



United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization



#ReviveTheSpiritOfMosul

# Reconstruction & Rehabilitation of the Al Nouri Complex in Mosul

## Architectural Brief

International **single stage** architectural design project competition conducted in **open** procedure

Mosul, Iraq

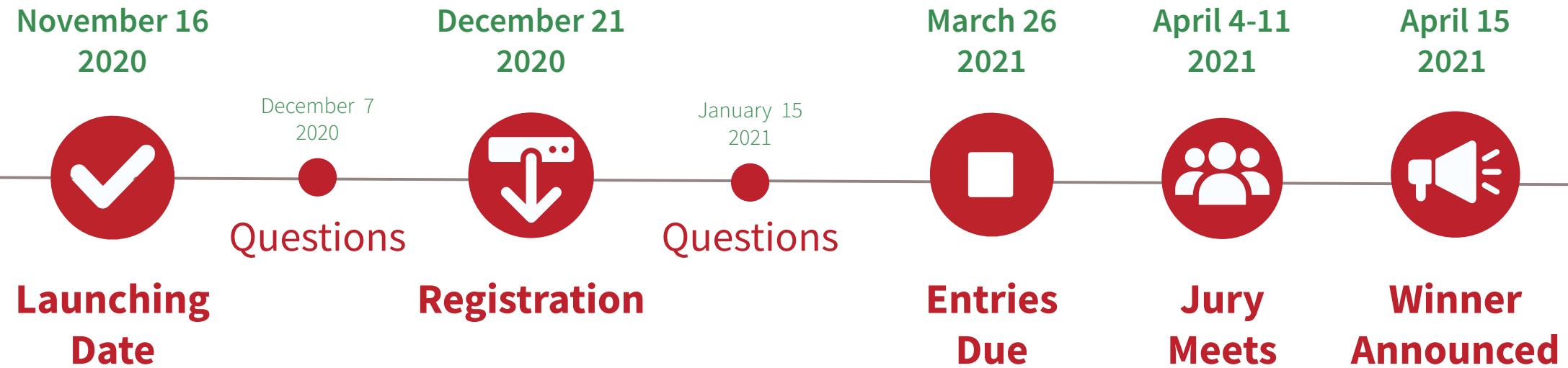


# The Competition

## Organized by

UNESCO Office in Iraq, in coordination with the Government of Iraq and with the financial support of the United Arab Emirates.

## Timeframe



## Summary of deliverables

- Two reports in A4 format;
- Seven panels in A1 format, on landscape format;
- The panels will be submitted as a single PDF document, with a maximum size of 500 MB;
- All documentation submitted should be written in English.





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FIG. 2





FIG. 3

# Introduction

The city of Mosul, meaning “the linking point” in Arabic, has been for millennia a strategic crossing and a **commercial and cultural link** between north, south, east and west. Due to its strategic location, it became home to a large number of people from diverse backgrounds, ethnicities and religious beliefs. However, this unique location also made it a target for violent extremism. In 2014, conflict struck the city. Three devastating years (2014-2017) of conflict passed before the shackles of violent extremism could be broken. During those three years various battles took place, leaving Mosul in ruins, its heritage sites reduced to rubble, religious monuments and cultural antiquities damaged, and thousands of its inhabitants displaced, leaving them scarred and with immense humanitarian needs.

In February 2018, the Director-General of UNESCO launched the flagship initiative [“Revive the Spirit of Mosul”](#) as the Organization’s response for the recovery of one of Iraq’s iconic cities. The Initiative aims at restoring the **urban, social and cultural fabric of the Old City** and achieving the primary goal of fostering reconciliation and social cohesion in Mosul. In order to achieve this goal, UNESCO Office in Iraq has embarked on a project to reconstruct the Old

City’s historic landmarks, namely Al Nouri Mosque and its iconic Al Hadba Minaret, Al Saa’a and Al Tahira Churches with the generous support of the Government of United Arab Emirates, and with the full support of the Prime Minister of Iraq and of the UN Secretary-General. Reviving Mosul is not only about reconstructing heritage sites; it is about **empowering the population** as agents of change involved in the process of rebuilding their city through culture and education. It is with a strong message of hope and resistance for Iraq and the world, a message that an inclusive, cohesive and equitable society is the future that Iraqis deserve, that the “Revive the Spirit of Mosul” Flagship Initiative was born.

The Initiative is striving to contribute to **community reconciliation** and peace building through the recovery of the living environment and rehabilitation of the city’s heritage sites. Reconstruction works will be conducted with the involvement of Moslawis, and programs for capacity building and job creation will be undertaken in order to support the reconstruction works.



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منظمة الأمم المتحدة  
للتربية والعلم والثقافة



#ReviveTheSpiritOfMosul

#FaireRevivreLEspritDeMossoul

#إحياء\_روح\_الموصل



بدعم من دولة الإمارات العربية المتحدة  
Supported by the United Arab Emirates



The reconstruction of this important landmark is of utmost importance to send a strong signal of resilience and hope, as a first step towards social cohesion and reconciliation in post-conflict Iraq. Indeed, historical sites and monuments are not only a scientific tool of knowledge, but they also represent a powerful symbol of belonging, community, and identity, whose rehabilitation will facilitate recovering the memory of the Moslawis that once felt part of a vibrant and emerging city.

Severely damaged in 2017, the complex will be the subject of an integrated rehabilitation program meant to **reconstruct the Al Nouri Prayer Hall** and, at the same time, integrate new functions to be hosted in the newly designed or rehabilitated secondary buildings, which will enhance further the role that this important complex has played for Moslawis over the centuries. The program will also encompass the redesign of the **open space** and the relation of the Complex with the surrounding **historical urban fabrics**, through its new gates and fences, in order to recover its central function in the urban life of the Old City.

## Mission Key Concepts

- Revival of Mosul's rich **artistic, cultural and scientific** life;
- Foster **reconciliation and social cohesion** in Mosul and its Old Town through the restoration and reconstruction of the city's iconic landmarks, such as Al Nouri Mosque and its Al Hadba Minaret;
- Skills **development and job creation** for all Moslawis. Providing young men and women from Mosul with a source of livelihood and a good understanding of heritage and the importance of its preservation;
- Reinststate the complex of Al Nouri Mosque as the city's main mosque by creating an **integrated design** inspired from and compatible with the traditional architecture of Mosul's Old City;
- Extend the use of the mosque beyond its main religious purpose, through the introduction of new functions, which will create a peaceful, tranquil place for worshipers and a vibrant **vital center for the community**.



## Ms. Audrey Azoulay, Director-General of UNESCO

Some buildings are so symbolic that they come to reflect the spirit of a place. In Mosul, Iraq, Al Nouri Mosque is one such building. Along with Al Hadba Minaret and the Clock Tower of the Dominican Latin Church, it dominates the city's skyline.

The Al Nouri mosque complex is one strand in a dense urban fabric, interwoven with shrines, churches, mosques, madrassas and cemeteries. This fabric, which is so central to Mosul's identity, reflects the cultural diversity of Iraq itself.

In recent years, Mosul has been destroyed by conflict. However, its **social, cultural and historical foundations remain**. By building on these strengths, the city can drive its own renaissance. By rebuilding its monuments, the city can improve its people's lives and livelihoods.

This is the goal of UNESCO's flagship initiative to "[Revive the Spirit of Mosul](#)". Accompanying local residents and the Iraqi Government, this initiative aims to create jobs and develop skills for youth, while contributing to **social cohesion** and community reconciliation, in Mosul and throughout Iraq.

A key element of this initiative is the project "[Revive the Spirit of Mosul by rebuilding its historical landmarks](#)", funded by the United Arab Emirates. The international architectural competition presented in this brief, to select the design of the Al Nouri Complex, is an essential **milestone** in this project.

Architects from across the globe now have the opportunity to contribute to the reconstruction of this important city. In doing so, they can help revive the spirit of Al Nouri Mosque – and the spirit of Mosul itself.



## H.E. Ms. Noura Al Kaabi, UAE Minister of Culture and Youth of the United Arab Emirates

The Al Nouri Mosque and its magnificent Al Hadba Minaret embody the civilizational essence of Mosul and Iraq. As a witness to the **rich history** of Mosul, this place of worship represents values and principles that **define us as human beings**. The restoration of the mosque is an emphatic rejection of terrorism and extremism, and an eloquent statement on moderation and pluralism.

The International Architectural Design Project Competition for the design of the Al Nouri Mosque complex emanates from our firm belief that a project of this importance must ensure wider **community participation**. The project will see the participation of Iraqis for sure in its various aspects, but we would also like to see how architects from around the globe visualize the rehabilitation of this significant icon of Iraqi history.

The project for the rehabilitation of the Mosque will benefit the youth of Mosul in many ways. It will provide around 1000 training and employment opportunities for them, strengthening the local economy. We have launched a training program in cooperation with UNESCO and ICCROM to boost the skills of Mosul's youth in architecture, engineering, town planning and handicrafts.

This is also an **opportunity for the people of Mosul**, and Iraq, to become active participants in rebuilding what was destroyed by violent extremists.



## H.E. Mr. Hasan Nadhim, Minister of Culture, Tourism, and Antiquities of Iraq

In rebuilding Al Nouri Mosque and Al Hadba Minaret, we are restoring the original heritage of Iraq, and the heritage of Moslawi people. We are **rebuilding memories** and repairing the fissures left behind after the terrorism of ISIS. We are once again overcoming the dangers of extremism. As the Minaret rises again in the sky, **it stands as a symbolic pillar of our identity and our history.** Therefore, this Mosque and this Minaret are patrimonial landmarks of our tangible heritage and also **spiritual places** in our spiritual worlds.

Our generous brothers in the United Arab Emirates and our loyal friends at UNESCO are collaborating to rebuild the Mosque and Minaret. Their untiring efforts will not be limited to rebuilding physical structures; they aim to **rebuild human lives as well.** Because the Mosque and the Minaret play a vital role in business and job creation, and create a new dynamic for the city of Mosul – a cultural scene where people’s needs are met, and where civilized values triumph over terrorist barbarism.

Work on this project has started, and will continue in the future. For it to be completed, an international architectural competition is today being launched for the design of the mosque. Through this competition, international experts will have the opportunity to participate in construction efforts, building on the strength of talented individuals around the world. Through this competition, we will ensure that the entire project is the work of a diverse and capable team, sending a message of optimism about the possibility of rebuilding what is destroyed by conflicts.



FIG.7



FIG.8

## Dr. Saad Hamid Kambash, President of the Sunni Endowments

In the name of GOD the gracious, the merciful

On a glorious and deeply moving day, at one of the greatest, noblest and magnificent times of life, the world cannot but stand amazed at the rebuilding of the historic Al Nouri Mosque and its towering Al Hadba Minaret.

