considered [Figure 3].

<Figure 3>
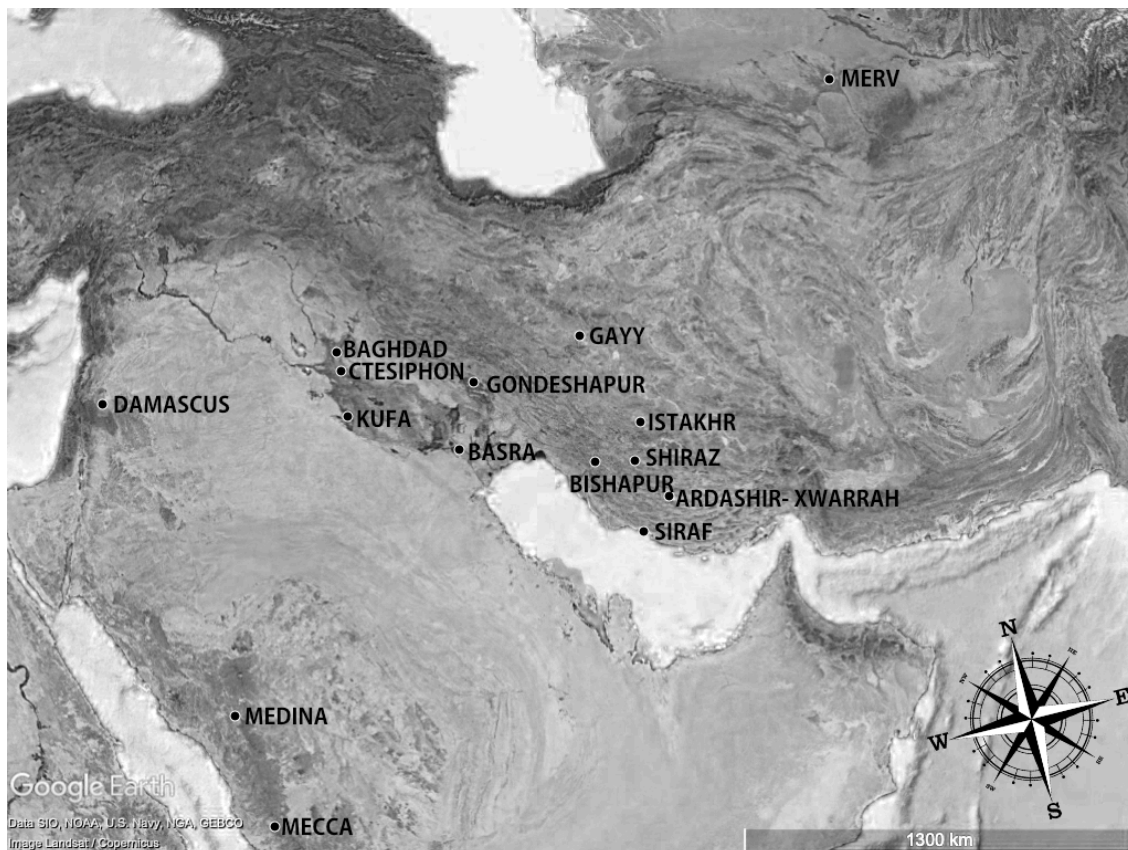
Since the archaeological data on urban spaces in Iraq and Iran is not sufficient, Merv has been included to supplement the information on Sasanian Ērānšahr. Mecca and Medina have been included as they constitute the core of the Islamic urban tradition and are vital in the understanding of the transition. Regional differences are obviously a matter of fact – for instance, Medina and Mecca's urban environment was influenced by their dimension as 'oases'. Another example is that the multi-culturalism of Merv was increased by its position at the fringes of the Sasanian empire. On one hand, the multi-millennial urbanistic history of Iraq substantiated a fertile soil for the development of the metropolis. On the other hand, the fact that Iran was the native region of the Sasanian dynasty played a vital role in the symbolic meaning behind some city foundations (e.g., Ardashir-Xwarrah and Bishapur).

Although the localised perspective usually prevails in comparative diachronic studies, it is the author's opinion that social changes found in urban spaces are very difficult to understand without considering the broader picture. In the following study, urbanism had

been used to analyse social changes. This is because the urban landscape is the outcome of both social and institutional forces within an urban environment. The relationship between society and the urban environment is directly proportionate and mutually dependent: as societies shape their own urban spaces so the spaces themselves reflect the social organisation.[3] This definition of 'urban space' reflects a manifestation of cultural identity that follows Bourdieu's theory based on *habitus*, 'a generative and structuring principle of both collective strategies and social practices; people use habitus to reproduce existing structures without being fully aware of how structures are in turn affected.'[4]

Exploring the way in which people relate to the surrounding architecture is an approach used in different chronological and geographical contexts by archaeologists. Among others it is noteworthy to mention the ground-breaking *Architecture and Order* edited by Parker Pearson and Richards.[5] This methodology will be applied here as urban spaces are dynamic aspects of urbanism. Therefore, a transition period such as the Arab-Muslim conquest (*c*.638–650 CE) should evidence a noticeable change in society. The conquest itself was a long process lasting for at least half a century and little by little the lifestyles and culture changed. Sasanian multiculturalism was maintained post-conquest with cultural exchanges still recognisable today, so transitions should be seen rather as metamorphoses and not as breakups.[6] As we will see, transition based on a religious change is clearly visible through urban space.

To illustrate this change, it is useful to pragmatically classify urban spaces according to their main function – in this case, religious urban spaces. This classification must be flexible, as often in Antiquity many places had multiple functions. Among other instances, Fentress points out the sacral and practical functions of Roman porticos.[7] Likewise, we will see how religious spaces in Sasanian times and after the Arab-Muslim conquest times are not limited to a sacred dimension.

Religious buildings and the concept of what is a sacred place constitute one of the most challenging categorisations of urban spaces. This is because the dimension of the sacred is ephemeral par excellence. The first step in tackling this challenge is to seek the criteria that characterised and shaped a particular place, space, landscape, or building to achieve the feature of being sacred. As we analyse a period characterised by a change of religion, distinguishing typologies of religious places and features of the religions is a must. For this reason, we will first examine religions and religious places during Sasanian times and then the evolution of Islamic religious *loci*.

Sasanian religious spaces: from fire temples to synagogues

The Ērānšahr stretched from the Fertile Crescent at the west to the fringes of Central Asia in the east. Within the Ērānšahr, minorities existed in ethnic, linguistic, and religious spheres. Even though Zoroastrianism predominated especially among the élites, there were also communities of Christians, both Nestorians and Monophysites, Manichaeans,

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[3] Ardener, 'Ground Rules and Social Maps for Women', 2.

[4] Pierre Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977), 72; Denise L. Lawrence and Setha M. Low, 'The Built Environment and Spatial Form', *Annual Review of Anthropology* 19 (1990): 469.

