

4.7 OTHER MOSQUES IN THE TIME OF THE PROPHET

The reported existence of other mosques in the time of the Prophet—some antecedent to the Hijra—strengthens the possibility that the structure he built at Madina was a mosque, indeed the central one. According to Islamic tradition, *ṣalāh* was enjoined while the Prophet was still at Makka, particularly during the celebrated Night Journey (*Riḥlat al-Isrā' wa-l-Mi'raj*). As indicated above, it was not until the Hijra that he and the earliest Muslims were able to establish a place for collective prayer, but how and where did they perform *ṣalāh*, whether individually or collectively, before the Hijra?

4.7.1 Pre-Hijra mosques at Makka

It is reported by Ibn Hishām that the Prophet occasionally conducted prayer along with a few of his earliest followers, most notably his cousin 'Alī b. Abī Tālib, in the adjacent defiles (*shib'āb*) around Makka.²²⁹ The Prophet is also reported to have conducted prayer individually in his house—sometimes also in the vicinity of the Holy Sanctuary, the Ka'ba, but this latter was quite a rare deportment. It was not until the conversion to Islam of 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb that the believers reportedly had the courage to pray, however tentatively, beside the Ka'ba.²³⁰ We do not possess any historical evidence, nonetheless, to say that this was done on any regular basis. Rather, the first devotees gathered for prayer in a house on the Mt. al-Ṣafā that was owned by al-Arqam b. Abī al-Arqam, an early young convert.²³¹ This too was a secret undertaking.

That being said, some notable Muslims began, before the Hijra, to make what the sources refer to as mosques. It is recorded of Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq, for instance, through al-Bukhārī and others that he adopted 'for himself' a mosque in the courtyard of his house at Makka.²³² These, however, were no more than individual places of prayer, i.e. mosques for private, rather than public, prayer.

²²⁹ Ibn Hishām, *Sīra*, i, 282–3; al-Suhaylī, *Rawḍ*, ii, 4.

²³⁰ Ibn Hishām, *Sīra*, i, 369; al-Suhaylī, *Rawḍ*, ii, 120.

²³¹ Ibn Sa'd, *Ṭabaqāt*, iii, 108, 223–5.

²³² Al-Bukhārī, no. 476; Ibn Hajar, *Fath*, ii, 110; Wensinck, *Early Muhammadan Tradition*, p. 155.

Cam: (030079)

Medine (130588)

4. THE 'HOUSE OF THE PROPHET'?

197

Mekke (130513)

Such a conduct was naturally censured by the Quraysh, who were concerned that their folks might be tempted to convert by such devotional displays.²³³ These restrictive conditions were manipulated by the fact that in Islam prayer can be performed on any piece of land. The Prophet is reported to have affirmed that one of the five privileges given to him exclusively is that the whole land is made a mosque to him and his adherents.²³⁴

4.7.2 Pre-Hijra mosques at Madina

In response to the Quraysh stubborn resistance to the Prophet's preaching, he began to proselytise members of the other Arabian tribes, who used to come to Makka for pilgrimage on an annual basis. His call did not fall on deaf ears, as he managed to make his first converts from Yathrib in 620 AD, where six men of the Khazraj clan embraced Islam and acknowledged him as a Prophet. In the following year, the number was doubled, representing converts from both of the two chief clans in Yathrib, the Aws and the Khazraj. This was known as the first 'Aqaba pledge that was followed by another (the second 'Aqaba pledge) in 622 AD, where a deputation of seventy-five converts vowed to facilitate the Prophet's moving to the city.²³⁵ Later in the same year, the Prophet and his earliest adherents from Makka made the journey to Yathrib, that was henceforth better known as al-Madīna al-Munawwara, 'the illuminated city', namely the city that is enlightened by the Prophet taking it as his new hometown.

It was also before the Hijra that the burgeoning Muslim community of Madina, thanks to the proselytising efforts of the earliest Anṣārī Muslims and of Muṣ'ab b. 'Umayr,²³⁶ began to gath-

²³³ Al-Bukhārī, no. 476.

²³⁴ Al-Bukhārī, no. 438; Muslim, nos. 1161–7; al-Dārimī, no. 1429; Ibn Hanbal, nos. 11858, 11727. See also al-Nawawī, *Sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, v, 2–5.

²³⁵ Al-Ṭabarī, *Tārīkh*, ii, 351–69; Ibn Hishām, *Sīra*, ii, 76, 82; al-Suhaylī, *Rawḍ*, ii, 247, 252.

²³⁶ Muṣ'ab was sent by the Prophet to Madina, following the first 'Aqaba Pledge, to teach the Qur'ān and the principles of Islam. To Madinan Muslims, he was, hence, known as the *muqri'*, 'reader': al-Ṭabarī,

Cami
030079

283551

Islamic History and Thought

15

Series Editorial Board

Peter Adamson	Jack Tannous
Beatrice Gründler	Isabel Toral-Niehoff
Ahmad Khan	Manolis Ulbricht

Advisory Editorial Board

Binyamin Abrahamov	Konrad Hirschler
Asad Q. Ahmed	James Howard-Johnston
Mehmetcan Akpınar	Maher Jarrar
Abdulahdi Alajmi	Marcus Milwright
Mohammad-Ali Amir-Moezzi	Harry Munt
Arezou Azad	Gabriel Said Reynolds
Massimo Campanini	Walid A. Saleh
Godefroid de Callatay	Jens Scheiner
Maria Conterno	Delfina Serrano
Farhad Daftary	Georges Tamer
Wael Hallaq	

Islamic History and Thought provides a platform for scholarly research on any geographic area within the expansive Islamic world, stretching from the Mediterranean to China, and dated to any period from the eve of Islam until the early modern era. This series contains original monographs, translations (Arabic, Persian, Syriac, Greek, and Latin) and edited volumes.