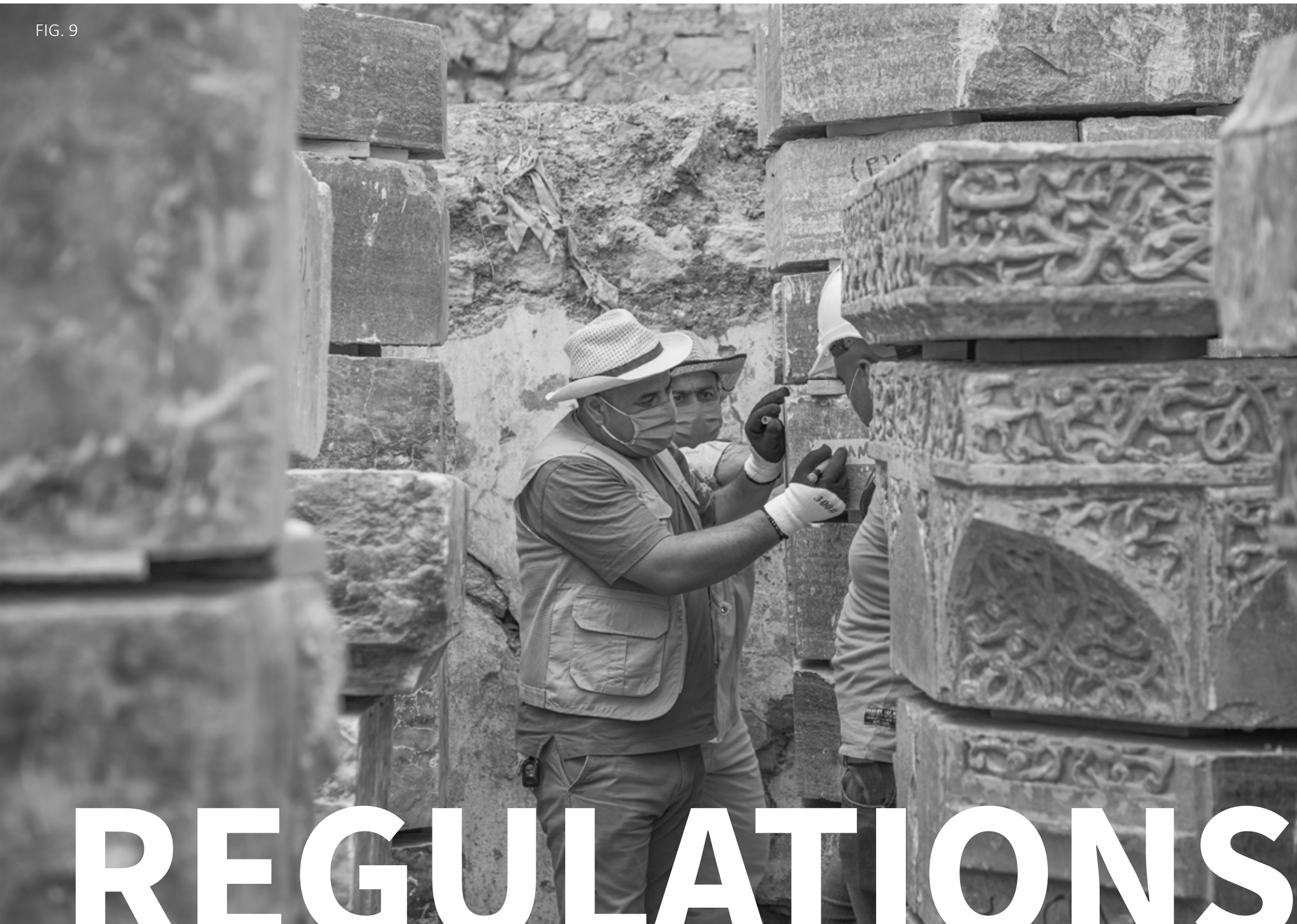
In the past, when I stood in the ruins following the destruction of the Mosque, I always asked myself and others in wonder: what in Al Nouri Mosque provoked ISIS to detonate it?

What kind of crime did the mosque commit to cause these monsters to make it into a suicide training camp, a cemetery for the dead, and a crime scene?

Nevertheless, similar crimes have been repeated throughout history... in the mosques of Baghdad, Cordoba, Andalusia, Toledo, Zaragoza, Gaza, Jerusalem and Ashkelon.

Al Nouri Mosque is not only a story of construction and reconstruction, but also a story of sacrifice and martyrs who defied death for the sake of life. They gave their pure blood so that humanity could live, protected by awareness. They were the miracle and symbols of victory; they are the perfume of the earth and of gunpowder.

Glory to Al Nouri Mosque. We deeply appreciate all those who have laid stones during its construction, **contributing to its great history.** Mosul will live on, through Al Hadba Minaret, through the splendour of its people, who are the city’s heart and witnesses to this epic victory.



# REGULATIONS

# Competition Regulations

This present competition is organised in accordance with the Guidelines, Rules and Regulations set out in the present document. It will be conducted according to the 1978 Revised Recommendation concerning International Competitions in Architecture and Town Planning, which was adopted by UNESCO General Conference at its 20th session and (by common practice of open international competitions) the UIA best practice recommendations ([UIA Competition Guide](#)). This is an international single stage architectural design project competition conducted in open procedure.

By participating in this competition, the participants accept unconditionally the Guidelines, Rules and Regulations set out in the present document and affirm that they are acquainted with and will strictly abide by the time-lines. Nothing in or relating to the competition regulations, specifications and program shall be deemed a waiver of any of the privileges and immunities of UNESCO. Submissions of an entry constitutes acceptance of the decisions of the jury, which shall be final.

Basic principles of the current competition are equal opportunities for all applicants, assessment of the submitted concepts in an independent jury with no conflict of interest and anonymity.

UNESCO will administer the international design competition for selecting a winning design entry for the Reconstruction and Rehabilitation of the Al Nouri complex in Mosul. The launch of the design competition is on **16 November 2020**. The competition will draw submissions from a wide range of individual architects, engineers, companies or joint ventures, from around the world to submit a design proposal for reconstructing and rehabilitating the Al Nouri complex. All entries to the design competition must be received by UNESCO in **digital format only**. The deadline for the digital submission of the entries is by **26 March 2021 at 23:59 (GMT)** and should be done via the competition website.

A formal examination by the Technical Committee will be organised by 3 April 2021; the fixed date is dependent on the number of entries received and will be published on the competition website

The jury is scheduled to start its sessions by **4 April 2021**, while the winner of the competition is scheduled to be announced by 15 April 2021. The exact dates will be announced via the [competition website](#).



## General information

- **Location:** The Al Nouri Complex is located in the Old City of Mosul in the Nineveh Governorate of the Republic of Iraq.
- **Organizers:** UNESCO Office in Iraq, in coordination with the Ministry of Culture and Sunni Endowment in Iraq and The United Arab Emirates.
- **Competition Website:** <https://unesco.org/mosulcompetition>
- **Competition Video:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f4R7-QO92B-k&feature=youtu.be>
- **Contact :** UNESCO Secretariat for the Reconstruction and Rehabilitation of the Al Nouri Complex Competition.



Email: [mosulcompetition@unesco.org](mailto:mosulcompetition@unesco.org)

## UIA approval and endorsement

The competition is endorsed by the International Union of Architects (UIA) and the brief examined and approved by the International Competitions Commission of the UIA. The Competition will be conducted according to the UNESCO Standard Regulations for International Competitions in Architecture and Town Planning and the UIA best practice recommendations ([uia-architectes.org/webApi/uploads/ressourcefile/32/uiacompetitionguide.pdf](http://uia-architectes.org/webApi/uploads/ressourcefile/32/uiacompetitionguide.pdf))

## Eligibility criteria

The present competition is an open call for proposals based on an anonymous design submission. Architects or teams of architects and engineers authorized to practice in their country of residence, will be asked to develop

and submit a proposal for the Reconstruction and Rehabilitation of the Al Nouri Complex in Mosul, as companies or joint ventures of individuals and/or companies. In the case of companies/firms the leading architect must be clearly named.

Participants will need to meet the following criteria:

- The team leader must be an architect with at least 5 years of experience in the field, with demonstrated previous experience in rehabilitation of historical buildings and/or new designs in historical contexts;
- Have at least one member junior architect with 1-2 years of experience in the field;
- Have at least 2 other examples of completed works from concept, design to as built;
- Have at least 1 other example of project of intervention in a historical urban context;
- Meet the UN-eligibility criteria:
  - (a) The bidder is not on the exclusion list published on the global portal for suppliers of the United Nations Organization, (<http://www.un.org>) due to fraudulent activities;
  - (b) The name of the bidder doesn't appear on the Consolidated United Nations Security Council Sanctions List which includes all individuals and entities subject to sanctions measures imposed by the Security Council;
  - (c) The bidder is not excluded by the World Bank Group.

The selected winner and 4 runners-up will be asked to provide proof of meeting all the criteria mentioned above. Failure to do so will result in

disqualification.

## Evaluation criteria

The jury will evaluate the quality of the entries based on following criteria which are listed not in order of priority or importance.

- **Integration** of the newly designed elements into the remains of the historical landmarks, as well as into the historical context;
- Impact on the **urban and social context**;
- Potential of expressing and reinforcing cultural and **community identity**;
- Potential of contributing to **sustainable development**;
- **Competency** of design approach and expression;
- Architectural **quality**;
- Integration into the **heritage landscape**;
- **Innovation** and creativity;
- **Historical analysis** and documentation aspects/consideration
- **Ecological** aspects;
- **Functional** aspects;
- **Economy of means** in the design approach;
- **Feasibility** and implementation potential;
- Coherence of **holistic** approach;
- General impression.

The jury may expound and detail the criteria at the evaluation process.

## Official language

The official language of the competition is English. All questions at the Q&A procedure and all texts of the entries are required to be submitted in English.

## Registration of competitors

In order to register for the competition, competitors must complete the Registration form on the website of the competition - <https://unesco.org/mosul-competition> by **21 December 2020 at 23:59 (GMT)**. Competitors will receive an email confirming their registration from the email address provided in the form. For detailed information on the process, refer to Appendix D-1 (Technical note on online registration and submission).

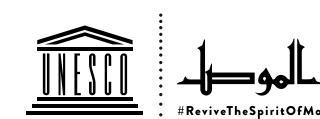
Candidates may only register for the competition once, as part of one team only.

## Jury members

An international and independent jury composed of experts in the key domains of the task, selected by UNESCO with the participation of the Sunni Endowment and the Ministry of Culture in Iraq, will review and evaluate all entries according to the evaluation criteria and select the winning submissions.

The jury is made up of the following members (9 jurors and 2 alternates):

- **Howayda Al-Harithy** | *Saudi Arabia* | Professor of Architecture and Director of the School of Design at the American University of Beirut;
- **Ahmed Yousif Mahmood Alomary** | *Iraq* | Head of the Department of Architectural Engineering at the University of Mosul;
- **Raya Ani** | *Iraq* | FAIA, LEED AP, Founder and Design Director at RAW-NYC Architects;
- **Xavier Casanovas** | *Spain* | Expert in urban regeneration and sustainable rehabilitation, and professor at the Polytechnic University of Catalonia





- **Amel Chabbi** | *United Arab Emirates* | Head of the Conservation Section at the Department of Culture and Tourism for the Emirate of Abu Dhabi;
- **Shahira Fahmy** | *Egypt* | Architect, urbanist, creative researcher and founder of Shahira Fahmy Architects;
- **Dominique Perrault** | *France* | Architect, founder of Dominique Perrault Architecture (DPA);
- **Wang Shu** | *China* | Co-founder of Amateur Architecture Studio;
- **Marina Tabassum** | *Bangladesh* | Principal of Marina Tabassum Architects;
- **Jerzy Uścińowicz** | *Poland* | Professor of Architecture and Head of the Division of Architecture of Local Cultures in the Faculty of Architecture of the Białystok University of Technology.
- **Doris Wälchi** | *Switzerland* | Director of Brauen Wälchi Architects

Depending on the number of entries received, the jury members might avail of additional experts to support the evaluation.

### The UNESCO Technical Committee

The UNESCO Technical Committee will screen all submissions before the jury meeting in order to control the formal aspects of the received entries; in particular:

- Submission within the deadline;
- Respect of anonymity;

- Completeness of submission;
- Respect of space program and eventual deviations.

The UNESCO Technical Committee will prepare a report with the results of this preliminary examination for the jury's consideration and final decision.

