Qāyṭbāy’s Madrasahs in the Holy Cities
and the Evolution of Haram Architecture

Qāyṭbāy was renowned for being a great traveler, who in spite of his advanced age spent a great part of his time traveling and sight-seeing both within and outside of Egypt. Among his travels were a visit to Jerusalem and the pilgrimage to Mecca and Medina. As he was also a great builder and sponsor of religious and philanthropic foundations, Qāyṭbāy used his tours to inspect construction works everywhere and to articulate his own ideas about architecture. In the following pages the design of Qāyṭbāy’s madrasah in Medina will be discussed, with reference to his madrasahs in Jerusalem and Mecca, in order to demonstrate the Sultan’s role in the articulation of what may be understood as the concept of haram architecture.

The waqf descriptions of Qāyṭbāy’s madrasahs in Jerusalem and in Medina document the innovations that the monuments themselves can no longer demonstrate.¹ The original appearance of the Ashrafiyah in Jerusalem has not been preserved, and the madrasahs of Mecca and Medina are no longer extant. The innovations at the madrasah of Medina were considered at that time bold enough to provoke a discussion among the ‘ulama’, as Ibn Iyās and al-Samhūdī report.² In his reconstruction of the Ashrafiyah in Jerusalem, Archibald Walls has reconstructed architectural features that occurred there for the first time.³

Although this was not usual for Mamluk architecture outside Cairo, both Qāyṭbāy’s madrasahs in Jerusalem and Medina were erected by Cairene craftsmen.⁴ The Ashrafiyah of Jerusalem was rebuilt by order of the Sultan who, displeased with its original layout, ordered its remodeling by craftsmen sent from Cairo. As

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¹Bibliothèque Nationale, Suppl. Ar. no. 471, fols. 28v.-32.
for the madrasah in Medina, it was erected by a team of Egyptian craftsmen who were working at the time on the restoration of the Prophet’s Mosque.

Prior to his pilgrimage in 884/1480, Qâytbây undertook the restoration of the Prophet’s Mosque, which lasted with interruption from 879/1474-75 to 881/1477. In the following year, 886/1481, a fire devastated the sanctuary so that new radical restorations had to be made which were completed in 889/1484. The construction of the Sultan’s madrasah began in Rabî‘ I 883/June 1478, that is, after the first restoration of the Prophet’s Mosque was resumed, and it was completed in Ramadân 887/October 1482, prior to the completion of the second restoration. The reason for the relatively long time span between the beginning and completion dates of the madrasah was probably the second restoration of the Prophet’s Mosque, which required the involvement of the craftsmen working at the madrasah. The simultaneous occurrence of the madrasah construction and the restoration of the mosque gave the master-craftsmen the opportunity to make adjustments to both buildings in order to achieve a unity of design between the two.

The Medina madrasah abutted the Prophet’s Mosque south of Bâb al-Salâm and north of Bâb al-Rahmâh. It was part of a complex that occupied the block between two east-west oriented streets leading to these gates. Both gates, piercing the western wall of the mosque, led directly into the prayer hall. The madrasah’s facade was striped with black and white masonry, and a two-storied minaret stood above the entrance on the street leading to Bâb al-Salâm. It was built on the Egyptian qa‘ah plan with a northern and a southern iwân separated by a dûrqâ‘ah. It had seven windows (shabâbîk) opening directly onto the Prophet’s Mosque; five others overlooked the street (fig. 1).

The waqfîyah mentions that on the madrasah’s northern side there was a two-storied building called a majma‘, which is an assembly hall. Its lower floor had three windows (shabâbîk) opening onto the Prophet’s Mosque and the upper floor overlooked the mosque’s roof. On the northern side of the majma‘ was a sabîl with one window opening onto the mosque and another onto the street. The window on the mosque’s side must have served to give the worshipers inside the mosque access to water from the sabîl (fig. 2).