[5] Michael Parker Pearson and Colin Richards, eds., *Architecture and Order. Approaches to Social Space* (London: Routledge, 1994).

[6] Edgar Morin and Tariq Ramadan, *Au Péril des Idées* (Paris: Presses du Châtelet, 2015).

[7] Elizabeth Fentress, 'Sacred transactions: religion and markets in Roman urbanism,' in *Urban Space and Urban History in the Roman World*, ed. Miko Flohr (London & New York: Routledge, 2020), 179–97.

Buddhists, and significant Jewish populations.[8] The Christians in Persia can be divided in those who emphasized two natures of Christ (divine and human), known as Nestorians, or the 'East Syriac Church', and those who denied the human nature of Christ, known as Monophysites, or 'West Syriac Church'.[9] Although our perception of religion in Sasanian times is often dominated by the persecutions mentioned in the Syriac, Armenian, and Jewish sources, and also in the *mowbed* Kerdīr's bombastic words, recent scholarship has shown that relations between religions involved more subtle and complex interactions.[10] For instance, east Syrian martyrologic literature emphasises the *mowbeds* rather than the nobility or the *Šāhānšāh*, i.e., the king of kings, as instigators of persecutions.[11] It is possible to hypothesise that the religious conflicts were not a systematic intolerance intrinsic to the state of Ērānšahr but quite the opposite.

Another example of Ērānšahr as a multi-religious entity is that religious canons covered details of practices, rituals, and prohibitions in daily life. Also, funerary practices changed according to religion – at least that of the deceased's family. Legal competence of criminal justice and property laws were instead reserved to the Sasanian monarchy.[12] Moreover,

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[8] For any further information on Zoroastrianism, see, among the others: Jacques Duchesne-Guillemin, *La Religon de l'Iran Ancie*n (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1962) and Mary Boyce, *Textual sources for the study of Zoroastrianism* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1984). On Ērānšahr as a multi-cultural state, see Richard Payne, *A State of Mixture. Christians, Zoroastrians, and Iranian Political Culture in Late Antiquity* (Oakland, California: University of California Press, 2016).

[9] Hugh Kennedy, *The Great Arab Conquests: How the Spread of Islam Changed the World We Live In* (London: Phoenix, 2007), 9; see also Wilhelm Baum, *Shirin. Christian – Queen – Myth of Love. A Woman of Late Antiquity: Historical Reality and Literary Effect* (Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias Press, 2004), 7–10.

[10] Syriac sources: among the others, many Christian Act of Martyrs (see Philip Wood, *The Chronicle of Seert. Christian Historical Imagination in Late Antiquity Iraq* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), noteworthy is the bibliography for a list of Acts and the book itself for a commentary). See Payne, *A State of Mixture*, 17–20 for an analysis of Syriac sources about the Church of the East. On Armenian historians, see, for instance, Nina G. Garsoïan, trans., *Epic Histories* (Cambridge, Massachusetts & London, England: Harvard University Press, 1989); Robert W. Thomson, trans., *History of the Armenians* (Cambridge, Massachusett: Howard University Press, 1978); Robert W. Thomson trans., *History of Vardan and the Armenian War* (Cambridge, Massachusetts & London, England: Harvard University Press, 1982); Robert Thomson and James Howard-Johnston, trans., *The Armenian History Attributed to Sebeos* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1999). On the Jews in Sasanian society and their sources, e.g., the *Talmud*, and legal practice, see, for instance, Markham Geller, ed., *The Archaeology and Material Culture of the Babylonian Talmud* (Leiden & Boston: Brill, 2015); Shai Secunda, 'Reading the Bavli in Iran', *The Jewish Quarterly Review* 100:2 (2010): 310–42; Yakoov Elman 'Commercial Law in Rome and Ctesiphon: Roman Jurisconsults, Rabbis and Sasanian Dastwars on Risk', in *Rabbinic Traditions between Palestine and Babylonia*, eds. Ronit Nikolsky and Tal Ilan (Leiden & Boston: Brill, 2014), 250–83. Kerdīr inscriptions are translated by Frantz Grenet, 'Observations sur les titres de Kerdir', *Studia Iranica* 19 (1990): 87–94; Philippe Gignoux, *Les quatre inscriptions du mage Kirdīr*, (Paris: Association pour l'avancement des études Iraniennes, 1991), 17–32; Philip Huyse, 'Kerdīr and the first Sasanians', in *Proceedings of the Third European Conference of Iranian Studies, pt. 1, Old and Middle Iranian Studies*, ed. Nicholas Sims-Williams (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 1998), 108–20. About Kerdīr's boasting and the myth of Zoroastrian intolerance, see Payne, *A State of Mixture*, 23–58. On the religious harmony and dis-harmonies see the analysis by Payne especially on Syriac sources, Payne, *A State of Mixture*, 39–48. On Manichean sources, see among the others, Iain Gardner *et alii*, *Mani at the Court of the Persian Kings. Studies on the Chester Beatty Kephalaia Codex* (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2015).

[11] Payne, *A State of Mixture*, 38. Among the many sources mentioned by Payne, I want to underline a *Talmud* anecdote (Yev. 17a) reported by David Goodblatt, 'The Poll Tax in Sasanian Babylonia. The Talmudic Evidence', *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 22 (1979): 260, which suggests that a person who paid his/her poll tax in a given town then acquired the right and the status of a resident there.

[12] On Zoroastrian legal texts, see the *Mādigān ī Hazār Dādestān* which survived until today, translated by Anahit Perikhanian, *The Book of a Thousand Judgements. A Sasanian Law-Book*, (Costa Mesa, California and New York: Mazda Publishers, 1997). On the incorporation and adaptation of Iranian laws

the winter capital, Ctesiphon, was also the seat of an archbishop, and the territory counted numerous bishoprics, e.g., in Gondishapur and Karka de Ladan.[13]

Thus, in a syncretic empire such as the Ērānšahr, worship places were not limited to fire altars and temples. Churches and synagogues were also a vital part of the religious environment. The city of Merv (in today's Turkmenistan) well depicted the syncretism of the Ērānšahr, as a 'frontier city' at the fringes of the empire. The proximity with the Indian subcontinent's influence is evidenced by the presence of a Buddhist monastery in Merv's southeast corner, which attracted the most attention in scholarship.[14]

Literary and archaeological sources hint at the presence of Christianity here. For instance, bishops are attested from the third century onwards.[15] Among the archaeological evidence, there is the known Kharoba-Koshk, i.e., a structure placed 15 km north of the medieval Sultan Kala, allegedly identified as a Christian church.[16] Moreover, a Christian mould was discovered within a domestic context in the citadel.[17] There is no archaeological evidence that can confirm the presence of a Manichaean Church or of the Jewish community, even though both are mentioned in literary sources.[18]

Moving from the eastern borders, the Christian communities flourished within the whole Sasanian empire. Syrian sources, especially martyrologies, provide ample evidence for Christian monasteries, churches, and shrines. Mar Mari was a Christian apostle, and possibly the first missionary in Persia. According to the tradition, Mar Mari alone would have built 365 churches and monasteries in 'all the chief's towns located above Seleucia and Ctesiphon'.[19] East Syriac Churches' dioceses in Nishapur and Coche are mentioned in sources as being active in 430 CE, although this is not archaeologically confirmed.[20] However important the role of monasteries and churches was from a socio-economic point of view, there is no clear attestation of any Christian religious space inside the walls. Besides some folkloristic traditions such as Mar Mari's, all recognisable places mentioned in sources are outside urban centres.

