

*Islamic architecture encompasses a wide range of both secular and religious styles from the early history of Islam to the present day for today it is known as Islamic architecture was influenced by Roman, Byzantine, Persian and all other lands which the Muslims conquered in the 7th and 8th centuries.*

Most of the conquered people accepted the Islamic religion. As Islam spread, a distinctive style of Islamic art gradually developed. It was used mainly for religious architecture, book illustrations, and the decoration of pottery, metalware, and other useful objects. Islamic art was influenced by the artistic styles of the conquered regions. These styles included late Roman, Byzantine, and Persian art. The development of Islamic art was also influenced by two religious restrictions. Mohammed warned artists not to imitate God, the creator of all life, by making images of living things. Most religious art therefore consisted of ornamental designs that did not represent people or animals. The second restriction discouraged the use of costly materials. Islamic artists, therefore, worked mainly with brass, clay, and wood. They learned to decorate objects made of these less expensive materials so skillfully that they looked as beautiful as silver or gold.

**Design Characteristics** The restriction on making images led to the development of one of the most outstanding features of Islamic art. Artists avoided depicting lifelike forms. Instead, they developed a special kind of decoration, called arabesque. An arabesque is a very complicated design. It can consist of twisting patterns of vines, leaves, and flowers. It can be made up of geometric shapes and patterns of straight lines, or it can have curving lines that twist and turn over each other. Sometimes animal shapes were used, but they were always highly stylized and not lifelike. Another important characteristic of Islamic art is the use of calligraphy, or beautiful handwriting. Arabic, the language of most Islamic texts, can be beautifully written in several different kinds of script. These include the straight, geometric Kufic script and the rounded, flowing Naskhi. Islamic artists used Arabic script which is read from right to left as part of their designs for religious books, wall decorations, and art objects. Especially beautiful calligraphy and decoration were used for copies of the Koran, the holy book of the Islamic faith.

**Architecture** The religious buildings known as mosques, where Muslims worship, are among the most important examples of Islamic architecture. Other kinds of buildings include madrasahs, or religious schools; tombs; and palaces.

**Mosques** The first mosques were simple buildings made of wood and clay. Then, as the world of Islam grew in size and power, large mosques of cut stone and brick were built. Because no Islamic building tradition yet existed, these early mosques were modeled after Christian churches. The oldest existing mosque, the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem, was built in . It has many features of Byzantine Christian churches, including Grecian-style columns and mosaic decorations. Muslim architects soon began to develop a new type of religious building, designed specifically for Islamic worship. An early example of the new design is the Great Mosque in Damascus, begun about . It is entered through a rectangular court with covered passageways on three sides. In the court is a fountain for washing before prayer. The fourth wall of the court is closest to Mecca, the holy city of Islam. All Muslims face in the direction of Mecca when they pray. The wall is marked by a small, arched prayer niche. Over the aisle leading to this niche is a dome. A tower, or minaret, is used to call the faithful to prayer. Other architects developed variations on this basic style. Some mosques have domes over each end of the aisle leading to the prayer niche. Other mosques have a large central dome. Some domes are ridged on the outside and resemble large melons. Inside, the ceilings of domes are often covered with decorative forms that resemble honeycombs, scales, or stalactites icicle-like formations found in caves. Many mosques, especially those in Spain, North Africa, and Persia, are covered with tiles. Madrasahs and Tombs Madrasahs, or religious schools, were often built next to mosques. They are four-sided structures built around a central court. Each side has a large arched hall that opens onto the courtyard. Students attended lectures in the large halls and lived in smaller rooms within the structure. Sometimes the tomb of a ruler was part of a complex of buildings that also included a mosque and a madrasah. It is laid out like a cross, with four halls opening off a large square court. Another well-known tomb is that of the Tatar warrior Tamerlane, which was built in the city of Samarkand about . Today Samarkand is part of Uzbekistan. This building has a melon-shaped dome covered with brilliant blue and gold tiles. The tiles are made of glazed earthenware cut

into various sizes and arranged in elaborate patterns. The Taj Mahal is so renowned that its very name calls up images of almost unreal splendor and beauty. An article on the Taj Mahal can be found in this encyclopedia.

**Palaces** The early Muslim rulers, or caliphs, were used to desert life; they did not like living in crowded cities. They built palaces in the desert where they could go to relax and hunt. The palaces looked like Roman fortresses, for they were built of stone and surrounded by walls with big towers. The throne rooms, prayer rooms, baths, and living quarters were decorated with murals and mosaics. The architecture of palaces changed as a result of the move. Domed palaces were built of brick covered with thick layers of stucco, and the interiors were decorated with stucco reliefs. In the Jawsaq Palace, built about in Samarra, Mesopotamia, the stucco ornament was of three distinct styles. One type showed deeply carved vine forms, and another added patterns to the surface of the main design. The third style used more abstract patterns, as in the metalwork of Central Asian nomads. These three styles contributed to the development of arabesque decoration, which became typical of Muslim art all over the world. Its many rooms are built around three open courts. The Court of the Myrtles features a long rectangular pool flanked by hedges. In the center of the inner Court of the Lions stands a fountain supported by twelve lions. The lower part of the palace walls are decorated with colored tiles set in geometric patterns. Painted and gilded plaster designs cover the upper part of the walls. Arabic inscriptions in the midst of the ornament say that there is "no conqueror but Allah. Islamic artists produced many beautiful illuminated manuscripts handwritten books decorated with painted pictures and designs. These paintings were created to help explain a scientific text or to add to the pleasure of reading a work of history or literature. Because of the restrictions on making images, illustrations for the Koran and other religious manuscripts often consisted of intricate ornamental designs. Nonreligious manuscripts sometimes contained images of human and animal figures. Figures in early illustrations were simple and painted to look flat or two-dimensional. These qualities can be seen in the illustrations for a famous book of fables, *Kalilah and Dimnah*. Later illustrators painted more detailed and realistic works. One of the best-known Persian painters was Kamal ad-Din Bihzad. This artist combined the ornamental style of Persian illustration with realistic observation of people and animals. From this time on, the influence of Chinese ink paintings, especially landscapes, can be seen in Islamic painting. The last of the great invaders from central Asia was Tamerlane. He and his followers ignored the dictates of their new religion and encouraged artists to paint pictures of people. These pictures still appeared mainly in nonreligious books, however. Most Islamic illustration remained essentially ornamental, uniting many design elements into an intricate pattern. The Muslims greatly respected the knowledge contained in books, especially in the Koran. Their book covers nearly always include a flap to cover and protect the page edges. The covers were made of beautifully tooled leather, often with added decorations of gold and bright colors.