**Late submission and non-respect of anonymity will constitute immediate grounds for disqualification.**

### Project Timeline

- Launching of the Competition: 16 November 2020;
- First round of questions: 7 December 2020;
- Deadline to answer: 14 December 2020;
- Deadline for registration: 21 December 2020;
- Deadline for second round of questions: 15 January 2021;
- Deadline to answer: 22 January 2021;
- Deadline for entries: 26 March 2021;
- Deadline for revision by Technical Committee: 3 April 2021;
- Jury meeting & deliberation: 4-11 April 2021;
- Announcement of the Winner: 15 April 2021

### Questions and answers

Competitors will have the opportunity to ask questions to the Secretariat by email to [mosulcompetition@unesco.org](mailto:mosulcompetition@unesco.org). This is the only method of communication permitted for participants; enquiries by telephone will not



be answered. Do not contact UNESCO or any member of the staff directly. **Two rounds of questions will be organised.** The deadline for submitting the first round of questions is 7 December 2020 at 23:59 (GMT). A second round of questions will take place, with the deadline for submitting the questions on 15 January 2021 at 23:59 (GMT).

Answers shall be approved by the jury and made available to all participants by 14 December 2020 for the first round of questions and by 22 January 2021 for the second round of questions. All answers to questions will be posted on the competition website.

### Prizes and prize-money

Five prizes will be allocated. The **total prize money** is **125,000 (USD)**. The winning entry will be given the **first prize** with a value of **50,000 (USD)** followed by a second prize with a value of 30,000 (USD) and a third of 20,000 (USD).

The fourth and fifth prizes will be granted 15,000 (USD) and 10,000 (USD) respectively. The jury may also allocate **honorary mentions** at its discretion for entries with special merit.

*\*Disclaimer: Prizes awarded in this competition do not fall within the scope of UNESCO's Strategy for UNESCO's prizes.*



## Declaration of Client intent

The author awarded the first prize by the jury will receive a commission for the development of the detailed design and supervision for the Reconstruction and Rehabilitation of the Al Nouri Complex, in conformity with UNESCO's rules and regulations.

The winner **must partner with an experienced local Iraqi professional, architectural company or educational institution of their choice**, relevant to the needed field of expertise.

The partner will require **authorisation to practice in Iraq**, and must meet the **UN eligibility criteria**: they not be on the exclusion list published on the global portal for suppliers of the United Nations Organization, (<http://www.ungm.org>) due to fraudulent activities; they don't appear on the Consolidated United Nations Security Council Sanctions List, which includes all individuals and entities subject to sanctions measures imposed by the Security Council and they not be excluded by the World Bank Group. Furthermore, the choice of partner will need to be approved and endorsed by UNESCO.

## Submissions and anonymity of entries

At the time of registering on the competition website, the participants will be given a User Identification Number (UIN, ex: M001). **Participants must place this UIN on the top right corner of each panel submitted**. Logos of companies, products, names, indications of applicants' names may not be placed on submitted documentation. This is a cause for disqualification. Entries will remain anonymous for all participants until the end of the competition, after the Jury has published the Jury Report announcing the winning entries.

Competitors may only participate in one team and submit one project. Variants are not allowed

## Jury decisions

The jury prizes are final and sovereign; decisions of the jury are not subject to reconsideration by UNESCO, in whole or in part. UNESCO is not involved in the decision making process and will not influence in any way the results of the competition. UNESCO's role is that of administrator of the competition. UIA's (International Union of Architects) role is that of support for UNESCO in organizing the competition.

## Mission and prospective commission (for project competitions)

UNESCO will require the winner(s) - if not based and licensed to practice in Iraq - to partner with another **local Iraqi professional, company or educational institution** relevant to the required field of expertise, of his/her choice.

## Author's rights

Submitted digital materials become the property of the competition organizer.

The Contracting Authority may use the first prize design only if the author is commissioned to carry out the project. With the exception of promotional use, no design, whether or not it receives a prize, may be used wholly or in

part by the Organizer without the author's written agreement.

The author of any design retains the copyright and the moral rights to their work; no alterations may be made without their formal consent. The winning design shall only be used once. The Participant must guarantee that the project is original and that they are the author of the project. They must also guarantee that their design proposal does not infringe intellectual property rights of any third parties.

The winner(s) will receive as compensation a further sum equal to the amount of the first prize if no contract for carrying out the project has been signed within twenty-four months of the announcement of the jury's prize. In compensating the first prize winner, UNESCO does not acquire the right to carry out the project except with the collaboration of its author.

## Publication rights

The competition submissions may be used by UNESCO and the International Union of Architects (UIA) for press, exhibitions, publications or other marketing of the competition and its outcome. By submitting an entry, each competitor hereby grants UNESCO a worldwide perpetual royalty-free license, with the right to publish, display and publicize any of the submitted entries or any part thereof, citing the name of the author.

Upon the lifting of anonymity and the publication of the Jury's report, candidates shall refrain from using UNESCO's or the UIA's name or emblem for anything pertaining to the competition, for promotional purposes or any other purpose, without prior written agreement from UNESCO or the UIA.

## Exhibition

All designs, including those disqualified by the jury, will be exhibited on the competition website, for three weeks, together with a copy of the signed

report of the jury. The dates of the online exhibition will be communicated later.

**UNESCO will organise an exhibition of top five finalists** as a "collateral event" **at the 2021 Venice Biennale of Architecture**. The exhibition will take place in the premises of the UNESCO office in Venice.

## Participant Protest

Participants perceiving that they have been unjustly treated in connection with the competition may protest by directly writing to the UNESCO Secretariat for the International architectural competition for the Reconstruction and Rehabilitation of the Al Nouri Complex ([mosulcompetition@unesco.org](mailto:mosulcompetition@unesco.org)).

Claims can only concern formal aspects of the procedure. The Secretariat will review the protest and may consult the relevant services in UNESCO and provide a reply to the applicant.

The Jury is sovereign in matters of evaluation. No appeals shall be allowed against the evaluation process conducted by the jury and the decisions taken by the jury with regard to the ranking of the entries and the attribution of the prizes.





# GUIDELINES

The project "[Revive the Spirit of Mosul by rebuilding its historic landmarks](#)", has now entered its Phase II in which a conceptual design for the Al Nouri Mosque Complex and its Prayer Hall will make the subject of an open international architectural design project competition conducted in one stage.

The architectural design project competition has two main components: the rehabilitation of the Al Nouri Mosque Complex and the reconstruction of the Al Nouri Prayer Hall. Although the Al Nouri Prayer Hall is an integral part of the Al Nouri Mosque Complex, it will be handled separately due to its high importance and the necessity of providing a more in-depth solution of reconstruction by integrating the remaining parts.

The rehabilitation of the Al Nouri Mosque Complex calls for a **conceptual design for the construction of new buildings with diverse functions**, the rehabilitation of all three of its historical buildings and their integration into the new designs, and the landscaping design of the entire site. By creating **new spaces dedicated to the community** – for education, social and cultural activities – the project envisions a space to serve the community beyond its principal religious function.

The reconstruction of the Al Nouri Prayer Hall calls for a conceptual design for conserving the remaining standing structure of the prayer hall and its integration into the new building, which is a reconstruction of the prayer hall as it was in 2017 before its intentional destruction.

# Architectural Guidelines

## Goals and aims for the rehabilitation of the Al Nouri Complex

- Create an **integrated design** inspired from and compatible with the traditional architecture of Mosul's Old City, while considering the retention of authenticity and integrity of the Complex;
- Create an oasis of **peace and tranquillity** for worshipers and a vibrant vital centre for the **community**, through the established new additional functions;
- Integrate an **environmentally conscious design**, which in the Mosul context should consider locally resourced materials, climate and efficiency;
- **Integrate** the **newly designed** buildings, landscaping and reconstructed portions **with the remains of historical landmarks** within the Complex.



## Evaluation criteria

- **Integration** of the newly designed elements into the remains of the historical landmarks, as well as into the historical context;
- Impact on the **urban and social context**;
- Potential of expressing and reinforcing cultural and **community identity**;
- Potential of contributing to **sustainable development**;
- **Competency** of design approach and expression;
- Architectural **quality**;
- Integration into the **heritage landscape**;
- **Innovation** and creativity;
- **Historical analysis** and documentation aspects/consideration
- **Ecological** aspects;
- **Functional** aspects;
- **Economy of means** in the design approach;
- **Feasibility** and implementation potential;
- Coherence of **holistic** approach;
- General impression.

## Site Analysis

\*See attached Appendix A: "The Al Nouri Mosque as existing in 2017 and situation today".

The Al Nouri Mosque has always been an iconic landmark for the Old City of Mosul, recognised by the local community as an **important public space** and a tangible manifestation of its cultural identity. Being one of the most ancient complexes in the Old City, its main architectural elements – notably the leaning Al Hadba Minaret and the Prayer Hall in its different configurations – have always significantly contributed to the overall character of the historical urban landscape of Mosul.

Through its historic and **symbolic importance**, the project for the rehabilitation and reconstruction of the Al Nouri Complex is expected to be an important contribution to the future development of a management plan for the Old City of Mosul.

The Al Nouri Mosque Complex with an area of approximately 11.050 sqm, is located in the north-eastern sector of the Old City, and it is bordered by two main streets: Djami Al Kabeer Street on its south side, and Farooq Street on its west side. The plot, one of the largest in the Old City, is relatively flat with a slight inclination towards the south. The whole site of the mosque complex comprises two areas:

- a "**historic**" area of 7.500 sqm, representing the boundary of the complex before 2017, and housing the remains of the minaret and those of the prayer hall, the ablutions pavilions and modern WCs buildings, as well as the houses on the north-eastern perimeter.
- an "**extension**" area of 3.500 sqm added to the site in 2019 – previously accommodating (pre- 2017) a garage and repair shop for cars and some 10 residential plots with dwellings.

The project proposal encompasses the whole site of the Complex, both its historic and extension areas, as well as the narrow pedestrian alley between the two. In the "historic" area, the Al Hadba Minaret and the group of seven buildings situated on the Complex's north-eastern side do not make part of the present project. In the "expansion" area, only 3 of the remaining buildings (see attached Appendix A: "The Al Nouri Mosque as existing in 2017 and situation today" – Survey of Houses no.8, no.9 and no.10), present historical value and make part of the project submission.

## Building Regulations

UNESCO expects subtle and relevant proposals that will help to create a harmonious accord between the Al Nouri Mosque Complex and the Old City of Mosul, as well as between the Complex's existing, reconstructed buildings and its newly designed ones.

For the **rehabilitation of the Al Nouri Mosque Complex**, the competition submission must consider the following:

- The Al Hadba Minaret and the seven dwellings on the north-eastern side (Houses no.1 to no.7) of the Complex **are not part of the project submission**. Participants will consider that the Minaret will be rebuilt to its former shape and appearance as before 2017 intentional destruction, making use of the original material – brick masonry. The participants will consider that the dwellings on the north-eastern side will also be rehabilitated using traditional materials and techniques, in the spirit and in accordance with Mosul Old City's architecture.
- All the existing buildings with no historical or architectural value will be demolished and thus **not part of the competition submission**, according to the attached Appendix B: "Al Nouri Mosque | Building Regulations".
- **Three of the existing buildings situated in the expansion area are part of the project submission** – Houses no.8, no.9 and no.10 (according to the attached Appendix A: "The Al Nouri Mosque as existing in 2017 and situation today" – Survey of Houses no.8, no.9 and no.10). These buildings are of historical value and thus will be kept and rehabilitated, reconverted functionally and integrated into the new proposed functions. The height of these buildings should not exceed their previous heights. E.g. if the buildings presented an upper floor, then this one may be rebuilt.