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by the East Syrian bishops, see Richard Payne, 'East Syrian Bishops, Elite Households, and Iranian Law after the Muslim conquest', *Iranian Studies* 48 (2014): 5–32. See Payne, *A State of Mixture*, 108–26, on Christian law making.

[13] On Ctesiphon as winter capital, see Ammianus Marcellinus' mention in his *Res Gestae*, XXIX.1.4, consulted in Antonio Selem, trans*., Le Storie* (Novara: UTET, 2013), 913. On the bishoprics in general, see Robert W. Thomson, trans., *History of Łazar P'arpec'i* (Atlanta, Georgia: Scholar Press, 1991), 166; on some bishoprics in Mesopotamia, see Wood, *The Chronicle of Seert*, 23–4. For further information on the bishoprics in the Sasanian territory and their location, see Jean Maurice Fiey, *Assyrie Chretienne* (2 vols) (Beirut: Recherches Publiées sous la Direction de l'Institut de Lettres Orientales de Beyrouth, 1975).

[14] St John Simpson, 'Merv, an archaeological case-study from the northeastern frontier of the Sasanian Empire,' *Journal of Ancient History* 1-28 (2014): 17. See also Barbara Kaim and Maja Kornacka, 'Religious Landscape of the Ancient Merv Oasis,' *Iran* 54:2 (2016): 65–6.

[15] On the attestations, see Kaim and Kornacka, 'Religious Landscape of the Ancient Merv Oasis,' 59–63; Simpson, 'Merv, an archaeological case-study from the northeastern frontier of the Sasanian Empire,' 20.

[16] On the church, see Kaim and Kornacka, 'Religious Landscape of the Ancient Merv Oasis,' 61. Documented by Galina A. Pugachenkova, ('The development of architecture in southern Turkmanistan at the time of slave-holding states and feudalism') 'Puti razvitiya arkhitektury yuzhnogo Turkeministana pory rabovladeniya I feodalizma,' *Trudy YuTAKE* 6 (1958).

[17] St John Simpson, 'Ancient Merv: Archaeological Insights into the Economy of the City during the Sasanian Period (3rd – 7th centuries AD),' in *The Turkmen Land as a Centre of Ancient Cultures and Civilizations. Materials of the International scientific conference, 1-3 October, Ashgabat* (Ashgabat: Ministry of Culture and TV and Radio Broadcasting of Turkmenistan, 2008): 248.

[18] Kaim and Kornacka, 'Religious Landscape of the Ancient Merv Oasis,' 63–5.

[19] Amir Harrak, *The Acts of Mār Māri the Apostle* (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2005), 41.

[20] Rocco Rante and Annabelle Collinet, *Nishapur Revisited. Stratigraphy and Ceramics of the Qohandez*, (Oxford & Oakville: Oxbow Books, 2013), 9.

Another essential community in Sasanian Asorestan was the Jewish one, which was a vital witness of life in Sasanian cities thanks to the *Talmud*'s narrative. However, the diaspora brought Jews also at the east of Babylon, as far as Khuzistan and Fars. It is attested that many Jews used to live in Susa, and a Jewish village, called al-Yahudiyah, was located close by the city of Gayy.[21] Archaeologically speaking, it is still an open question whether they had their own dwelling quarters. It is indeed true that archaeology of minorities is ephemeral, as the state does not invest money and workforce in the construction of big, lasting monuments.

Besides these two literary attestations on the Jewish community, some scholars conveyed that the main reason to believe in religious segregation is related to the different purity laws and the consequent logistics.[22] Yet other scholars point out the similarities of purity laws of Rabbis and Zoroastrian priests, therefore denying any reason for ghettoization.[23] Synagogues appeared to be owned by the community and surely there was such a building in Mahoza, a quarter of Veh-Ardashir.[24] The synagogue was attended by the synagogue attendant, whose dwelling place was contained in the synagogue itself.[25]

One among the other religions of the empire was Manicheism. This religion was founded by Mani, who started to preach during Ardashir's reign (*c.*224–242) and died by order of the fourth Sasanian king, Bahram (*c.*274–6/7).[26] Seeking proselytes on his travels and spreading his good teaching, he allegedly arrived in India.[27] Characteristics of Mani's religion were its syncretism and absolute dualism.[28] Little is known of architectural features and even less on funerary tradition. One apparatus typical of Manichean rituals was the *bema*, a platform with five steps on which a Mani's effigy was placed.[29] Mani's life seems to be focused on some cities of Asorestan and Khuzistan, so it seems plausible that Manichean communities grew in an urban environment. However, we still have little information on this religion and its spaces.

The 'official religion' practised in the Ērānšahr was Zoroastrianism. An essential feature of many Zoroastrian holy places in the Iranian plateau was the closeness with mountains and water.[30] About this particularity, in the *Frawardīn* and *Zamyād Yašts* the legendary Kavi Vishtaspa 'sought space for order in tree and rock, who located space for order and rock'.[31] About the architecture of sanctuaries, i.e., fire temples, scholarship still debates functional interpretations of the buildings limited due to the absence of documentation.[32] As far as we know, there were at least three hierarchical categories of

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[21] Touraj Daryaee, *The Rise and Fall of an Empire* (London & New York: I.B. Tauris, 2009), 55.

[22] Daryaee, *The Rise and Fall of an Empire*, 66.

[23] See, for example, Rabbi Elman's ground-breaking work, continued by his pupils – among others, Shai Secunda.

[24] Michael G. Morony, *Iraq after the Muslim conquest* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1984), 313.

[25] *Talmud*, Mas. Yoma 11a.

[26] For further information see Iain Gardner and Samuel N. Lieu, *Manichean Texts from the Roman Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004).

[27] Gardner and Lieu, *Manichean Texts from the Roman Empire*, 5-6.

[28] Gardner and Lieu, *Manichean Texts from the Roman Empire*, 11.

[29] Gardner and Lieu, *Manichean Texts from the Roman Empire*, 93.

[30] At this regard, see Matthew Canepa, 'Technologies of Memory in Early Sasanian Iran: Achaemenid Sites and Sasanian Identity,' *American Journal of Archaeology* 114: 4 (2010): 563–96.