**Decorative Arts** Many different arts were used in the decoration of Islamic mosques and palaces. Arabesque carvings in stone, wood, and plaster adorn the doorways, prayer niches, and pulpits of mosques. The borders of the decorations were often inscribed with quotations from the Koran. Both mosques and palaces were decorated with mosaics--pictures made by pressing tiny pieces of colored glass into wet cement. Painted and glazed tiles covered interior and exterior wall surfaces. Glass lamps decorated with arabesques and Arabic letters hung by long chains from ceilings. They traded ceramics, leather goods, metalware, and textiles as far east as India and China and as far west as Europe. The tastes and spending power of the merchants, as well as the increased contact with other cultures, led to new developments in the decorative arts. Scenes of everyday and popular stories were realistically portrayed on all kinds of objects.

## Chapter 2 : Islamic Architecture

*Islamic architecture, building traditions of Muslim populations of the Middle East and elsewhere from the 7th century on. Islamic architecture finds its highest expression in religious buildings such as the mosque and madrasah.*

Among the architecture of this group are mosques, madrasas or schools, mausoleums, and shrines. Islamic architecture may also be considered as the creation of patrons and builders who profess Islam or those that live in a region ruled by Muslims. These buildings can generally be described as secular, and include suqs marketplaces , hammams public baths , khans inns , caravanseries or roadside inns, palaces, and houses.

**Defining Islamic Architecture** Although Islamic architecture is infinitely varied in plan, elevation, building material, and decorative programs, there are several recurring forms found in all types of buildings, be they religious, secular, public, or private. These basic components are the dome, the arch, and the vault Fig. Before describing the different aspects of Islamic architecture it is important to pause and ask if such a categorization is viable. This question stems from three considerations. First is the fact that the forms and decorative practices of these buildings are largely adaptations of pre-Islamic models. Thus it is not improper to ask if Islamic architecture should in fact be labeled Classical, Sassanian, or Hindu. If all that was being considered were forms emptied of meaning and function then the answer to this question would be a resounding yes. The second consideration derives from the fact that many of the architectural forms considered as Islamic architecture were built for secular purposes. How, then, can a religious category designate houses, inns, baths, or even cities? Are there essential qualities of these secular spaces that give them meaning as Islamic architecture? Finally, there is a question of fit. If Christians, Jews, and Hindus living within an Islamic region build similar forms then would not the designation be too narrow? And, conversely is the designation too broad? For how can a Malaysian congregational mosque built in the twenty-first century be placed under the same analytic category as an Umayyad congregational mosque of the eighth century, when they are not built of the same materials and do not display common decorative practices or forms? While such considerations are beyond the scope of this article, it is important to realize that contemporary historians of Islamic architectural history weigh these questions critically. Some have responded by introducing more specified categories of Islamic architecture, such as those based on regional, dynastic, and chronological designations. Others have introduced new analytic models, for example, by studying the development of certain architectural forms, such as the minaret, or a practice, such as the use of public inscriptions. Taken together, recent scholarship of Islamic architecture presents a more historically contingent and culturally varied approach to the study of Islamic architecture. Many of the problems associated with the category of Islamic architecture arise from what is taken as the meaning of architecture. If Islamic architecture is simply a material entity, composed of classical forms, then the notion of Islamic architecture as being distinct from Byzantine or Sassanian becomes questionable. However, if by architecture we mean a dynamic space that produces relationships between people and helps individuals understand and articulate their identity through their engagement or disengagement with that space then the meaningfulness of Islamic architecture can be seen as a distinct construction.

**The Mosque** The mosque is the preeminent dynamic space that stands at the center of Islamic society and culture. It is both a spiritual site of worship and a social site of education, debate, and discussion of religion, politics, and current events. Arab caliphs and their governors were the first builders of architectural mosques. Emerging from a Bedouin culture that did not necessitate permanent architecture, these early Islamic rulers adopted and adapted the building traditions of the cultures they conquered to guide the formation and style of the new mosques. In the conquered regions previously dominated by these cultures Arabs established garrison cities and ordered the founded mosques to provide the Islamic community with a space to meet and pray. The mosques that appeared in the first centuries of Islamic history were either renovated structures, for example, Christian churches converted into mosques, or they were new buildings constructed from recycled parts of abandoned buildings, particularly columns of Roman ruins. Some Islamic rulers, such as the Umayyad builders of the Dome of the Rock completed in c. Over time, the practice of employing local building techniques, decorative practices, and architectural forms resulted in mosques of