- Additional buildings with **new functions** are part of the design for the rehabilitation of the Al Nouri mosque complex. These buildings are: the Al Nouri school; the Higher Institute of Art and Islamic Architecture; the Festivities Hall; the Shrine – Tomb of Al Nouri; Administration offices; Security & CCTV offices; and an Ablutions & WCs building – according to the attached Appendix B, Al Nouri Mosque Building Regulations – Functional Distribution Plan and Sections.
- The new proposed buildings will integrate **harmoniously** with each other, with the existing buildings on the site, and with the architecture of the Old City of Mosul<sup>1</sup>.
- Only two-story buildings with maximum three-story accents should be proposed for the new buildings.
- The new proposed buildings will make use of colours and materials in accordance with those used in the Old City of Mosul. Fired brick, stone and the use of **alabaster** (Moslawi marble) are favoured. The use of **traditional architectural typologies** or modern subtle reinterpretations of elements of these typologies should be sought.
- All buildings must be accessible to persons with disabilities, following the general requirements for international disability guidelines.
- The **landscaping** of the entire Mosque Complex should provide a conceptual design of the exterior furniture, pavement, vegetation and type of shading system proposed. The solution should include the design of the fence and proposed access gates of the Complex.



For the **reconstruction of the Al Nouri Prayer Hall**, the competition submission must consider the following:

- The new Prayer Hall is a reconstruction of the building of 2017, before its destruction. The reconstruction **will follow entirely the dimensions and architectural features of the previous one** (see Appendix A: The Al Nouri Prayer Hall as existing in 2017 (before the destruction) with only some interior improvements; (see chapter “Buildings Requirements”);
- Design a viable solution for the **permanent stabilization and conservation of the remaining standing structure of the Prayer Hall** (see Appendix C: “UNESCO Report on the temporary stabilization measures executed on the Prayer Hall”).

- Submit a design which provides a proposal on **how to treat the remaining portions**, in particular how they will be integrated into the new design. Special attention should be given to the treatment of still-standing original columns and the *mihrab* on the southern wall.
- Submit a proposal describing how and where to **store, exhibit or reuse** the original fragments collected during the rubble removal.
- The building must be entirely **accessible** to persons with disabilities, following the general requirements for international disability guidelines.



FIG. 12

## Building Program

### *Mosques are the centre of the community Mosques are the heart of the Islamic life*

Throughout history, mosques served as important centres for prayer and events – thus having a **religious** function; as well as places for **education, sciences, medicine and philosophy** – an educational function; and places for business agreements, funeral services and marriages – a societal and legislative function. Nowadays, mosques include an even bigger array of functions, acting as **community centres**, hosting **multifunctional** spaces for the community to congregate and socialise after prayer. Thus, they have come to include functions such as libraries, museums, exhibitions, shops, multi-purpose rooms for lectures and debates, as well as dormitories, shelters and dining facilities for the poor and homeless.

The Al Nouri Mosque needs to be vested now with functions that will transform it and make it **the heart of the religious, social and cultural life of Moslawi community**. The proposed new functions, hosted by the newly rehabilitated Al Nouri Mosque Complex, are in line with the Initiative’s scope of providing quality education through the construction of Al Nouri school and of a Higher Institute of Art and Islamic Architecture, and of reviving socio-cultural life both through the reconstruction of the Al Nouri Prayer Hall and the construction of a Festivities Hall and of the Al Nouri shrine.

## .Education

Historically, mosques were vested with an educational role and were the main centres for the preservation of scripture and the study of Arabic, Qur’anic scripts, Islamic law and sciences. According to historic sources, the 12-century Al Nouri Mosque was also built with a *madrasa* – a school.

As part of the rehabilitation project, the Sunni Endowment wishes to bring back to life the **educational component**, historically a part of the Al Nouri mosque. The Al Nouri school, a secondary school for boys and girls, and the Higher Institute of Art and Islamic Architecture, will be hosted by two buildings in the expansion area, either on its northern side or on its southern side.

## Festivities Hall

A completely new function for the mosque’s complex, will be hosted inside a building situated in the expansion, either on its northern side or on its southern side. This building has a **socio-cultural function** and will be used as an auditorium hall for lectures, preaching and guidance lessons. This building will be equipped with all the latest accessories and a projector, in the form of an auditorium (steps).

## Al Nouri Sahn (Courtyard)

One of the most important traits of a congregational mosque is the *sahn*, the courtyard. The large courtyard of the Al Nouri Mosque is a place for prayer – an area dedicated for summer praying, and a place for community gatherings as well as a place for **peace and tranquillity** away from the bustle of the Quotidian, among trees, pavilions and *sabil*- water wells and fountains.



The courtyard is also a place for **pilgrimage**, where the tomb and shrine of Al Nuri, as well as other ancient tombs will be re-opened for public.

### The Al Nouri tomb and shrine

The area dedicated to the Al Nouri Shrine encompasses the tomb of Al Nouri as well as a small cemetery. It will be located **on the place of the historical ziyarah of the Mosque**, the name in Arabic meaning "visit". It is a place for pious visitation, pilgrimage for worshipers and travellers alike.

### Complex's ablutions and toilet facilities

These facilities will be designed so that they are located on the main path towards the prayer hall. Possible location: west or north-west of the Prayer Hall.

The ablutions and toilets may be designed together or as separate spaces. The toilets facilities must be far from the entrance to the Prayer Hall, and

any opening of these facilities directly to it should be avoided.

Toilets can be designed to take the influx of people hosted by both the Prayer Hall and the Festivities Hall, if situated in direct or close connection to the latter one. If another design will be adopted, then separate toilet facilities should be proposed for both functions.

### The Al Nouri Prayer Hall

It will be rebuilt as it was in 2017 before its destruction, on the original location of the former Prayer Hall, which occupied the southern side of the complex. This new building, although a replica of the previous one, is expected to **skilfully integrate the consolidated remains** and use improved materials and constructive techniques, which are physically compatible with the existing ones. Some improvements in the interior organisation of the space are expected to be achieved as part of this reconstruction. Such are the creation of dedicated spaces for women, VIPs and Quran readers, as well as a storage and electrical rooms, (detailed in the Chapter "Building Requirements").





## Building Requirements

### Rehabilitation of the Al Nouri Mosque Complex

#### *Al Nouri secondary school for boys and girls*

- Provide 12 classrooms, each able to seat 30 students. Use flexible furniture to create a variety of seating arrangements for the classrooms.
- Provide a library with tables for reading in groups and computer/IT tables for up to 15 students.
- Provide a multi-functional classroom for laboratory and projections, able to host one class of students.
- Arrange separated WCs for girls and boys and disabled children.
- Arrange an indoor sports hall. The sports hall will be equipped with changing rooms separated for boys and girls, each with 1 WC.
- Prepare an area dedicated to administration personnel and teachers. This area should include: 1 office for the director, 2 other offices for

the administrative staff, for up to 3 persons each; 1 pantry/ kitchenette shared by all staff; WCs for female staff and male staff with one WC for disabled use; storage spaces for furniture.

- 2 teachers rooms- one for men and one for women should be provided on the 1st and respectively 2nd floor respectively. Each room is equipped with a WC.
- Arrange the above mentioned spaces taking into account that: the administration, library, multi-functional classroom and sports hall should be situated on the ground floor; the 1st floor should be dedicated to boys, while the 2nd floor will be dedicated to girls. The WCs for boys should be located on the 1st floor, while the WCs for girls should be located on the 2nd floor.

Function	Area/unit (sqm)	No. of units	Total Area (sqm)	Notes
<b>Classrooms</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>540</b>	12 classrooms, each class for 30 students
<b>Library</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>40</b>	1 librarian; 15 students
<b>Multi-functional classroom</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>45</b>	Used for laboratory and/or projections
<b>WCs for girls and boys</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>48</b>	With 2WC for disabled students, 1 per gender
<b>Indoors sports hall</b>	<b>410</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>410</b>	
Main hall area	380	1	380	
Changing rooms with WC	15	2	30	Changing rooms separated by gender
<b>Administration</b>	<b>101</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>142</b>	
Office for the director	12	1	12	Space for 1 person
Offices for administration staff	15	2	30	Each office hosts 3 persons
Teachers rooms equipped with WCs	22	2	44	Each room for 6 persons (separated by gender)
Pantry/ Kitchenette for staff	12	1	12	
WC for staff	4	2	8	With one WC equipped for disabled use
Storage space	36	1	36	For furniture
Corridors and circulations			<b>490</b>	Around 40% of the total
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>1.715 sqm</b>	



FIG. 14



### Higher Institute of Art and Islamic Architecture

- Provide an entrance lobby with a small seating area.
- Provide an indoor cafeteria (can be extended in the exterior) equipped with a small kitchen, a storage room and WCs for customers separated by gender and one WC for disabled.
- The institute can host up to 8 classrooms, each able to seat 25 students. Use flexible furniture to create a variety of seating arrangements for the classrooms.
- Provide an open space library for up to 20 persons, with tables for reading and computer/IT tables. Provide 2 quiet rooms for private working group sessions and reading, each room to accommodate a maximum of 6 persons.
- Prepare offices for 10 teachers, with each office of 6 square meters, made of light partition walls – glass, wood or others.
- Prepare an area dedicated to administration personnel, which will include 2 offices for the management and 2 offices for administration. Provide a meeting room seating 25 persons and a communal area with a small pantry room and sitting.
- Provide toilets for students and teachers separated for women and men. Provide 2 accessible facilities for people with disabilities.



FIG. 15

Function	Area/Unit (sqm)	No. of Units	Total Area (sqm)	Notes
<b>Classrooms</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>336</b>	8 classrooms, each class for 25 students maximum
<b>Entrance lobby</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>15</b>	
<b>Cafeteria/ Tea House</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>107</b>	
Open space	60	1	60	For 50 persons
Kitchen	20	1	20	For 2-3 staff
WCs for customers	4	3	12	1WC for disabled
Storage	15	1	15	
<b>Library</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>100</b>	
Open space	60	1	60	1 staff and 20 students
Quiet rooms	20	2	40	Each room able to host 6 persons
<b>Administration</b>	<b>210</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>210</b>	
Offices for management	12.5	2	25	1 office for director and 1 office for deputy director
Cubicles for teachers	6	10	60	Individual cubicle-type space for 10 teachers
Offices for administration staff	15	2	30	Each office able to host 3 persons
Meeting room	75	1	75	Space able to host up to 25 persons
Pantry (communal area)	20	1	20	
<b>WCs for students and staff</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>40</b>	With 2 cubicles for disabled, 1 per gender
<b>Corridors and circulations</b>			<b>325</b>	Around 40% of the total
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>1.133 sqm</b>	



**Festivities Hall/ Multi-purpose Hall**

- The space will accommodate 200 seats for lectures, public events, debates and other performances pertaining to Islamic creed.
- Arrange an entrance area with a small shop providing beverages and snacks.
- Provide a dressing area(s) or off-stage area with private bathrooms.
- Design two spaces for storage and maintenance purposes.
- If the Festivities Hall is designed located in the proximity of the complex's WCs (+ablutions), then a possible closed corridor/ covered patio may be provided to connect the hall to the WCs, which should be designed to take into consideration the influx of persons resulting from both functions. If the Festivities Hall is designed located in the northern side of the expansion area, than its area should allow for separate toilet facilities from the ones of the complex.

Function	Area/Unit (sqm)	No. of Units	Total Area (sqm)	Notes
Entrance lobby with shop	200	1	200	Able to host 200 pers. standing. Calculated 1,00sqm/p.
Main space – Hall	300	1	300	Able to host 200 pers. Calculated at 1,50sqm/person Area includes the circulations and the stage
Rooms for performers	5	4	20	4 rooms equipped with WC
Storage and maintenance rooms	30	2	60	
Corridors and circulations backstage			20	Around 25% of the backstage area
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>600 sqm</b>	

**Administration**

- The administration area can be designed as one building or can be divided between several buildings.
- The building(s) for the administration of the mosque will include an entrance area with seats for 6 persons, 1 office for the Imam, 2 offices for 6 employees, 1 pantry with a small dining facility, 1 meeting room for 10 persons, WCs for employees and a storage/ archive space.
- Provide another area with 1 office for security & CCTV connected to 2 rooms for 4 guards working on shifts.

