

# **The Umayyads & the Abbasids**

**Umayyads, c. 661-750**

**Abbasids, c. 750-1258**

## Principal Goals for Topic 2

1. The Emergence of an Imperial Islam - empire vs. region
2. The Distinction of “Religious” and “Secular” Realms -  
Figuration

# Style & Iconography

2 tools of Art History

# Politics vs. Religion

Motivating factors behind patronage

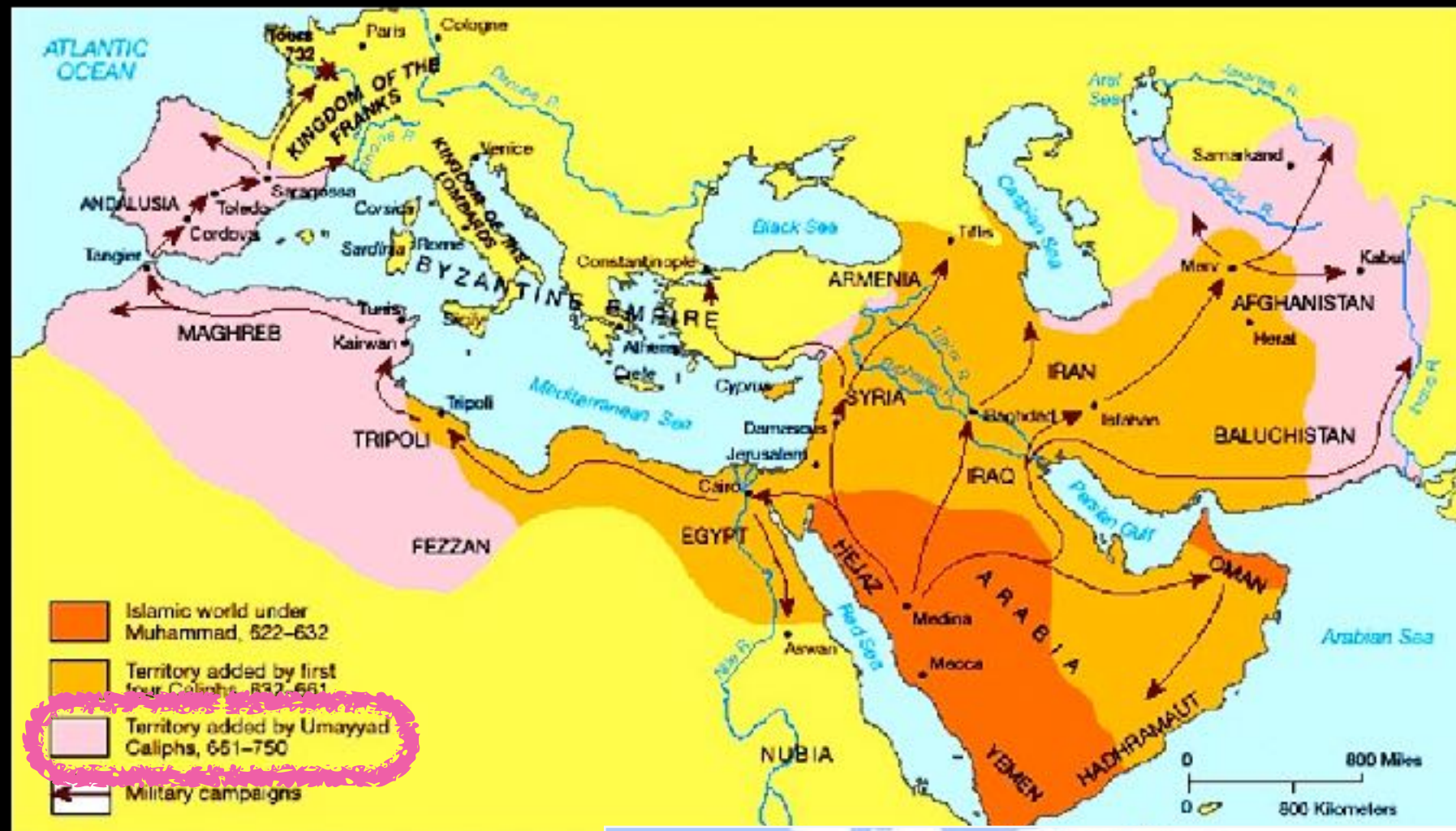
# Defining “Islamic”

What is “Islamic” about an object or building?

Does “Islamic” define an object’s entire identity, or are other factors important in defining it?

***Ideas of your own??***

## Umayyads, c. 661-750



## Abbasids, c. 750-1258

Abbasid Caliphate at its greatest extent, c. 850.







Bukhara

Samarqand

Balkh

Persepolis

Ctesiphon

Samarra

Karbala

Palmyra

Khirbat al-Mafjar

Damascus

Jerusalem

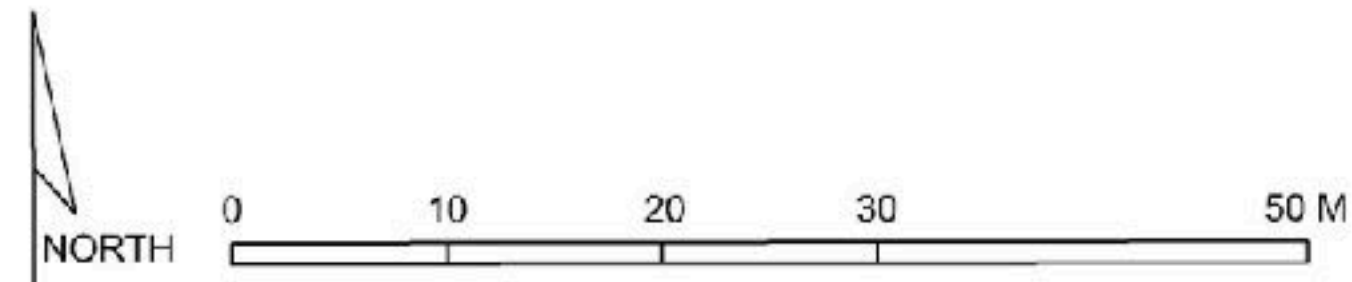
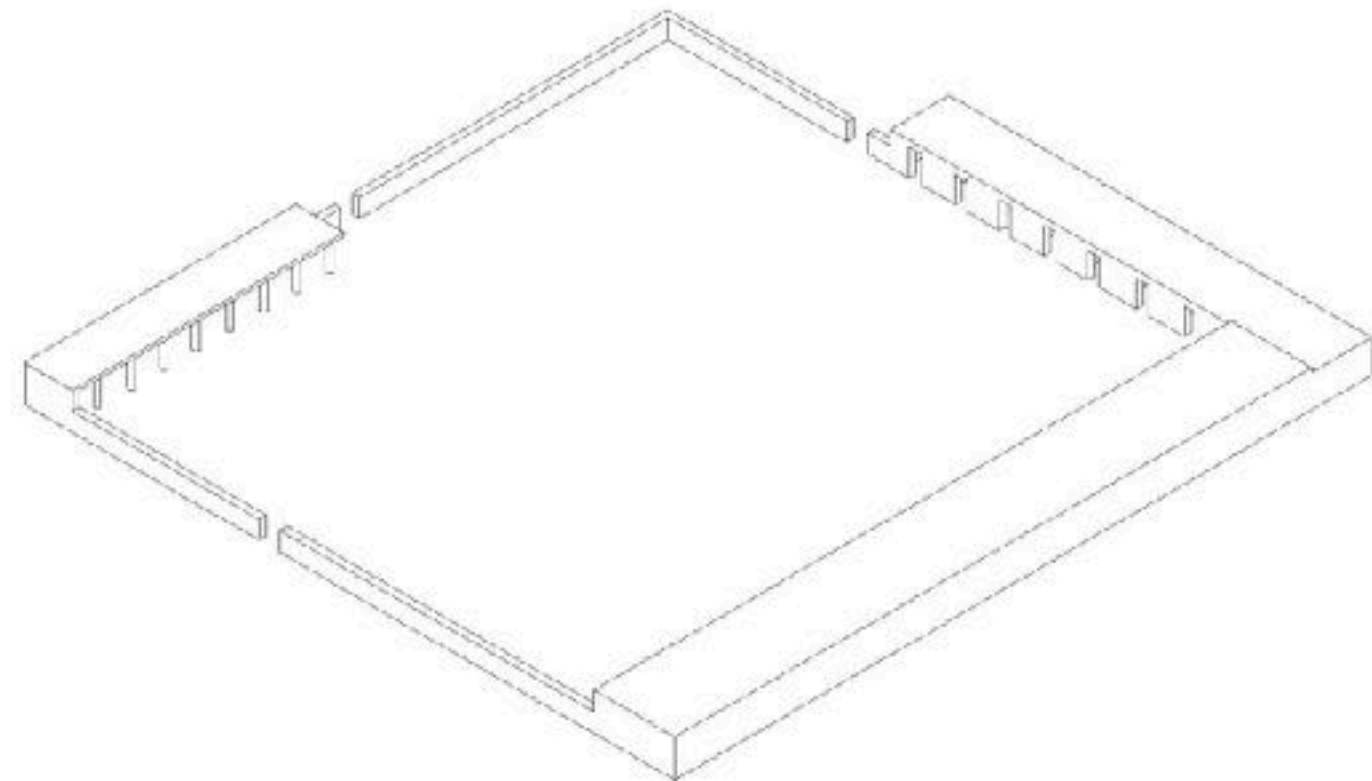
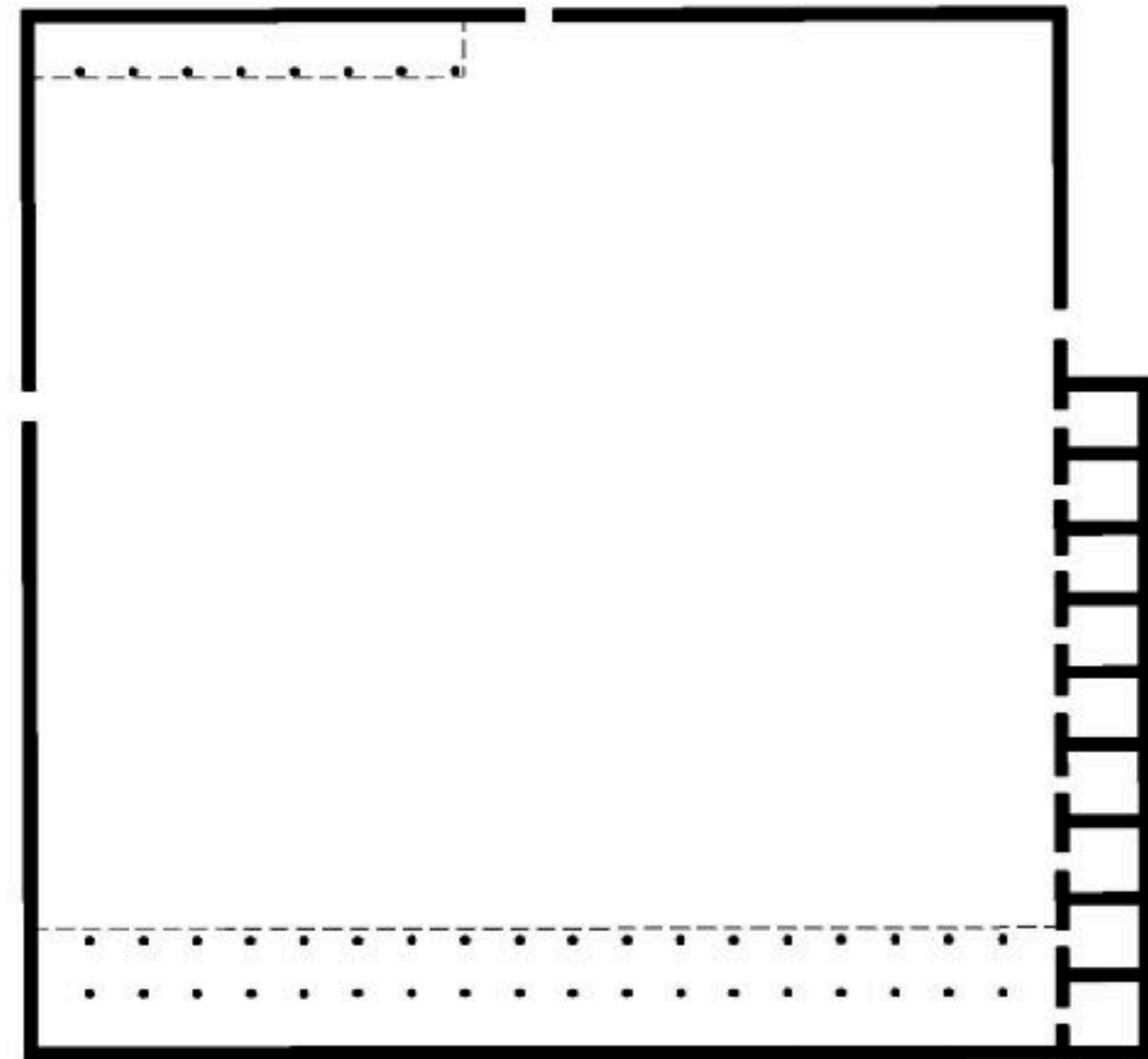
Cairo

Medina

Mecca

# The Mosque

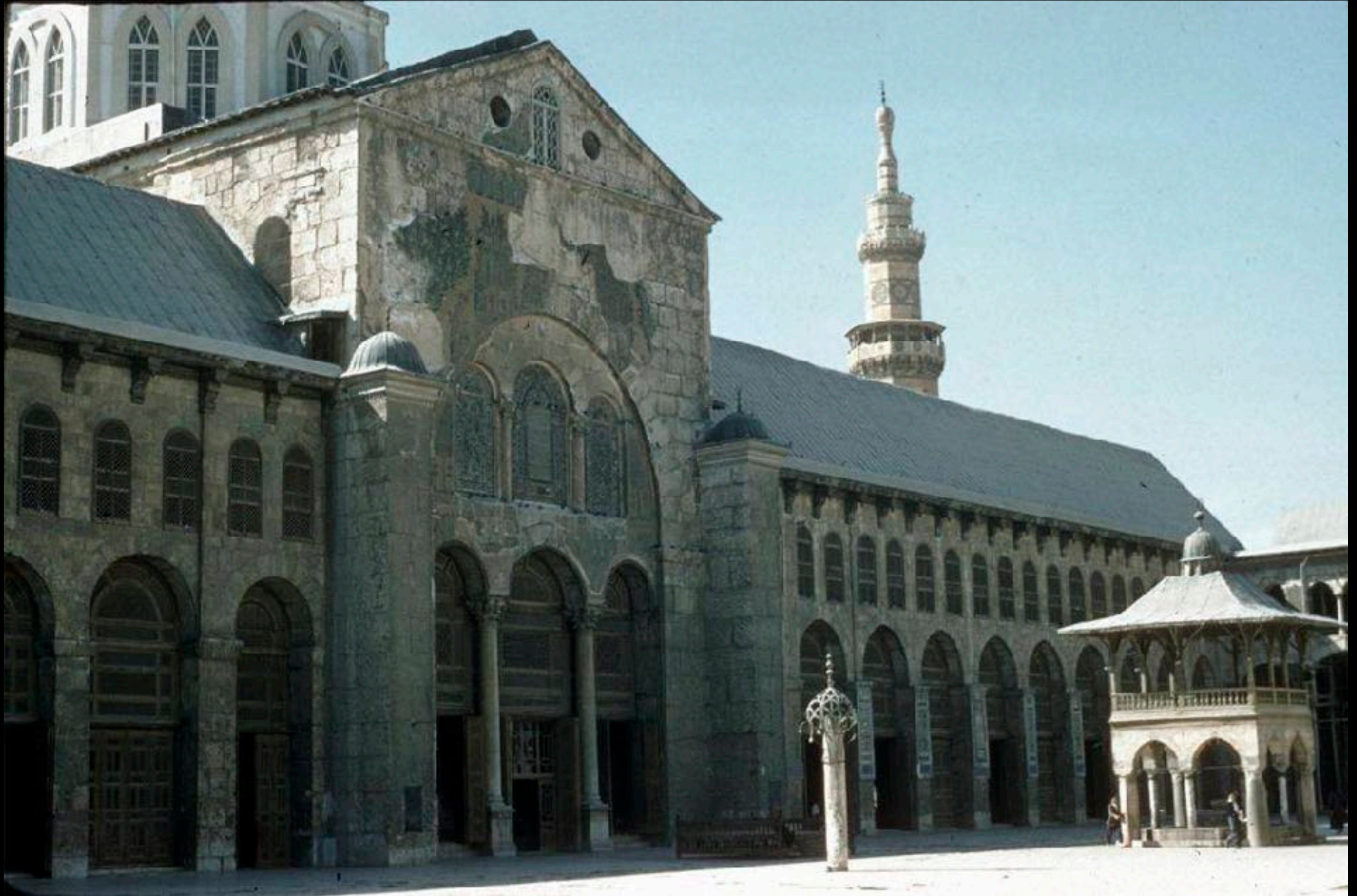
The Prophet's House and Mosque. Madina, Saudi Arabia. C. 622-30.  
RECONSTRUCTION



Initial orientation toward Jerusalem, then toward Mecca



# The Umayyads



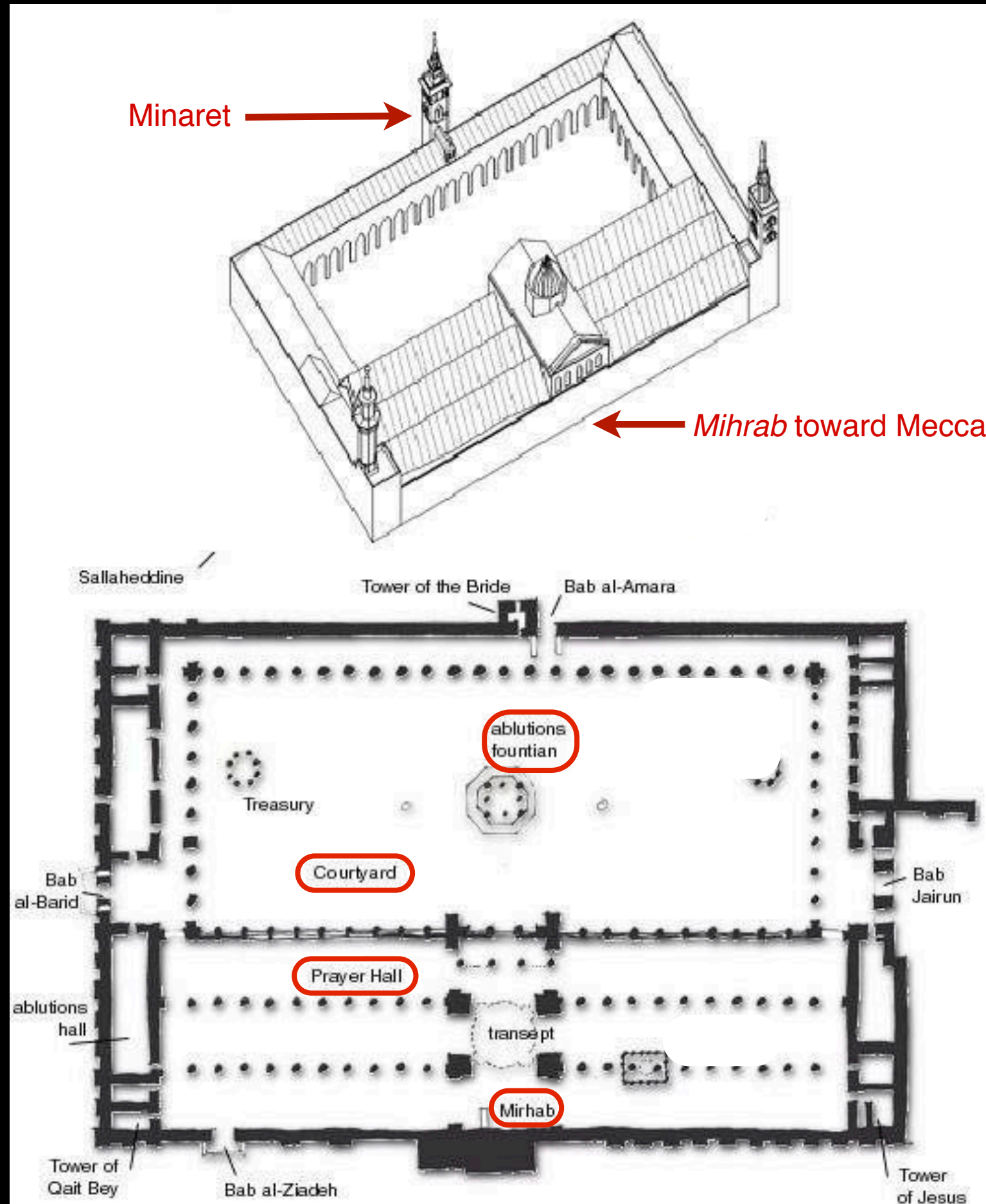
The Umayyad Mosque, Damascus  
Attributed largely to al-Walid I, r. 705-715