[31] Jamsheed Choksy, 'To Cut off, Purify, and Make Whole: Historiographical and Ecclesiastical Conceptions of Ritual Space,' *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 123:1 (2003): 32.

[32] Pierfrancesco Callieri, *Architecture et Représentations dans l'Iran Sassanide* (Paris: Association pour l'avancement des études Iraniennes, 2014), 73–4.

fires,[33] although not all the Zoroastrian rituals focused on the fire cult.[34] Moreover, the priests carried out many different activities as confirmed by the clergy seals used in administrative sealings.[35]

Currently, the debate concerning the fire temples is ongoing. Scholars disagree on the functional interpretation, architectural details, and the plan of some of the complexes found.[36] This last debate is exemplified by the case of the so-called Palace of Shapur at Bishapur.[37] However, surely fire-temples were not exclusively centred on fire-worshipping – even though foreign sources do underline the importance of fire, Zoroastrianism was not limited to this element.[38] Zoroastrians also worshipped water as the source of life and recipient of offerings and libations.[39]

A feature that seems to be common with all the known Zoroastrian fire-temples is their location outside the urban walls. Some examples are Palang Gerd (Kermanshah), and Mele Hairam (Turkemenistan).[40] In the poem Vis and Ramin, it is mentioned an *ātash kada* located in the vicinity of one of the gates leading to Merv, and all the other known fire-temples are placed outside urban centres.[41] Another instance are the three fire temples close by Gayy – i.e., Shahr Ardashir, Zarwād Ardashir, and Mihr Ardashir.[42] Literary evidence seems to be confirming a Parthian origin of this rural dimension of fire-temples. In the *Acts of Mār Māri*, the pagan temple he destroyed is 'located outside the city'.[43]

We know only three instances of Zoroastrian temples located inside the walls [Figure 4]. Surely enough, the Takht-e Nishin within the walls of Ardashir-Xwarrah is among

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[33] Mary Boyce, 'On the Zoroastrian Temple Cult of Fire,' *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 95: 3 (1975): 462–3.

[34] As it is attested by the Veshnaveh sanctuary, see Callieri, *Architecture et Représentations dans l'Iran Sassanide*, 199.

[35] Pierfrancesco Callieri 'Water in the Art and Architecture of the Sasanians,' in *Proceedings of the 5th Conference of the Societas Iranologica Europaea. Volume* 1, eds. Antonio Panaino & Andrea Piras (Milan: Mimesis International, 2006), 339–49.

[36] For the canonical interpretations, see Dietrich Huff, 'Architecture, Sasanian Period,' in *Encyclopædia Iranica*, 2: 3 (1986): 329–334. The debate is summed up in Callieri, *Architecture et Représentations dans l'Iran Sassanide*, 72–102.

[37] Callieri, *Architecture et Représentations dans l'Iran Sassanide*, 73. On the palace of Shapur, see Callieri, *Architecture et Représentations dans l'Iran Sassanide*, 50–1.

[38] Some of the most intriguing mentions of fire temples can be found in John of Ephesus' *Life Ecclesiastic*, see Ernest W. Brooks, trans., 'Lives of the Eastern Saints,' in *Patrologia Orientalis* 17, eds. René Graffin and François Nau (Paris: Firmin-Didot & Co., 1923), 39, reporting of 'transportable' fire temples left in the Sasanian camp when Romans won Narseh; forced building of fire temples into the churches of Christian Armenia as told by Łazar Pʻarpecʻi, see Thomson, *History of Łazar Pʻarpecʻi*, 96; and Armenians destroying fire temples during Kavadh's reign according to Joshua the Stylite, see William Wright, *The Chronicle of Joshua the Stylite composed in Syriac A.D.* 507 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1882), 14; and so on.

[39] Mary Boyce, 'Āb i. The concept of water in ancient Iranian culture,' in *Encyclopædia Iranica*, 1/1, (1982), 27.

[40] See Remy Boucharlat, 'Découvertes récentes de stucs en Iran Sassanide et problems d'interprétation,' in *Syria. Supplément* V: *Stucs d'Orient*, eds. Jacqueline Dentzer-Feydy, Anne-Marie Guimier-Sorbets, Christiane Delplace (2019): 351–66.

[41] Kaim and Kornacka, 'Religious Landscape of the Ancient Merv Oasis,' 53. See also Vladimir F. Minorsky, 'Vīs u Rāmīn: A Parthian Romance (Conclusion),' *Bulletin of the School of Oriental Studies* 12: 1 (1947): 28. On the rurality of fire temples, see Hugh Kennedy, 'From Shahristan to Medina,' *Studia Islamica* 102/103 (2006): 15–7.

[42] Ḥamza al-Iṣfahānī, *Sinī Mulūk ʻArḍwʾ al-Anbīyā*, trans. Robert Hoyland (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2018), 38; see Federica Duva, 'Gay in the Sasanian Period: Some Preliminary Notes on its circular Urban Plan', *Vicino Oriente* 22 (2018): 165.

[43] Harrak, *The Acts of Mār Māri the Apostle*, 57.

those. The corners, built with huge blocks of dressed limestone in regular courses, are still remarkably well-preserved.[44]

<Figure 4>

Behind it, a depression is very well marked and presents three solid walls built with rubble masonry, which showed traces of a covering with *saruj*.[45] Stein mentioned the two tanks reported by ibn al-Balkhī, *Būm Pīr* and *Būm Jawān*, respectively the old and young owl.[46] [Figure 5]. This would also confirm different rituals, not only based on fire-worshipping.

Among other examples, the Bishapur building seems to be another attestation of Zoroastrianism within a Sasanian city's walls.[47] Istakhr seems to have had a temple dedicated to the goddess Anahid inside the walls.[48] If the assumption of the dedication to Anahid of the Bishapur's temple is correct, and we presume that the presence of water at the Takht-e Nishin would prove a closeness to this goodness as well, we have just three attestations of Zoroastrian intramural temples. However, all three temples are dedicated to Anahid rather than to the fire.

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[44] Aurel Stein, 'An Archaeological Tour in the Ancient Persis,' *Iraq* 3:2 (1936): 120.

[45] Stein, 'An Archaeological Tour in the Ancient Persis', 120. The *saruj* had been identified during the survey the author carried out in 2015 at Firuzabad. See Domiziana Rossi, 'La città storica di Ardashir-Xwarrah presso Firuzabad (Fars, Iran). Fonti e territorio' (MA diss., University La Sapienza, 2016), table 18.

[46] Guy Le Strange, trans., 'Description of the Province of Fars, in Persia, at the beginning of the twelfth century A.D. translated from the MS of Ibn al-Balkhi, in the British Museum,' *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland* (1912): 324-30; Stein, 'An Archaeological Tour in the Ancient Persis,' 120.