Adjacent to the madrasah on its western side was a ribâṭ, a complex of thirty-eight cells built around a courtyard, in the middle of which was an octagonal domed fountain. It is not clear whether this ribâṭ had one or two stories. No cells

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6van Berchem, Matériaux pour un Corpus Inscriptionum Arabicarum, Syrie du sud, I: Jerusalem ville (Cairo, 1922), 89; in Mujîr al-Dîn’s terminology, majma‘ is another word for a mall mosque.
7The precise location of this ribâṭ is not indicated in the document, neither in relation to the madrasah nor to the street.
overlooking the mosque or the street are mentioned, which suggests that they opened onto the courtyard. Another forty-two cells were beneath the madrasah and the majma’, some of them with windows overlooking the Prophet’s Mosque; others were integrated into the madrasah itself, overlooking its interior and connected with the Prophet’s Mosque by a staircase. This makes for a total of eighty cells. The document does not specify how many cells overlooked the mosque. Al-Samhūdī writes that Qāyybāy’s complex had a total of thirty openings (fataḥāt) pierced on three levels and overlooking the mosque⁸ (figs. 3 and 4).

From the reconstruction of the plan of the Prophet’s Mosque as it was in the fifteenth century, it appears that between Bāb al-Salām and Bāb al-Raḥmah ten naves run parallel to the qiblah wall,⁹ six of which were part of the sanctuary, the other four belonging to the lateral western riwāq. Since the complex was located between Bāb al-Raḥmah and Bāb al-Salām, only its southern part, probably the madrasah, was juxtaposed to the prayer hall itself; the northern part, or majma’, was juxtaposed to the lateral western riwāq.

If thirty openings overlooked ten naves, one is tempted to imagine that three windows arranged vertically opened onto each nave but, according to al-Samhūdī, there were also three doors leading through the madrasah into the mosque.¹⁰ The waqfīyah uses the word shabābik for windows, a term which usually does not include the arched bays with stucco grills filled with colored glass, which are called qamarīyah, nor does it include the oculi. Al-Samhūdī uses the general term for openings (fataḥāt), which can refer to any type of openings, including doors.¹¹ When the sanctuary was rebuilt by the Ottoman sultan ‘Abd al-Majīd, the number of naves between the two gates was only nine.¹² The reconstruction showing how Qāyybāy’s madrasah abutted to the Medina mosque, as shown in figures 1 and 2, can therefore be only schematic and conjectural.

On both streets adjacent to the Qāyybāy complex were apartment houses and shops. Other buildings, including the public kitchen, a ḥammām, a mill, a bakery, and a wakālah, were built opposite the madrasah’s entrance, partly on the qiblah side of the mosque. Based on the waqf document, this description suggests that, in order to erect this madrasah with the living units and the sabīl communicating with the mosque through windows, it must have been necessary to make important

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¹¹ Muḥammad Muḥammad Amīn and Laila Ali Ibrahim, Architectural Terms in Mamluk Documents (Cairo, 1990), 69, 90f.
¹² Muṣṭafā, al-Madīnah al-Munawwarah, 94.
modifications in the mosque’s western wall, in fact eliminating it entirely in this section and replacing it by the madrasah’s facade.\(^\text{13}\) It seems very likely that these restorations and the planning of the madrasah were coordinated so as to produce a madrasah with a facade inside the mosque.

The madrasah did not stand directly on the street level, but was built above a row of shops on the street side, and above living units on the inner side overlooking the Prophet’s Mosque. Its floor must have been, therefore, on a level higher than the mosque’s, and the living units beneath must have had their windows close to their ceiling in order to leave enough vertical space for the madrasah’s facade with its windows.