The Emergence of an Imperial Islam - empire vs. region

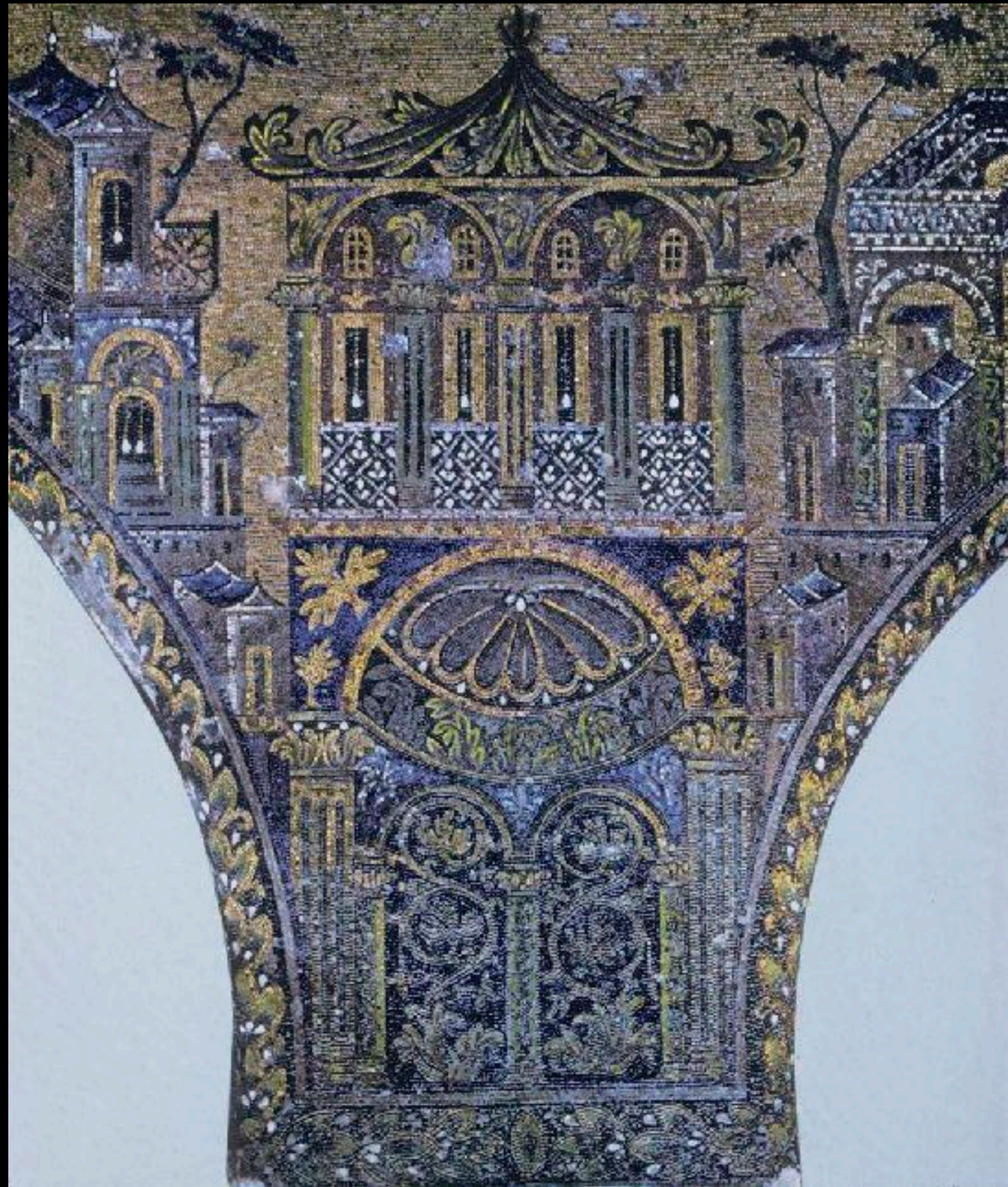
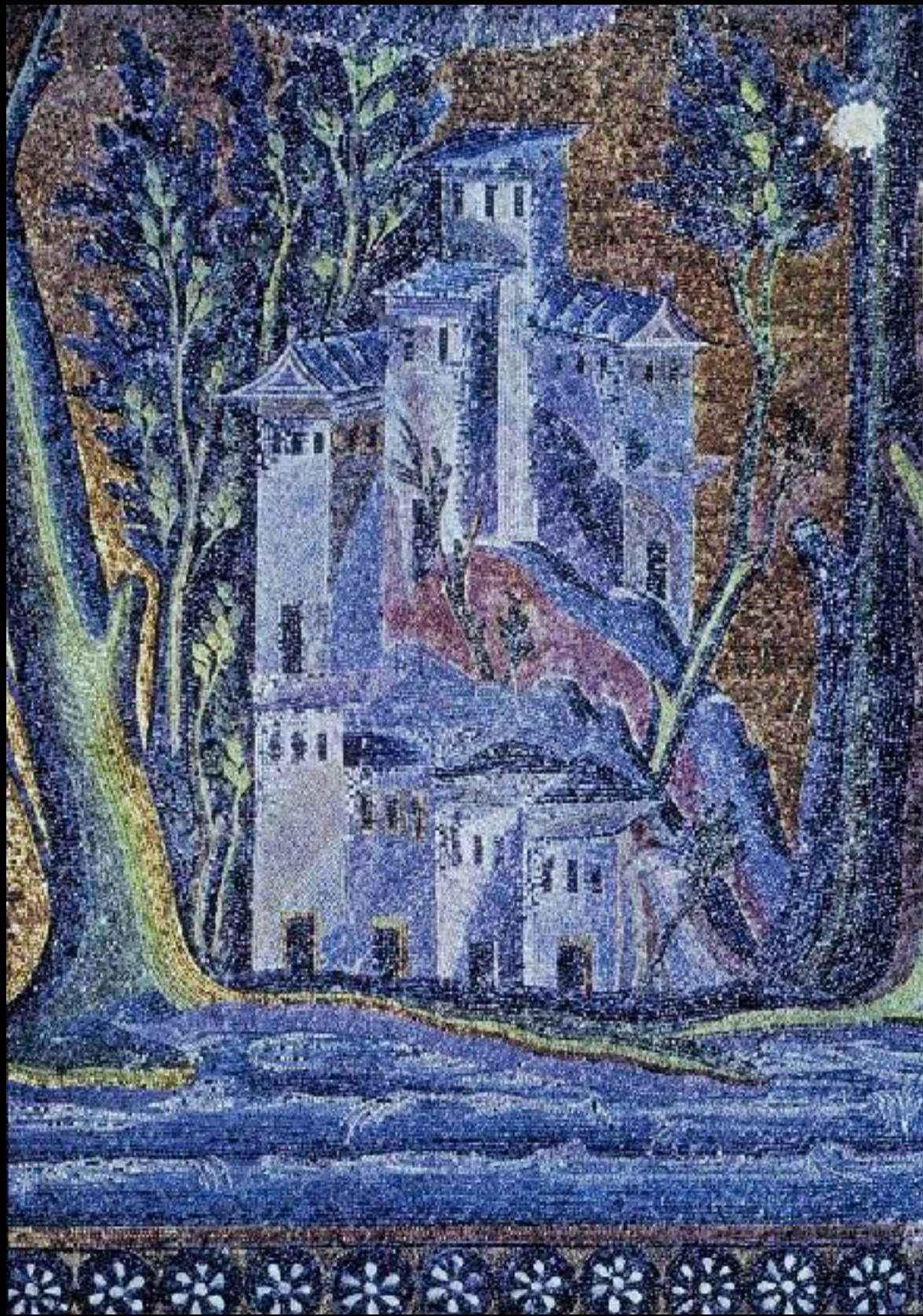


# Uniting the *Umma*: the Mosque

The Umayyad Mosque, Damascus (founded ca. 650), hypostyle plan







**The Umayyad Mosque, Damascus  
Attributed largely to al-Walid I, r. 705-715**

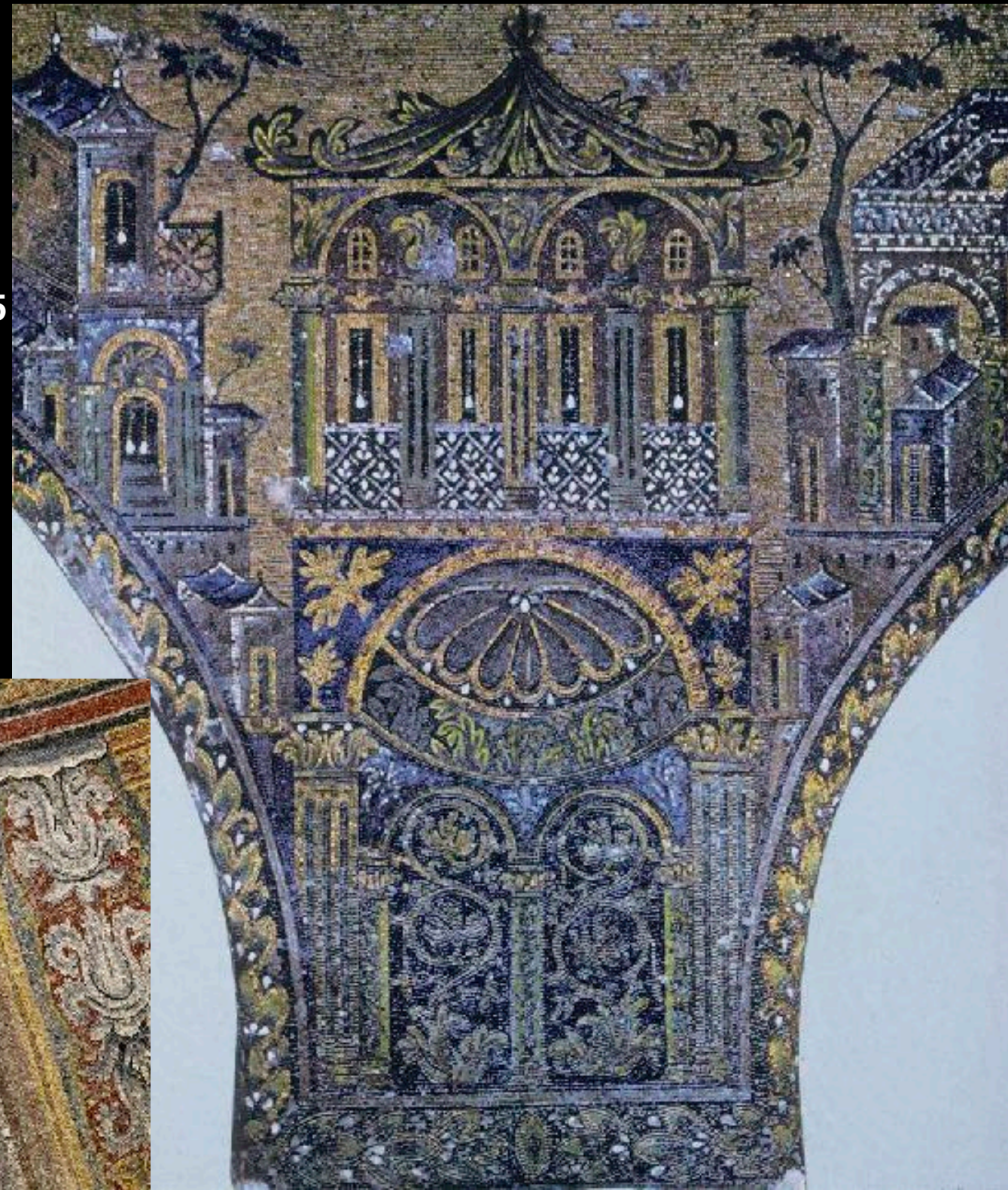
**The Emergence of an Imperial Islam - empire vs. region**



# Style & Iconography

2 tools of Art History

The Umayyad Mosque, Damascus  
Attributed largely to al-Walid I, r. 705-715



Altar table with open Gospel and two thrones  
for Christ's Second Coming, dome, detail  
c. 450-460

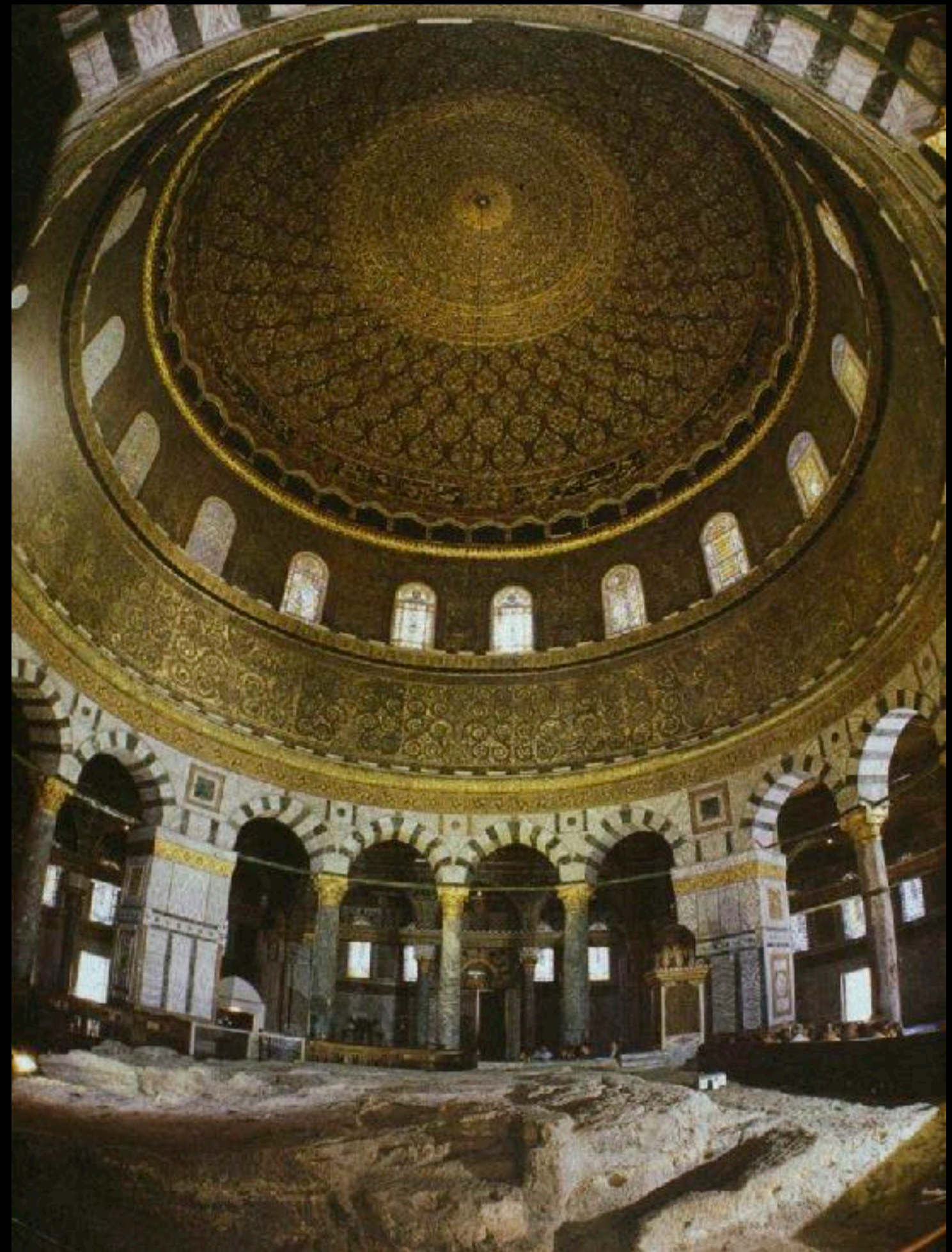
Orthodox Baptistery (San Giovanni in Fonte,  
also known as the Neonian Baptistery),  
Ravenna, Italy





**The Dome of the Rock, Jerusalem. Founded c. 691 (Abd al-Malik r. 685-705)**





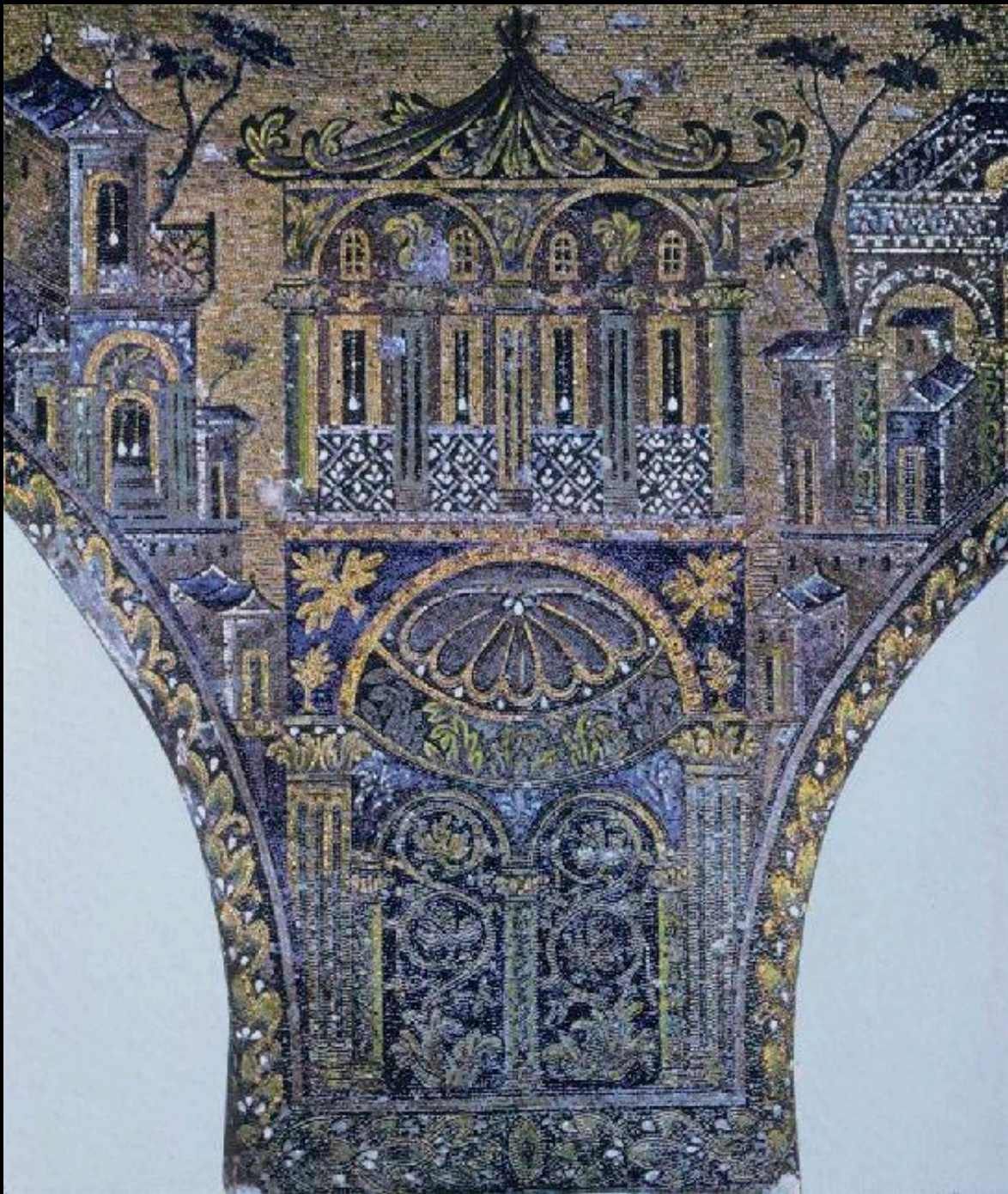
**Politics vs. Religion**  
Motivating factors behind patronage