[47] Callieri, *Architecture et Représentations dans l'Iran Sassanide*, 50–1.

[48] See Ehsan Shavarebi and Sajad Amiri Bavandpour, 'A Note on the Temple of Anāhīd-Ardašīr at Estakhr and the *Martyrdom of Abbot Baršebyā*,' *Dabir: Digital Archive of Brief notes and Iran Review* 7 (2020): 168–174.

<Figure5>

The archaeological evidence hitherto found hints at the rurality of Zoroastrian centres, not connected to an urban environment [Figure 6]. A major question is why there was no central Zoroastrian temple in the capital or major urban centres. One of the reasons argued by Elman was that while temples in Ancient Mesopotamia were an urban phenomenon, Zoroastrianism descends from nomadic Indo-European religions.[49] Ahura Mazda did not need a house like the Mesopotamian gods as according to the *Gathas* he already had a house – in the House of Song.[50] This particular feature could have been related both to the rural nature of elite society and also to the concept of purity in Zoroastrianism.[51] Although the reasons behind this rural dimension of fire-temples are still unclear, they were probably connected with aristocracy (see, for instance, the site of Hajjiabad and Callieri's hypothesised function),[52] forming the basis for the social and economic power of the aristocratic houses.

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[49] Yakoov Elman, 'Why is there no Central Zoroastrian Temple? A thought experiment,' in *The Temple of Jerusalem: From Moses to the Messiah*, ed. Steven Fine (Leiden & Boston: Brill, 2011), 155.

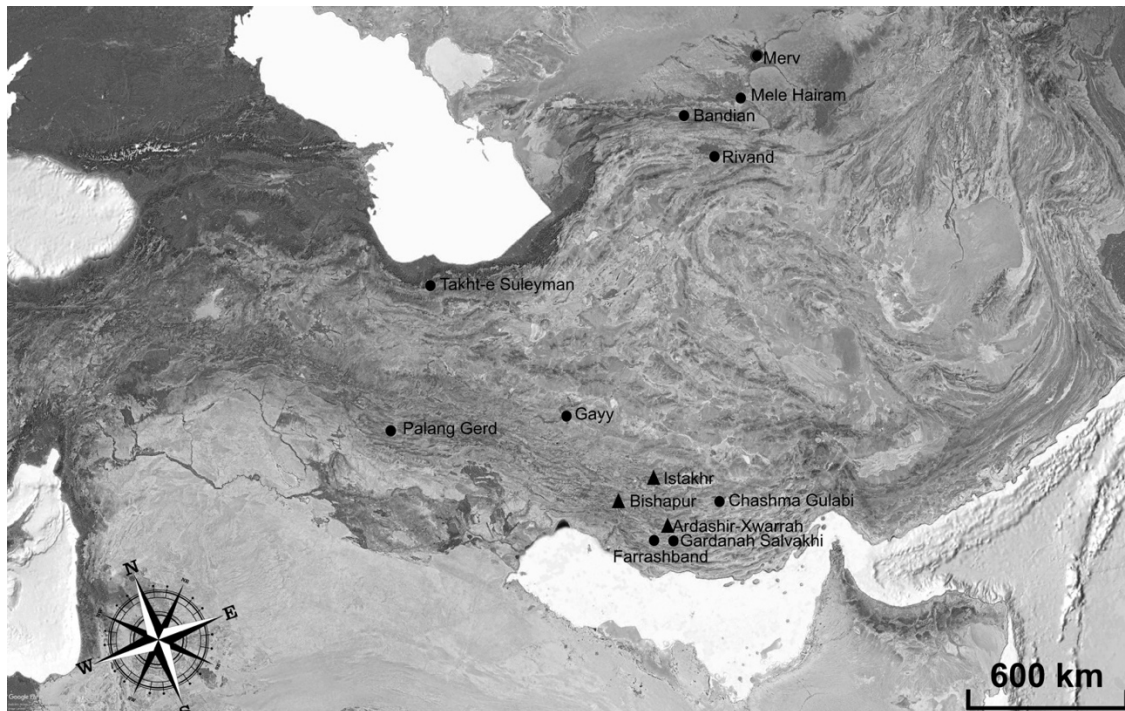[50] Elman, 'Why is there no Central Zoroastrian Temple? A thought experiment,' 156–7.

[51] Kennedy, 'From Shahristan to Medina,' 18.

[52] Payne, *A State of Mixture*, 48. For Callieri's hypothesis, see Callieri, *Architecture et Représentations dans l'Iran Sassanide*, 66, 118, 124.

<Figure 6>

Islamic religious spaces

> *The first thing to be marked out in al-Kufah and that was subsequently*
> *erected, when they had finally decided to make a beginning*
> *with building, was the mosque. It was situated in what is*
> *now the market area of the soap manufacturers and date sellers.*
> *Its ground plan was traced out. Then a man stationed himself in*
> *the center of this ground plan. [...]*
> *He shot (one arrow) to his right and ordered that anyone*
> *who wanted could start building for his own beyond where the*
> *arrow had landed.*
> *[...]*
> *Thus they left a square for the mosque that*
> *the people could enter from all sides.*
>
> al-Ṭabarī[53]

The proto-Islamic urbanism in the former Sasanian territories will be analysed following Donner's assumption that the movement born by the prophet Muhammad's predications was initially an ecumenic openness embracing all the monotheisms.[54] This is also confirmed by the inclusion of the Jewish community to the 'Medina Constitutions' where

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[53] al-Ṭabarī, *The History of al-Tabari, vol.13 – The Conquest of Iraq, Southwestern Persia, and Egypt*, trans. Gauthier H.A. Juynboll (New York: State University of New York Press, 1989), 69.

[54] Fred Donner, *Muhammad and the believers. At the origins of Islam* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2010).

various clans joined Mohammad's monotheistic vision in his war effort against Mecca.[55] In fact, Simpson proposes a postponed chronology of many churches located nearby the Persian Gulf and west of Kerbela [Figure 7]. Previously thought to be from Sasanian times, Simpson dates them to the first centuries after the Arab-Muslim conquest.[56]