The innovation at the madrasah of Medina consisted of its juxtaposition to the sanctuary in an intimate way, with its facade forming the lateral wall of the prayer hall. Ibn Iyās and al-Samhuḍi refer to the windows as a characteristic feature of the madrasah complex; they report that some ‘ulamā’ objected to their presence, arguing that the windows constituted an intrusion into the Prophet’s Haram. But, as might be expected, the Sultan found other scholars to override them. Whereas Ibn Iyās mentions only the fatwā authorizing the windows, al-Samhuḍi, who also refers to this fatwā, writes that God made the Sultan change his mind, so that the windows were ultimately walled up. Unlike Ibn Iyās, al-Samhuḍi was an eyewitness in Medina, so that his version is more trustworthy. It is difficult to imagine, however, how so many windows could be done without.

Due to the lack of a waqf document, we are less informed about the Ashrafiyah of Mecca, which was built prior to that of Medina. It was completed just in time to host the Sultan during his pilgrimage in 884/1480. Located on the left hand side of Bāb al-Salām on the eastern wall of the Haram, it included also a majma’ overlooking the Haram. Its curriculum included the teaching of the four rites of Islamic law with four teachers and forty students, as well as Sufi services. Its premises comprised seventy-two living units, a primary school (maktab) for forty pupils, a ribāṭ, a majma’ for the four chief qaḍās, and a library. Both the madrasah of Mecca and that of Medina were built by the same contractor-architect, Ibn al-Zamin.\(^\text{14}\)

\(^\text{13}\) al-Samhuḍi, Wafā’ al-Wafā’, 2:640f.

\(^\text{14}\)Shams al-Dīn Ibn al-Zamin was a merchant who had been working as a commercial agent for Qāytbāy already prior to the latter’s sultanate. Qāytbāy sent him to Mecca on business and at the same time to build for him a religious complex next to the Holy Mosque, and another in Medina next to the Prophet’s mosque. He moreover executed infrastructural works, such as the conduction of source water to the holy cities and for pilgrims’ use. When a fire broke out in the Prophet’s mosque, he was in charge of the reconstruction as well as of building the Sultan’s madrasah. From all historical accounts it appears that Ibn al-Zamin was a contractor who designed the buildings as well. Qūṭb al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn Ṭāhir al-Nahrawālī, Kitāb al-I’lām bi-A’lām Bayt Allāh
Whether in Medina or Mecca, Qāytbāy’s constructions provoked a controversy. In Mecca, the contractor and architect Ibn al-Zamin laid the foundations of the complex in such a way as to make them encroach upon the mas‘ā, thus disturbing the ḥaţj ritual. This infuriated the ‘ulamā’, but the petitions they sent to the Sultan were not of much help; Qāytbāy confirmed Ibn al-Zamin’s appointment and dismissed the qādī who had tried to stop the construction. Qūţ al-Dīn comments by expressing his mixed feelings about Qāytbāy who, although one of the most pious and charitable rulers was, nevertheless, able to act in such a ruthless manner.\textdagger\textdagger}\textdagger

For both of his constructions in Mecca and Medina, Qāytbāy did not hesitate to demolish his predecessors’ buildings in order to replace them with his own or to remove them simply for aesthetic purposes; in Mecca an old sabīl was demolished because it obstructed the view of his new madrasah and an ablution fountain of al-Ashraf Sha‘bān was razed because its space was needed. In Medina a ribāţ, parts of the Madrasah Jūbānīyah, the Dār al-Shubbāk, as well as houses had to make place for the Sultan’s new religious complex. Ibn Iyās reports how the acquisition of the houses had raised a controversy which led one of the house owners to kill the qādī involved in the transactions. This did not, however, stop the Sultan’s scheme.\textdagger\textdagger\textdagger\textdagger In fact, the demolition of parts of the Jūbānīyah, a pious foundation, could not have been fully correct.

Qūţ al-Dīn, who also criticized Sultan al-Ghawrī’s encroachments upon the Holy Mosque in Mecca, commented with resignation that the Sultan would not have listened to the jurists anyway; they were too dependent on the rulers to be capable of true opposition.\textdagger\textdagger\textdagger\textdagger This, in fact, conforms with what Mamluk sources regularly report about the ‘ulamā’’s opposition being easily overruled; alternative jurists could always be found to issue more convenient opinions.