different regions and periods of the Islamic world appearing visually dissimilar. They are, however, all connected by their principal function: Established soon after his community moved to Medina in c. The walls of the courtyard were made of mud-brick and had three openings. The walls surrounded an open space of about 61 square yards 56 meters. Palm tree trunks were used for the columns and palm leaves for the roof of a covered area called the zulla, which was built to protect worshipers from the midday sun. The zulla marked the direction Muslim prayer was originally orientedâ€” north, toward the holy and venerated city of the Jews, Jerusalem. The zulla was therefore moved to concur with the new qibla direction of prayer. House of the Prophet Muhammad in Medina. The first mosque type to emerge was the hypostyle plan Fig. Its basic unit, the bay a covered area defined by four columns , could be expanded upon so the mosque could grow with the community. The hypostyle mosque typically has an inner courtyard, called the sahn, surrounded by colonnades or arcades riwaqs on three sides. There are three entrances into the sahn. The principal entrance can be a monumental portal as built in Cairo in the Fatimid Mosque of al-Hakim c. Passing through the sahn, the worshiper walked into a covered sanctuary area or haram. The haram of the Great Mosque of Cordoba , c. Once inside the sanctuary of a mosque the focus is the qibla, a directional wall that indicated which way to pray. In the center of the wall was often a semicircular niche with an arched top, known as the mihrab. In large mosques a minbar located to the right of the mihrab was also included. It was from atop the minbar that on Fridays the khutba sermon was delivered by the imam or prayer-leader. It ranges from a simple three-step elevation to a highly decorated monumental stairway of many steps. In large mosques another platform called the dikka is provided at the rear of the sanctuary, or in the courtyard, and along the same axis as the mihrab. A qadi repeats the sermon and prayer from the dikka for those standing too far from the minbar. Located outside of some mosques is a minaret that, along with the dome, has become the architectural symbol of Islam due to its ubiquitous presence and high visibility. Constructed as a tower, it either stands outside the mosque precinct or it is attached to the outer walls or portals of the mosque. The minaret varies in shape, ornamentation, and number depending on the region and building conventions of the patron. The maqsurah is a later addition made to the hypostyle-plan mosque. It is a differentiated, protective space, adjacent to the qibla wall. The maqsurah is found in mosques where the imam or ruler wanted either to be protected or ceremonially separated from the congregation. It was originally built as a raised platform separated with a wooden screen that allowed total to partial concealment of its occupants. There are two general types of mosques. The first is the congregational mosque, known as the jami masjid. Masjids are small community mosques used daily by members of a quarter, or an ethnic group within a city. Masjids were also constructed as subsidiary structures next to mausoleums, palaces, caravanseries, and madrasas. Adapting the basic building elements of vaults, arches, and domes, these rulers built mosques that from the exterior appeared to span large areas and soar to great heights. To create a stunning visual experience in the interior the jami masjids were ornamented with complex geometric and arabesque or vegetal decoration in mosaic and stucco. Regional Variation of Mosques. Although there is no one style to unify the mosques of the Islamic world, they can be divided into broad regional variants. The mosque style of central Arabia was an early development influenced by church-building of the Syrian Byzantine Empire and palace-building of the Sassanian Persian Empire. In the east, the ground plans of the Great Mosques of Kufa c. When the Great Mosque of Kufa was rebuilt in , its haram was based on the apadanas or throne rooms of Achaemenian kings: Similarly, the Great Mosque of Damascus, built by the Umayyad caliph al-Walid between , was based on indigenous building conventions. Architects used the preexisting enclosure of the temenos and church, but since the mosque had to be oriented to the south, the qibla wall was on the longer side of the rectangular space. Also, due to the constraints of the preexisting quadrangle, the courtyard was transversal in orientation rather than longitudinal. The haram contained a short, wide central nave with a gabled roof and a wooden dome in its center. Three aisles of double-tiered arches, parallel to the qibla wall, supported a gabled ceiling. Al- Walid, wanting to outdo the neighboring churches and temples, employed Syrian-Christian artisans to richly decorate the interior of the mosque with imported gold and colored mosaics and marble, and even used rock crystal for the mihrab. The early Abbasid caliphate, ruling from Baghdad from to , first built their mosques with square floor plans as the early Umayyads had done in the region. However, after the Abbasids moved their capital to Samarra, their

mosques reflected the rectangular hypostyle form favored by the later Umayyads. The Great Mosque of Samarra, built by al-Mutawakkil from 836 to 85, was the largest hypostyle mosque of its time with nine rows of columns in the sanctuary that supported a thirty-five-foot-high ceiling. The mosque is most famous for Malwiyya, the colossal spiral minaret. Sub-Saharan West African mosques are unique in their use of organic materials that are constantly replenished over time, such as tamped earth, timber, and vegetation. Due to seasonal deterioration during the wet and dry seasons, the mosques are constantly being repaired and resurfaced. The predominant quality of these structures is their rounded organic form, reinforced with projecting timber beams or torons, which also serve as supports for scaffolding when the mosque is being resurfaced. The Great Mosque of Djenne thirteenth century is the most representative of the West African mosques. Its tall rounded towers and engaged columns, which act as buttresses, easily flow into each other and give the structure its characteristic verticality and overwhelming majesty. The central-planned, domed mosque of the Ottomans is yet another distinctive type. When the Ottomans conquered Constantinople in the fifteenth century they converted the Byzantine church of Hagia Sophia into a mosque by framing it with two pointed minarets. Later in the nineteenth century they added roundels inscribed with calligraphic writing of the names of Muhammad, Allah, and the early caliphs. Using the Hagia Sophia as their prototype, Ottoman rulers built mosques in the principal cities of their empire. The mosques were defined by large spherical domes, with smaller half-domes at the corners of the square, and four distinctively shaped minarets—tall, fluted, and needle-nosed—that were typically placed at the exterior corners of the mosque complex. Moving further east to Seljuk Iran, another type of mosque emerges known as the four-iwan mosque. The iwan is an open vaulted space with a rectangular portal or pishtaq. In a Seljuk mosque four of these iwans would be oriented around a central courtyard. The Great Mosque of Isfahan, built in this style in the twelfth century, is a monumental four-iwan mosque. Of these, the principal or qibla iwan is the largest, with a large domed maqsura and muqarnas vaulting. To lend it further visual impact, two minarets were added at the corners of the portal. The iwan that stood opposite the qibla iwan followed in size, and it was both smaller and shallower.

## Chapter 3 : Category:Islamic architecture - Wikimedia Commons

*Islamic architecture encompasses a wide range of both secular and religious styles from the foundation of Islam to the present day, influencing the design and construction of buildings and structures in Islamic culture and beyond.*