The Making of the Mosque**A Survey of Religious Imperatives****Essam Ayyad**

Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslam Araştırmaları Merkezi Kütüphanesi	
Dem. No:	283551
Tas. No:	726.2 AYY-M

GORGAS
GP
PRESS

2019

Essam Ayyad, *The Making of the mosque: a survey of religious imperatives*, Piscataway: Gorgias Press, 2019. İSAM DN. 283551

themselves from it.³⁶ Conversely, the excessive reliance on *isnād* by other historians led some of them to transmit many unrealistic reports, as remarked by Ibn Khaldūn, on the grounds that they already mentioned their *isnāds*.³⁷ The same practice was also criticized by Ibn al-Şalāh (d. 643/1245).³⁸

This overlapping between *hadīth* and Islamic history is understandable. The earliest forms of the latter were mainly founded on reports on the Prophet's biography, alongside other historical material, such as tribal memory, genealogy, recollections of the conquests and the influence of the Syriac historical tradition. The early Muslim historians from Ibn Ishāq (d. ca. 151/768) to Ibn Sa'd and al-Ṭabarī depended considerably on the material collected by earlier informants of *hadīth*, such as 'Urwa b. al-Zubayr (d. 94/712) and Ibn Shihāb al-Zuhri (d. 124/741–2).³⁹ Sometimes, the works of later historians, such as Ibn Sayyid al-Nās (d. 734/1334) and Ibn Kathīr (d. 774/1373), cite reports by 'Urwa *et alii* that are not included in the works of earlier historians.⁴⁰

In what follows, we will try to keep the above source-criticism concerns in mind in the course of our discussion of the literary sources on the Prophet's mosque at Madina, as an example of early

³⁶ M. 'Abd al-Ghanī Ḥasan, *Ulm al-ta'rikh 'inda al-'arab* (Cairo: Mu'assasat al-Maṭbū'at al-Ḥadītha, 1961), p. 162.

³⁷ For Ibn Khaldūn's critique of early Arabic writings, see *Muqaddima*, i, 92–7.

³⁸ Ibn al-Şalāh, *Ulim al-ḥadīth (Muqaddimat Ibn al-Şalāh)*, ed. Nūr al-Dīn al-'Itir (Damascus: Dār al-Fikr, 1986), pp. 14–7. See also Gregor Schoeler, *The Genesis of Literature in Islam: From the Aural to the Read*, transl. Shawkat M. Toorawa (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press; rev. edn 2009), p. 124.

³⁹ On the roles of 'Urwa and al-Zuhri in preserving *hadīth* and *şīra*, see Schoeler, *Genesis*, pp. 41–50; Dūrī, *Rise of Historical Writing*, pp. 25–30, 76–121; Tarif Khalidī, *Arabic Historical Thought in the Classical Period* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994; repr. 1995 and 1996), 30–4; Sezgin, *Geschichte* (Hijāzī's transl.), ii, 65–86 (esp. 70–1, 74–9). See also J. M. B. Jones, 'Ibn Ishāq', *IEJ* (1971), iii, 810–1; J. W. Fück, 'Ibn Sa'd', *IEJ* (1971), iii, 922–3.

⁴⁰ Dūrī, *Rise of Historical Writing*, pp. 7–8.

Cami (030079)

Medine (130588)

non-archaeological mosques. While we must begin by unravelling the complexities related to dating and transmission, the main objective remains to identify *how* and by *whom* our information on these missing mosques came down to us.

2.2.1 Sources on the mosque of Madina

Like other early non-archaeological mosques, attempts to reconstruct the mosque of the Prophet in his time have been based heavily on literary evidence; the original structure was overwritten by many later rebuildings. In addition, the whole area is now occupied by the vast, and exceptionally sacred, present mosque and thus denies to archaeology which is, over and above, not allowed so far.⁴¹ Fortunately, however, and due to its outstanding pre-eminence and supreme authority, the Prophet's mosque at Madina is celebrated through a large number of writings by traditionists, historians, biographers, geographers, jurists, travellers and pilgrims. Many of these accounts include anecdotal and hagiographic detail, but the copiousness of this material permits some weighing up of its dependability. It may also add to our optimism that the later designers and builders of the mosque were reputedly keen to place any new architectural element in the same position as its predecessor. According to Sauvaget, whenever the mosque was to be renewed or expanded, there was always a desire to retain the old form.⁴² This tradition can, according to al-Samhūdī, be traced back to the time of 'Uthmān b. 'Affān, the first to use stone for the mosque (see Chapter 7). On the authority of Khārīja b. Zayd,⁴³ in the time of 'Uthmān the task of positioning the new stone columns, in the same place where the old trunks of palm-trees were standing, was assigned to the former's father Zayd b. Thābit, the Prophet's per-

⁴¹ See Johns, 'Archaeology', p. 433.

⁴² Sauvaget, *La Mosquée Omeyyade de Médine*, pp. 117–8, 120. See also Fikrī, *Madkhal*, p. 187.

⁴³ Khārīja (d. 99–100/717–718), the son of Zayd b. Thābit, was one of the seven (or ten) chief *faqīhs* of Madīna. See Ibn Sa'd, *Ṭabaqāt*, vii, 158–9; Ibn Khallikān, *Waḥayāt al-a'yān wa-anbā' abnā' al-zamān*, ed. Iḥsān 'Abbās, 8 vols (Beirut: Dār Şādir, 1968–72), ii, 223.

57-68