The idea of establishing visual contact between a building and an adjoining mosque or shrine was obviously not a matter of mere architectural design, but rather of religious significance. As Christel Kessler has demonstrated in the case of Mamluk funerary architecture, sultans and amirs tried to place their mausoleums in a location adjacent to the prayer hall of their mosques, both connected by windows, so that the soul of the dead would benefit from the barakah, or blessing,


\textdagger\textdagger\textdagger\textdagger Qūţ al-Dīn, \textit{Kitāb al-I‘lām}, 101.
\textdagger\textdagger\textdagger\textdagger Ibn Iyās, \textit{Badā’i’ al-Zahūr}, 3:145.
\textdagger\textdagger\textdagger\textdagger Qūţ al-Dīn, \textit{Kitāb al-I‘lām}, 212.
emanating from the mosque’s prayers.\textsuperscript{18} In the recess of a window overlooking the street, a \textit{shaykh shubbāk}, regularly mentioned in \textit{waqfīyahs} of religious foundations, would sit reciting the Quran for the soul of the dead, thus extending this \textit{barakah} to the passersby, and soliciting at the same time their prayerful response.

The practice of attaching a mausoleum to a religious building started under the Saljuqs, when Sultan Sanjar (d. 1157) built his mausoleum next to a mosque in Marw, connecting them with a window.\textsuperscript{19} A few decades later the Zanjid vizier Jamāl al-Dīn Jawād al-Īsfahānī erected a \textit{ribāṭ} for Persian visitors and a mausoleum for himself on the eastern side of the Prophet’s Mosque. The complex was built across the street, facing the mosque’s door, Bāb ‘Uthmān, also called Bāb Jibrīl. The mausoleum, where the vizier was buried in 1193, was pierced with a window facing yet another window in the mosque, allowing the passersby to see the Prophet’s tomb within the sanctuary. The two windows established a visual connection between the tombs of Jawād and the Prophet.\textsuperscript{20} Jawād had been a great benefactor of the Holy Cities, where he ordered important improvements at his own expense, such as the reconstruction of the walls of Medina. To the south of this \textit{ribāṭ}, there was another funerary structure purchased by Shīrkūh, Šalāḥ al-Dīn’s uncle, in which he and his brother, Šalāḥ al-Dīn’s father, were to be buried.

Also in Medina, the funerary \textit{madrasah} called al-Jūbānīyah, erected in 1324 by Jūbān, the \textit{atābak} of the Ilkhanid sultan Abū Sa’īd, was connected with the Prophet’s Mosque through a window pierced in the wall of the mausoleum. After his death the remains of Jūbān were sent from Baghdad to Medina for his burial there. This, however, was prevented by the Mamluk sultan al-Nāṣir Muḥammad who gave orders to bury him at the cemetery of Baqī‘. Al-Samhūdī mentions that the reason for this opposition was the location of the mausoleum: in order to be buried facing the \textit{qiblah}, Jūbān’s feet would have had to point at the Prophet’s grave.\textsuperscript{21} Part of this \textit{madrasah} was later demolished by Qāytbāy in order to build his own \textit{madrasah} at this place.

In Ayyubid Syria, when al-Malik al-Kāmil (d. 1238) built his mausoleum near the great mosque of Damascus, he pierced the mosque’s northern wall with a window, ignoring the general opposition against his initiative. A similar conflict occurred in Cairo, at the Azhar mosque, when the amir Jawhar al-Qanqabā‘ī built his funerary \textit{madrasah} (1440) adjacent to the sanctuary’s northern wall and wanted to pierce a window in the prayer hall to connect it with his mausoleum. He