Function	Area/Unit (sqm)	No. of Units	Total Area (sqm)	Notes
<b>Offices</b>	<b>130</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>130</b>	
Entrance with seats	16	1	16	1 receptionist at the entrance
Office for Imam	12	1	12	
Offices for administration personnel	15	2	30	Each office able to host 3 persons
Meeting room	30	1	30	Room able to host up to 10 persons
WCs for employees	4	3	12	1 WC per gender and 1 for disabled
Pantry	14	1	14	Space equipped for dining
Storage	16	1	16	For mosque's archives
<b>Security</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>42</b>	
Office for security and CCTV	15	1	15	
Rooms for guards	12.5	2	25	Each room for 2 guards (1 room equipped with 2 beds)
<b>Corridors and circulations</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>43</b>	Around 25% of the total
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>215 sqm</b>	



**Complex's Ablutions and Toilets facilities**

- Design taking into consideration that for the prayer hall alone, there should be 1 toilet (cubicle) for 80 men and 1 for 50 women. Western toilets should make up 20% of the total number of toilets.
- The space for ablutions (Wudu), can be proposed as part of the toilets facilities or functioning as a separate building. For the ablution space, it should be 1 washing space for 40 men and 1 for 80 women.
- The direction of the toilets should not be in line with the orientation towards Mecca and should preferably be perpendicular to that direction. They should not be located behind the *Qibla* wall or at a level above the Prayer Hall.

Function	Area/Unit (sqm)	No. of Units	Total Area (sqm)	Notes
<b>Ablutions (Wudu)</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>88</b>	* area calculated per person includes: space for washing, seat for washing and circulations
Ablutions for women	2	4	8	Provide at least 1 disabled washing facility for women
Ablutions for men	2	40	80	Provide at least 2 disabled washing facility for men
<b>WCs</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>104</b>	The number of toilets should be calculated to include the influx of people coming from the Prayer Hall, Summer Praying Area, Festivities Hall and other visitors of the complex. It has been calculated that the Prayer Hall and the Festivities Hall will not run simultaneously, thus the maximum number of persons will be taken as the maximum number of persons hosted by the Prayer Hall together with the Summer Praying Area.  * area calculated per person includes: the cubicle; sink space and circulations  ** even though the number of women attending the prayers is much less than that of men, the number of women who might attend the Festivities Hall should be considered as 1/2 the number of total persons hosted by this function, thus 100.
WCs for women	4	6	24	Provide at least 1 disabled facility for women
WCs for men	4	20	80	Provide at least 2 disabled washing facility for men
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>192 sqm</b>	

**Landscaping design, fences, gates and other considerations**

- Arrange a summer praying area for a minimum of 600 persons. This area should be equipped with at least one ablutions pavilion (of approximately 20 square meters). Retractable shading systems and/or cooling/heating and ventilation systems should be proposed to make this space usable in summer, as well as for a possible partial usage during winter.
- The entire courtyard of the complex will be equipped with street furniture and lights, trees and other types of vegetation. The historic hexagonal ablutions pavilion will be incorporated in the overall proposal. Design other possible water features, with one or more ablutions pavilion, water drinking fountains and others.
- Provide the space for a minimum of 20 parking lots for the complex's

employees. This space is situated inside the complex and should be integrated in the overall landscape design. The parking can be situated in the extension area entirely, or partially in the expansion and partially in the historic sector of the complex (eastern side), preferably in its north-eastern sector.

- The whole perimeter of the complex will be fenced and will incorporate 4 pedestrian gates and 1 auto and pedestrian gate. Each gate will have one security booth. An additional auto gate may be proposed if the parking will be divided between two distinct areas inside the complex.
- Refurbish the Al Nouri tomb and shrine area and propose a new landscaping design.

Function	Area/Unit (sqm)	No. of Units	Total Area (sqm)	Notes
<b>Summer praying area</b>	<b>576</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>576</b>	Area for 600 persons. Calculated with 0.96 sqm/person
<b>Ablutions pavilion</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>20</b>	Situated in the summer praying area
<b>Booths for guards</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>12</b>	Situated at the 4 secondary gates
<b>Al Nuri Tomb and Shrine</b>	<b>215</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>215</b>	Refurbish and propose a new landscaping design
<b>Landscaping of the complex</b>	<b>7.667</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>7.667</b>	
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>8.490 sqm</b>	



## BUILDING PROGRAM - MACRO-CATEGORIES SUMMARY TABLE

MACRO-CATEGORIES	FUNCTIONS	AREA (SQM)
<b>I - AL NOURI MOSQUE COMPLEX</b>		
<b>I-1 - Al Nuri secondary school for boys and girls</b>	<b>EDUCATION</b>	<b>1.715</b>
	Classrooms	540
	Library	40
	Multi-functional classroom	45
	WCs for girls and boys	48
	Indoors sports hall	410
	Administration	142
	Corridors and circulations	490
<b>I-2 - Higher Institute of Art and Islamic Architecture</b>	<b>HIGHER EDUCATION</b>	<b>1.133</b>
	Classrooms	336
	Entrance lobby	15
	Cafeteria/ Tea House	107
	Library	100
	Administration	210
	WCs for students and staff	40
	Corridors and circulations	325
<b>I.3 - Festivities Hall</b>	<b>CULTURE</b>	<b>600</b>
	Entrance lobby with shop	200
	Main space – Hall	300

	Offstage area and private restrooms	20
	Storage and maintenance rooms	60
	Corridors and circulations	20
<b>I.4 - Administration and teachers rooms</b>	<b>ADMINISTRATIVE</b>	<b>215</b>
	Offices	130
	Security	42
	Corridors and circulations	43
<b>I.5 - Complex's Ablutions and Toilets facilities</b>	<b>FACILITIES</b>	<b>192</b>
	Ablutions	88
	WCs	104
<b>I.6 - Landscaping design, fences, gates and other considerations</b>	<b>MISCELANOUS</b>	<b>8.490</b>
	Summer praying area	576
	Ablutions pavilion	20
	Booths for guards	12
	Al Nuri Tomb and Shrine	215
	Landscaping of the complex	7.667
<b>II- AL NOURI PRAYER HALL</b>		<b>Main Prayer Area - 698</b>
		<b>Portico - 215</b>



## Reconstruction of Al Nouri Prayer Hall

The destroyed building presented the following spaces: a portico with shoe racks from which the interior of the prayer hall, a storage room (at the east corner of the portico) and the stair leading to the roof (at the west corner of the portico), were directly accessed. The interior, accessed through three doors under the portico, hosted the main prayer area and the women's prayer area<sup>2</sup>, as well as a balcony for raising Azan and reading the Holly Quran – situated on an upper floor, above the main entrance bay.<sup>3</sup> These spaces may be reorganised and laid out differently in the reconstructed building.

In addition to the aforementioned spaces, the following new spaces and functions will be hosted in the new building:

A delineated VIP area, in the form of a wooden compartment, situated on an upper floor balcony. This place should be able to host a maximum of 15 persons. A separate entrance may be allocated for this area.

A separated women's prayer area should be allocated inside the prayer hall.

This area should be of about 100 square meters and can be located entirely on the ground floor, or can be divided between the ground floor and an upper floor balcony. The women's area should be accessible from outside directly, through a private door situated on the west façade of the hall. A lattice-work-type barrier of 2 meters with an openable door will divide and connect this space from the rest of the building.

A wooden compartment dedicated to raising Azan and reading the Holly Quran, for a maximum of 5 persons, should be allocated inside the hall. This area can be located on the ground floor or in the balcony, near the VIP area.

An electrical control room will be included in the total area of the building.

A storage room should be allocated inside the hall. This represents 2% of the total area of the building.

As the stair to access the roof was detrimental to the symmetrical appearance of the northern courtyard elevation, a more skilful approach may be employed to create a new staircase.



FIG. 16



# Deliverables

Participants are required to submit the following:

## DRAWINGS - Minimal requirements FOR THE AL NOURI MOSQUE COMPLEX

### PANEL NO.1

- The Al Nouri Mosque Complex site plan proposed functional distribution – scale 1:500
- The Al Nouri Mosque Complex site plan proposed landscaping design (with indication of the type of vegetation proposed, lighting, urban furniture, water fountains and others) – scale 1:500
- Fencing solution detail(s) and visualization (s) – scale 1:50
- Bird eye visualization (s) of the entire Mosque Complex

### PANEL NO.2

- Street elevation of the Al Nouri Mosque Complex from west – Farouq Street – scale 1:200
- Street elevation of the Al Nouri Mosque Complex from south – Great Mosque Street – scale 1:200
- Section through the site F-F – scale 1:200
- Ground level visualization (s) of the Mosque Complex

### PANEL NO.3

- Section G-G, scale 1:200 North- South section running through historic area looking towards west (extension area). Location: through Al Nouri Shrine and Prayer Hall secondary bays
- Section H-H, scale 1:200 North-South section through the extension area. Location: through the historic buildings, looking towards east (historic area)
- Section through the site F1-F1 – scale 1:200
- Ground level visualization (s) from inside the Mosque Complex

### PANEL NO.4

- Northern Building(s) Extension Area- Ground floor and 1st floor – scale 1:200
- Southern Building(s) Extension Area- Ground Floor and 1st Floor – scale 1:200
- Typical building wall section through proposed new buildings – scale 1:50
- Visualization (s) of proposed buildings

## FOR THE AL NOURI PRAYER HALL

### PANEL NO.5

Proposed intervention of permanent stabilization measures to be undertaken for the remaining structure of the Prayer Hall:

- Plan at level of the Prayer Hall +8.00m (approximately) – scale 1:100
- Plan at level of the Prayer Hall +10,00m (approximately) – scale 1:100
- Vertical section through the central bay of the Prayer Hall – scale 1:100

Proposed new building:

- Ground floor plan of the Prayer Hall – scale 1:100
- Plan at level of the Prayer Hall +7.25m (Terrace level) – scale 1:200

### PANEL NO.6

- North or South elevation of the Prayer Hall – scale 1:100
- West or East elevation of the Prayer Hall – scale 1:100
- Horizontal Section of the Prayer Hall- Detail no.1 illustrating the connection point between old (remaining structure) and new (proposed structure)- scale 1:50. Location: main bay area
- Horizontal Section of the Prayer Hall - Detail no.2 illustrating the new (proposed structure)- scale 1:50. Location: other than the main bay area.
- Vertical Section of the Prayer Hall – Detail no.3 illustrating the connection point between old (remaining structure) and new (proposed structure) – scale 1:50. Location: transverse through eastern secondary bays.
- Exterior visualization(s) of the Prayer Hall

### PANEL NO.7

- Longitudinal section of the Prayer Hall – scale 1:100
- Transverse section of the Prayer Hall – scale 1:100
- Vertical Section of the Prayer Hall – Detail no.4 illustrating the connection point between old (remaining structure) and new (proposed structure)

- scale 1:20- Location: main bay area

- Vertical Section of the Prayer Hall – Detail no.5 illustrating the new (proposed structure) – scale 1:20 – Location: other than the main bay area Interior Visualization (s) of the Prayer Hall

## REPORT

- A brief presentation of the design strategy for the rehabilitation of the complex – maximum 1000 words (A4 format). The document shall include also:
- A brief presentation of the proposed consolidation strategy- maximum 1000 words (A4 format)

- Applicants will submit the text and drawing requirements on **2 A4 format reports and 7 panels A1 format, in landscape format.**
- The panels will be submitted as a single PDF document, with a maximum **size of 500 MB.**
- All documentation submitted should be written in **English.**
- A summary **statement** of the Client's objectives and the primary factors to be considered by the jury

The evaluation of the designs will be based on the "**Goals and aims for the Rehabilitation of the Al Nouri Complex**" and the evaluation criteria. The selection process consists of finding an adequate approach to the specifications and programme of the competition. The feasibility of the project will be assessed.