**The Dome of the Rock, Jerusalem. Founded c. 691 (Abd al-Malik r. 685-705)**



# Style & Iconography

2 tools of Art History



**The Umayyad Mosque, Damascus**  
Attributed largely to al-Walid I, r. 705-715



**The Dome of the Rock, Jerusalem.**  
Founded c. 691 (Abd al-Malik r. 685-705)

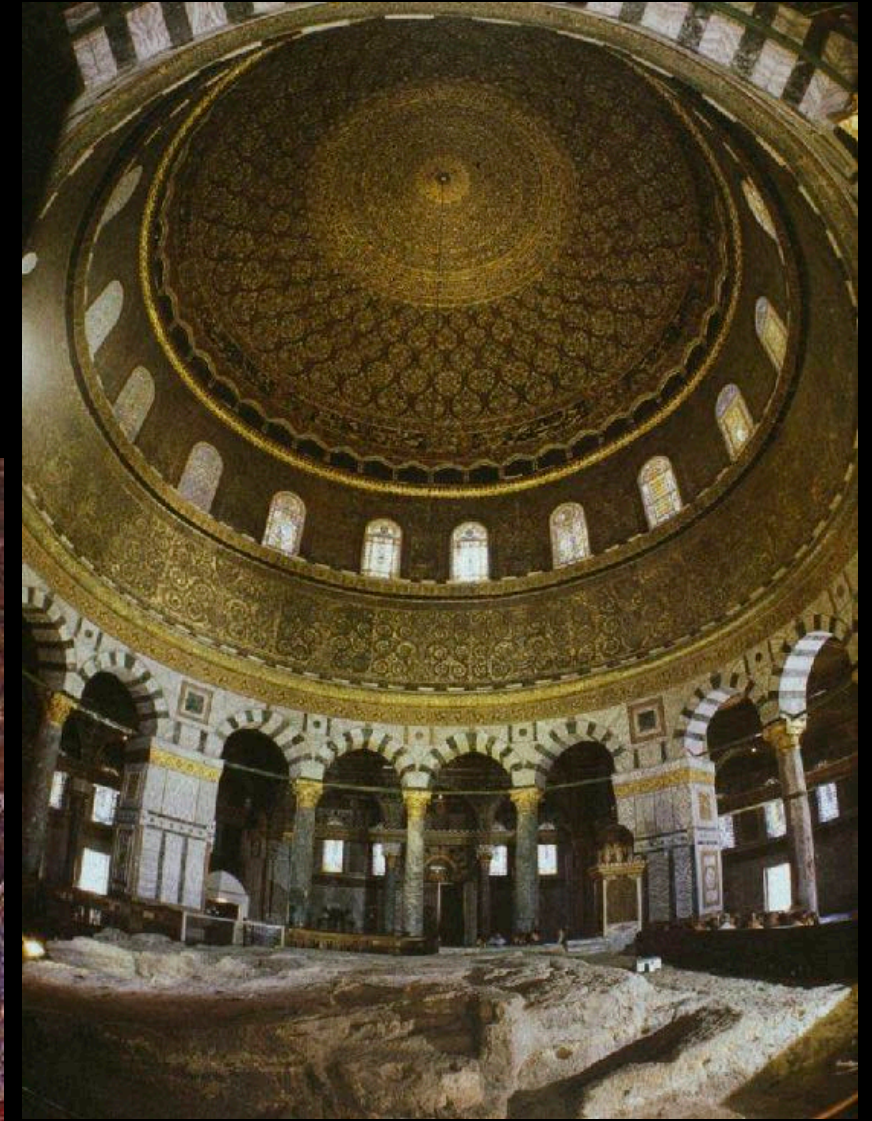
**The Emergence of an Imperial Islam - empire vs. region**



## Defining "Islamic"

What is "Islamic" about an object or building?

Does "Islamic" define an object's entire identity, or are other factors important in defining it?



**The Dome of the Rock, Jerusalem. Founded c. 691 (Abd al-Malik r. 685-705)**





**Silver Dirham, minted 695-6 CE**  
**Obverse: Idealized portrait of the caliph as Sasanian emperor**  
**Reverse: Representation of Prophet's lance in niche**



**Sasanian coin, silver; c. 5th-6th century CE**  
**Obverse: Sasanian emperor**  
**Reverse: Figure and symbols (?)**

**Gold Dinar, adapting Byzantine design. Minted in Syria, 694-7 CE**



**Gold Solidus of Constantine II; c. 647-651 CE**



**Gold Dinar, showing new design of inscriptions. Minted in Syria, 696-7 CE**

**The Emergence of an Imperial Islam - empire vs. region**



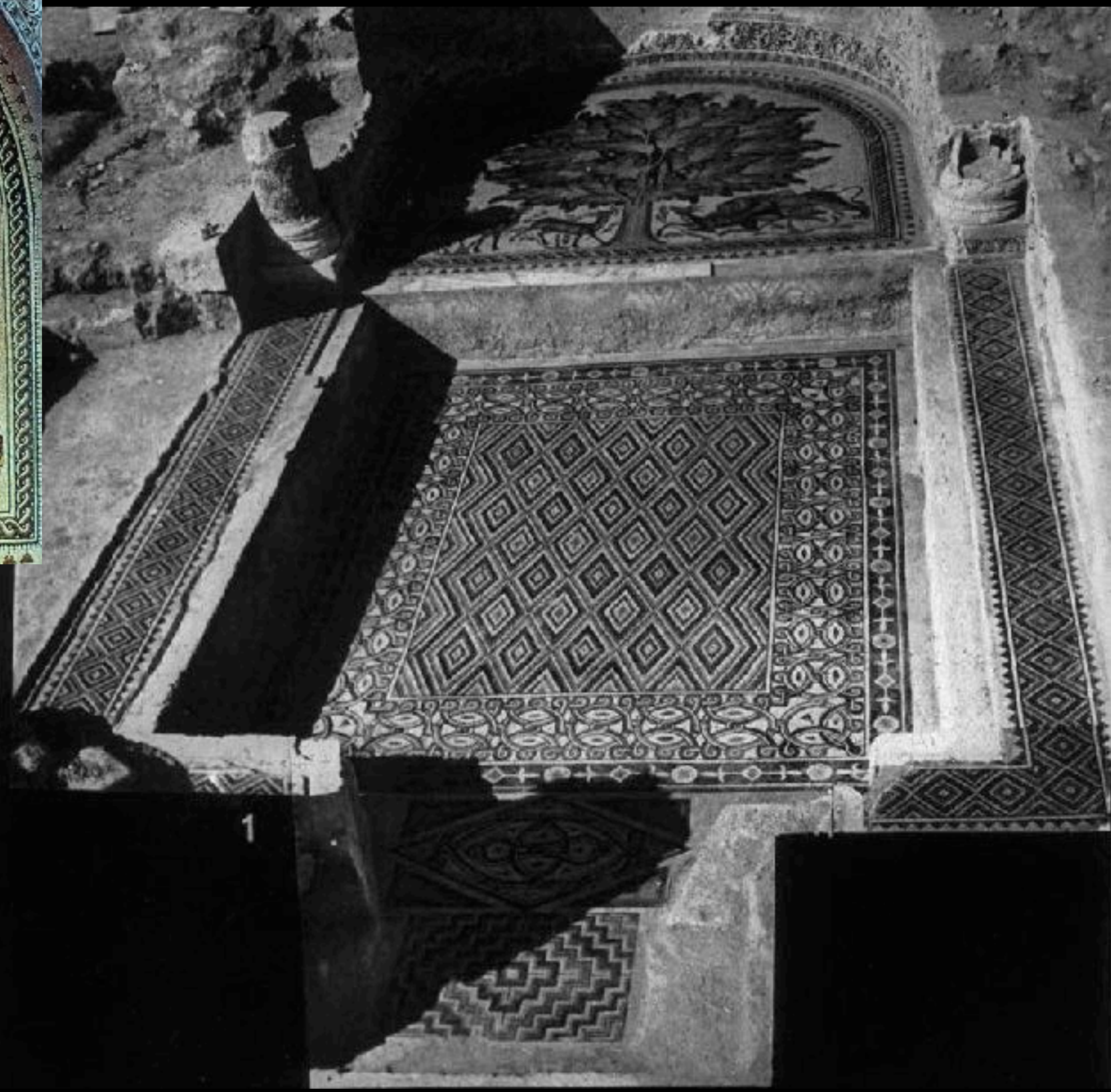
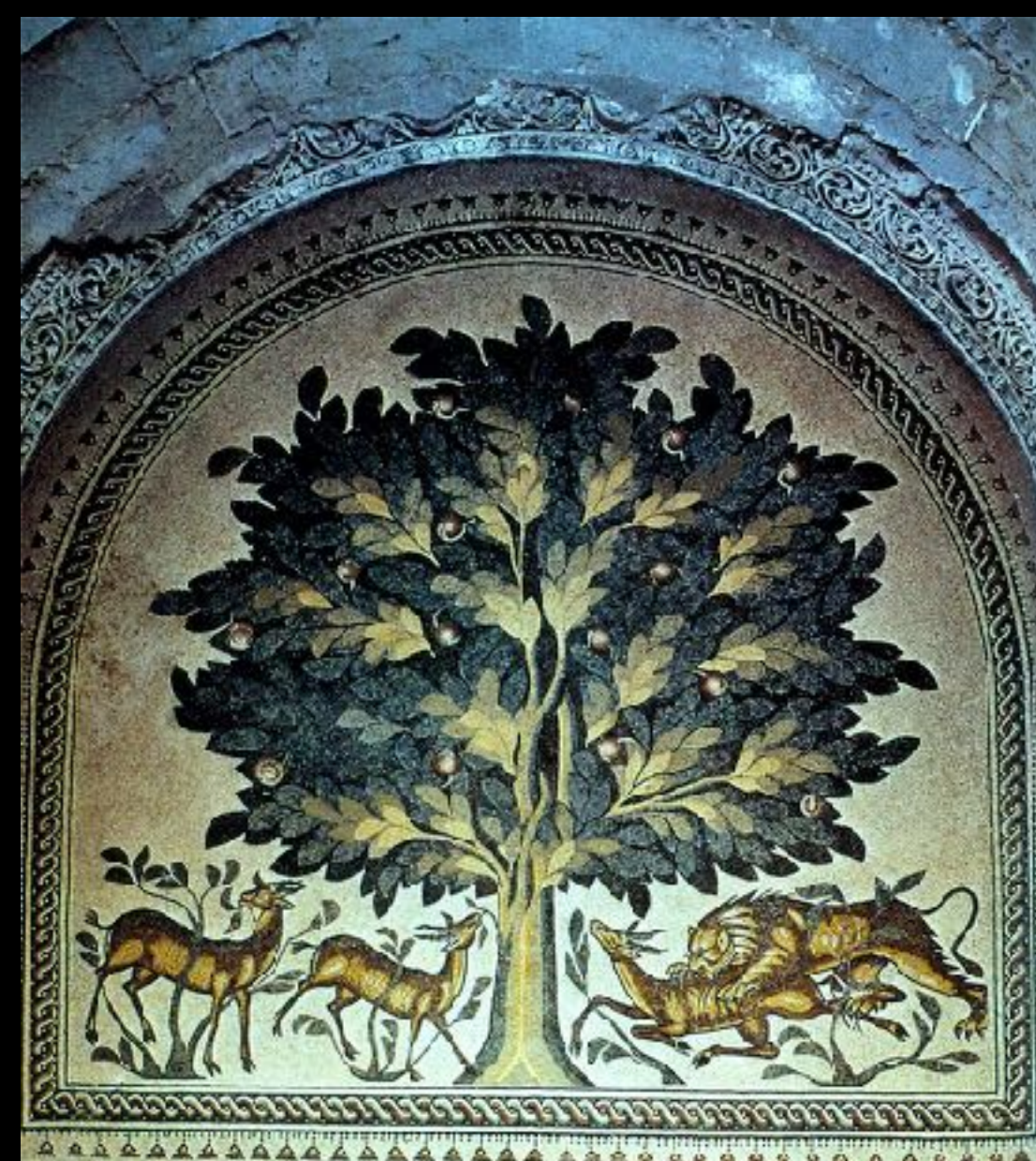
**Palace of Khirbat al-Mafjar, Main Hall. 724-743; near Jericho (Jordan)**



**The Distinction of “Religious” and “Secular” Realms**



**Palace of Khirbat al-Mafjar, Mosaics.  
724-743; near Jericho (Jordan)**







Palace of Khirbat al-Mafjar, Mosaics.  
724-743; near Jericho (Jordan)



Vaison-la-Romaine, Mosaics, c. 100  
BCE-100 CE; Provence (France)

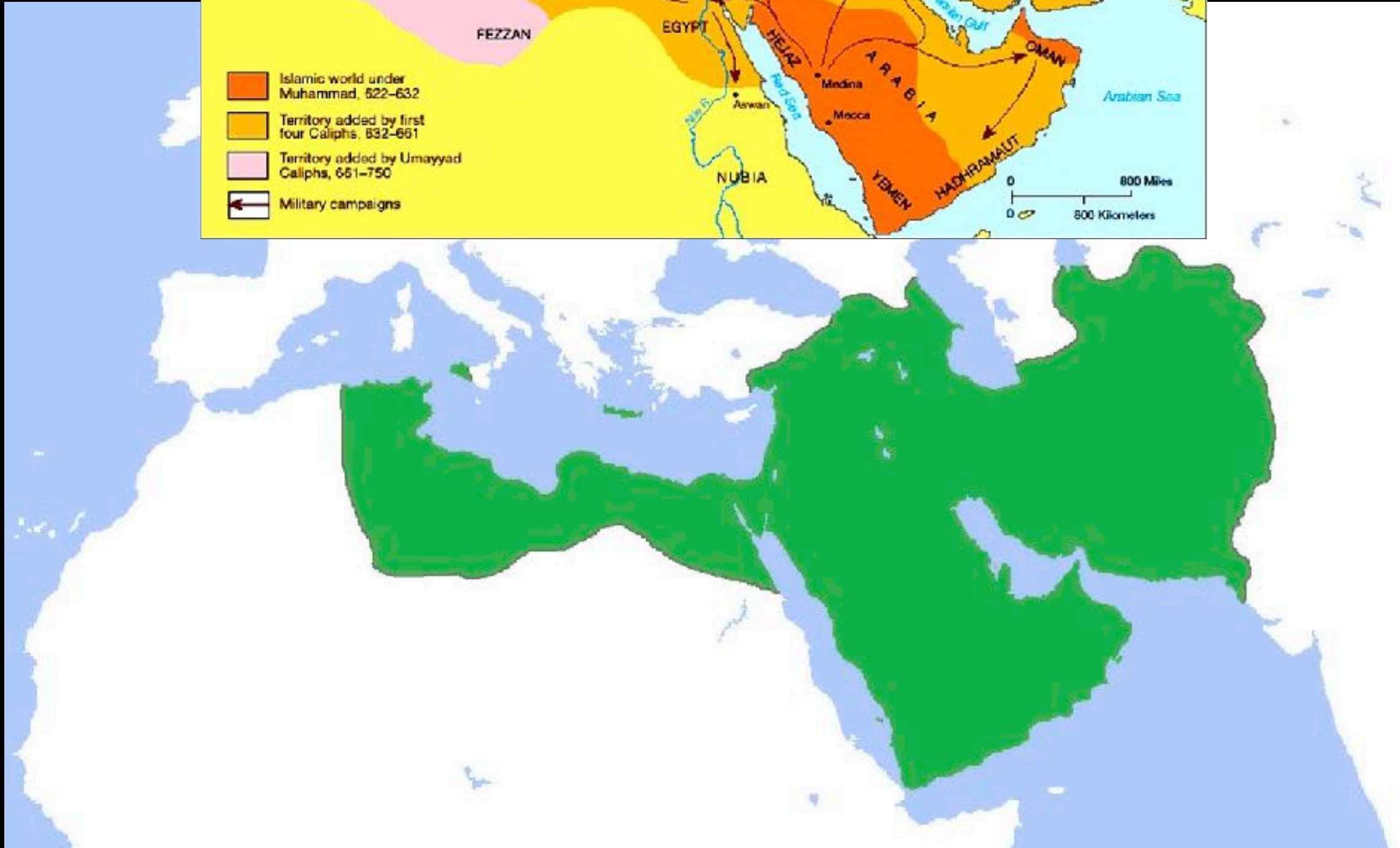
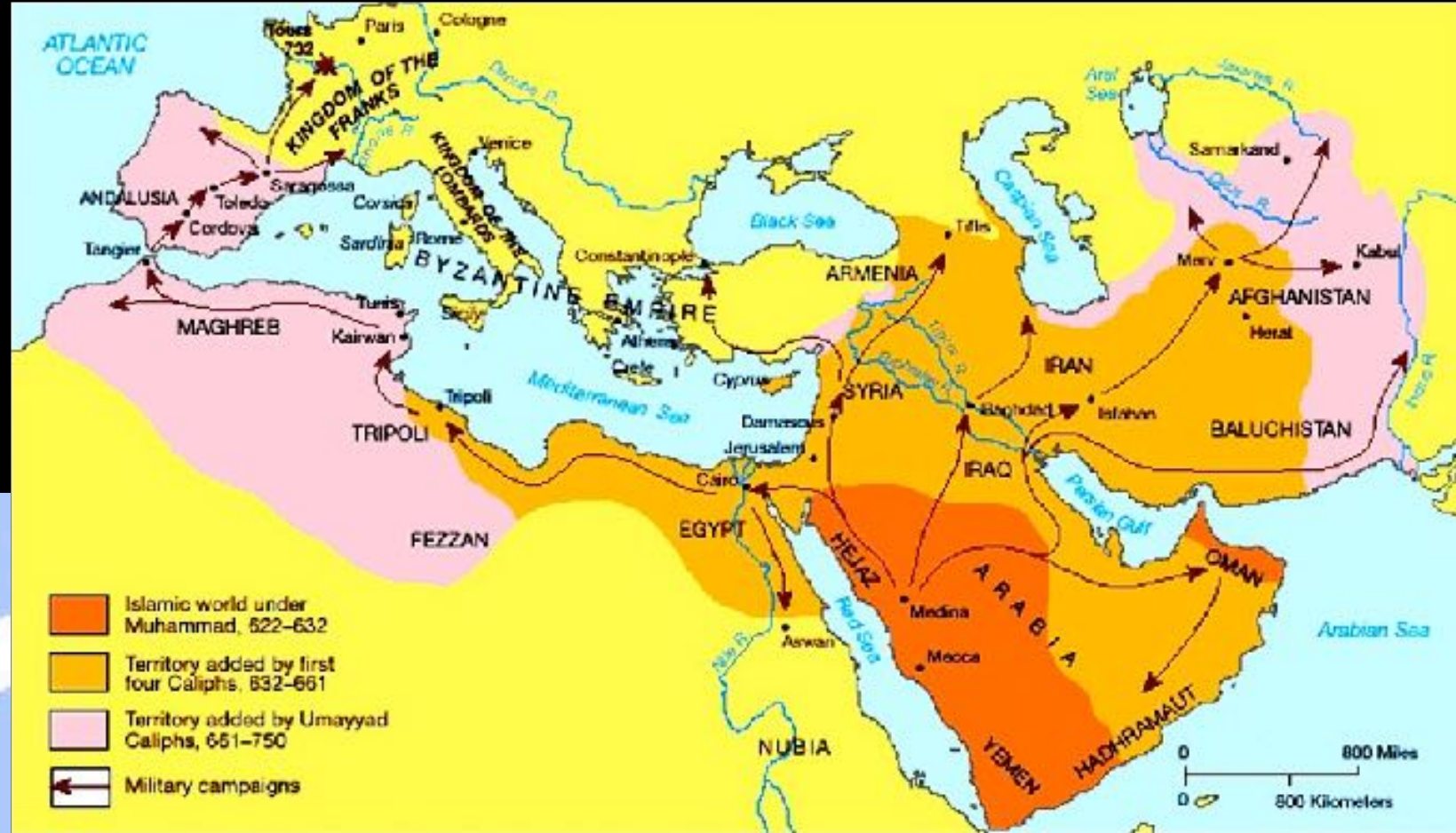