\textsuperscript{19}Ferdinand Wüstenfeld, \textit{Yacut’s geographisches Wörterbuch} (Leipzig, 1924), 4:509.
\textsuperscript{20}al-Samhūdī, \textit{Wafā’ al-Wafā‘}, 3:689.
\textsuperscript{21}Ibid., 2:702.
requested, therefore, a fatwá from the jurists authorizing him to do so. The jurist and historian al-‘Ayní, who was involved in this case, refused to sign this fatwá and accused the others who had signed it of corruption. This episode was recorded by al-Sakhawí in his biography of Jawhar and by al-‘Ayní himself. None of them, however, discusses the arguments presented by the two parties.\(^{22}\)

The earlier madrasahs of Áqbughá (1340) and Taybars (1309-10), which were erected in the northwestern ziyyádah of al-Azhar, are not mentioned to have provoked any opposition from the ‘ulamá’. In Jerusalem several religious foundations built along the portico of the Haram included funerary chambers with windows opening onto the Masjid al-Aqsá.

To understand the ‘ulamá’’s opposition to Qaýtba’y’s windows at his madrasah in Medina, it is necessary to understand the layout of the Haram complex prior to Qaýtba’y’s constructions and the physical relationship between the adjoining buildings and the mosque. In his description of the Prophet’s Mosque, al-Samhûdî mentions that dwellings, madrasahs, and ribâṭs surrounded the mosque with their walls facing its doors. This description indicates that there was a street between the mosque and the surrounding quarters.

Only on the qiblah and western sides did buildings abut the mosque. Between Báb al-Salám and Báb al-Rahmah, there were two buildings adjacent to, and overlooking, the prayer hall; one was a house called Dár al-Shubbák because it had a window onto the mosque. It was built by Káfûr al-Muzaffarí (d. 1311-12), known as al-Harîrî, one of the eunuchs who attended the mosque. It was the only house with a window overlooking the mosque; al-Samhûdî does not indicate, however, the reason for this exception, which could have been related to Káfûr’s task of policing the precinct. The other building was Júbân’s funerary madrasah mentioned above, whose window by that time had been walled up. It was there, on the site of the Dár al-Shubbák and parts of the Júbânîyah, that Qaýtba’y built his madrasah. A bakery, a mill, a wakâlah, and a public kitchen were erected on the qiblah side of the mosque on the site of houses whose demolition he also ordered.

Burton’s map, which was drawn during the reign of ‘Abd al-Majíd, shows streets next to the Prophet’s Mosque, except on the qiblah side and along the western side between Báb al-Salám and Báb al-Rahmah. This means that buildings touched the mosque to the south and west of the prayer hall. Burton himself writes of the Medina mosque: ‘Like that at Mecca, the approach is choked by ignoble buildings, some actually touching the holy ‘enceinte,’ others separated by a lane compared with which the road round St. Paul’s is a Vatican Square.’\(^{23}\)


\(^{23}\)Richard Francis Burton, Personal Narrative of a Pilgrimage to al-Madinah and Mecca, 2 vols.
The layout of the Meccan shrine was a different matter. Originally, in pre-Islamic times, the sanctuary was the roofless unwalled space around the Ka'bah. Houses surrounded this central space with streets between them converging from all sides towards the open space. With the expansion of the sanctuary in the Islamic period at the expense of the surrounding quarters, walls and porticoes were added around the central space. The legitimacy of the surrounding pre-existing dwellings could not be questioned. Gradually, the houses around the sanctuary which served as guest-houses during the pilgrimage season were replaced by philanthropic foundations of the ribāt and madrasah type, including a hospital, to provide lodging and teaching and care for sojourners and pilgrims. The earliest ribāt was founded in 400/1009-10. It was followed by several others to house the poor and the Sufis. As for madrasahs, they began to appear slightly later and multiplied in the following centuries so that by the end of the fifteenth century almost the entire wall of the holy mosque was hidden behind buildings. This made it necessary for Qāytbāy to demolish two ribāts in order to establish his own religious complex along the mosque’s wall.