The architectural heritage of the Islamic world is staggeringly rich. Devastated, the emperor commissioned the Taj Mahal, a massive mausoleum complex on the southern bank of the Yamuna Jumna River that ultimately took more than 20 years to complete. Today the Taj Mahal is the most famous piece of Islamic architecture in the world, with the possible exception of the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem. The monument is remarkable both for its size the finial of the dome of the central mausoleum stands feet [73 meters] above ground level and for its graceful form, which combines elements of Indian, Islamic, and Persian design. From afar, viewers are dazzled by the white marble of the central tomb, which appears to change color with daylight. Up close, the building is richly decorated with Arabic calligraphy and inlays of semiprecious stones. Inside there are cenotaphs false tombs for Mumtaz Mahal and Shah Jahan; the actual tombs are in a chamber beneath the ground floor. As early as the s, travelers reported that Shah Jahan had intended to build a matching mausoleum for himself out of black granite on the opposite bank of the Yamuna; modern scholars, however, regard this as a legend with no basis in fact. Although some portions of the palace have been demolished, three parts remain: The courtyards and rooms of the Alhambra are exquisitely decorated with colored tiles, carved stucco, carved wood, and calligraphy. Some of the most remarkable ornamental features are the intricately carved geometric stalactite designs a recurring pattern in Islamic architecture called muqarnas in Arabic that adorn the halls surrounding the Court of the Lions. A mosque has stood on the site since the 8th century, but the oldest elements of the current structure are two domes built during the Seljuk dynasty, which ruled parts of Iran in the 11th century. In the early 12th century the mosque was rebuilt around a rectangular courtyard adjoined on each side by an iwanâ€”a type of hall that opens into a tall arch on one side. The four-iwan design, which first appeared in Esfahan, later became the norm for Iranian mosques. Built in â€”, about 55 years after the Arab conquest of Jerusalem, the design and ornamentation are rooted in the Byzantine architectural tradition but also display traits that would later come to be associated with a distinctly Islamic architectural style. The structure consists of a gilded wooden dome sitting atop an octagonal base. Inside, two ambulatories circle around a patch of exposed rock. The interior is richly decorated with marble, mosaics, and metal plaques. The mosque was built out of baked brick, with an interior decorated with blue glass. Most of the structure was destroyed during the Mongol invasion led by Hulagu in , but one of the most-intriguing features, the foot meter minaret, survived. The minaret is built in the shape of a cone, wrapped in a spiraling ramp that leads to the top. One of the best remaining examples of Islamic military architecture is the citadel that stands on the top of a hill in the middle of the Syrian city of Aleppo. Archeologists have found fortifications on the site dating back to Roman times and earlier, but the citadel was begun in the 10th century and acquired its current form in a massive expansion and reconstruction during the Ayyubid era about â€” Inside the walls of the citadel there are residences, chambers to store supplies, wells, mosques, and defensive installationsâ€”everything needed to hold out against a long siege. The most-imposing part of the complex is the massive entrance block, built around A steep stone bridge resting on seven arches leads across the moat now dry to two towering gatesâ€”the Gate of the Serpents and the Gate of the Lions. To enter the citadel, invaders would have had to penetrate both gates and navigate a winding passageway while defenders poured boiling liquids down on them and arrows shot from numerous arrow slits rained down on them from above. The structure underwent several enlargements in the 9th and 10th centuries. During one of these enlargements a richly decorated mihrab a niche in a mosque pointing in the direction of Mecca set behind an intricate arch was added. Another remarkable feature of the mosque is the hypostyle hall consisting of approximately columns made of porphyry, jasper, and marble supporting two-tier horseshoe arches. Most of the columns and capitals were recycled from earlier buildings. The interior of the mosque is a single square-shaped room, illuminated by more than large windows, many of which are stained glass. The ornamentation is simple and does not distract from the imposing size of the central dome, which measures 90 feet Arranged around the mosque itself are a

hospital, several religious schools, a row of shops, a mausoleum, and a bath. The complex was designed by the Ottoman master architect Sinan, whose buildings were critical to the establishment of a distinctly Ottoman style of architecture, and it is considered one of his masterpieces. Both Sinan and Suleyman are buried in the complex.

## Chapter 4 : Introduction to Islamic Architecture | Muslim Heritage

*Islamic architecture is in part comprised of those buildings and built environments intended for use in Islamic worship, commemoration, and instruction. Among the architecture of this group are mosques, madrasas or schools, mausoleums, and shrines.*

The reign of the Mamluks AD marked a breathtaking flowering of Islamic art which is most visible in old Cairo. Religious zeal made them generous patrons of architecture and art. Trade and agriculture flourished under Mamluk rule, and Cairo, their capital, became one of the wealthiest cities in the Near East and the center of artistic and intellectual activity. This made Cairo, in the words of Ibn Khaldun , "the center of the universe and the garden of the world", with majestic domes, courtyards, and soaring minarets spread across the city. The architectural identity of Mamluk religious monuments stems from the major purpose that individuals erected their own memorials, therefore adding a high degree of individuality. Mamluk architecture is oftentimes categorized more by the reigns of the major sultan , than a specific design. Interestingly, the mamluk elite were often more knowledgeable in the art of buildings than many historians. Patrons used architecture to strengthen their religious and social roles within the community. While the organization of Mamluk monuments varied, the funerary dome and minaret were constant leitmotifs. In Cairo, the funerary dome and minaret were respected as symbols of commemoration and worship [8]. Patrons used these visual attributes to express their individuality by decorating each dome and minaret with distinct patterns. Patterns carved on domes ranged from ribs and zigzags to floral and geometric star designs. Therefore the creativity of Mamluk builders was effectively emphasized with these leitmotifs. Expanding on the Fatimids concept of street-adjusted mosque facades, the Mamluks developed their architecture to enhance street vistas. In addition, new aesthetic concepts and architectural solutions were created to reflect their assumed role in history. By the essential features of Mamluk architecture were already established in the complex of Sultan Qalawan. However, it took three decades for the Mamluks to create a new and distinct architecture. By , the Ottoman conquest brought Mamluk architecture to an end without a term of decadence. Mamluk history is divided into two periods based on different dynastic lines: The Bahri reign defined the art and architecture of the entire Mamluk period. Mamluk decorative artsâ€”especially enameled and gilded glass, inlaid metalwork, woodwork, and textilesâ€”were prized around the Mediterranean as well as in Europe, where they had a profound impact on local production. The influence of Mamluk glassware on the Venetian glass industry is only one such example. The Burji Mamluk sultans followed the artistic traditions established by their Bahri predecessors. Mamluk textiles and carpets were prized in international trade. In architecture, endowed public and pious foundations continued to be favored. Major commissions in the early Burji period in Egypt included the complexes built by Barquq r. In the eastern Mediterranean provinces, the lucrative trade in textiles between Iran and Europe helped revive the economy. Also significant was the commercial activity of pilgrims en route to Mecca and Medina. Large warehouses, such as the Khan al-Qadi , were erected to satisfy the surge in trade. Other public foundations in the region included the mosques of Aqbugha al-Utrush Aleppo, â€” and Sabun Damascus, as well as the Madrasa Jaqmaqiyya Damascus, During his reign, the shrines of Mecca and Medina were extensively restored. Major cities were endowed with commercial buildings, religious foundations, and bridges. Building continued under the last Mamluk sultan, Qansuh al-Ghawri r. Though the Mamluk realm was soon incorporated into the Ottoman empire , Mamluk visual culture continued to inspire Ottoman and other Islamic artistic traditions.