# List of documents provided to competitors

## APPENDIX A

### The Al Nouri Mosque as existing in 2017 and situation today

#### LIST OF DRAWINGS

### The Al Nouri Mosque Complex

#### I. The Al Nouri Mosque Complex as existing in 2017 (before the destruction)

- Mosul Old City Area Plan with the position of Al Nouri Mosque Complex – scale 1:10000 | MC.A-100.
- Al Nouri Mosque Complex Site Plan scale 1:500 and Sections through the site D, D1, E, F and F1 – scale 1:500 and scale 1:10000 | MC.A-101.

#### II. The Al Nouri Mosque Complex - Situation Today

- Mosul Old City Area Plan with the position of Al Nouri Mosque Complex – scale 1:20000 | MC.A-102.
- Al Nouri Mosque Complex Site Plan – scale 1:500 | MC.A-103.
- House no. 8 (Extension area)–Survey Layout plans, Elevation and Sections – scale 1:100 | MC.A-104.
- 4.House no. 9 (Extension area)–Survey Layout plans, Elevation and Sections – scale 1:100 | MC.A-105.

- House no. 10 (Extension area)–Survey Layout plans, Elevations and Sections – scale 1:100 | MC.A-106.
- House no. 8, no.9 and no. 10 Assessment.

### The Al Nouri Prayer Hall

#### I. The Al Nouri Prayer Hall – As existing in 2017 (before the destruction)

- Prayer Hall Ground Floor Plan – scale 1:100 | PH.A-100.
- Prayer Hall Plan Level +7.25m – scale 1:100 | PH.A-101.
- Prayer Hall Plan Level +20.00m – scale 1:100 | PH.A-102.
- Prayer Hall North and East Elevations – scale 1:100 | PH.A-103.
- Prayer Hall South and West Elevations – scale 1:100 | PH.A-104.
- Prayer Hall Section A-A and B-B – scale 1:100 | PH.A-105.
- Prayer Hall Section A1-A1 and C-C – scale 1:100 | PH.A-106.

#### II. The Al Nouri Prayer Hall – Situation Today (with the temporary stabilization measures)

- Prayer Hall Plan Level +7.25m and Roof Plan- scale 1:100 | PH.A-107 .
- Prayer Hall North and East Elevations- scale 1:100 | PH.A-108.
- Prayer Hall South and West Elevations- scale 1:100 | PH.A-109.

- Prayer Hall Section A-A and B-B- scale 1:100 | PH.A-110
- Prayer Hall Section A1-A1 and C-C- scale 1:100 | PH.A-111

## APPENDIX B

### The Al Nouri Mosque | Building Regulations

#### LIST OF DRAWINGS

### The Al Nouri Mosque Complex

- Demolitions Plan – scale 1:500 | BR.A-100
- Functional Distribution Plan- scale 1:500 and sections through the site D1-D1 and F-F scale 1:500 and Sections through the site G-G and F1-F1 scale 1:200 | BR.A-101

All the drawings listed for both Annex A & B will be made available to registered competitors in the editable version (DWG format)

## APPENDIX C

### The Al Nouri Mosque | List of additional documentation

#### PHOTOGRAPHIC AND WRITTEN DOCUMENTATION

- Virtual Reality Tours
  1. 3D model of the Mosque Complex 2020: <https://sketchfab.com/3d-models/al-nouri-mosque-complex-hq-8d62d0c30fef46019b26476f55f7633f>
  2. 3D model of Mosque Complex 2017: <https://sketchfab.com/3d-models/al-nouri-complex-before-2017-72b67e11915e4e769f2035c3b11dccee>
  3. 3D model of the Prayer Hall 2017: <https://sketchfab.com/3d-models/prayer-hall-c8d4c62154904bb9a24216aabe47bf00>

- UNESCO report on the temporary stabilization measures executed on the Prayer Hall
- Photographic catalogue of the entire site of the Al Nouri Mosque

## APPENDIX C.1

### City of Mosul

#### LIST OF ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION

- UN Habitat, City Profile of Mosul - Multi-sector assessment of a city under siege, October 2016
- UN Habitat, Initial Planning Framework for the Reconstruction of Mosul, January 2019
- UN, Video Mosul: The Road to Recovery ([https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6tVtLo\\_mM\\_Q](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6tVtLo_mM_Q))

## APPENDIX D

### Technical Notes

#### REGISTRATION, SUBMISSION AND CONTRACTUAL MODALITIES

- Technical note on online registration and submission (App. D-1)
- Technical note on negotiation and contractual modalities (App. D-2)







FIG. 17

# Historical Context

## History of Mosul from origins to present day

### From its origins to the 12<sup>th</sup> Century AD

The origins of Mosul are shrouded in mystery, with historical records pointing to its emergence around the 7<sup>th</sup> / 6<sup>th</sup> century BC, after the destruction of the ancient Assyrian capital of Niniveh, when a series of settlements appeared on the west side of river Tigris. According to Greek historian Xenophon, who visited the region some 200 years later, **a settlement called Mepsila existed on the West side**<sup>4</sup>. Some believe that the name of Mosul may have stemmed from this settlement; others believe that its name was given by the Arabic tribes who conquered it, Mosul or *Al Mawsil* in Arabic meaning the linking point. Yet again, others attribute it to *muslin*, a cotton fabric highly sought in medieval times, for which Mosul was famous.

According to German archaeologist Ernst Herzfeld, Syrian Christian sources note the existence of a monastery on the west side of the river around 570 AD<sup>5</sup>. This fortified monastery, at the time of the Arab conquest in 641 AD, had already developed into a settlement with a castle, churches<sup>6</sup> and a few Christian houses next to them, as well as a Jewish quarter. After its conquest, the settlement became a garrison town – *Misr*, which received a Friday mosque. **The importance of Mosul grew during the hundred-year** Arab rule of the Rashidun Caliphate, when the city's streets were paved, and fortification walls were built around the city. Under the brief rule of Marwan II (744-750 AD), the

last Umayyad caliph known as the "builder" of Mosul, the city had "around 50,000 inhabitants, noted as twice as populous as contemporary Rome but ten times less populous than Baghdad" (Novaceck K, 2017). To this epoch is also attributed the construction of the ship bridge- the only bridge over the Tigris until the 20<sup>th</sup> century AD, the *qaysaria* (covered market) and Umayyad mosque<sup>7</sup>, from which the Al Nouri Mosque inherited its main *mihrab*.<sup>8</sup>

For the next two and a half centuries, from the 9<sup>th</sup> to the first half of the 11<sup>th</sup> century, the larger region was marked by a period of internal strife and political turmoil. During this time, Mosul was ruled by the Hamdanid and Uqaylid dynasties, which ended with the fall of the city to Seljuk ruler Toghril Beg in 1057 AD. Even as this period was one of political unrest, **the arts, sciences and trade continued to prosper in Mosul.**

According to al-Muqaddasi, a 10-century geographer, Mosul "is the metropolis of this region. It is a splendid city, beautifully built. Highly renowned, and of great antiquity, it is possessed of excellent markets and inns, and is inhabited by many personages of account, and learned men; nor does it lack a high authority in the traditions, or a celebrated doctor of the law. From here come provisions for Baghdad, and thither go the caravans of al-Rihab. It has, besides, parks, specialties, excellent. fruits, very fine baths, magnificent houses, and good meats: all in the entire town is thriving."



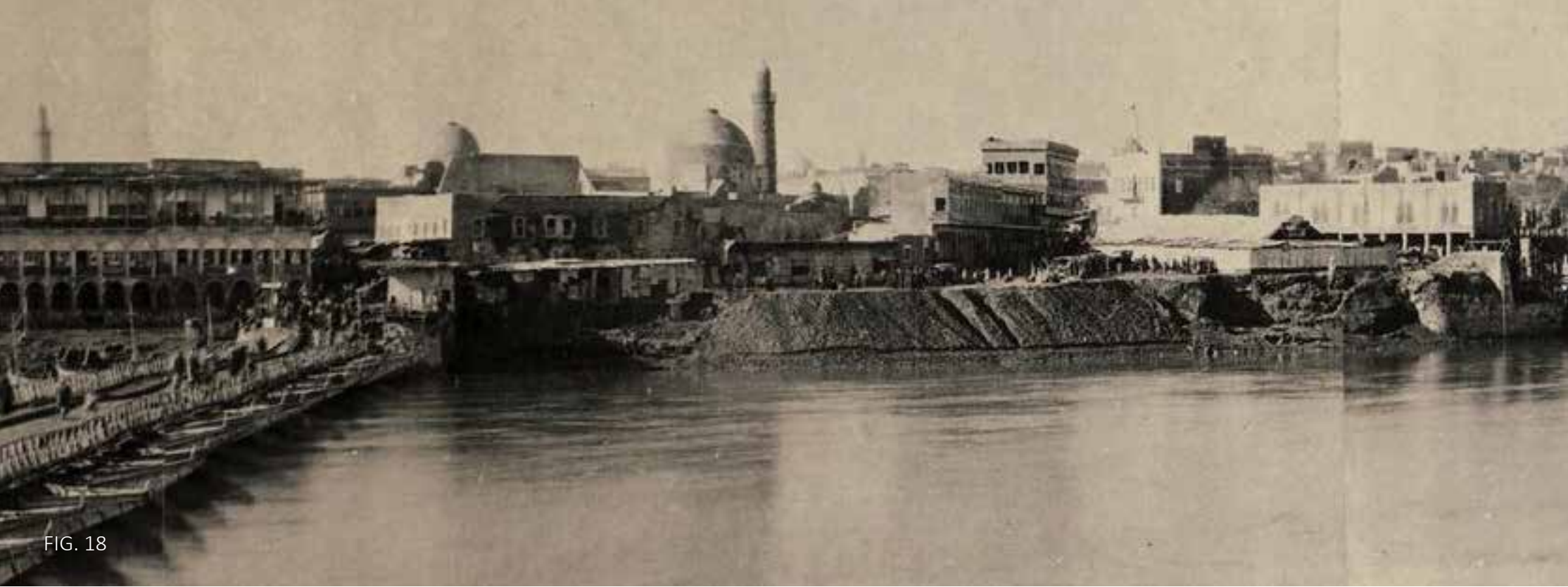


FIG. 18

## From the 12<sup>th</sup> century AD to the 16<sup>th</sup> century AD

After the Seljuk conquest, the Al Jazira region (now part of Syria and Iraq) was ruled by the dynasty's princes and governors, one of them rising to power in 1127 AD and establishing an independent rule – the Zengid. Imad al-Din Zengi rose to power from Mosul and established himself as the Atabeg of Mosul and Aleppo. The Atabeg dynasty went on to rule Mosul for the next 130 years; considered as the **golden years** of Mosul. The Atabeg rulers were great patrons of the arts and sciences. During this time, in Mosul were built many mosques, shrines, schools, ribats – lodges for Sufis and hospitals. Some of these buildings survived until the 20<sup>th</sup> century and damaged only after the devastating effects of recent conflict.

According to Ernst Herzfeld and Nikita Elisseeff, when Imad al-Din Zengi took over Mosul, the city was in ruins and even the mosque built by Marwan II (Umayyad mosque) was barely visited on Fridays. Imad al-Din had several palaces built and Mosul was embellished by magnificent buildings. He doubled the city walls, added large towers to reinforce these walls, built Bash Tabyia citadel (the city's northern most point) and gave the trenches greater depth. (Figure 19)

His son Nur al-Din continued the work of his father and in 1170 AD ordered the building of the new Grand Mosque of Mosul – Al Nouri Mosque, together with

a *madrassa* and a minaret, the Al Hadba Minaret.