Palace of Khirbat al-Mafjar, 724-743; near Jericho (Jordan)



The Distinction of “Religious” and “Secular” Realms - Figuration

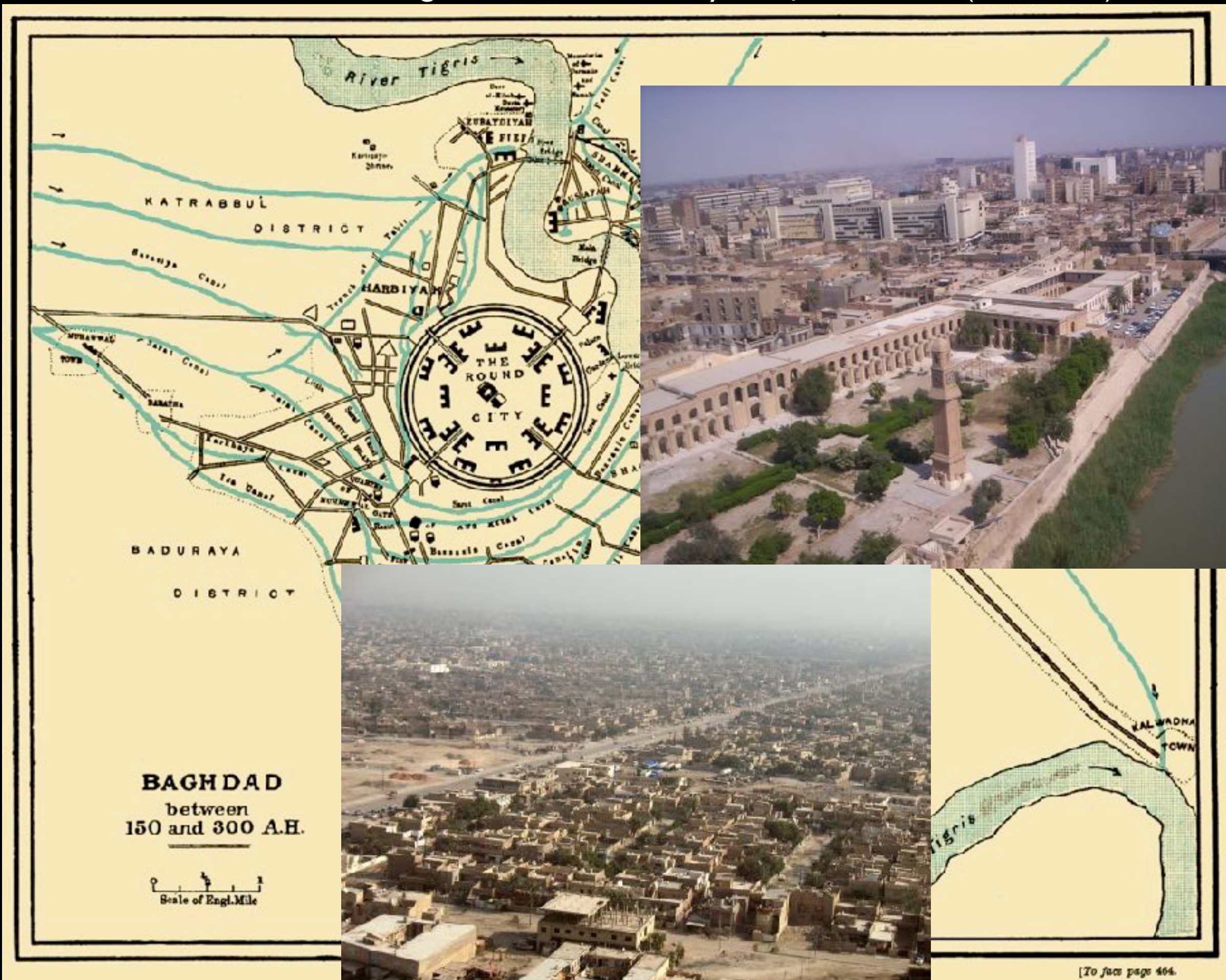




# Abbasids, c. 750-1258

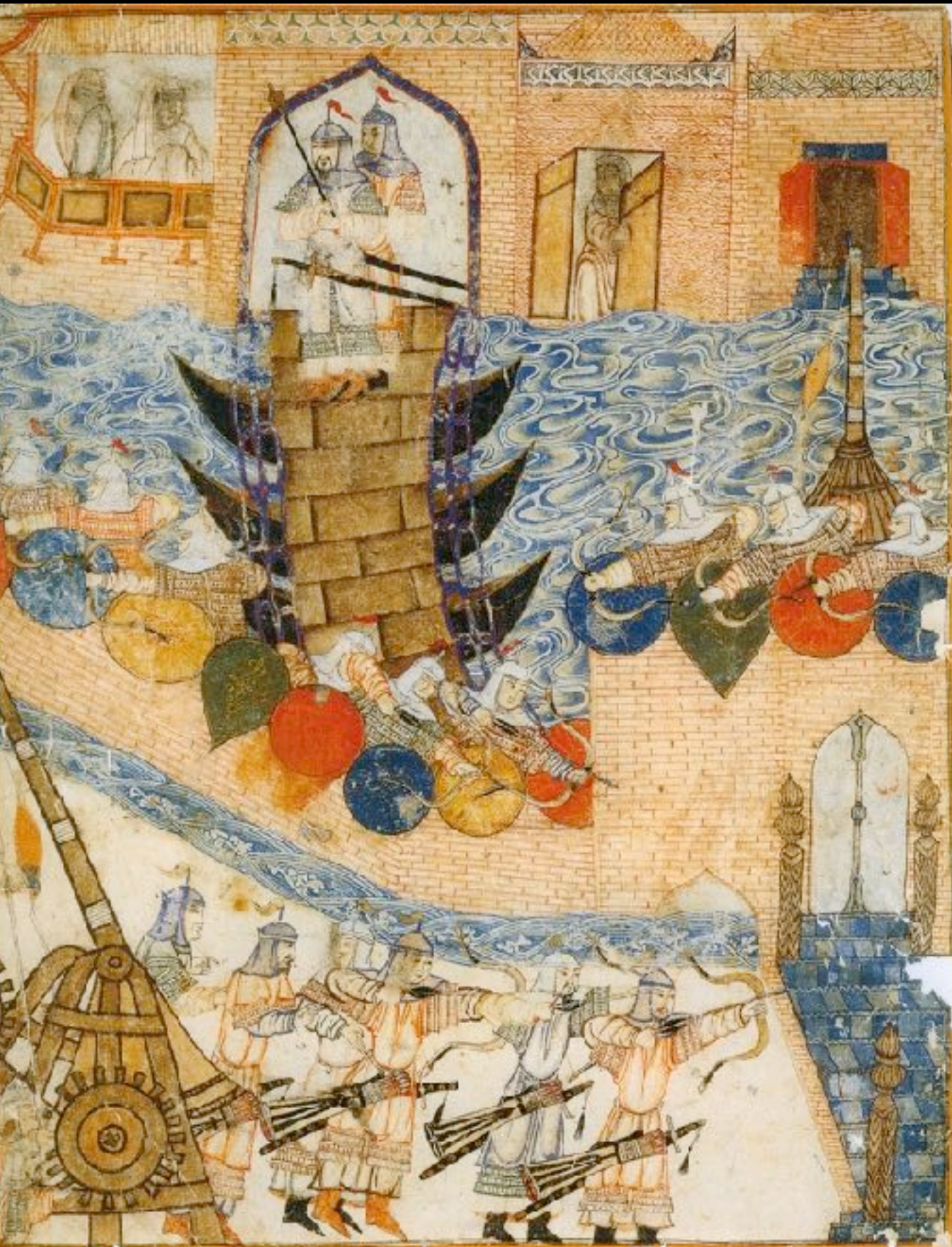


“Madinat al-Salaam,” Baghdad. Founded 762 by *khalifa* al-Mansur (r. 754-775)





“Madinat al-Salaam,” Baghdad. Founded 762 by *khalifa* al-Mansur (r. 754-775); Mongol conquest in 1258

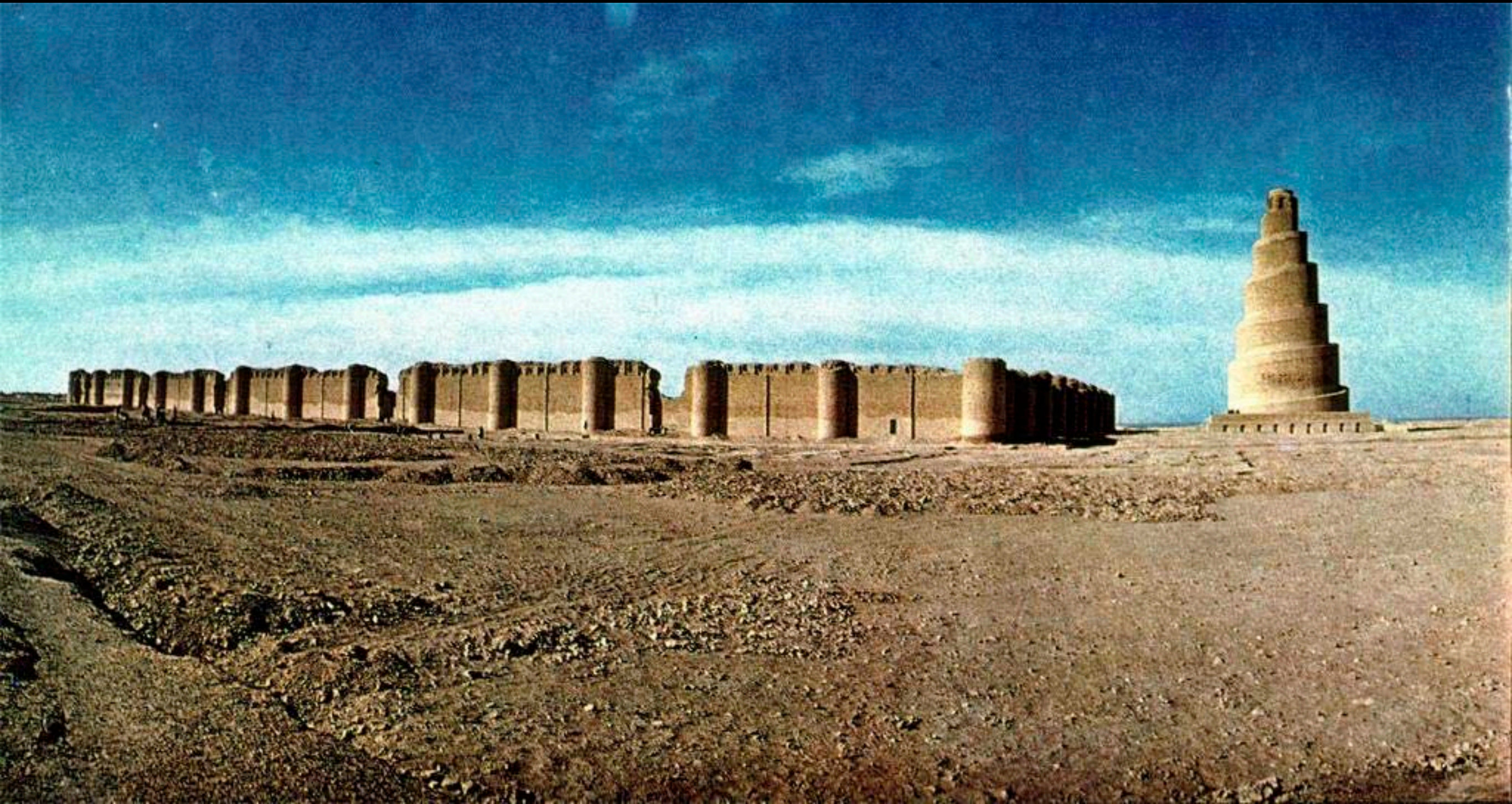


From Rashid al-Din, *Jami' al-Tawarikh*, early 14th century

How we know what we know - the generation of “knowledge”



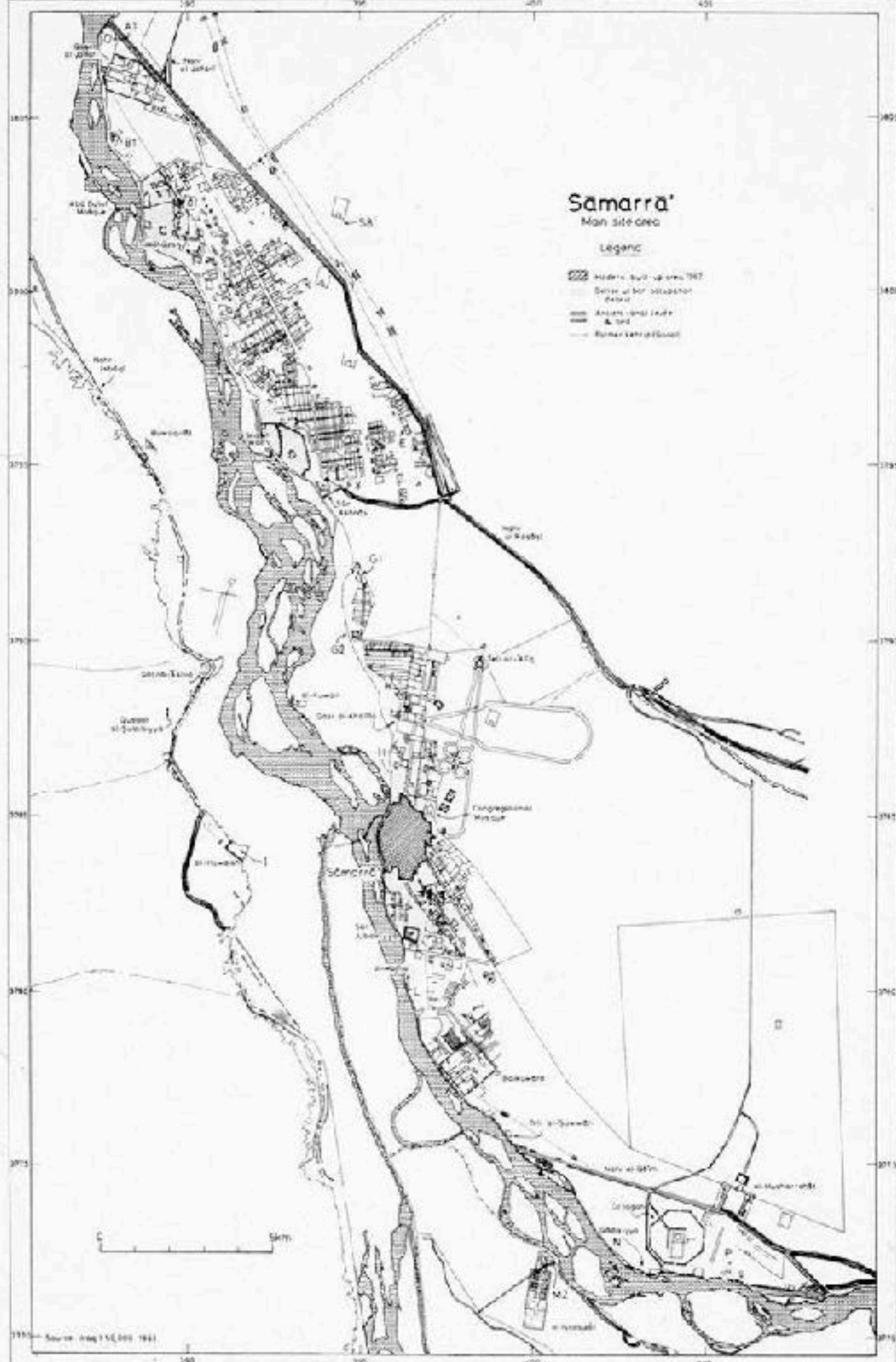
Samarra (near Baghdad). Founded 836. Mosque of al-Mutawakkil (r. 847-61).



## Politics vs. Religion

Motivating factors behind patronage





**Samarra (80 mi. north of Baghdad).  
Founded 836, occupied through 892.**

<b>Al-Mu'tasim</b>	<b>833–842</b>
<b>Al-Wathiq</b>	<b>842–847</b>
<b>Al-Mutawakkil</b>	<b>847–861</b>
<b>Al-Muntasir</b>	<b>861–862</b>
<b>Al-Musta'in</b>	<b>862–866</b>
<b>Al-Mu'tazz</b>	<b>866–869</b>
<b>Al-Muhtadi</b>	<b>869–870</b>
<b>Al-Mu'tamid</b>	<b>870–892</b>
<b>Al-Mu'tadid</b>	<b>892–902</b>