The sources do not mention windows between the satellite structures and the mosque; these dwellings overlooked the mosque at the level of the roof, and not below. Windows are mentioned only in the case of the Dār al-Nadwah, formerly an adjacent guest-house that the caliph al-Mu’tadīd (r. 892-902) had turned into a prayer hall. It thus became an extension of the mosque, at which point large windows were pierced in the wall between it and the sanctuary.

The construction of windows in the Medina mosque was protested by the ‘ulamā’ with the argument that this was an indiscretion against the Prophet, whose tomb lay within the mosque. Such an argument could not have been used in Mecca, where from the outset the sanctuary had been exposed to its neighbors, or in Jerusalem, where the Haram with its large open space was surrounded by religious and residential buildings built above porticoes, creating a zone of transition between the city and the sanctuary.

Qāytbāy’s madrasah in Medina had an interesting feature in common with the Ashrafīyah of Jerusalem: a visual opening onto the adjoining sanctuary. The madrasah in Jerusalem was completed in 887/1482, slightly after that of Medina. The building was devastated by an earthquake in 1545. Later restorations did not

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replicate the original shape. The unusually detailed description in the waqf deed, and a comprehensive description by the contemporary historian Mujır al-Dín, in addition to the vestiges of the madrasah itself, allowed Archibald Walls to produce a reconstruction of this remarkable building, erected within the complex of the Masjid al-Aqṣá.

The madrasah acquired its final configuration after Qāytbāy visited Jerusalem and expressed his dislike for the first building, the reconstruction of which he ordered to be executed by Egyptian craftsmen. Like the madrasah of Medina, it was designed with an Egyptian qā‘ah plan, on a north-south axis. It was constructed on two floors; the waqfiyah refers to lower and upper madrasahs. Mujır al-Dín calls the lower madrasah a majma‘, which consisted merely of a hall reached from the Masjid al-Aqṣá by an entrance on its eastern side.

The madrasah projected onto the Haram of the Masjid al-Aqṣá with three facades pierced by large windows (fig. 5). The qiblah-side īwān had ten large rectangular windows (shabābīk) in its lower part, and six arched windows (qamarḥyaṭ) in its upper part. The northern īwān had six large rectangular windows surmounted by eight arched windows and a bull’s eye in its upper part.

The plan of the Jerusalem madrasah differs from the commonly known qā‘ah applied in religious architecture, however, in that, instead of a lateral recess, it has on one side a maq‘ad (fig. 6) or loggia that commanded the Haram panorama through three large arches. The maq‘ad is a feature of Cairene residential architecture, where it is connected with a reception hall (qā‘ah), while it overlooks at the same time the inner courtyard of a house. Although it is the only maq‘ad in the Cairene style known so far to have been used in religious architecture, the idea of a loggia overlooking the Haram was not new in Jerusalem. Smaller loggias with a double-arch

27 Mujır al-Dín, al-Uns al-Jalīl, 2:328. This term is not used in the waqf description of this building, but it was used in the earlier document describing the madrasah that Qāytbāy replaced with this one.


window existed already in several Mamluk satellite buildings around the Haram. They had double arched windows overlooking the Haram,\textsuperscript{30} such as the one at the Manjakiyah (762/1361), the pair of lateral chambers at the Is‘ardiyyah (1340s), and the one at the ‘Uthmāniyyah (840/1437). These were sometimes surmounted by domes, as at the Manjakiyah and the Is‘ardiyyah. There is also a kind of forerunner to this device in Fatimid architecture at the Azhar mosque where the caliph al-‘Azīz built a manzarah, or loggia, where he used to sit on festive occasions with his family.\textsuperscript{31}

The madrasahs of Qāytbāy in both Medina and Jerusalem were built in order to have a maximum number of bays overlook the adjoining sanctuary. Both had their majma‘ built so as to give their residents visual access to the sanctuary, creating a permanent interaction between the community of the sojourners (mujāwirūn) and the shrine.\textsuperscript{32}