**Chapter 5 : Islamic architecture - Wikipedia**

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The Great Mosque of Kairouan , with a large courtyard sehan surrounded by arcades , Kairouan , Tunisia. The traditional Islamic courtyard , a sehan Arabic: When within a residence or other secular building is a private courtyard and walled garden. It is used for: A sehanâ€”courtyard is in within almost every mosque in Islamic architecture. The courtyards are open to the sky and surrounded on all sides by structures with halls and rooms, and often a shaded semi-open arcade. Sehans usually feature a centrally positioned ritual cleansing pool under an open domed pavilion called a howz. Hypostyle hall[ edit ] A Hypostyle , i. The Roman type of building has developed out of the Greek agora. In Islamic architecture, the hypostyle hall is the main feature of the hypostyle mosque. One of the earliest hypostyle mosques is the Tarikhaneh Mosque in Iran, dating back to the 8th century. Whilst Umayyad architecture continues Syrian traditions of the 6th and 7th century, Eastern Islamic architecture was mainly influenced by Sasanian styles and forms. Diaphragm arches with lintelled ceilings made of wood or stone beams, or, alternatively, with barrel vaults, were known in the Levant since the classical and Nabatean period. They were mainly used to cover houses and cisterns. The architectural form of covering diaphragm arches with barrel vaults, however, was likely newly introduced from Iranian architecture , as similar vaulting was not known in Bilad al-Sham before the arrival of the Umayyads. The earliest known example for barrel vaults resting on diaphragm arches from Umayyad architecture is known from Qasr Harane in Syria. During the early period, the diaphragm arches are built from coarsely cut limestone slabs, without using supporting falsework , which were connected by gypsum mortar. Later-period vaults were erected using pre-formed lateral ribs modelled from gypsum, which served as a temporal formwork to guide and center the vault. These ribs, which were left in the structure afterwards, do not carry any load. The ribs were cast in advance on strips of cloth, the impression of which can still be seen in the ribs today. Similar structures are known from Sasanian architecture , for example from the palace of Firuzabad. Umayyad-period vaults of this type were found in Amman Citadel and in Qasr Amra. Columns are connected by horseshoe arches , and support pillars of brickwork , which are in turn interconnected by semicircular arches supporting the flat timberwork ceiling. Horseshoe arches were now used for the upper row of arcades, which is now supported by five-pass arches. In sections which now supported domes , additional supporting structures were needed to bear the thrust of the cupolas. The architects solved this problem by the construction of intersecting three- or five-pass arches. The three domes spanning the vaults above the mihrab wall are constructed as ribbed vaults. Rather than meeting in the center of the dome, the ribs intersect one another off-center, forming an eight-pointed star in the center which is superseded by a pendentive dome. Mosque of Cristo de la Luz in Toledo was constructed with a similar, eight-ribbed dome. The architectural form of the ribbed dome was further developed in the Maghreb: The central dome of the Great Mosque of Tlemcen , a masterpiece of the Almoravids built in , has twelve slender ribs, the shell between the ribs is filled with filigree stucco work. The "non-radial rib vault", an architectural form of ribbed vaults with a superimposed spherical dome, is the characteristic architectural vault form of the Islamic East. From its beginnings in the Jameh Mosque of Isfahan, this form of vault was used in a sequence of important buildings up to the period of Safavid architecture. Its main characteristics are: Wide central domes with huge diameters were erected on top of a centre-plan building. Despite their enormous weight, the domes appear virtually weightless. Some of the most elaborate domed buildings have been constructed by the Ottoman architect Mimar Sinan. When the Ottomans had conquered Constantinople , they found a variety of Byzantine Christian churches, the largest and most prominent amongst them was the Hagia Sophia. The brickwork-and-mortar ribs and the spherical shell of the central dome of the Hagia Sophia were built simultaneously, as a self-supporting structure without any wooden centring. Shell and ribs form one single structural entity. Zeyrek Mosque , the central medallion of the apex and the ribs of the dome became separate structural elements: The ribs are more pronounced and connect to the central medallion, which also stands out more pronouncedly, so that the entire construction gives the

impression as if ribs and medallion are separate from, and underpin, the proper shell of the dome. In the history of architecture, the structure of the Selimiye Mosque has no precedent. All elements of the building subordinate to its great dome. Muqarnas The architectural element of muqarnas developed in northeastern Iran and the Maghreb around the middle of the 10th century. The ornament is created by the geometric subdivision of a vaulting structure into miniature, superimposed pointed-arch substructures, also known as "honeycomb", or "stalactite" vaults. Made from different materials like stone, brick, wood or stucco, its use in architecture spread over the entire Islamic world. In the Islamic West, muqarnas are also used to adorn the outside of a dome, cupola, or similar structure, whilst in the East is more limited to the interior face of a vault.

### Chapter 6 : Islamic or Muslim Architecture - IslamiCity

*In Islam, decoration is reserved for the inside of buildings. Most often the only exterior parts to be decorated will be the entrance and the dome. Architecture is one of the greatest Islamic art.*

Much has been written and said about the subject, yet scholars and researchers vastly differ over it. It is an endless, but at the same time enthralling, debate. Islamic architecture is an architecture that exemplifies Islamic teachings and values in an architectural process rather than in an architectural product. An architectural process starts with having a proper understanding and vision which leads to making a right intention. It continues with the planning, designing and building stages, and ends with attaining the net results and how people make use of and benefit from them. Islamic architecture is a fine blend of all these phases and elements which are interwoven with the threads of the belief system, tenets, teachings and values of Islam. What makes an architecture Islamic is its metaphysical, spiritual and ethical dimensions, rather than its sheer physical and observable aspects, in relation to all the parties involved in the process: This however does not mean that the physical side of Islamic architecture is unimportant. On the contrary, it is important, but remains subservient to the metaphysical, spiritual and ethical factors. Reducing the orb of architecture to its sheer artistic, technological or engineering aspects, and singling out architects and structural engineers as the sole protagonists in it, significantly downgrades architecture and divests it of some of its most dynamic dimensions. By saying this, no diminishing or taking away any credit whatsoever from anyone who duly deserves it, especially architects, is intended. Islamic architecture, it goes without saying, must not be seen as an elitist enterprise. It is a scientific as well as an epistemological pursuit that aims to ensure the welfare of all Muslims. Islamic architecture should be practical in the sense that it is affordable, accessible, functional and should tackle the issues and problems concerning all Muslims. It further must not be discriminatory, impractical and utopian. Islamic architecture would thus simply be "a complex synthesis of different legacies, and cultural and political statements as well". Therefore, it has been often suggested that the use of the term Islamic to qualify the architecture of the Islamic world after the rise of Islam should be suspended "until more conclusive research is conducted". This nevertheless represents a set of fairly sensible contentions, provided the same is observed against the backdrop of its fundamental epistemological premises that inexorably lead to making such judgments. However, architecture is more than pure art, science and technology, just as Islam is much more than mere slogans, symbols, forms and plain rituals. Thus, if seen as a physical locus of the lifestyles that are inspired, guided and even dictated by the total message of Islam, which is meant not only to facilitate and promulgate such lifestyles, but also to integrate itself into and become an integral part thereof, Islamic architecture suddenly becomes a different and much more complex and profound proposition. As a process and total framework meant for the facilitation and implementation of Islam, Islamic architecture, in fact, becomes both a quintessence and unmistakable manifestation of Islamic ways of life. It thus merits being qualified Islamic. The characteristics which constitute the unity of architectural styles throughout the Muslim world are provided or inspired by Islam. It will be a terrible shortcoming if Islam neglected to influence the architecture of its peoples. Like all other fine arts, architecture is an aesthetic expression of the Muslim in so far as he has a unique and distinct view of reality, of space and time, of history, of the ummah and of his organic relation thereto. Islam is indeed a comprehensive religion, worldview and culture. Its influence must pervade the whole of human life. It did determine the style of clothing, of eating, of sleeping, of socializing, of leisure and recreation. Nay, it did; and it even buttressed its influence with the power of law as regards all these. Consequently, it is often suggested that the term Muslim, rather than Islamic, be used when describing the architecture of Muslims in any given epoch or geographical region. It is at times even suggested that it would be much better if neither Islamic nor Muslim is used, for both, if misconstrued or taken out of context, can seriously mislead and puzzle. Advertisement At any rate, Islamic architecture is such a fascinating, broad, profound and multidimensional subject to study. It thus could be approached from numerous perspectives: Study approaches could be both theoretical and empirical, and methodologies both qualitative and quantitative. However, whatever research study is undertaken: True, it was as responsive to the climatic,