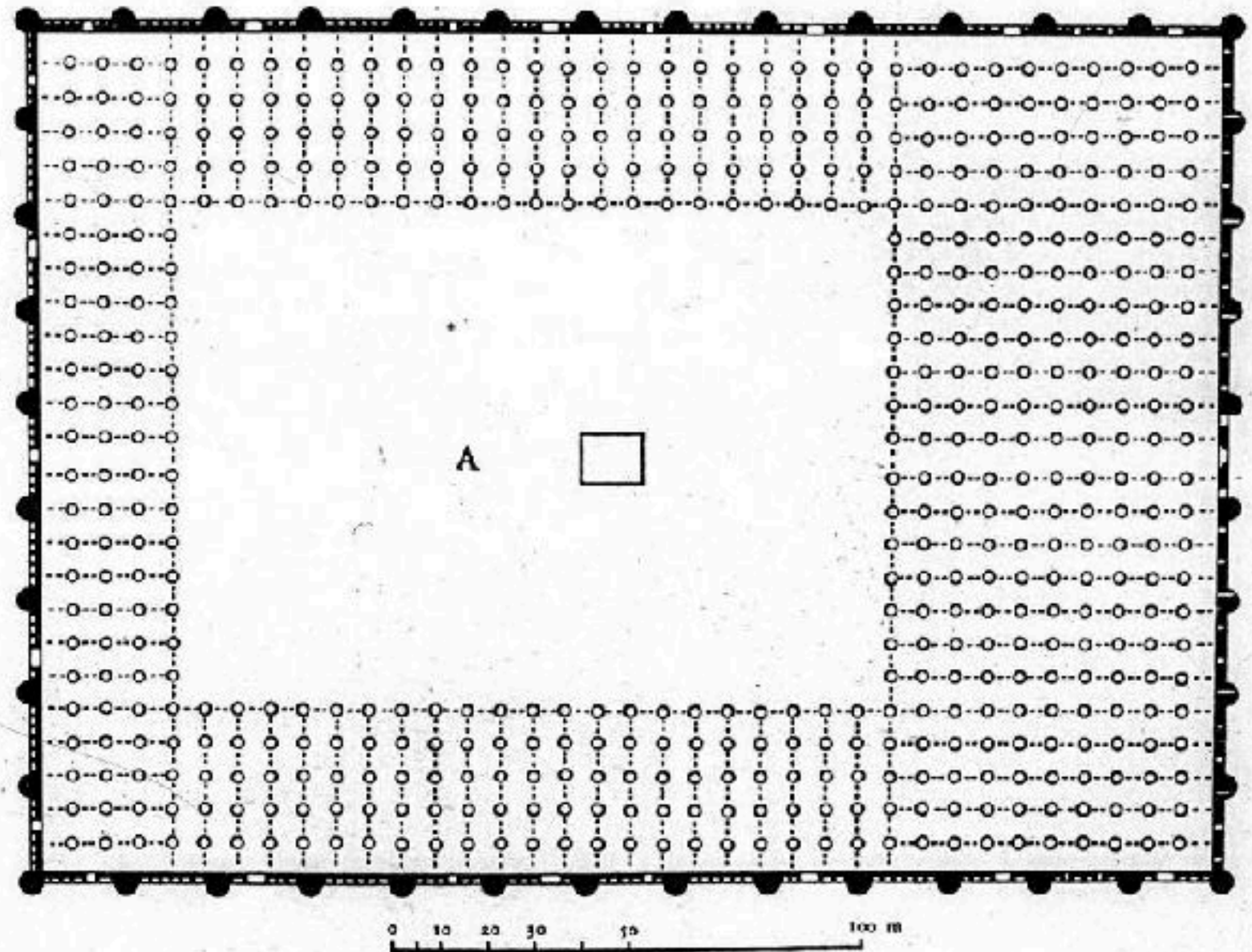
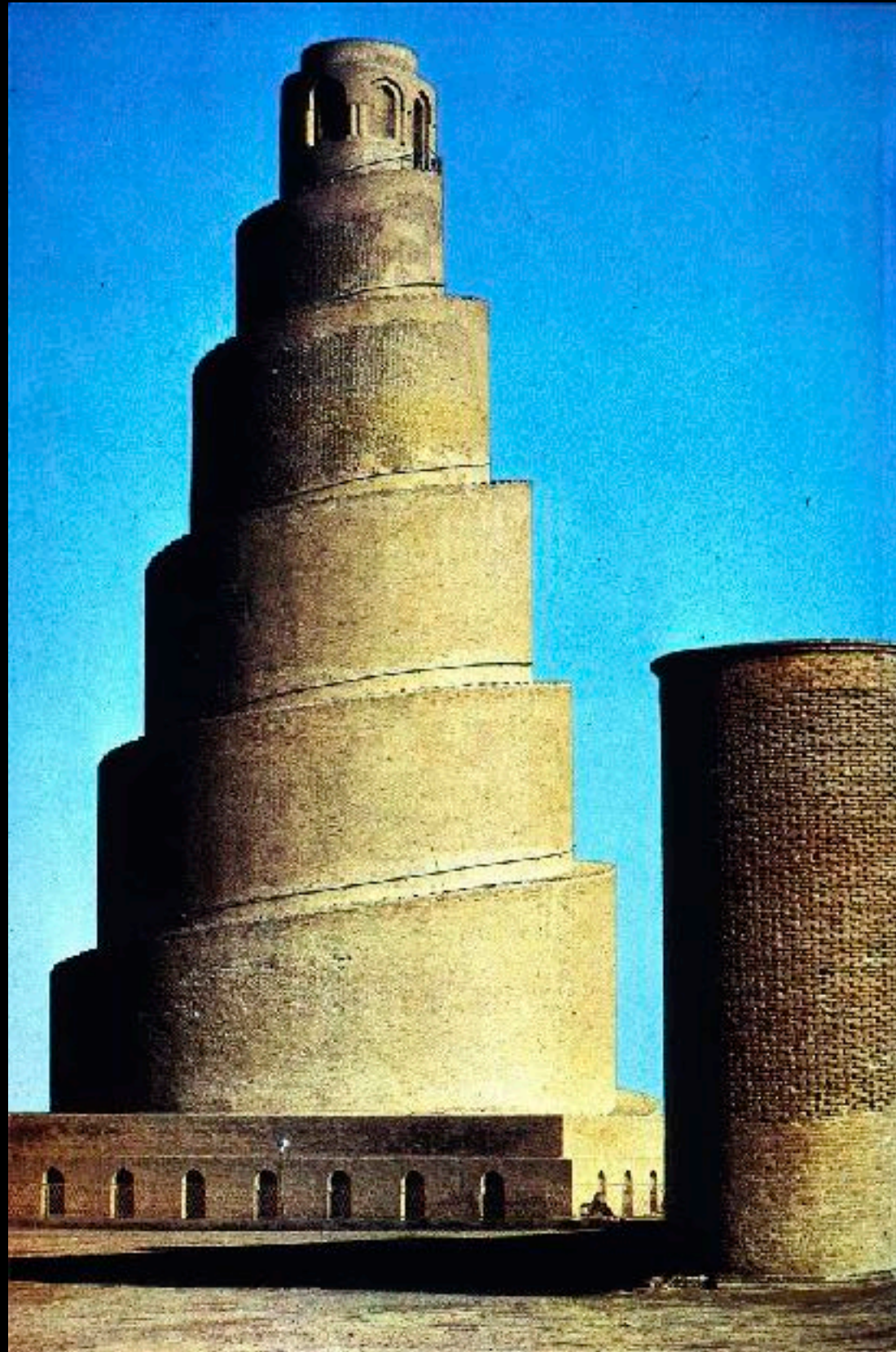
Samarra (near Baghdad). Founded 836. Mosque of al-Mutawakkil (r. 847-61).

## Politics vs. Religion

Motivating factors behind patronage

Scale...

## Hypostyle Plan





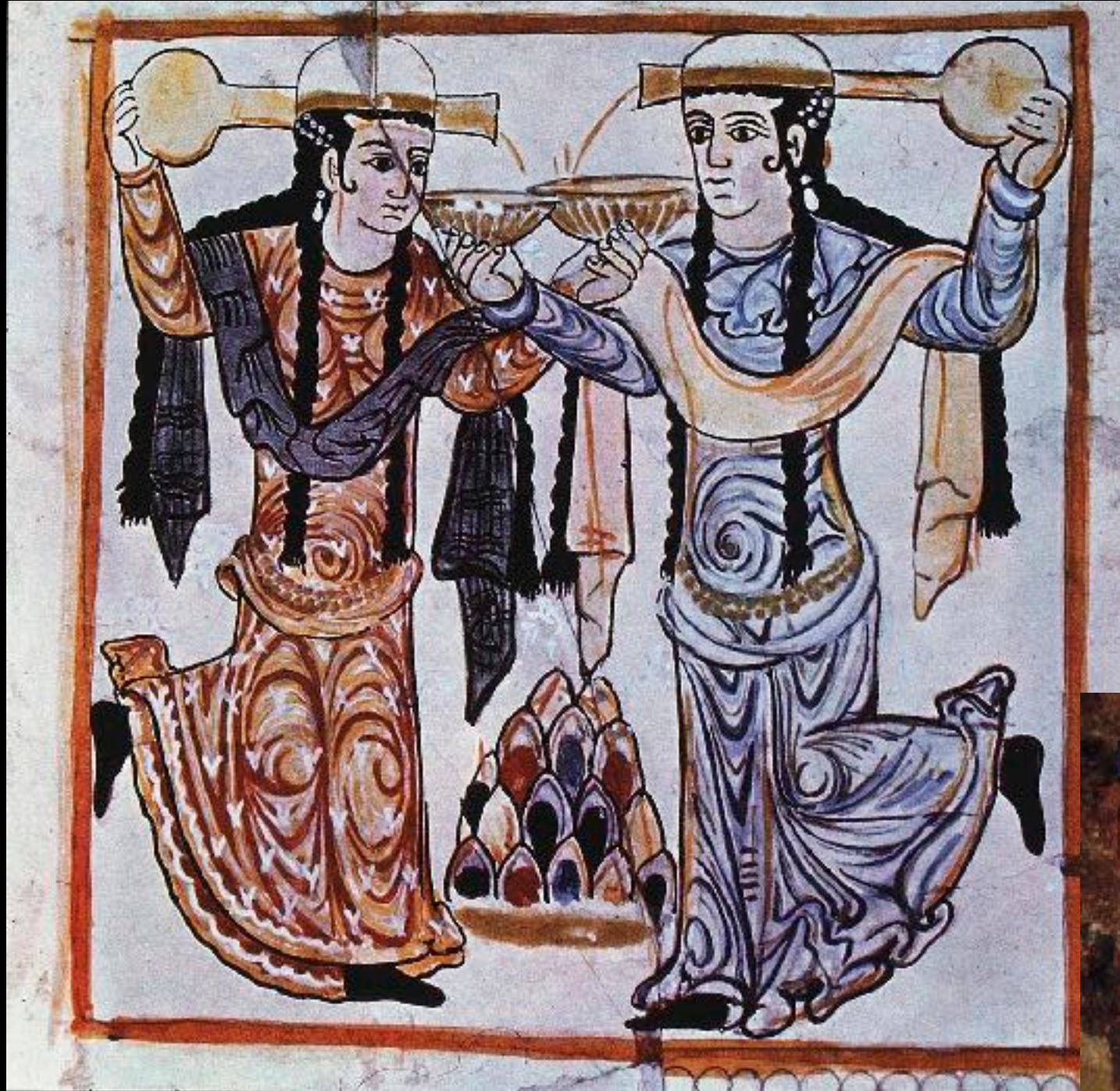
**Samarra (near Baghdad). Founded 836.**



**Materials: sun-dried & baked brick, wood, stucco**

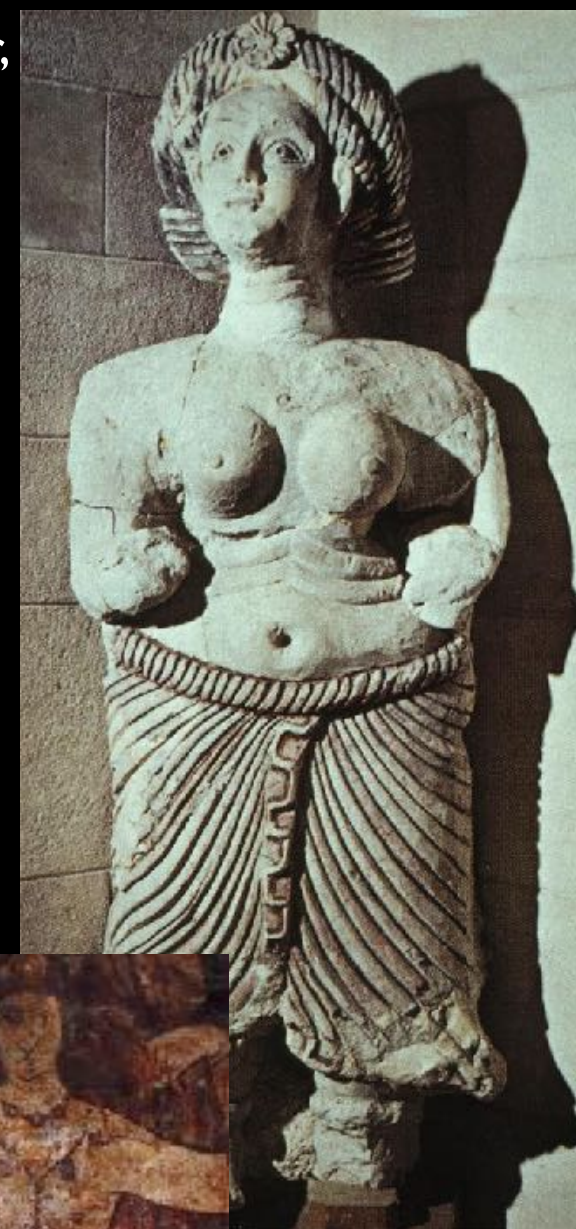


Samarra (near Baghdad). Founded 836.



Quseir 'Amra. Jordan. Early 8th century.

Palace of Khirbat al-Mafjar,  
724-743; near Jericho  
(Jordan)