In Jerusalem, the Masjid al-Aqṣá had been able to integrate additional structures into its premises apparently without legal conflicts because of the open character of its architecture and the natural separation of the platform from the walls. Mujīr al-Dīn defines the Masjid al-Aqṣá as the entire enclosed complex, and not only the Umayyad mosque known as al-Jāmi‘ al-Aqṣá, which is a jāmi‘ within the masjid.\textsuperscript{33} By means of this definition, he included the surrounding buildings within the sanctuary. This idea is essential for understanding Qāytbāy’s windows in Medina. In the Haram of Jerusalem the surrounding madrasahs and hostels were not viewed as “outdoor” structures; their windows and doors, as well as Qāytbāy’s maq‘ad, were not considered an intrusion into the sanctuary, but rather were considered part of it. Already in the eleventh century, oratories were built along the walls of the Haram in Jerusalem, and Nāṣir-i Khusraw mentions a handsome mosque along the eastern wall, within the portico, between Bāb al-Rahmah and Bāb al-Tawbah (the Golden Gate).\textsuperscript{34} This could have been the building used by the Shāfi‘ī scholar, Shaykh Naṣr ibn Ibrāhīm ibn Dāwūd, who is reported to have

\textsuperscript{30}Burgoyne, Mamluk Jerusalem, 391, 368-79, 552.
\textsuperscript{31}al-Maqrīzī, al-Mawā‘īz wa-al-I‘tibār fī Dhiqr al-Khiṭaṭ wa-al-‘Āthār (Būlāq, 1270/1853-54), 1:465 ff.
\textsuperscript{32}In Jerusalem the cells were at the same level as the madrasah, whereas the majma‘ was beneath it; in Medina the majma‘ was adjacent to the madrasah, and the cells were partly beneath it or included in the adjacent ribāt.
\textsuperscript{33}Mujīr al-Dīn, al-Uns al-Jālīl, 2:11, 24.

founded in about 1058 an oratory described as a *madrasah*, and also as a *zāwiyah*, above Bāb al-Rahmah.\(^{35}\) It was during the Mamluk period, however, that religious monuments with funerary chambers began to cluster along the northern and western porticoes of the Ḥaram,\(^ {36}\) whose street walls faced the busiest quarters of the city. In all these *madrasahs* and *khānqāhs* the main hall (*majma‘*) was built so as to have windows overlooking the Ḥaram. Some of these satellite buildings had their entrances within the portico, while others had two entrances. These were reached from both the street and the portico, or they might be reached only from the street. Several of them, such as the Awhādiyyah (697/1298), the Amīniyyah (730/1329), the Arghūniyyah (759/1358), the Khātūniyyah (completed 782/1380), and the Balādiyyah (782/1383), included funerary chambers with a window open to the Ḥaram. The living units were either on the street side, or on the upper floor with a view of the Ḥaram.

Here it is interesting to add a note about the use of the term *majma‘* in the sources and in the *waqf* deeds in connection with the Ḥaram structures. *Majma‘* means literally “place of assembly” and it refers in these texts to the main hall in a residential institution that includes the *miḥrāb*. The term *majma‘* is never used in *waqf* descriptions of Cairene religious architecture. This cannot be explained by local scribal traditions, for the terminology used in Qaṭḍāy’s *waqfiyyahs* is otherwise the same for foundations in or outside of Egypt. Also, Mujīr al-Dīn uses this term when speaking of the “prayer halls” of the *madrasahs* and *khānqāhs* in Jerusalem. The choice of the term *majma‘* instead of *masjid* seems to be of particular significance. It may involve a premeditated avoidance of the term *masjid* in the context of these boarding institutions since they were part of the Masjid al-Aqṣā. The *madrasahs*, *ribāts*, and *khānqāhs* in the Masjid al-Aqṣā were seen as dependencies to lodge pilgrims and provide religious education, rather than autonomous mosques. Another example for this complementary relationship between the shrine and the adjoining structures is the absence of a *miḥrāb* at the *madrasahs* of Álmalik and Sanjar al-Jawlī, both situated along the northern portico.\(^ {37}\) Instead, their *qiblah* walls are pierced by three windows each, the central one, which replaces the *miḥrāb*, being the largest; its view of the Ḥaram to the south is oriented to Mecca. The view of the Ḥaram thus replaces the *miḥrāb*: the Dome of the Rock and the Jāmi‘ Aqṣā, both on the same axis signal the more remote Ka‘bah which is in the same cardinal direction. It should be recalled in this context that the *madrasah* of Qaṭḍāy at Medina had neither an *imām* nor a