<Figure 7>
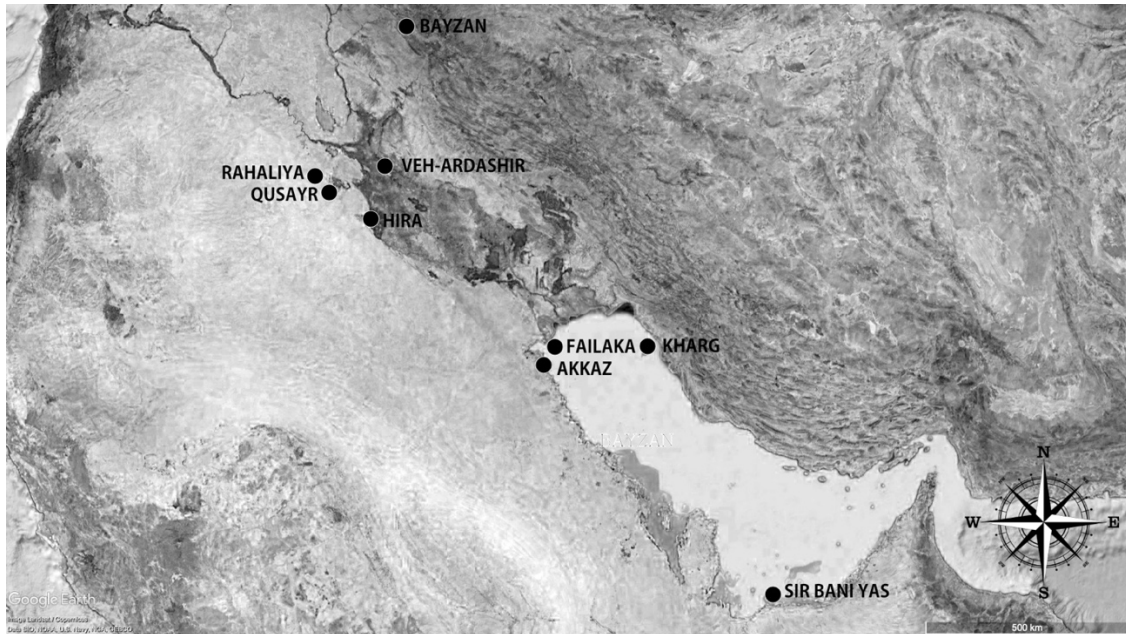
However, all the archaeological evidence of churches found so far are not within urban walls. We can only hypothesise that synagogues were not destroyed, but we have no archaeological evidence of Jewish life after the conquest of the former Sasanian territory. It is indeed possible that the scale of public buildings may not be central enough, more suburban rather than urban, to have easily survived. What is certain is that the urban religious spaces were mainly dominated by the mosque. This is particularly true in the regions known as al-Jibal, al-Iraq, 'Aqur, and Khorasan, which with the advent first of the 'Umayyad and then the Abbasid dynasties were characterised by many cities and even metropolis [Figure 8].[57]

However tolerant Islam was at the origins, when we think of 'Islamic religious spaces', we cannot but identify them with the mosque, or *masjid*. But what was the symbolic value associated with the *masjid*? Monneret de Villard referred to the mosque's function as a 'hybrid'. In his posthumous book, he argued that the political component of the mosque was key, as confirmed by its connection with the caliphal residence.[58] In the proto-Islamic urbanism the mosque was often matching the *dār al-imāra*, i.e., the residence of either the central power's representative, or the sovereign himself, and thus the seat of the statal

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[55] Aila Santi, 'Il rapporto fra moschea e Dār al-imāra nel periodo protoIslamico. I casus studii di Medina, Kūfa e ʿAnjar alla luce di una riconsiderazione dell'urbanistica delle origini' (Ph.D. diss., University of Rome, 2018), 35.

[56] St John Simpson, 'Christians on Iraq's desert frontier,' *al-Rāfidān* 39 (2018): 21.

[57] Paul Wheatley, *The Places where men pray together. Cities in Islamic Lands. Seventh through the Tenth centuries* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2001), 77.

[58] Ugo Monneret de Villard, *Introduzione all'archeologia islamica* (Venice: Istituto per la collaborazione culturale, 1966).

administrative offices.[59] This architectural relationship had been first attested in Kufa but its diffusion lasted for over two centuries and all over the Islamised territory.[60]

<Figure 8>

The connection between the *masjid*/*dār al-imāra* has been analysed by Santi in her Ph.D. dissertation in three case studies, Medina, Anjar, and Kufa.[61] The last two better fit a methodological approach joining literary sources to archaeological evidence. In the case of Medina, the amount of information by European traveller's cartography and Islamic literary sources is such that it is possible to reconstruct the urbanistic evolution, from the origins to the 'Umayyad period.[62] Literary sources are our main source of data, as the archaeological evidence is even scarcer than for study of the Sasanian cases.

When analysing the buildings built in Medina during the early Islamic phase, it is immediately clear that the predominant character of this religion is urban. According to Santi's reconstruction, the *masjid* had been strategically located.[63] The city of Medina, characterised by disconnected agglomerations, was transformed into a more coherent urban reality. This was possible thanks to the Prophet's redefinition of this oasis through new space policies connected to his religious and political authority. Moreover, the religious urban spaces hold new and powerful ritual and congregational meanings.[64] The urbanistic programme meant a strong symbolism and its propaganda was a characteristic of Islam, even though this process was especially clear since 'Umayyad times.[65]

This redefinition of urban spaces as connected to religious places is exemplified by the polyfunctional *masjid*, the religious and administrative centre of the settlement.[66] Indeed,

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[59] On the *dār al-imāra* and mosque I principally referred to Aila Santi's doctoral thesis.
[60] Santi, 'Il rapporto fra moschea e Dār al-imāra nel periodo protoIslamico.'
[61] Santi, 'Il rapporto fra moschea e Dār al-imāra nel periodo protoIslamico.'
[62] Santi, 'Il rapporto fra moschea e Dār al-imāra nel periodo protoIslamico,' 44.
[63] Santi, 'Il rapporto fra moschea e Dār al-imāra nel periodo protoIslamico,' 105.
[64] Santi, 'Il rapporto fra moschea e Dār al-imāra nel periodo protoIslamico,' 105.
[65] Santi, 'Il rapporto fra moschea e Dār al-imāra nel periodo protoIslamico,' 117.
[66] Santi, 'Il rapporto fra moschea e Dār al-imāra nel periodo protoIslamico,' 113.

before the construction of the first *dār al-imāra* in Kufa (*c*.17 H/638 CE),[67] the mosque partly performed the relevant administrative and representative functions. The conceptual separation of secular and religious powers in two distinct buildings was not a characteristic of early Islam.[68] The *masjid* was both a religious and administrative urban space as the whole community of believers (*umma*) was called to participate in political matters.[69]

This merging of administrative and religious power in the urban life of the first Islamic cities is exemplified by the role of governors of the main two garrison cities in Iraq, Kufa and Basra. [Figure 9] However the governor was called either *'Amir al Basrah* or *Amir al-Kufah*, his responsibilities included maintaining law through the implementation of *shari'ah*, administering taxes and managing the treasure, carrying the role of imam by leading public prayers, delivering the *khutbah*, i.e., sermon, and organising the *hajj*, the holy pilgrimage.[70] They also held the judicial government, until Caliph 'Umar introduced the position of *qadi*, the judge.[71]

<Figure 9>

On at least one occasion, Kufa's governor al-Hajjāj distributed stipends in the *masjids* at Kufa in 694 CE.[72] It is not to be overlooked the role of *masjids* as assembly places where tribal councils (*majlis*) survived with a religious component.[73] This not-religious

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[67] Sylvie Denoix, 'Founded cities of the Arab world from the seventh to the eleventh centuries,' in ed. Salma K. Jayyusi, *The City in the Islamic World* 1 (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2008), 121.