## The Distinction of "Religious" and "Secular" Realms



# Egypt

**Mosque of Ibn Tulun. Cairo, Egypt. 876-9, with many later restorations & additions.**

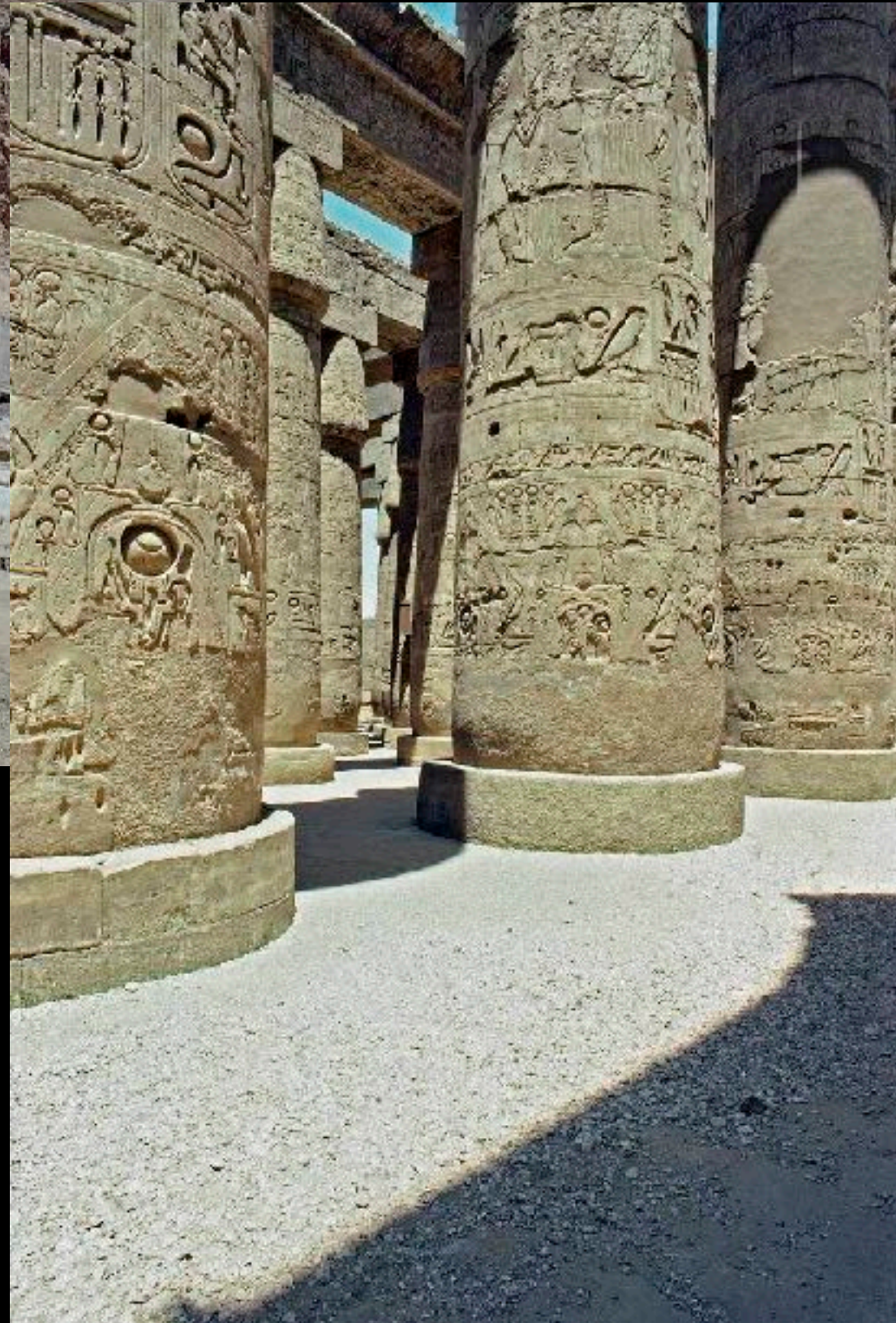


**The Emergence of an Imperial Islam - empire vs. region**



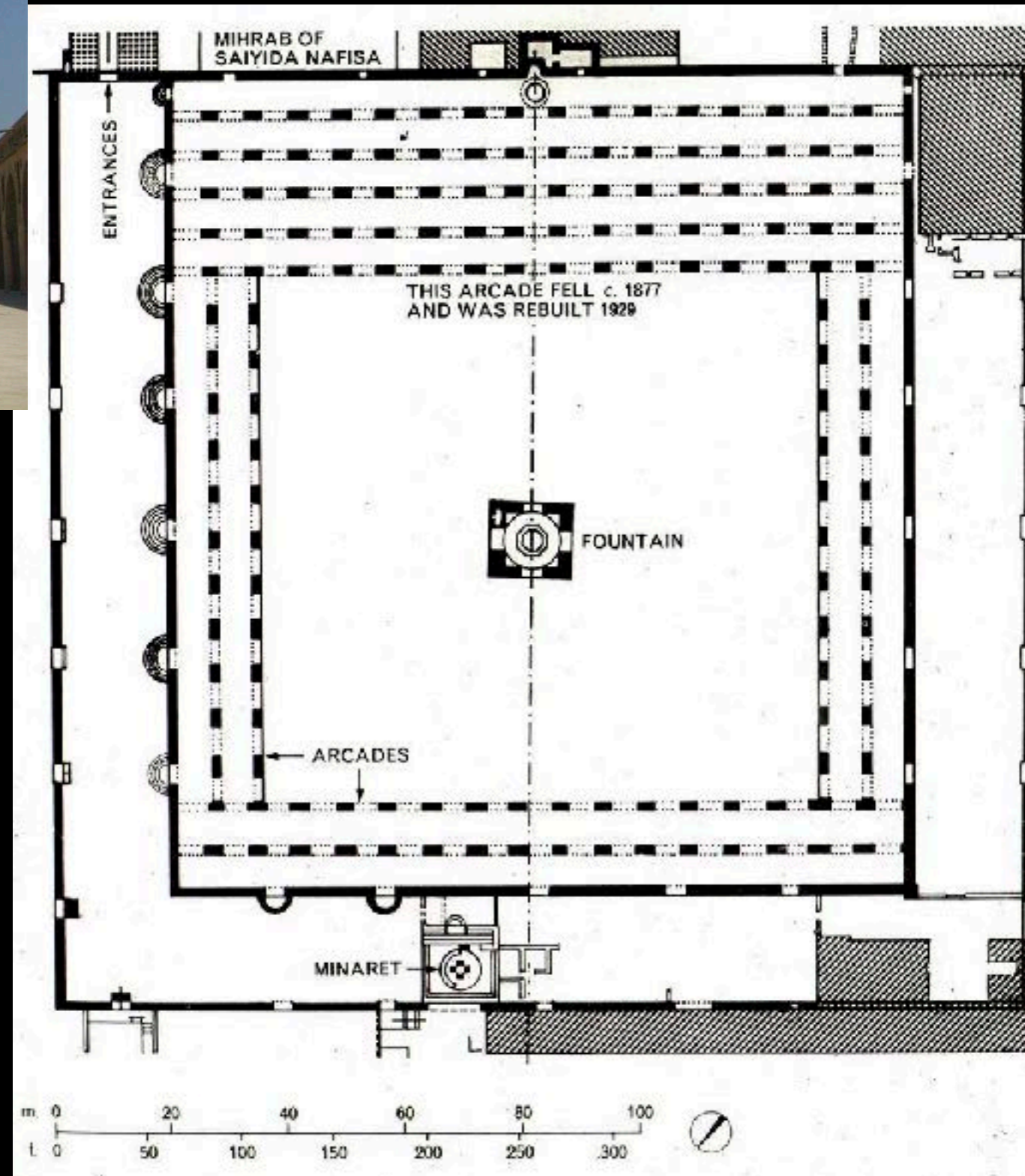
# Egypt

Great Temple of Hatshepsut. Deir el Bahri, Egypt. C. 1465 BCE



Great Temple of Amun.  
Karnak, Egypt.  
C. 1465 BCE





## Politics vs. Religion

Motivating factors behind patronage

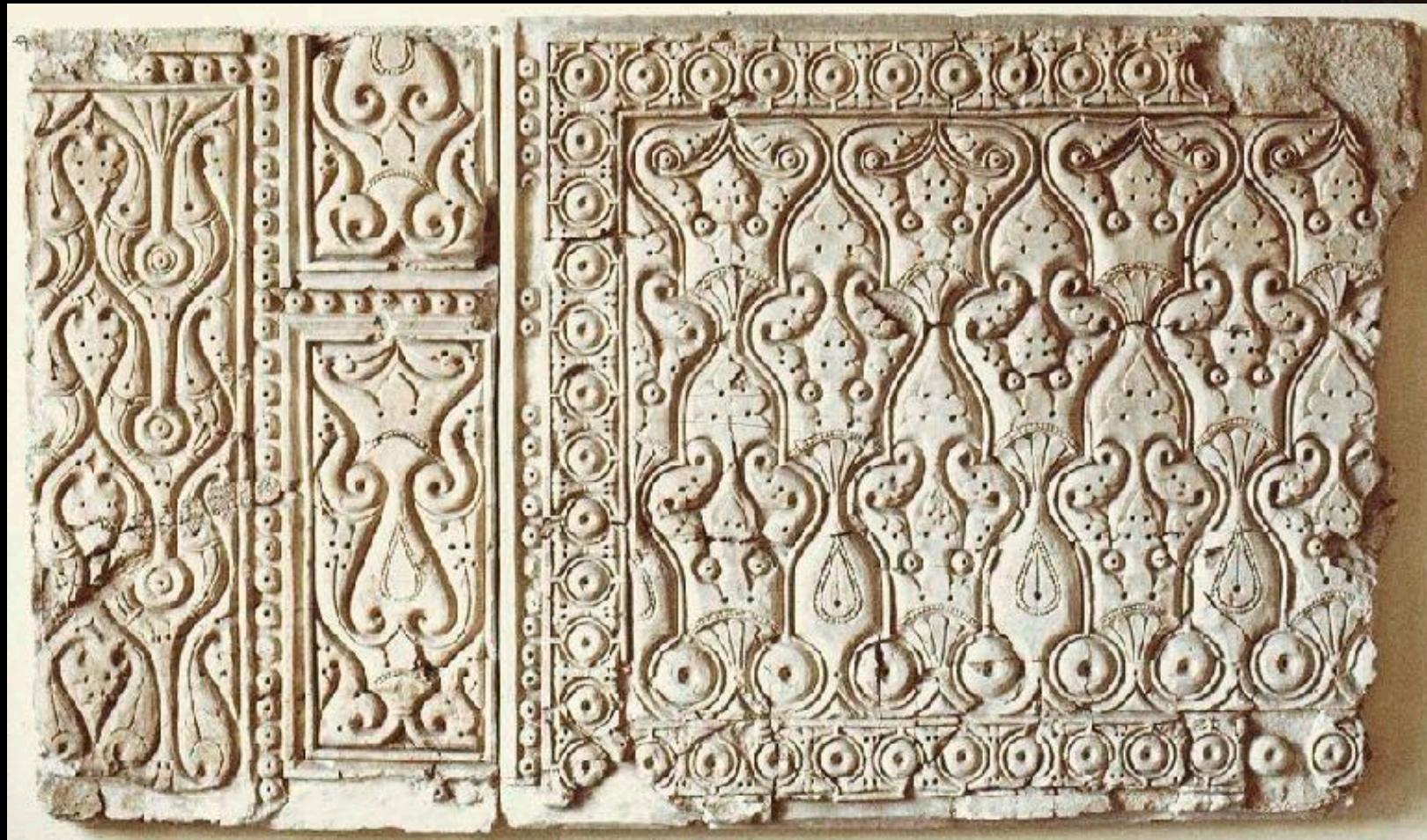
Mosque of Ibn Tulun. Cairo, Egypt. 876-9, with many later restorations & additions.

The Emergence of an Imperial Islam - empire vs. region



# Style & Iconography

2 tools of Art History



Samarra



Cairo





Bukhara

Samarqand

Balkh

Persepolis

Ctesiphon

Samarra

Karbala

Palmyra

Khirbat al-Mafjar

Damascus

Jerusalem

Cairo

Medina

Mecca



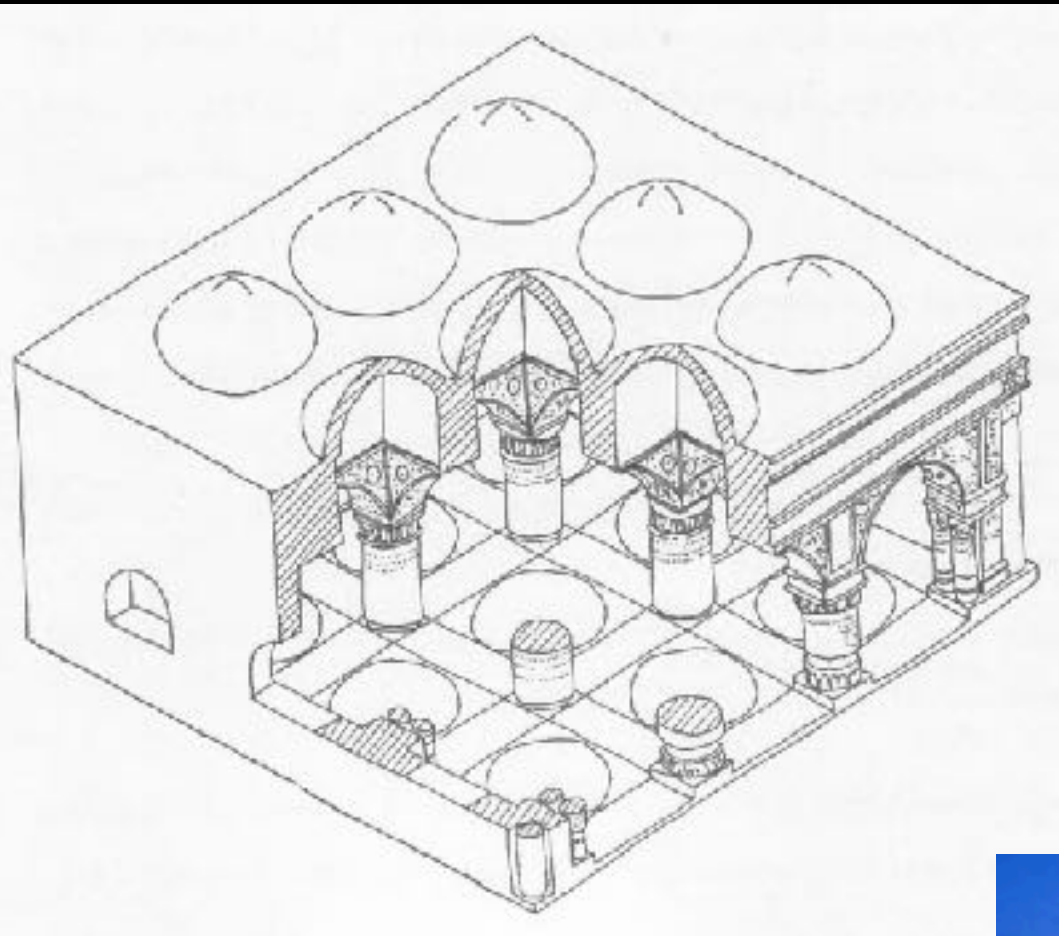
**Masjid-i No Gunbad, Balkh (Afghanistan). Ninth century. Interior view of southeast wall, from northwest  
Josephine Powell (photographer), c. 1960**



The Emergence of an Imperial Islam - empire vs. region  
How we know what we know - the generation of “knowledge”



**Masjid-i No Gunbad, Balkh (Afghanistan). Ninth century.**



**Fire Temple  
(Zoroastrian),  
Semyrneh, central  
Iran. C. 5th-6th c.  
© Touraj Daryaei**

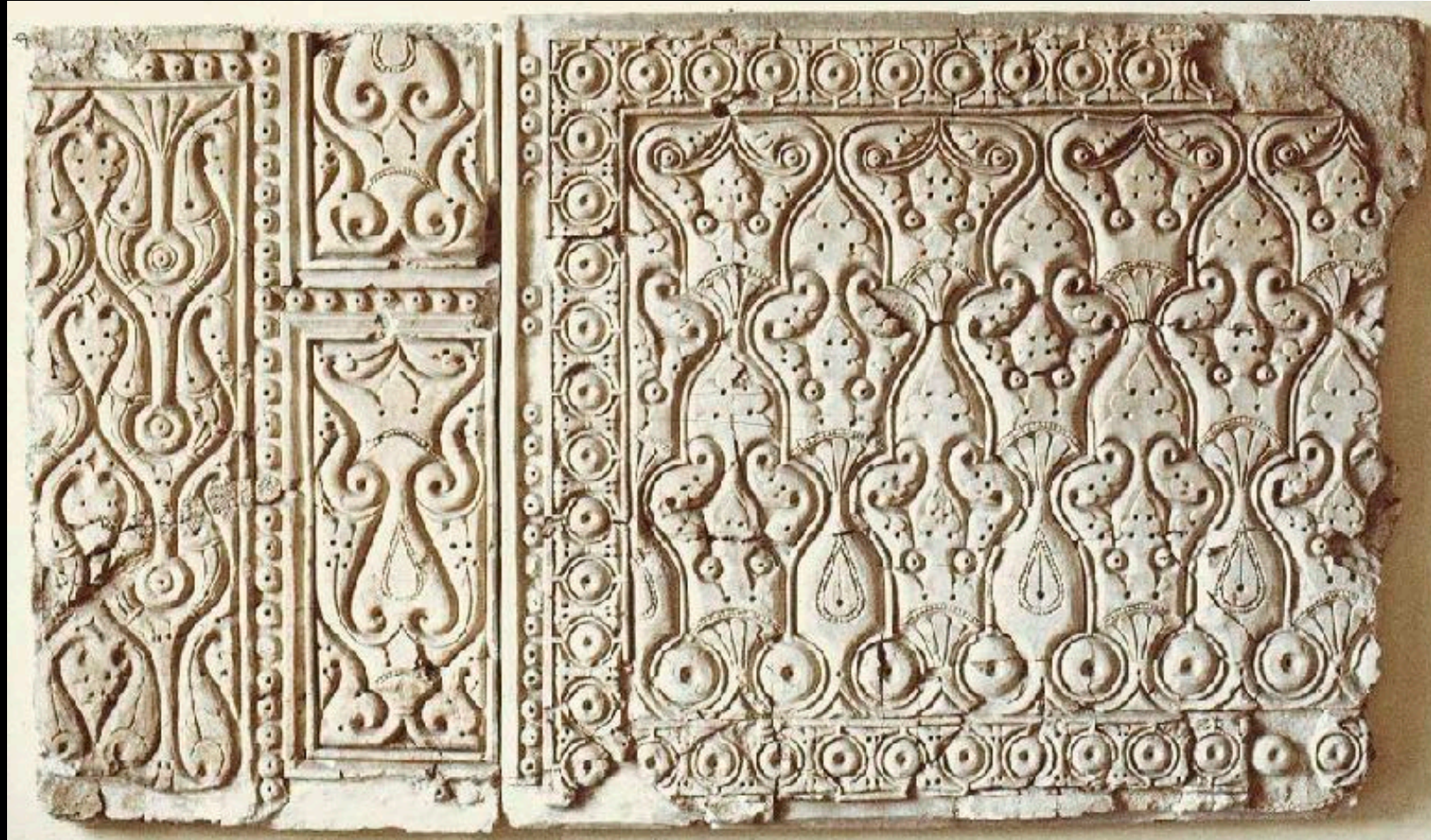


**The Emergence of an  
Imperial Islam  
- empire vs. region**



# Style & Iconography

2 tools of Art History



Samarra



Balkh



Tomb of the Samanids. Bukhara (Uzbekistan). Early 10th c.

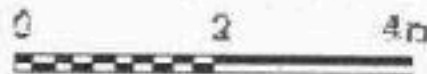
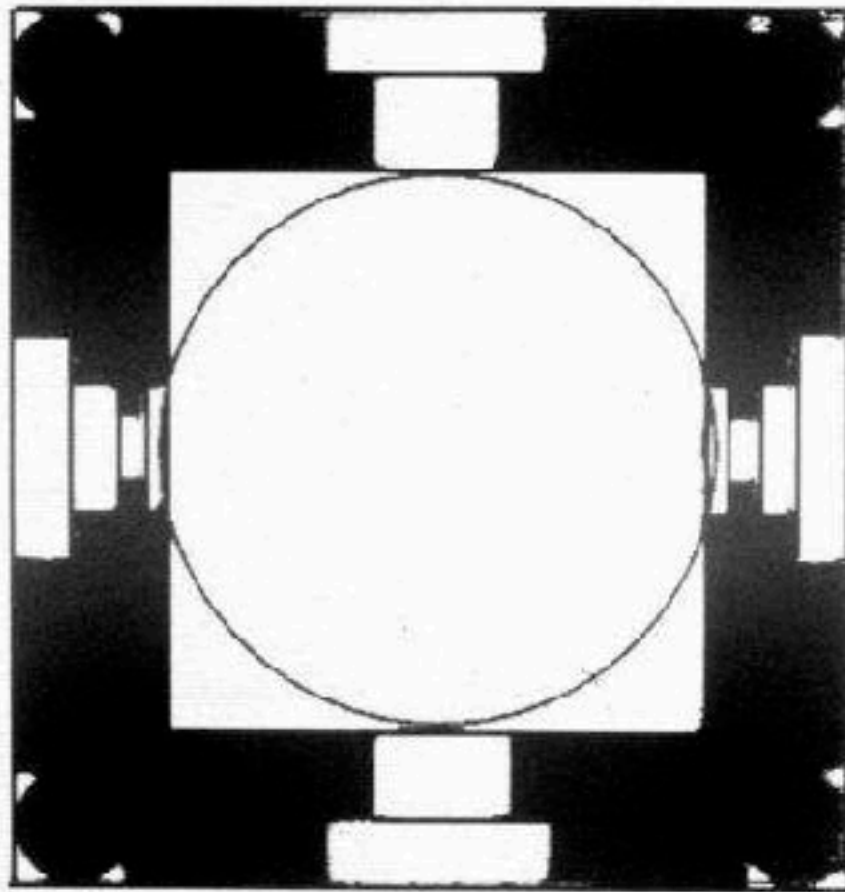
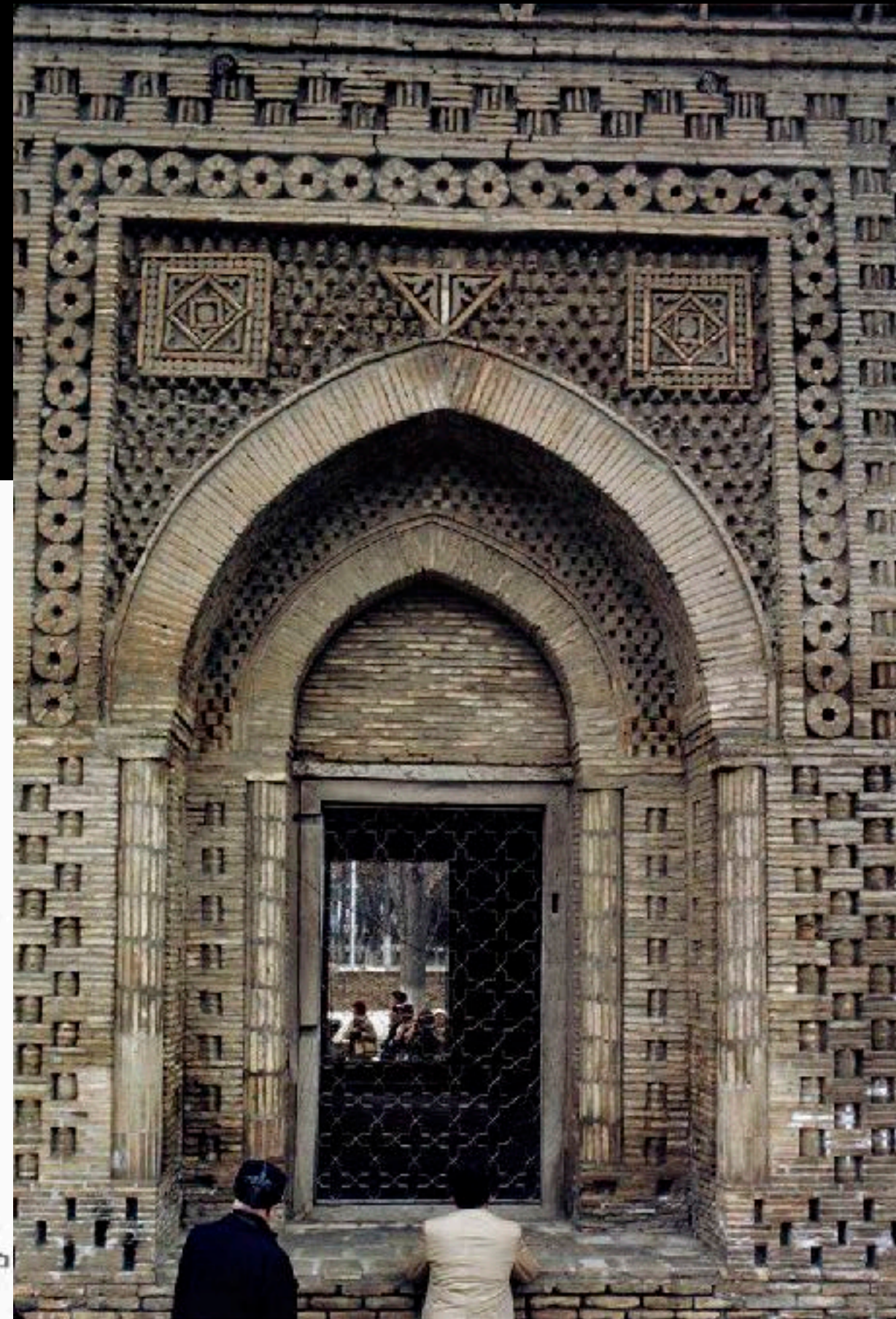
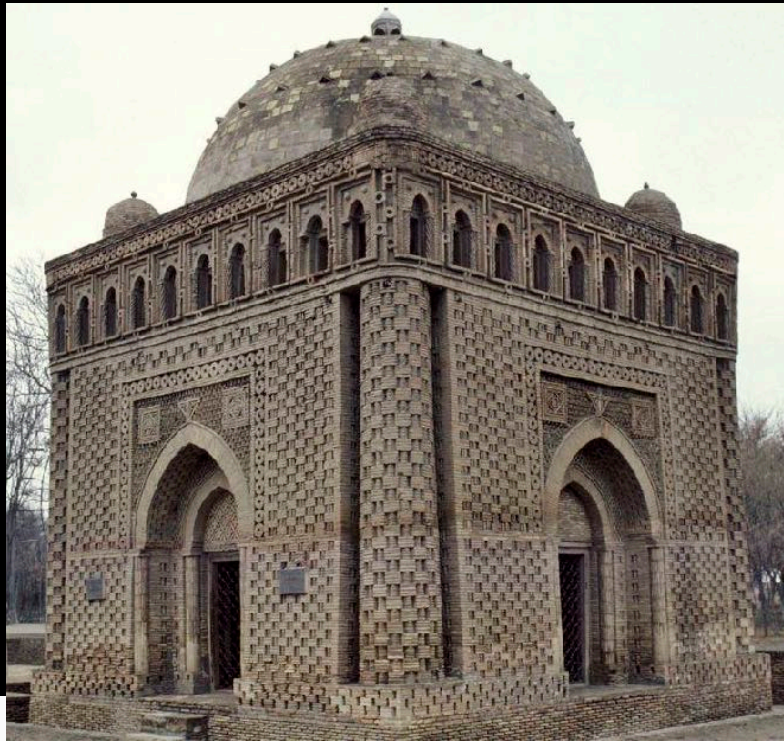


The Emergence of an Imperial Islam - empire vs. region  
**Politics vs. Religion**