The patronage of Badr al-Din Lu'lu (1219-1259 AD) is seen as the apogee of the Atabeg rule and of Mosul. His epoch was the birth of the so-called school of Mosul, with its delicate architectural decorations of gypsum arabesques, carved alabaster (Moslawi marble) and muqarnas domes. During his reign he built some 14 mausoleums, rebuilt his palace Qara Sarai (built by Imad al-Din), a Gymnasium, the *mashad* (shrine) of Imam Yahya, *mashad* of Imam Awn Din and other churches and monasteries. (Figure 21)

In the 13<sup>th</sup> century, Mosul had 3 congregational mosques, 36 suqs, 28 schools and 18 dar-hadiths – Quran schools (Kemp P, 1979), 8 churches and the astonishing number of 210 *hammams* (Fethi I, 1977).

This golden age came to an end in the second half of the 13<sup>th</sup> century, when Mosul was captured and sacked by Mongols and later ruled by the Ilkhanate and Jalairid Sultanates. The invasion of the region by Mongols, decimated the population of Mosul and the city's urban expansion was curbed. For three long centuries, Mosul was marred by political insecurity, and its once flourishing trade markets and rich agricultural hinterlands were destroyed. The population living outside the city's southern walls during Atabeg times retreated inside the walls. Inside the city, the north part was deserted, the only inhabited quarters remaining the ones around Al Nouri and further east to the river.

## From the 16<sup>th</sup> century AD to the 19<sup>th</sup> century AD

Even though conquered by the Ottomans since 1517, the city was considered mostly a garrison city and thus no investment was done, and it is only after another hundred years that Mosul saw a time of prosperity and revival. According to historian Dina Rizk Khoury, Mosul was "*integrated into the Ottoman Empire gradually and revived its place among the cities of the Fertile Crescent.*"<sup>9</sup>

During the four centuries of Ottoman rule, Mosul was considered to have been the most independent district of the Empire, being ruled by local notables. Powers were entrusted by the Empire to local governors, and Mosul saw the rise to power



FIG. 19



of an urban-based gentry represented by the families of Al-Umari, Tasin Al-Mufti and the most important one, the Al Jalili who ruled Mosul for most of the 18<sup>th</sup> and beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. It was Hussain Pasha Jalili who solidified the Jalili's rule over Mosul, after his defeat of Nadir Shah in 1743. During this epoch, the **Pashas and the urban Moslawi notables restored some of the city's walls**, ramparts and moat, and built numerous *khans*, *bazars*, coffee houses, mosques, Friday mosques and schools. The city expanded once again outside the city's walls, both southwest and southeast. Nonetheless, all the improvements and buildings erected during these years were merely political acts done in order to gain prestige and buy influence. (Figure 20) *"Around 1820 Mosul had some 25 Friday mosques, most of which had been erected under the Jalilis, either from scratch or on the site of an old masjid – smaller mosque"* (Kemp P, 1979).

The second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century was marked by the Empire's attempts to centralize the government's rule. In Mosul, the Sultan abolished in 1834 the powers of the Jalili family and of the urban notables, and imposed new non-Moslawi governors, appointed for short periods of time. 19<sup>th</sup> century Mosul, **"with a population of roughly 70,000 was still a modest city compared to others in the Ottoman Empire. Mosul was a regional capital with a diverse and prosperous economy"** (Shields S, 1991) based mainly on agriculture – through its rich fertile hinterland; manufacture – cotton and metalwork, and pastoral produce – sheep and goat, wool and *mohair*.



FIG. 20



FIG. 21

## The 20th Century

After World War I and the defeat of the Ottoman Empire, between 1918 and 1926, Mosul became part of the **British Mandate**, which included Baghdad and Basra. The British instigated large infrastructure projects all over Iraq, building roads, bridges and railways, but eventually halted its expansion due to lack of sufficient revenue. It is during this time that Mosul received a water supply system and electricity. This is when the railway and the train station were completed and Mosul Old City's main east-west road, Niniveh Street, a commercial street with many shops and multi-story buildings, was cut through the heart of the historic bazaars (Figure 22). With the creation of Niniveh street, in 1916, a new bridge was erected through Qal'at Island, which was completely levelled and connected to the city<sup>10</sup>. (Figure 23)

After 1926, **Mosul became part of the newly established country Iraq**, and became the capital of Niniveh province. During the royal rule, which lasted until 1958, the city expanded and the defensive wall was demolished sometimes around 1933<sup>11</sup>. New neighbourhoods appeared inside the Old City in the deserted northern part and outside of it, in its south western and south eastern part. Between 1930s and 50s, Al Shaziani and Al Farooq Streets, became the Old City's north-south artery, and were created by structuring and enlarging existing roads<sup>12</sup>. **"The opening (or the widening) of these roads didn't affect the morphology of the urban fabric, but certainly created a new system of relation between the Old City, its hinterland and the wider urban area that expanded outside the wall and beyond the river."** (Pini D, 2019)

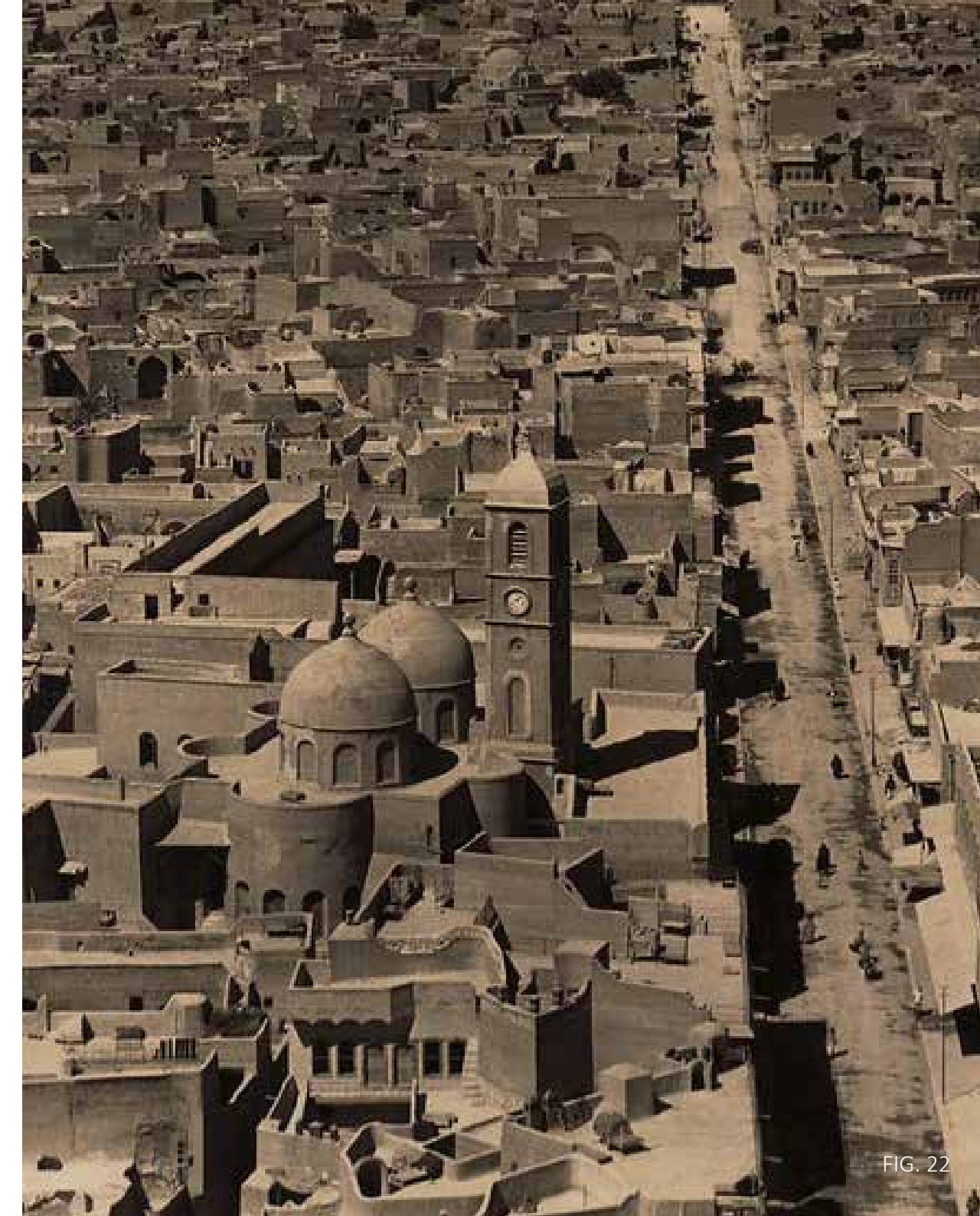


FIG. 22



With the establishment of the republic of Iraq and Saddam Hussain's regime, **Mosul grew and was further modernized**, extending also on the eastern bank of Tigris. The most prominent period in the expansion of the city of Mosul was the period after the '70 s, when many works were undertaken, according to a 1975 French Master Plan.<sup>13</sup> The motorway over the 5<sup>th</sup> bridge, which links the east bank with the new developments to the west of the Old City, is considered to have been the only major change<sup>14</sup> suffered by the Old City, prior to recent conflict. This motorway runs through the Old City's northern part, severing the Old City from its citadel Bash Tabyia and other 12 and 13-century important Atabeg buildings, such as Saykh Fathi mosque, madrasa Al-Nuriyya and mashad (shrine) al-Imam Yahya ibn al-Qasim

The last decades saw the construction inside of the Old City of many modern buildings using concrete and other modern materials, while **many historical houses were left to decay** or destroyed mainly due to the owners' inability to restore them or as an aspiration for modernity. However the hardest blow

suffered by the city was under the rule of *Daesh* (al-Dawla al-Islamiya fi al-Iraq wa al-Sham, the Arabic abbreviation for ISIL) who deliberately destroyed some of its most important public buildings<sup>15</sup>. Despite the destruction brought by the conflict and subsequent operations to retake the city in 2016 and 2017, the Old City seems to have preserved its morphology, even if its buildings (represented mostly by 18th and 19th century residential architecture) were heavily damaged.

The contemporary city of Mosul, encompassing the west and east banks, is now **one of Iraq's principal cities**. It is the capital of the northern Iraqi Governorate of Nineveh and Iraq's second largest city after Baghdad. According to a [2016 UN-Habitat profile of Mosul](#), the city is composed nowadays of 251 quarters (*mahala*) on both sides of Tigris, with 91 neighbourhoods on the west bank (the Old City and surrounding quarters) and 160 neighbourhoods on the east bank (Figure 24).