[68] Santi, 'Il rapporto fra moschea e Dār al-imāra nel periodo protoIslamico,' 310.

[69] Keppek A.C. Creswell, *Early Muslim Architecture I.1/2. Umayyads A.D. 622-750* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1969); Robert Hillenbrand, *Islamic Architecture: Form, Function and Meaning* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994); Jeremy Johns, 'The House of the Prophet and the Concept of the Mosque,' in ed. Jeremy Johns, *Bayt al-Maqdis. Jerusalm and Early Islam* (Oxford: Oxford Studies in Islamic Art 9.2, 1999), 59–112; Santi, 'Il rapporto fra moschea e Dār al-imāra nel periodo protoIslamico,' 312.

[70] Nezar al-Sayyad, *Cities and Caliphs. On the Genesis of Arab Muslim Urbanism. Contributions to the Study of World History* 26 (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1991), 66.

[71] al-Sayyad, *Cities and Caliphs*, 68.

[72] Morony, *Iraq after the Muslim conquest*, 60–1.

[73] Morony, *Iraq after the Muslim conquest*, 83.

feature is indeed vital, as it confirms that the function of *masjids* was not relegated to a religious one.[74] This, together with the new urban dimension of mosques, contributed to creating a new meaning of urban spaces, changing after the Arab-Muslim conquest.

Following al-Sayyad, the first clear interpretation is that in nearly three centuries a considerable increase of urbanization characterised the territories of the *dār al-Islam*.[75] By looking at our main literary source on the conquest, al-Ṭabarī, we found the first attestation of *masjid* building. At the time of the conquest, existing cult places were not used for Islamic worship.[76] The first existing mosque in Iraq was established in 16H/637CE, after the conquest of the capital Ctesiphon when Sa'd ibn Abī Waqqās set up a *minbar* (i.e., pulpit) in the Iwan-e Kisra, symbolising the change of power.[77] The earliest *masjid* at Basra was nothing but an open space in the centre of the city, enclosed by a fence of reeds and replaced three years later by mudbrick (*c*.17H/638 CE).[78] The first building erected in Kufa was the *masjid*, which consisted in a reed roof structure with no walls, as 'the whole square was meant for the people to congregate in, but in a way that they not stand packed.'[79] Over the passing of the seventh century, congregational mosques became monumental structures and acquired what will be traditional features like the *maqṣūrah*, minaret, and *miḥrāb*.[80]

During Uthman's rule, the Fars governor left at Istakhr his deputy, i.e., Sharīk ibn al-A'war, who built the *masjid* in Istakhr.[81] After re-examining literary sources, European travellers' descriptions, and recent scholarship, the Iranian-Italian mission in 2012 excavated the ruins considered to be this mosque. Di Cesare and Ebanista's paper concludes that 'a definitive interpretation of the excavated structures and the identification of their use is still a long way off.'[82] It is certain that there was a mosque within the walls, but it is not clear if the building was built *ex-novo*, as suggested by al-Ṭabarī, or a fire temple was converted, as Herzfeld argued.[83]

This appropriation achieved by converting pre-existing, either religious or secular, buildings in mosques is a well-attested process. Several *cāhartāq* were among them, especially in case of the little town as in large cities the mosque had to be bigger.[84] After a few years, appropriating the religious building of earlier religions became common practice all around the *dār al-Islam*.[85] In the Kākūyid Yazd (i.e., sixth/twelfth century), the congregational mosque was built after tearing down the main Zoroastrian *ātash kada*.[86]

We can thus divide the building of mosques into two different typologies:

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[74] Morony, *Iraq after the Muslim conquest*, 432, 503.

[75] al-Sayyad, *Cities and Caliphs*, 3–4.

[76] Morony, *Iraq after the Muslim conquest*, 432.

[77] al-Ṭabarī, *The History of al-Tabari, vol.13*, 21, 23. See also Morony, *Iraq after the Muslim conquest*, 432.

[78] Morony, *Iraq after the Muslim conquest*, 74.

[79] al-Ṭabarī, *The History of al-Tabari, vol.13*, 69.

[80] Morony, *Iraq after the Muslim conquest*, 433.

[81] al-Ṭabarī, *The History of al-Tabari, vol.15 – The Crisis of the Early Caliphate*, trans. Stephen R. Humphreys (New York: State University of New York Press, 1990), 90.

[82] Michelina di Cesare and Laura Ebanista, 'The Site of the Mosque at Istakhr,' in *Istakhr (Iran), 2011–2016. Historical and Archaeological Essays*, ed. Maria Vittoria Fontana (Rome: Quaderni di Vicino Oriente, 2018), 272.

[83] Following al-Maqdisī, *The best divisions for knowledge of the regions,* trans. Basil Anthony Collins (Centre for Muslim Contribution to Civilization: Garnet Publishing Limited, 1994). 385). See Di Cesare and Ebanista, 'The Site of the Mosque at Istakhr,' 273.

[84] Bernard O'Kane and Dietrich Huff, 'Čahārṭāq: ii. In the Islamic Period,' in *Encyclopædia Iranica* 4/6 (1990): 634–36.

[85] al-Sayyad, *Cities and Caliphs*, 156.

[86] See Ja'fārī, *Tārīkh-i Yazd,* ed. Iraj Afšār (Tehran: Bungāh-i tarjama va-našr-i kitāb, 1960), 19.

1. Ex-novo building began with the conquest itself as an attempt to answer to the social need of having a place where to congregate and pray. As shown in the cases of Basra and Kufa, simple and temporary building material was used at first (e. g. reeds). Little by little, as the conquest proceeded towards the east, we can observe in the first settlement the shift to more permanent material. All these constructions were carried out in an urban environment.

2. Appropriation of pre-existing structures occurred through the conversion of structures. Although this might sound as if this process was aimed at erasing the former religions, the use of secular buildings had a more pragmatic reason. The first converted building, the Iwan-e Kisra, was likely chosen for two such reasons. First, its position was within the headquarters' encampment, i.e., the White Palace. The occupation of the former Sasanian dynasty residence was the main symbolic act. The second pragmatic reason was the size of the Great Hall (43.50m deep by 25.50m wide).[87] It was possibly the only place that could accommodate the host of the Arab-Muslim army. It probably also had very good acoustics due to the imponent parabolic vault, an important consideration for the call to prayer. The converted structures of the former Sasanian empire were mainly rural.