geographical and cultural requirements as any other architectural tradition. Nevertheless, it never treated them away from the exigencies of a higher order and meaning of things. It follows that articulating the term Islamic architecture would be correct, especially when dwelling theoretically on the theme and when architecture is understood as a comprehensive process and system implemented with relative success into actual life situations. Even giving no adjectives or appellations to the architectural styles created by Muslims would be correct, especially when it is recalled that early Muslims never called their architecture, art, urbanism, etc. They knew that those were their own legacies spontaneously generated and imbued by the impetus of their perceptions of reality and the world, of life and death, and of space and time, and which were part of their larger civilizational vision and drive. Giving designations under the circumstances was superfluous, as the things were instinctively implied and understood by everyone, and the culture of giving precedence to substance over the form largely prevailed. However, when mere names, titles and descriptions became an obsession, such denoted a sign of civilizational weaknesses and decline. It meant desperate clinging to something that was gradually fading away and was hard to keep. The efforts in due course turned into sheer reminiscing about things that were lost and became difficult to bring back. Hence, reminiscing became nostalgia, and the latter soon morphed into individual and collective acts of desperation. Finally, it was in fact non-Muslim scholars and researchers who especially during the colonization era coined and imposed on the world first those artificial appellations as regards Islamic civilizational legacies, including architecture. It was also them first who in the process loaded the terms with some erroneous, or questionable at best, connotations. So therefore, while it is possible to use any of the existing designations often attached to the historical and current architectural realities of Muslims, Muslims, at the same time, should be aware of the implications each and every designation entails, so that the most appropriate terms, those closest in describing an intended matter, are selected and articulated. Numerous fallacies and misconceptions, old and new, associated with different aspects of the architecture of Muslims, are also to be scientifically and thoroughly unraveled and repudiated. But these ought to be no more than interim and short-term strategies. They are by no means to be regarded as ends in themselves, as they cannot offer permanent answers and solutions to the pressing dilemmas. Rather, those and other similar intellectual efforts and activities must represent - or at least be precursory to -- a gradual fashioning of a new and unified scholarly culture among Muslims that will be closest to reverberating the authentic philosophy of Islam and the soul of its teachings and values, paying no or very little attention to the often meaningless and worthless appellations, labels and descriptions. The new comprehensive intellectual culture will need to skillfully amalgamate the fundamental nature of the Islamic message with the spirit and exigencies of modern times, dispensing generally with religious, cultural and intellectual mediocrity, prejudices, formalism, literal symbolism and apathy, which can seriously damage the prospects of reviving not only Islamic architecture, but also all the other aspects of Islamic eclectic culture and civilization.

*Islamic architecture is one of the world's most celebrated building traditions. Known for its minarets, domes, vaulting, arches, and decorative work (each of which is often found in the Islamic mosque), this distinctive approach has been popular in the Muslim world since the 7th century.*

The Columbia Encyclopedia, 6th ed. Copyright The Columbia University Press Islamic art and architecture, works of art and architecture created in countries where Islam has been dominant and embodying Muslim precepts in its themes. Because of their rapid expansion and the paucity of the earlier artistic heritage of the Arabian Peninsula, the Muslims derived their unique style from synthesizing the arts of the Byzantines, the Copts, the Romans, and the Sassanids. The great strength of Islamic art as a whole lies in its ability to synthesize native design elements with imported ones. Abstract decoration of the surface is an important factor in every work of Islamic art and architecture, whether large or small. Curving and often interlaced lines, of which the arabesque is a typical example, and the use of brilliant colors characterize almost all of the finest productions, which are of greatly varied styles. Islamic art eschews the realistic representation of human beings and animals, and its floral designs are extremely distant from their original models. Architecture The earliest architectural monument of Islam that retains most of its original form is the Dome of the Rock Qubbat al-Sakhrah in Jerusalem, constructed in 692 on the site of the Jewish Second Temple. Muslims believe it to be the spot from which Muhammad ascended to heaven. It has mosaics depicting scrolling vines and flowers, jewels, and crowns in greens, blues, and gold. Similar in some aspects is the later Great Mosque of Damascus built c. The interior walls have stone mosaics that depict crowns, fantastic plants, realistic trees, and even empty towns. This is thought to represent Paradise for the faithful Muslim. Both the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem and the great Mosque of Damascus used the Syrian cut-stone technique of building and popularized the use of the dome see mosque. The 8th-century desert palace Khirbat al-Mafjar in present-day Jordan reveals a wealth of carved and molded stucco decoration, sculptured stone reliefs, and figural fresco paintings. In the Abbasid dynasty moved the capital east to Baghdad, and from to the Abbasid rulers resided at Samarra. The Great Mosque of Samarra is an important example of the Iraqi hypostyle , noted for its massive size and spectacular minaret. In Iran few Islamic buildings erected before the 10th cent. Sassanid building techniques, such as the squinch, were combined with the mosque form see Persian art and architecture. Sassanid influence is also strong in many Umayyad dynasty residential palaces, built mostly in Syria. The most famous is the 8th-century palace of Mshatta; much of its delicately carved stone facade is now in Berlin. In the middle of the 8th cent. The mosque was extended three times. The culture of Islamic Spain reached its apogee in Moorish art and architecture. Late in the 9th cent. In the 10th cent. The most important Fatimid buildings are the Cairo mosques of al-Azhar and al-Aqmar. The cruciform Mosque of Hasan in Cairo, built by a Mamluk sultan in , still reflects Persian influence. In India a distinct style, preserved mainly in architecture, developed after the Delhi Sultanate was established This art made extensive use of stone and reflected Indian adaptation to Islam rule, until Mughal art replaced it in the 17th cent. The square Char Minar of Hyderabad with large arches, arcades, and minarets is typical. In Turkey the mosque form was also derived from Persia, as was most Turkish art. The great Byzantine church of Hagia Sophia , adapted for use as a mosque, greatly influenced Turkish architects. The most famous among these is Sinan , chief architect in the Ottoman court from until his death in It has four minarets and stained-glass windows flanking the mihrab. The mosque of Sultan Ahmed I is similarly distinguished by its dome lit by numerous windows, and wall surfaces covered with green and blue tiles. Fine ornate buildings were erected in Turkey until the middle of the 17th cent. The Decorative Arts Among the ceramic types are unglazed wares, molded pieces with the lead glaze of Hellenistic tradition, and most famous, the lusterware fragments. In 9th-century Islam the technique of tin-glazed ware was perfected. Lusterware was imported into Egypt and later made there. The Great Mosque of Al Qayrawan c. Skilled craftsmanship can be seen in rock-crystal carving, a continuation of Sassanid art, using floral motifs that became increasingly abstract. From the 10th to the mid 11th cent. Arabic script represents the expression of the will and strength of Allah, and as such is regarded as sacred by the faithful. The Kufic script, often executed in