Motivating factors behind patronage

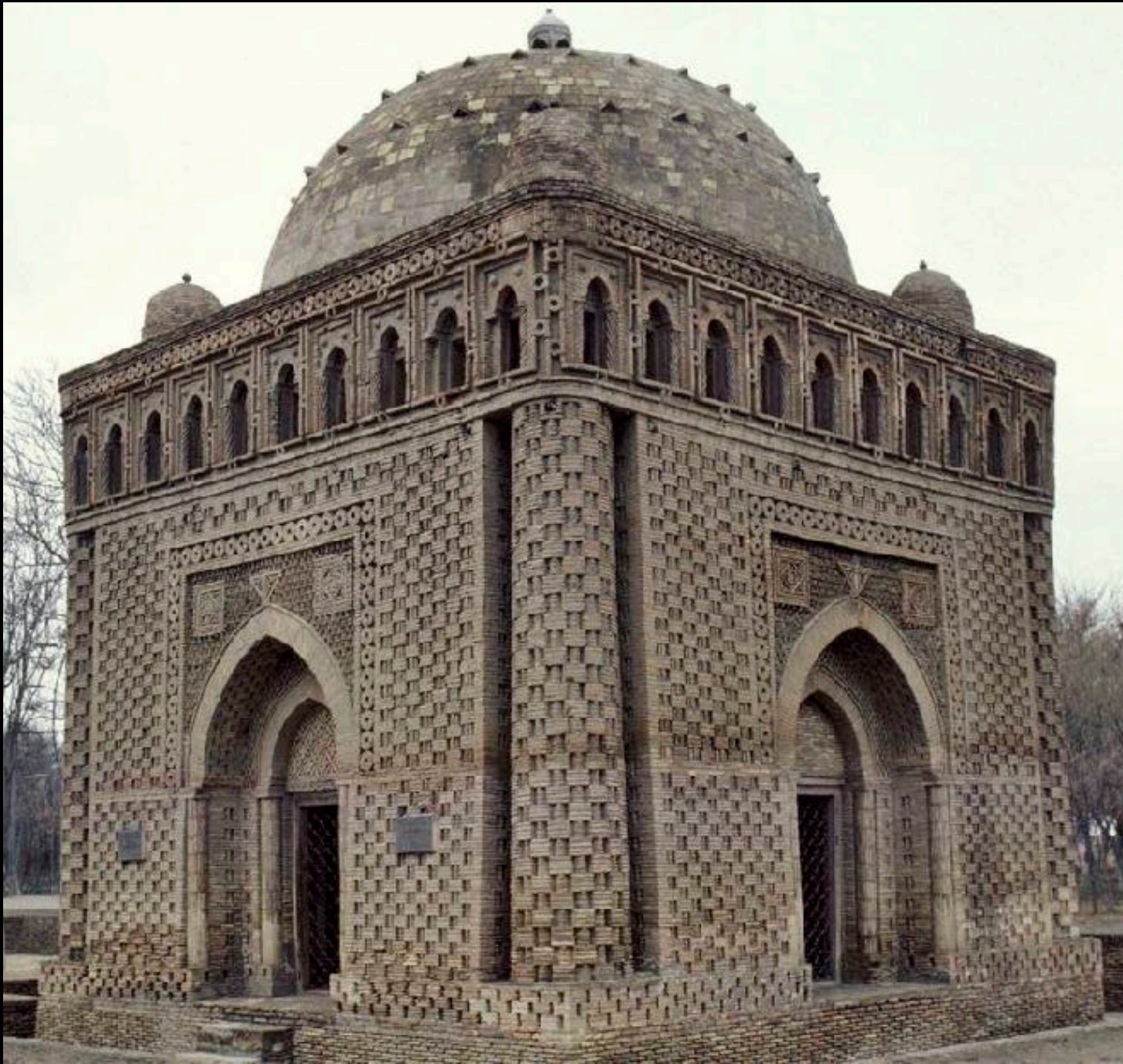


Tomb of the Samanids. Bukhara (Uzbekistan). Early 10th c.





**Tomb of the Samanids. Bukhara (Uzbekistan). Early 10th c.**



**Fire Temple (Zoroastrian), Seymareh, central Iran.  
C. 5th-6th c.**



© Courtesy Touraj Daryaei

## The Emergence of an Imperial Islam - empire vs. region

### Defining “Islamic”

What is “Islamic” about an object or building?

Does “Islamic” define an object’s entire identity, or are other factors important in defining it?



## Topic 2

1. The Emergence of an Imperial Islam - empire vs. region

2. The Distinction of “Religious” and “Secular” Realms -  
Figuration







**Congregational Mosque, Naiyin (near Isfahan), Iran. 9th century.**





Congregational Mosque, Naiyin (near Isfahan), Iran. 9th century.





Congregational Mosque, Naiyin (near Isfahan), Iran. 9th century.





# Style & Iconography

2 tools of Art History



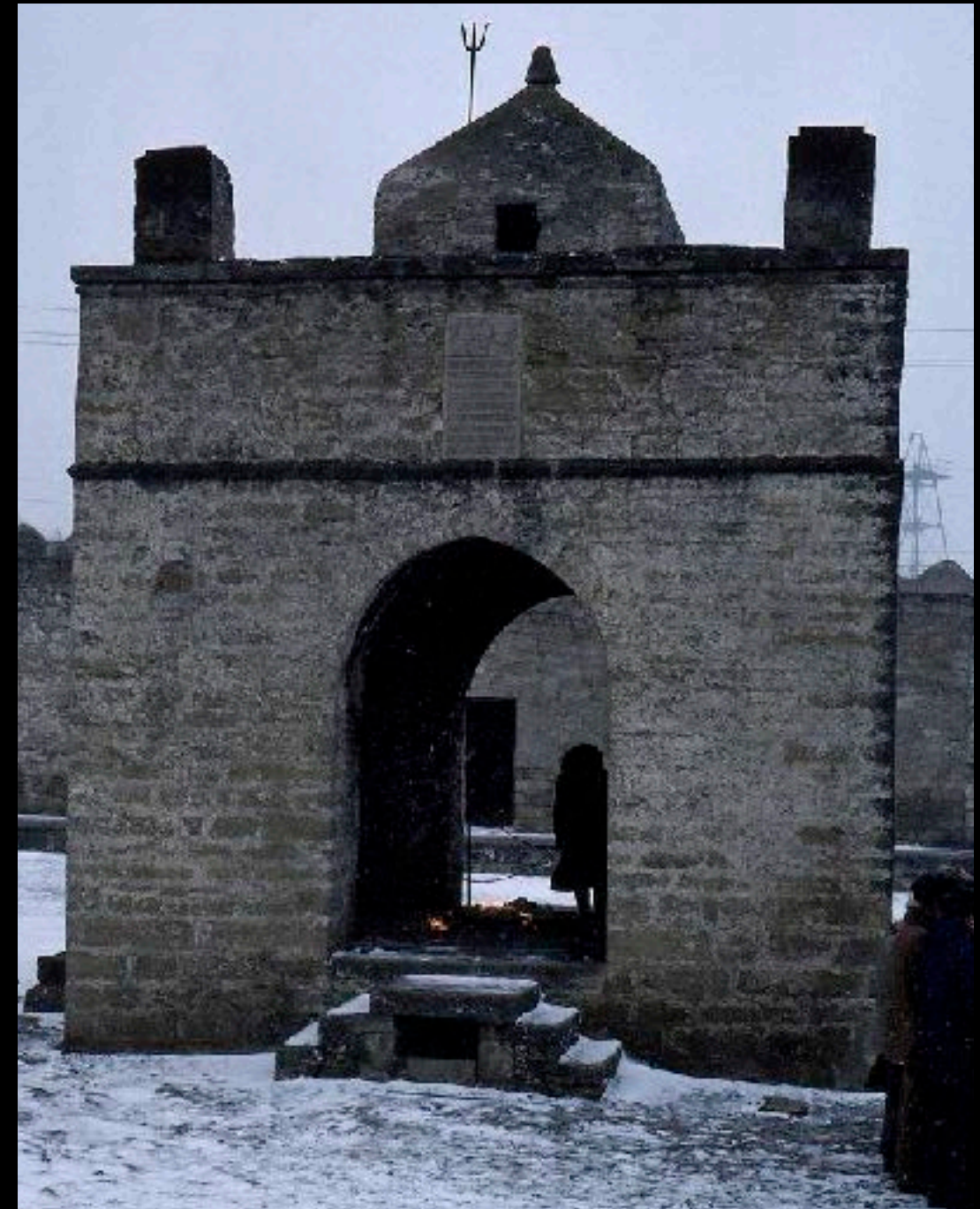
**Samarra**



**Tomb of the Samanids. Bukhara (Uzbekistan). Early 10th c.**



**Fire Temple (Zoroastrian), 18th c. Baku, Azerbaijan.**



## Defining “Islamic”

What is “Islamic” about an object or building?  
Does “Islamic” define an object’s entire identity, or are other factors important in defining it?



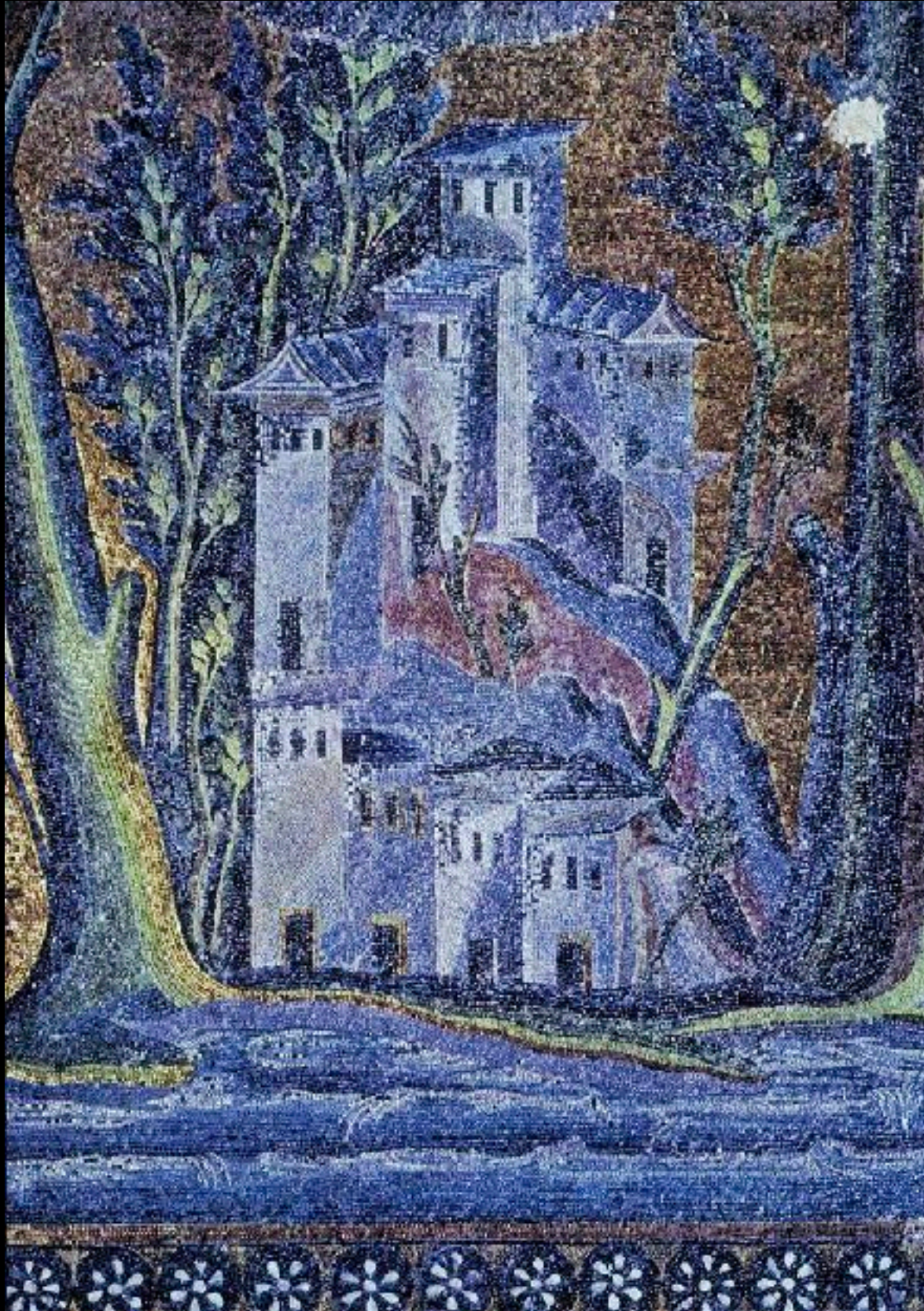




# Style & Iconography

2 tools of Art History

**The Umayyad Mosque, Damascus**  
Attributed largely to al-Walid I, r. 705-715



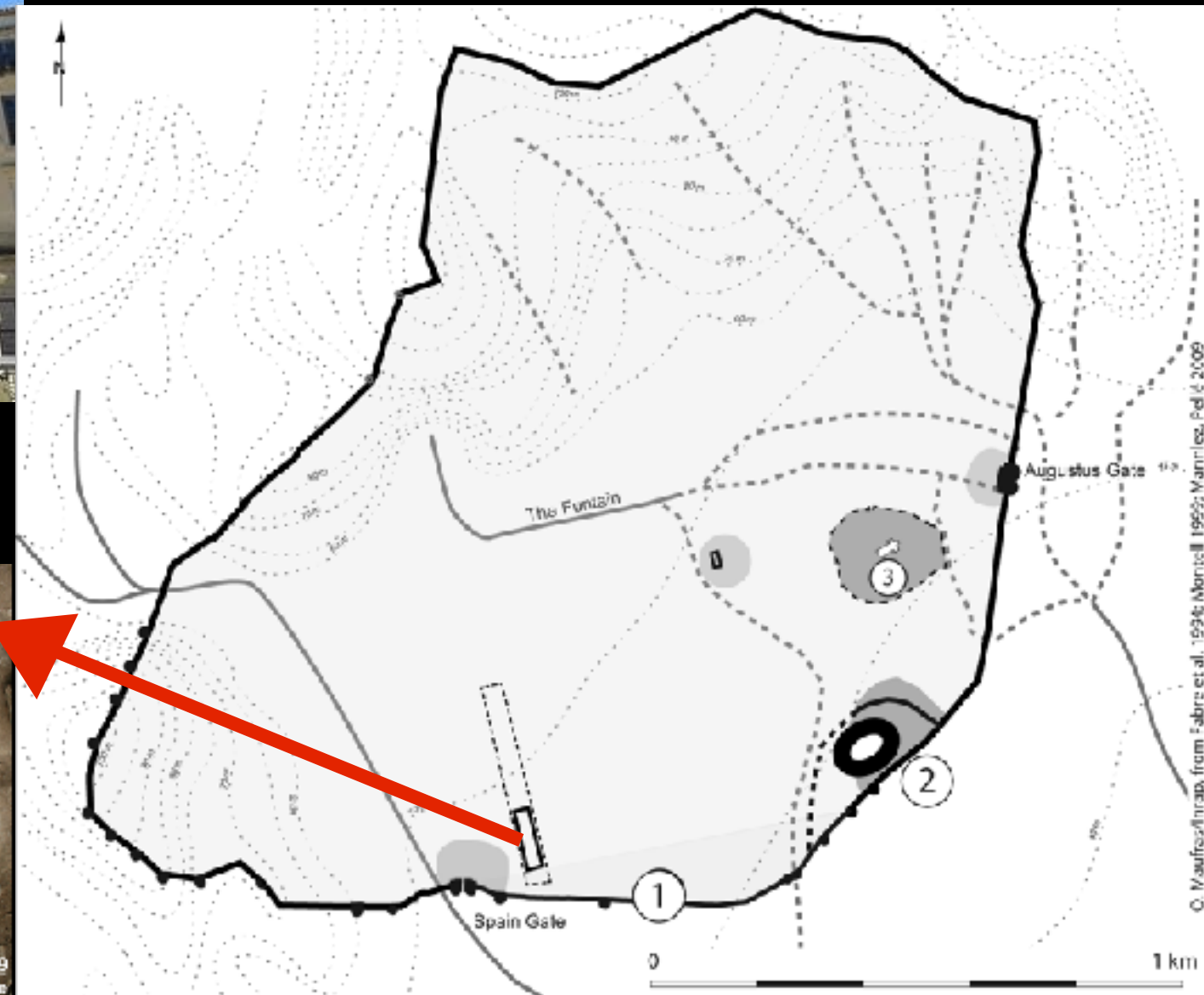
**Nile Mosaic (Barberini Mosaic)**  
Last quarter of the second century BCE,  
from the Sanctuary of Fortuna, Praeneste



# Legacies of Greeks and Romans Integrated

**Corinthian Temple (“Maison carée”).  
Nîmes, France. Dedicated 4 CE.**

© Alka Patel 2016



SP7080  
Male  
> 30 years old  
684-761 cal AD  
mtDNA - L1c3a1a  
NRY - E1b1b1b1a

SP7089  
Male  
20-29 years old  
637-765 cal AD  
mtDNA - K1a4a  
NRY - E1b1b1b1a

SP9269  
Male  
> 50 years old  
651-767 cal AD  
mtDNA - H1  
NRY - E1b1b1b1

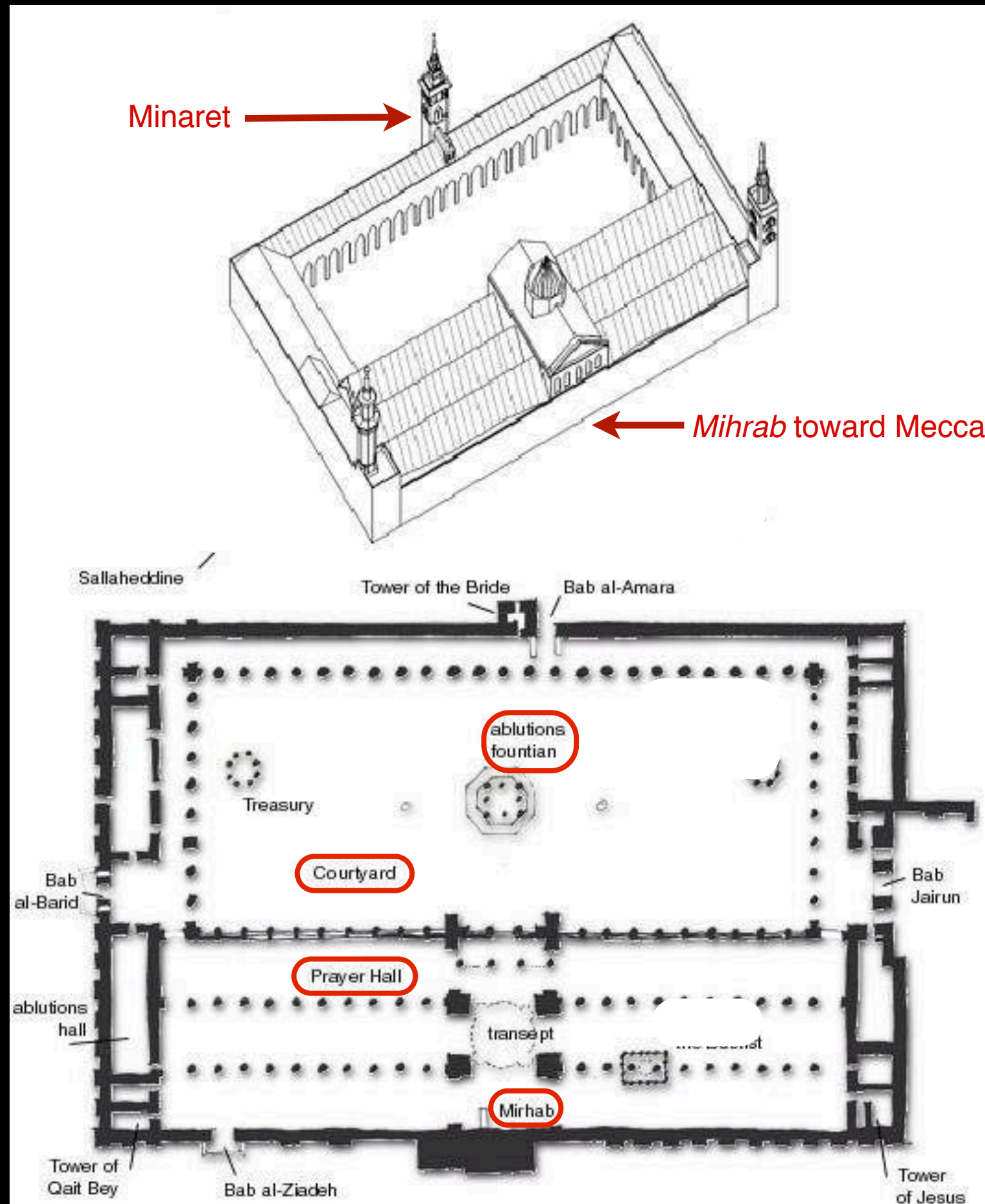
- ① Roman walls (1st AD)
- ② Arena castrum (c. 4th AD)
- ③ Episcopal group (end 6th AD)
- Excavations area
- Urban pole (5-12th AD) preserved in urban parcel plan
- Sector where settlements could persist between Antiquity and Middle Ages
- Permanent or occasional river (in dotted lines, uncertain routing)