This means that the community prayed in the Prophet’s Mosque and gathered for teaching and Sufi rituals in the adjoining boarding structures.

While the satellite foundations created a zone of transition between the city and the shrine, the Mamluk market of Sūq al-Qaṭṭānīn, is connected with the Haram through a gate, Bāb al-Qaṭṭānīn, located along the western portico. This magnificent gate, built by al-Nāṣir Muḥammad and Amir Tankiz for the benefit of the Masjid al-Aqṣā and the Tankizīyah, signals the market-street to the visitor of the Haram, thus emphasizing the intersection between the urban-commercial zone and the religious precinct. It fulfills an equivalent function from the street’s perspective where its market side, which was once also decorated, signals the Haram to the market visitor.

Although it did not stretch along the entire enclosure, the portico built along the northern and eastern walls of the Haram contributed to the creation of a parallel to the layout of a classical mosque. Mujr al-Dīn’s reading of the Masjid al-Aqṣā as a mosque built around a courtyard, within which is the Dome of the Rock, having porticoes and minarets and encompassing educational and boarding structures, is of particular interest because it established a formal parallel between the Masjid al-Aqṣā and the mosques of Mecca and Medina. It is interesting to note here that the Mamluk minarets at the Jerusalem Haram were placed so as to be attached to the Haram rather than to the individual madrasahs. The minaret of Bāb al-Silsilah, built at the same time as the Tankizīyah, and most likely also by Tankiz, stands above an entrance to the Haram, and not at the madrasah. With the Meccan shrine the Jerusalem Masjid shares the central structure, a common feature that the Muslim theologians were aware of as they made the parallel between the Rock in Jerusalem and the Black Stone in Mecca. It shares with Medina the classical mosque plan of porticoes around a courtyard.

By the late Mamluk period the three holiest mosques of Islam in Mecca, Medina, and Jerusalem were encircled by hospices and religious institutions devoted to lodging communities of pilgrims and sojourners from various parts of the Muslim world. These buildings, which had expanded gradually and spontaneously from the eleventh century onward, added a new dimension to the shrines, creating an architectural and functional intermediary between them and the city. The intensive building activity of the Mamluks adjacent to the Haram in Jerusalem was the most articulate manifestation of this phenomenon. It was Qāṭbāy, however, who made a concept out of this phenomenon, as the bold layout of his madrasahs in Medina and Jerusalem demonstrate. The Sultan’s visit to Jerusalem in 880/1475, prior to

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38Burgoyne, Mamluk Jerusalem, 273 ff.
his pilgrimage to Medina in 884/1480, seems to have been decisive for the
architecture of his buildings in both cities. It inspired him to reshape the first and
to emulate in Medina the Haram pattern he had witnessed at the Masjid al-Aqṣá.
The boldness of this design was due to the Sultan’s personal involvement with
architecture and to his power of taking radical measures when necessary.
Figure 1. The qaʿah interior of Qāytbāy’s funerary mosque in Cairo
Figure 2. Schematic reconstruction of the layout of Qāytbāy’s complex in Medina

Figure 3. Axonometric drawing of Qāytbāy’s madrasah and majmā‘ in Medina
Figure 4. Schematic elevation of Qaytbay’s madrasah and majma’ in Medina
Figure 5. Qāṭbāy’s madrasah in Jerusalem (based on A. C. Walls)
Figure 6. *Maq'ad* from the period of Qāytbāy (Bayt al-Razzāz)