gold on parchment, was further animated by floral interlaces. Calligraphy was not used exclusively for two-dimensional works but also appears in architectural ornament, ceramics, textiles and metalwork. During this period calligraphy, bookbinding, papermaking, and illumination were developed and were held in highest esteem throughout Islam. The sloping cursive script most commonly used today, Nastaliq, was perfected in the 15th cent. Before the 13th cent. Early in the 13th cent. The pictures may be divided into two types: In the middle of the 13th cent. However, after a period of acclimatization, the Chinese taste and artifacts imported by the Mongols revitalized the art of Iran, where book illustration reached great heights. With the arrival of the Seljuks in Iran came a new ceramic technique, fritware, similar to certain Chinese porcelains. The unique qualities of this ware enabled artists to create richly colored glazes such as deep blues from cobalt and turquoise from copper. Syria and Iraq continued to manufacture fine black-and-turquoise pottery. Textiles and rugs of great beauty were again manufactured throughout Islam, and in the 15th cent. Mamluk carpets were renowned for their designs of great complexity and their asymmetrical knots. Turkish ceramics reached their peak in the "Iznik" ware of the 16th and 17th cent. Distinctive green tiles are frequently used in the decoration of Turkish architecture. Schimmel, Calligraphy and Islamic Culture ; R. Grabar, The Art and Architecture of Islam: Grabar, The Formation of Islamic Art rev. Brend, Islamic Art ; S. Bloom, The Art and Architecture of Islam, " Cite this article Pick a style below, and copy the text for your bibliography.

*The architectural heritage of the Islamic world is staggeringly rich. Here's a list of a few of the most iconic mosques, palaces, tombs, and fortresses. In Mumtaz Mahal, the third and favorite wife of the Mughal emperor Shah Jahan (reigned ), died while giving birth to the couple's.*

References Note of the editor This article was first published in January An edited version with revisions is published here in HTML, with new illustrations and captions. Theoretical issues Although Muslim architecture has been widely investigated, it still remains omitted from main stream architecture theories and much of the existing works about it are no more than curiosities undertaken by a group of sympathisers. Here, the notion of Islamic architecture has been associated with Muslim monuments such as mosques, palaces, and castles. Some scholars, such as Briggs , called it Muhammedan. This three volume work touched upon the architecture of most nations but jumped from Sassanian and Byzantine architecture 4th and 5th century CE to European Medieval architecture of the 11th century Romanesque , ignoring some years of Muslim architectural achievements Hope provided a chapter on Islamic architecture entitled "Derivation of the Persian, Mohammedan, and Moorish architecture from that of Byzantium. Meantime, publications referring to it often present a shy coverage. Kostof , for example, gave it a mere eight pages with five figures in his pages work [2]. The Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem is a key example of Islamic architecture. Furthermore, there are views circulating in the West which reject the "islamisation" of architecture, arguing that Muslim architecture was used by Orientalists only to differentiate it from other types of architecture. They propound that the nomadic lifestyle of the Arabs discouraged any form of permanent settlement and thus any architectural or building tradition. According to this view, much of the building heritage of what is called Islamic architecture came from Christian, Persian, or Indian origins and Muslims only imitated and sometimes employed masons from these cultures. The answer to these arguments involves the following three main issues: Although Islam opposes the exaggeration in unnecessary spending, it has no objection to comfortable life or wealth as such, nor to the enjoyment of this worldly life. Sources on the tradition of Prophet Muhammad show that he discouraged Muslims from miserable living. It is amply evident that he had worn rich clothes in festivities and was fond of exquisite perfumes and essences. His famous expressive saying: In relation to building activity, we find indications in the Quran as well as in the tradition of the Prophet that the first builder was Prophet Adam who built the Kaaba. After him, it was Prophet Ibrahim Abraham and his son Ismail Ishmail who rebuilt it, after its collapse some years before Prophet Suleiman Solomon built his famous temple, which is considered in some popular writings as the origin of architecture. The Quran also refers to building in a number of occasions. In Surah 66, Ayah 11, for example, the wife of the Pharaoh in her supplication says: Prophet Muhammad participated in the construction of his mosque by carrying bricks. He also helped in the construction of dwellings of some of his followers. From the above, it appears clearly that Islam has no objection to building and urbanisation. As for borrowing from other cultures, we find the argument endorsing the universal concept of the message of Islam. In no other part of the world was the population so diversified, yet united, than in the Muslim World. This is the secret of the success story of Muslim art, architecture, science and technology of the classical period of Islamic civilisation. Its expansion over a vast territory, incorporating three continents, provided a cultural richness that played a significant role in the elaboration of Muslim art and architecture. Converts from Christian, Persian and Indian origins enthusiastically redefined their knowledge, as well as their experience in arts, industry and various accomplishments of their respective nations, to conform with Islamic values and injected it into their new world. Muslims were not blind imitators but "were content to adopt each local style that they found, modifying it mainly in distinctive ornamental details, but also introducing several important new features of plan and structure [4]. The early introduction of a completely alien architecture was not desirable, as Islam remoulded existing traditions and built on them the new value and life systems. So, these centres which played important community roles in ignorant pagan times, provided new enlightened rays of the new belief. The early use of churches in Syria and Spain, and temples in Persia and India is evidence of these attitudes. Saladin [5] , the plan of the mosque was derived