© M. Maufroy/Map from Fabre et al., 1994; Monnet, 1999; Mannes, 2009



# Uniting the Umma: the Mosque

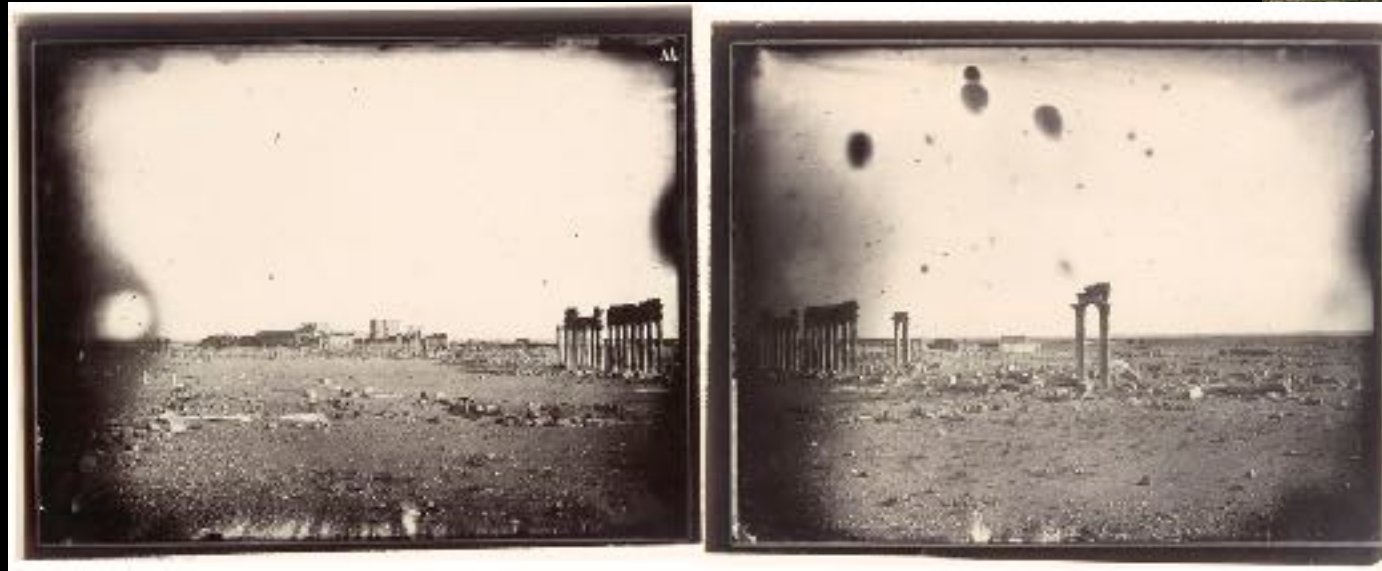
Example of a mosque: The Umayyad Mosque, Damascus (founded ca. 650), hypostyle plan



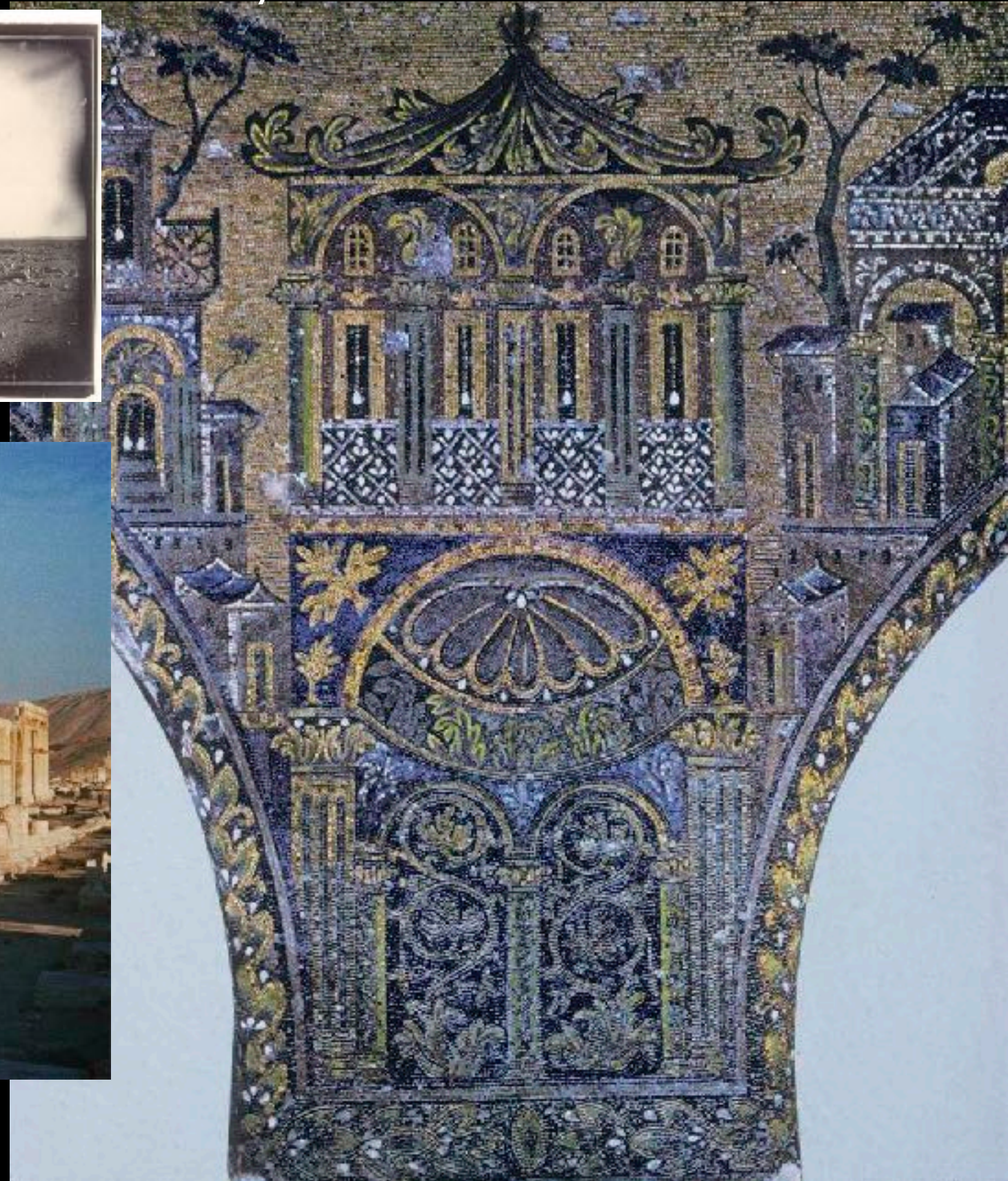


# Style & Iconography

2 tools of Art History



Palmyra, Syria: Monumental Arcade c. 2nd century CE  
Romans in Syria by 1st century CE



The Umayyad Mosque, Damascus  
Attributed largely to al-Walid I, r. 705-715



## The Umayyads



Quseir 'Amra. Jordan. Early 8th century.





Quseir 'Amra. Jordan.  
Early 8th century.





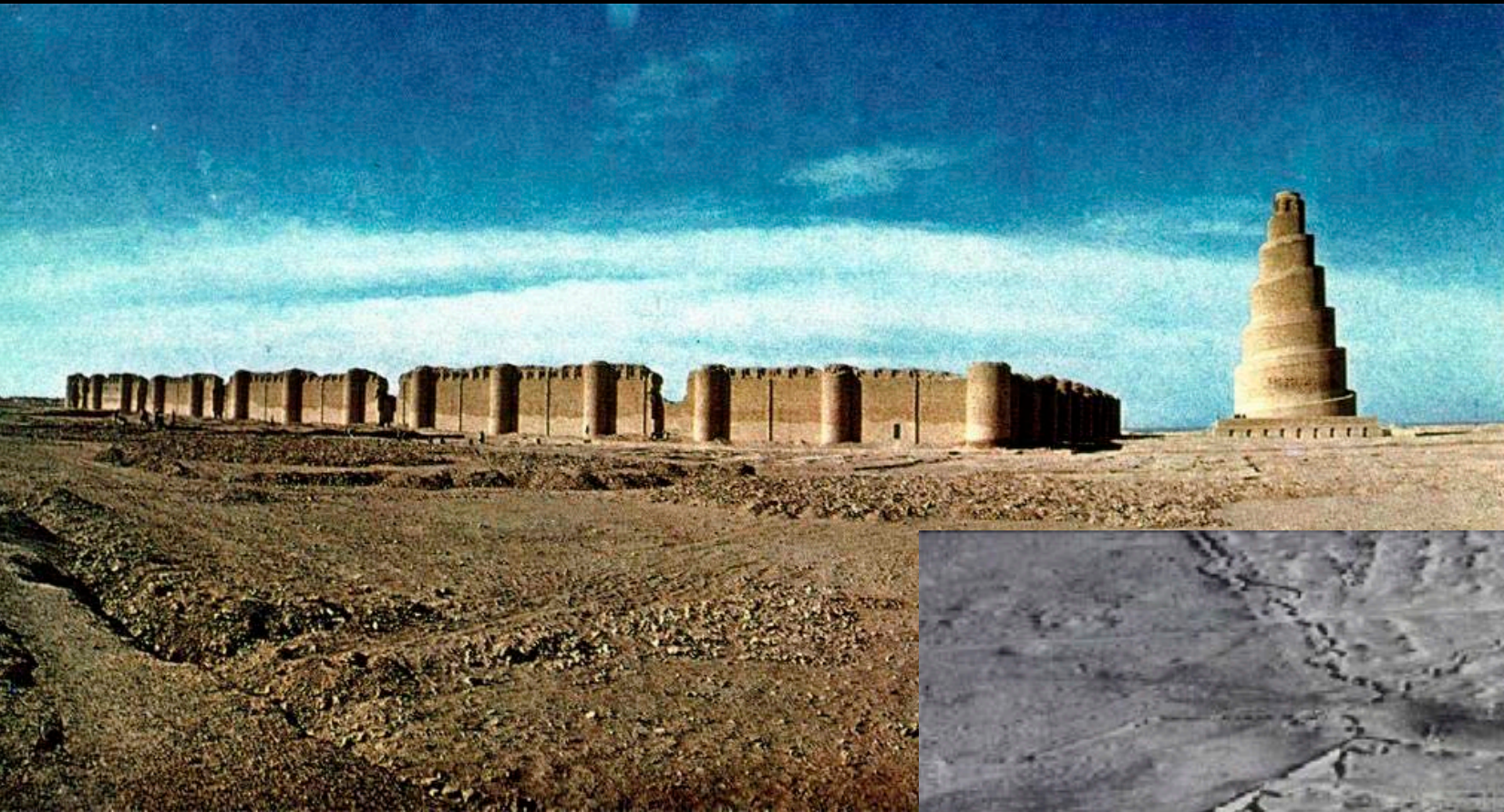
Personification with cornucopia, first half of 6th century.  
The Metropolitan Museum of Art, NYC



Quseir 'Amra, Jordan.  
Early 8th century.



Samarra (near Baghdad). Founded 836. Mosque of al-Mutawakkil (r. 847-61).



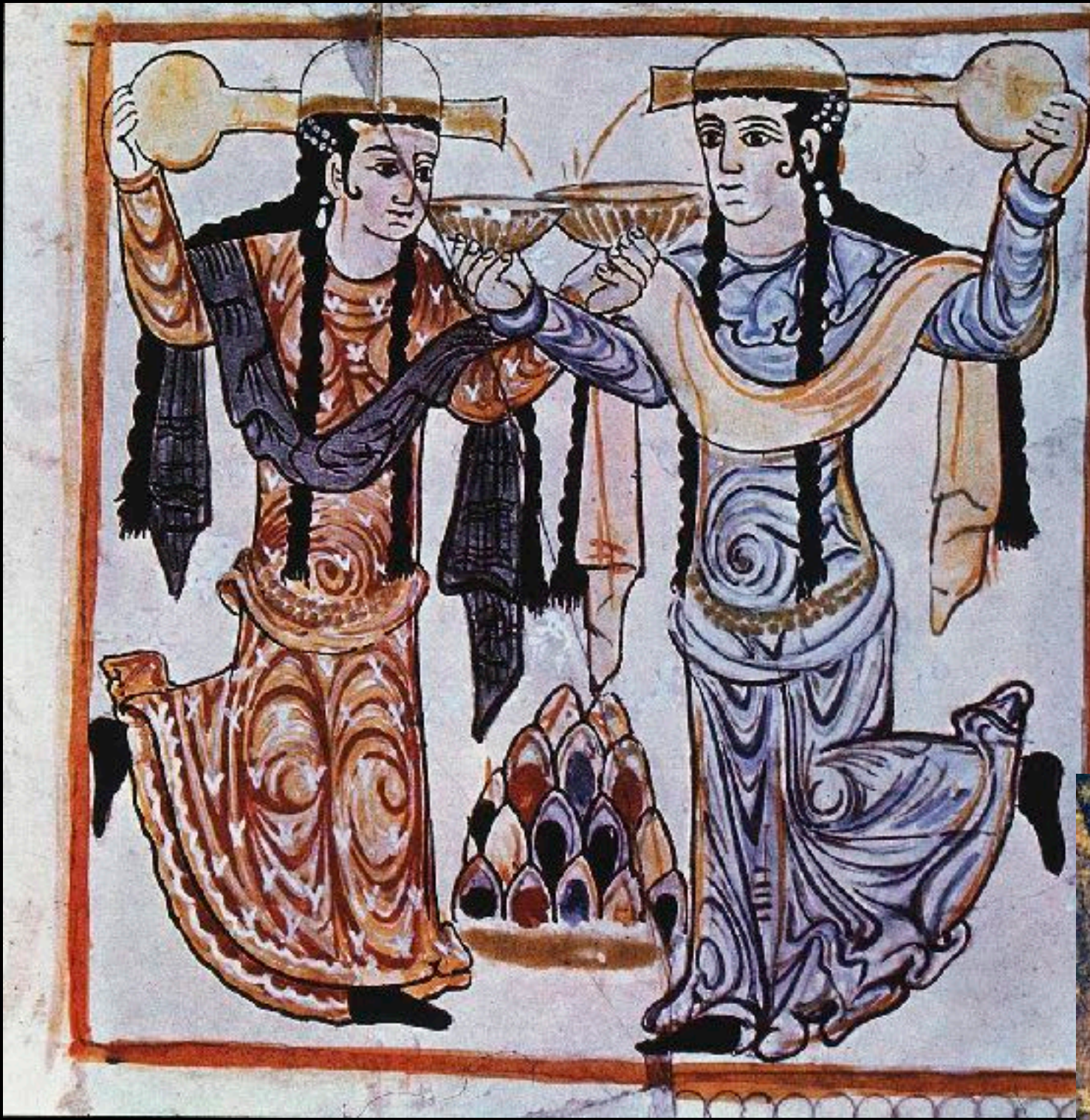
Scale...

## Politics vs. Religion

Motivating factors behind patronage



Samarra (near Baghdad). Founded 836.



Personification with cornucopia (Kaloï, fine, beautiful), first half of 6th century.



# Style & Iconography

2 tools of Art History

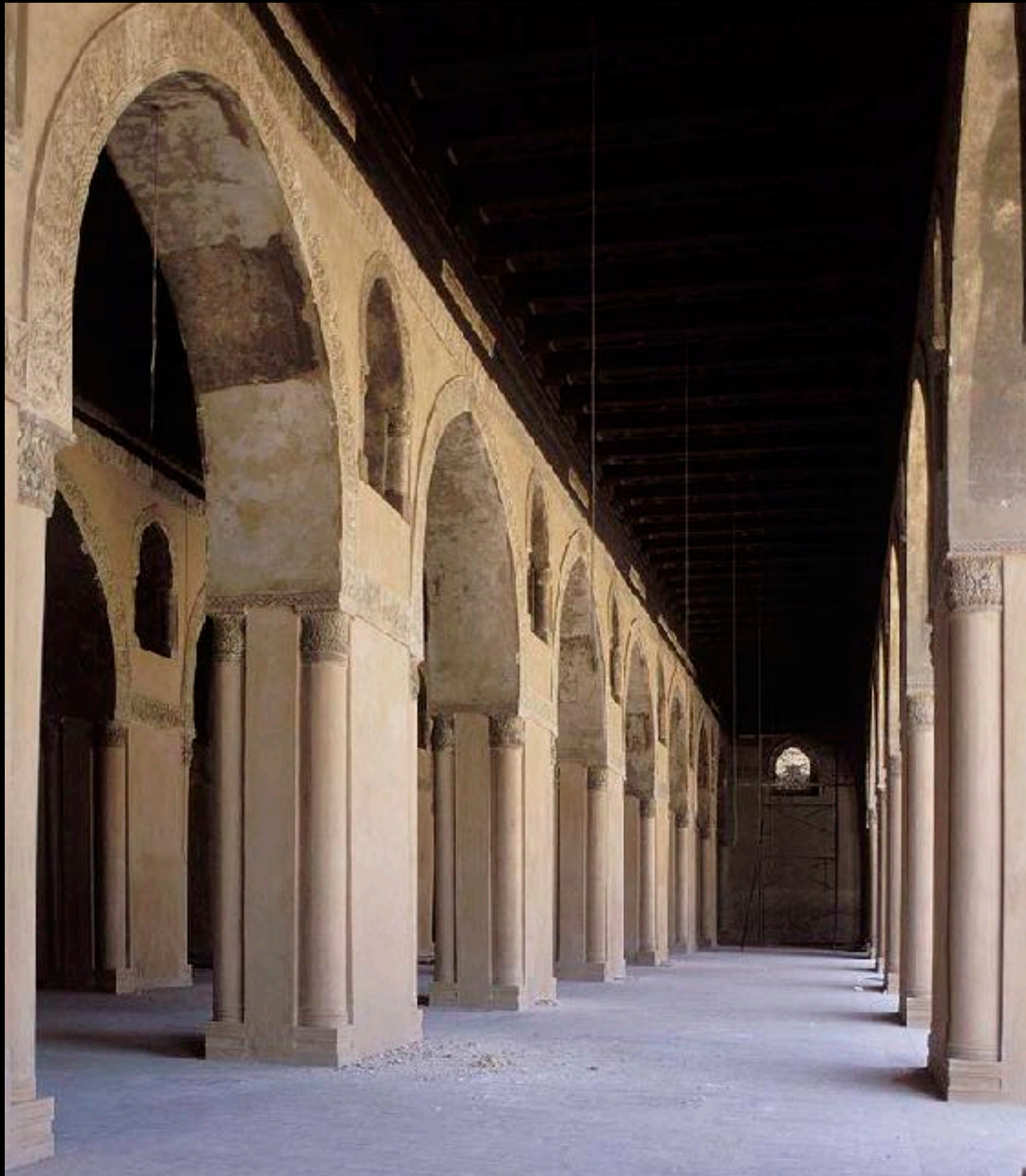
Procession (Rustam?). Panjikient, Tajikistan. C. 7th century CE.





# Politics vs. Religion

Motivating factors behind patronage



**Mosque of Ibn Tulun. Cairo, Egypt. 876-9, with many later restorations & additions.**