This division points to a well-recognisable pattern. Most of the converted structures were rural as most of the monumental Sasanian buildings, either residential or religious, were outside the city walls. The main change brought by the Arab-Muslim conquest was a progressive urbanization, with consequent abandonment of rural settlements. This is clearly visible by the expansion of some centres in al-Jibal, al-Iraq, 'Aqur, and Khorasan. Unfortunately, the modern cities incorporated both the Sasanian and medieval cities, so that it is impossible to calculate the degree of expansion. However, a visual example is constituted by Merv – the Sasanian citadel, Gyaur Kala, was later used after the conquest. The increase of population was such that a new citadel, Sultan Kala, was then built to the west of the first one [Figure 10].[88]

To conclude, a change of society might explain this process, because with all conquerors new social classes establish themselves. This new society, consisting partly of conquerors, settlers, and former inhabitant of the Sasanian empire, needed a new pole, an urban one. How did this social change take place? An important feature was related to the loss of power of the former aristocratic families, who lived in a rural environment and controlled both armies and agricultural production. The rural dimension of monumental religious buildings in the Sasanian period was possibly related to the links of the religious hierarchy and the aristocratic families. Another reason for the social change was partly connected to the new soldiers, and their entourages, arriving from Arabia during the conquest and settling themselves in newly founded garrison cities. These new customers needed supplies and luxury items for their new houses. This contributed to the development of trade, which was also due to an enlarged territory ruled by the Caliphs, this in turn incremented the flow of goods and money to the urban markets.

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[87] Edward J. Keall, 'Ayvān-e Kesrā,' in *Encyclopædia Iranica*, 3:2 (1987): 155–59.

[88] Georgina Herrmann, Kakamurad Kurbansakhatov, and St John Simpson, 'The International Merv Project Preliminary Report on the Fourth Season (1995),' *Iran* 34 (1996): 4.

<Figure 10>

Those two main socio-cultural reasons might be confirmed by the fact that the increased urbanisation occurred in other regions outside Fars, i.e., the cradle of the Sasanian dynasty. The main Sasanian cities, Ardashir-Xwarrah, Bishapur, and Istakhr lost their importance, and the new centres of economic and trade shifted to Siraf and Shiraz.[89] On the other side, the establishment of the *dār al-Islam*'s core first in Damascus and then in Baghdad, changed the economic and commercial routes to al-Jibal, al-Iraq, and 'Aqur, and Khorasan.

The re-use of religious spaces was thus mainly focalised into intramural buildings, not only because of the rural dimension of fire temples, but also because of this new urbanization process. *Masjids* were built *ex novo* in newly founded settlements and former Sasanian towns because their raison d'être was in the urban environment, a new environment born after the Arab-Muslim conquest. New research and archaeological data on Sasanian urban spaces are much needed, so to increase our understanding of the transition process.

In this case, religious spaces have been used as a tool of analysis because the change of religion was the most apparent transformation after the conquest. For this reason, when the past scholarship tried to explain which were the features of an 'Islamic city', it pointed out the presence of mosques. However, a utilitarian approach will help us to better understand the urban spaces of the 'Islamic cities'. The key for it is clued by Wheatley's observation that 'this is not to imply that the Middle Eastern city was everywhere the vehicle of a uniform lifestyle, but rather than it provided the framework within which diverse cultures to varying degrees absorbed and internalised the various duties of the

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[89] Donald S. Whitcomb, 'Trade and Tradition in Medieval Southern Iran' (Ph.D. diss., University of Chicago, 1979).

Faith as expressed in the five pillars of Islam.'[90] All urban spaces are organised in function of the needs of an urban population, and the regional variabilities intertwine with the different backgrounds of the cities, their story, and the ethnicity of their population. There is no such a thing as 'a recipe', or a communal feature, except for the need for water infrastructure – water is important in Islamic rituals – and a big open space, large enough to allow men to pray together.

Acknowledgements

Bibliography

A. List of illustrations

Figure 1: The Ērānšahr under the reign of Khosrow Parvez (*c*.590–680). During his reign, the empire reached the maximum extent. To the author's knowledge, there is no Middle Persian list of regions coeval to Khosrow's reign. For this reason, the names of the indicated regions are from both Shapur's and Kertir's inscriptions along the Ka'ba-ye Zardosht at Naqsh-e Rostam (both dated to the third century).

Courtesy of the author, Google Map image, modified

Figure 2: 'Umayyad Caliphate under the reign of al-Walid (*c*.674–715). During his reign, the empire reached the maximum extent. To the author's knowledge, there is no such a list name of the regions written during the conquest. This map follows the toponyms given by al-Maqdisī's *Aḥsan al-taqāsīm fī maʿrefat al-aqālīm* (*c*.946–1000) as he was one of the most prominent geographers of the *dār al-Islam*.[91] The author just added the region called Andalusia, which was not under the Abbasid Caliphate during the 10th century. For this reason, Maqdisī labelled it together with North Africa under the name of al-Maghrib.

Courtesy of the author, Google Map image, modified

Figure 3: Location of the cities mentioned in the paper.

Courtesy of the author, Google Map image, modified

Figure 4: Location of the Takht-e Nishin within the city of Ardashir-Xwarrah.

Courtesy of the author, Google Map image, modified.

Figure 5: A depression at the east of the Takht-e Nishin, possibly where the two tanks described by ibn al-Balkhī were placed. In the background, the author, and the Takht-e Nishin.

Courtesy of Habibe Abbasi. Reproduced with permission of the photographer

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[90] Wheatley, *The Places where men pray together*, 39.
[91] See Zayde Antrim, *Routes and Realms* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 22ff.

Figure 6: Location of the most famous fire temples. Those indicated with a triangle are within the urban walls. The author is just pointing out the rural dimension of most of the fire-temples, as is shown by the little archaeological data we have. The real question behind is 'what is a fire-temple'? However, this paper has not the presumption to answer this question. For this reason, just the certain fire-temples and not all the known *cāhartāq* in the map are labelled.

<div align="right">Courtesy of the author, Google Map image, modified</div>

Figure 7: Location of most of the Christian sites mentioned by Simpson. It was not possible to find Qasr Serij, Tell Musaifnah, Kharoba-Koshuk, and Ak-Beshim.

<div align="right">Courtesy of the author, Google Map image, modified</div>

Figure 8: Location of the metropolis of the Caliphate, according to al-Maqdisī's *Aḥsan al-taqāsīm fī maʿrefat al-aqālīm* (*c*.946–1000).[92]

<div align="right">Courtesy of the author, Google Map image, modified</div>

Figure 9: Location of the cities of Kufa and Basra.

<div align="right">Courtesy of the author, Google Map image, modified</div>

Figure 10: Location of Merv as inhabited during Hellenistic times, named Erk Kala (1), the enlarged settlement during Arsacid and Sasanian times, presently known as Gyaur Kala (2), and the new citadel, Sultan Kala (3).

<div align="right">Courtesy of the author, Google Map image, modified</div>

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[92] Wheatley, *The Places where men pray together*, 77.

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