from older Semitic sanctuaries. The building of mosques and diffusion of the new architecture did not take place until Islam became established in that community or region. External view of the Alhambra complex in Granada Source. As Islam took firm roots and a degree of economic and cultural prosperity was reached, unique core architectural features, forms and techniques evolved. Such factors became distinguishing features of Muslim and Islamic architecture. Similarly, the existence of other elements unique to Christian or Japanese architecture would define their building style. Terminological issues The second issue is terminological and connected to the use of "Muslim" and "Islamic" architecture. The two words are theoretically interconnected but conceptually different. Muslim is a general word referring to religious and geographical setting of Islam. Muslim architecture is the building style of the countries of Muslim religion, a term which may include modern or old architecture practised in these countries and which may not be necessarily Islamic nor display any known features of Islamic architecture such as the arch, the dome, stucco decoration, etc. Similarly, we say today Muslim city to refer to its location in a Muslim country rather than to its Islamic morphological features. The other disadvantage of using this concept is related to buildings of Muslim origin but not in the Muslim world, as in the case of Spain, Sicily, old USSR and other countries. More positively, one can define it as including the architecture that was accomplished by Muslim masons, architects, for or under Muslim patronage government , or in a Muslim country. Islamic architecture can also be misleading as one may understand that it refers to the architecture of a particular religious Islamist group or that of a religious function, while in reality it refers to the Islamic way of building and the specific style developed in the civilisation of Islam. This is practical for the ordinary house as well as the mosque, the palace and other major architectural monuments. However, one can analytically categorise Muslim architectural achievements in two main areas involving religious and secular. The centre of the first is the mosque which was invented in the first year of Hijra to serve a prestigious role providing shelter and refuge for the first community of Muslims. The faithful gather there five times a day and every Friday on a weekly basis. The articulation of elements such as arches, domes and columns, calligraphic illustrations and geometrical decorating patterns create a continuous sense of peace and contemplation. The first and second enlargements were made along the central axis, while the third enlargement was done to the lateral direction, which caused the position of the Mihrab not to be located in the middle of the Qibla wall. Architecturally, the second most important religious building is the Madrasa school , being in general a college which evolved from the mosque and was finally established as an independent institution of learning and education. The form of Madrasa progressively evolved starting from the simple form of houses of the teachers and reaching the monumental character of the Kutubiya in Marrakesh, Morocco. Here, the building incorporated lecture theatres, library, residential rooms for students and facilities such as bathes, fountains and a courtyard, which is equipped with a water clock. Although, a handful of Madrasas still exist today in the Muslim world, most of its teaching is undertaken by modern universities which do not structurally differ from their Western counterparts. Other religious buildings include monastic mosques Zawiya and mausoleums which can also be very elaborate, reaching sometimes a monumental position like the Taj Mahal in India. Muslim secular buildings consist largely of domestic structures, palaces and ordinary houses. Here, one cannot stop appreciating the successful adaptation of space to religious values and teachings, especially those relating to private and public domains. From early palaces of the Umayyad and Abbassid Caliphate to modern houses, there was much observance of distinction between private and public spaces. The first was designed for family and domestic life, reserved for children and women. In the palace, the public space was for conducting public affairs such as reception halls, meeting rooms, ceremonial courts maydan and mosques for princial entourage. Ibn Yusuf Madrasa in Marrakesh, Morocco. Other buildings that form part of Muslim secular architecture include military structures such as castles, forts, towers and walls. These were erected to provide protection for cities, especially in areas where external threat was menacing as in Palestine and its bordering countries Syria and Jordan , in Cairo and North African coast. Giant gates forming part of the defensive system as well as elements of ceremonial furniture victory were also erected along these ramparts. Muslim keen interest in trade produced highly developed architecture in the form of numerous caravanserais, warehouses Qaysariyaor Khan and suqs markets and bazaars which formed the economic heart of the Muslim city. In engineering architecture, Muslims managed

to create ensembles of structures combining high degree of engineering, functionality and outstanding beauty. Their bridges, fountains and reservoirs also form fascinating elements showing sense of purpose and professional excellence. The Taj Mahal in Agra, India, built by Shah Jahan as a mausoleum for his wife, represents the pinnacle of Mughal Islamic architecture in India and is one of the most recognisable buildings in the world. Final Remark Muslim architecture attests to the high level of power and sophistication that the Muslim community had reached at a time when Europe was living through the dark ages. Whether in the mosque, the palace or in the ordinary house, Muslim mason, architect and artist remarkably transmitted the profound devotion of Islam to community. The world owes much of its architectural development to early Muslim architects. Europe in particular built its architectural renaissance on the advances made by Muslim architects; a fact acknowledged at least in Gothic by a number of Western scholars including Fletcher who stated: Kalan Mosque in Bukhara, Uzbekistan. Fletcher, B , A History of Architecture: There are numerous sayings about building and making use of earth, e. Anas bin Malik narrated that Prophet Muhammad said: It was finished in the year It stands at the northern end of Muizz Street. Its rounded towers were a stronger defence than the square towers of Bab al-Nasr another Old City gate, just to the east. They had shafts for pouring boiling water or burning oil on attackers, and arrow slits. These gates and also Bab Zuwayla were built the powerful Fatimid vizier Badr al-Jamali, who ruled Egypt from to , to prevent the attempts of the Turkoman Atsiz to take Cairo, among other threats from the East. See Bab al-Futuh on Archnet.

### Chapter 9 : Islamic architecture Archives | Iran Tour Operator and Iran Travel Agency

*Islamic architecture, Muslim architecture Islamic horseshoe arch The architecture of the peoples of Islamic faith, also called Mohammedan, which from the 7th century onward expanded throughout the Mediterranean world and as far as India and China, and beyond, producing a variety of great regional works and local decorative styles.*