FIG. 23

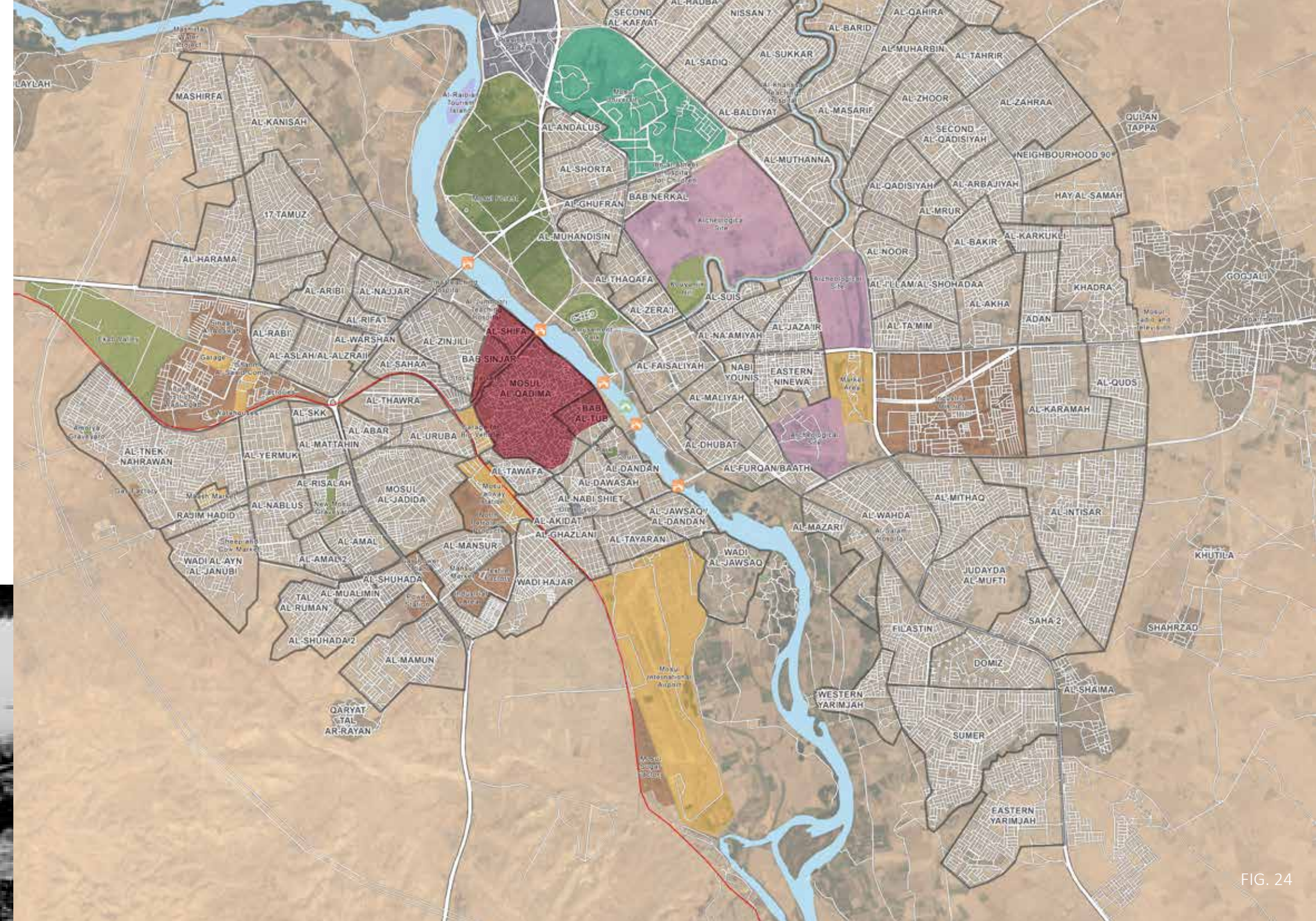


FIG. 24



# Main features of the Islamic City

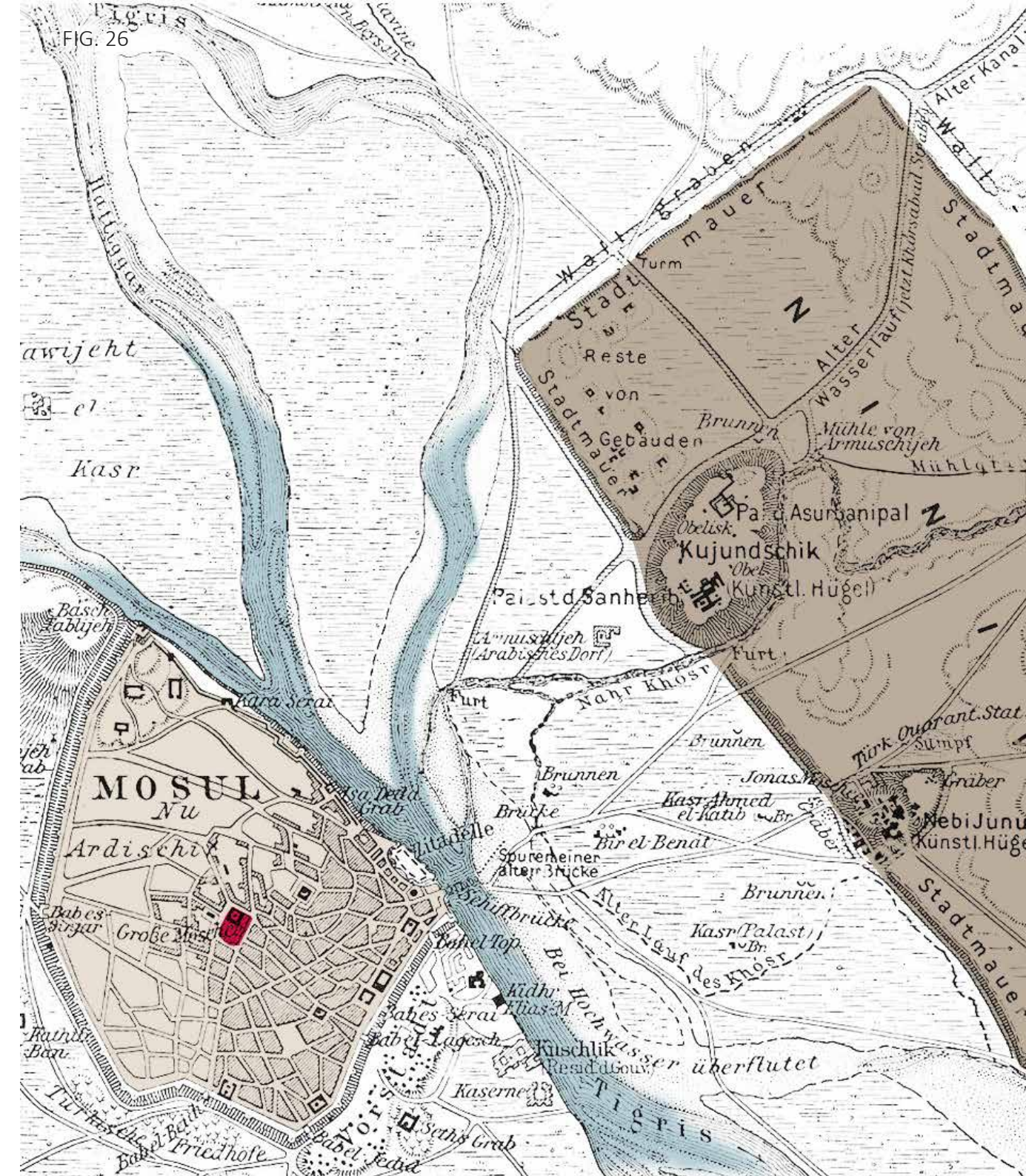
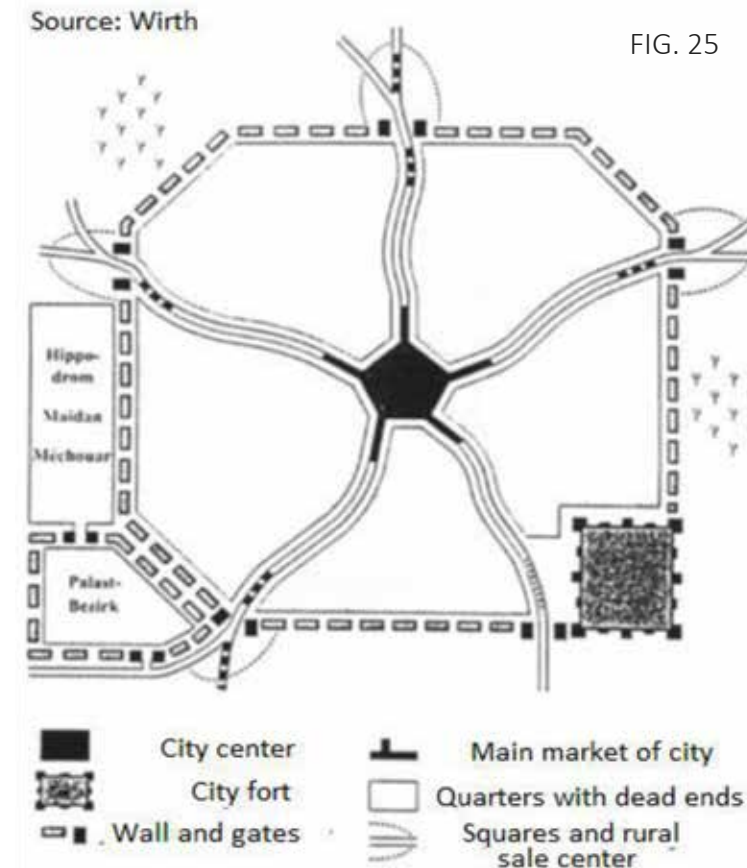
## and parallels with Mosul

### Mosul's Public Architecture

*“The physical form and functional structure of historic madinas (cities) in Iraq, generally resemble those in other Islamic countries but particularly Arab ones. The evident consistency in their overall character was achieved and maintained over centuries largely because of the existence of a strong sense of religious tradition and social conformity” (Fethi I., 1977).*

Consistent in their features, historic Islamic cities are probably best represented by the diagram of German geographer Eugen Wirth (Figure 25). Traditionally, the historic Islamic city is a **walled city** with a **citadel (Qal'at)**, which usually takes its place on a hill or near the water, situated outside the city's centre. The **main Friday mosque (jami)**, occupies the heart of the city, the **bazaar (souq or qaysaria)** surrounds the mosque and extends on the main roads leading to the city's gates. The **palace (Sarai)** takes its place inside or outside the city, close to the surrounding defensive walls, during Ottoman times like a fortified city of its own. The **residential quarters** and streets fill in the remaining spaces.

The overall form of the Old City of Mosul seems to have remained unchanged from the 8<sup>th</sup> until the 19<sup>th</sup> century AD (Figure 26). Mosul's **defensive walls** built by Marwan II, “surrounded an approximately 300 ha town in an irregular semi-circular shape, attached to the elevated bank of



*the Tigris.” (Novacek K, 2017) During the visit of Carsten Neibuhr at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century AD,, Mosul was less than half the size of its east bank neighbour in ruins, the ancient Niniveh (Figure 26).*

Some 30 years after the siege of Nadir Shah of 1743, the city was surrounded by thick walls, some of which were still standing – those on its northern front – while others were collapsed or scattered – those on the riverfront and the southern walls. History recounts that in 1743, the northern part of the walls, close to Bash Tabyia, Mosul's **citadel (Qal'at)**, were the strongest<sup>16</sup>. The citadel and city walls fell in disrepair and at the time of Herzfeld's visit at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, both were in ruins, although swiftly repaired throughout the ottoman rule.

The largest open space in the Islamic city is the court (*sahn*) of the **main Friday mosque** which serves several quarters (Figure 27). Since its construction in 1170 AD, Al Nouri Mosque was and still is the principal mosque of Mosul. Together with its *sahn*, The Al Nouri Mosque is still to this day the largest open space of the Old City.

During the Umayyad times, towns such as Mosul had only one congregational mosque, Friday Mosque, which would have been large enough to accommodate the entire male population of the town.



Later, during the Atabeg dynasties, when Mosul grew considerably and expanded beyond the city's walls, a single mosque was unable to perform this task. Thus, Mosul had 3 congregational mosques – the old Umayyad Mosque situated in the east close to Tigris (no recorded photographs); the Al Nouri Mosque – the main mosque of Mosul, situated at the geographic heart of the city, and the Al-Mujahidi (Al-Khidr) Mosque – situated in the city's south, outside the walls.

Another feature of the Islamic city is the **bazaar** (Figure 27). The mosque was usually built with the main bazaar surrounding it. The Al Nouri Mosque was located in a less populated area, in the heart of a large covered market – qaysaria – with more than 299 shops, according to written sources. The bazaar appears as a result of the establishment of a mosque or vice versa, as seems to be the case with both the Al Nouri (1170 AD) and Al Mujahidi mosques (1180 AD); in fact, the construction of both was most likely commanded by the need for a religious place at the heart of well-established important commercial areas. The construction of Al Mujahidi mosque proves the growing importance of the bazaars and markets situated outside the city's precincts during the Atabeg rule. At the time, Al Muajhidi may have rivalled Al Nouri, but its importance dwindled with the Mongol invasion, when these bazaars were razed, and the city's commercial trade was reduced to the area south and south east of Al Nouri mosque – coinciding with the Umayyad *qaysaria*.

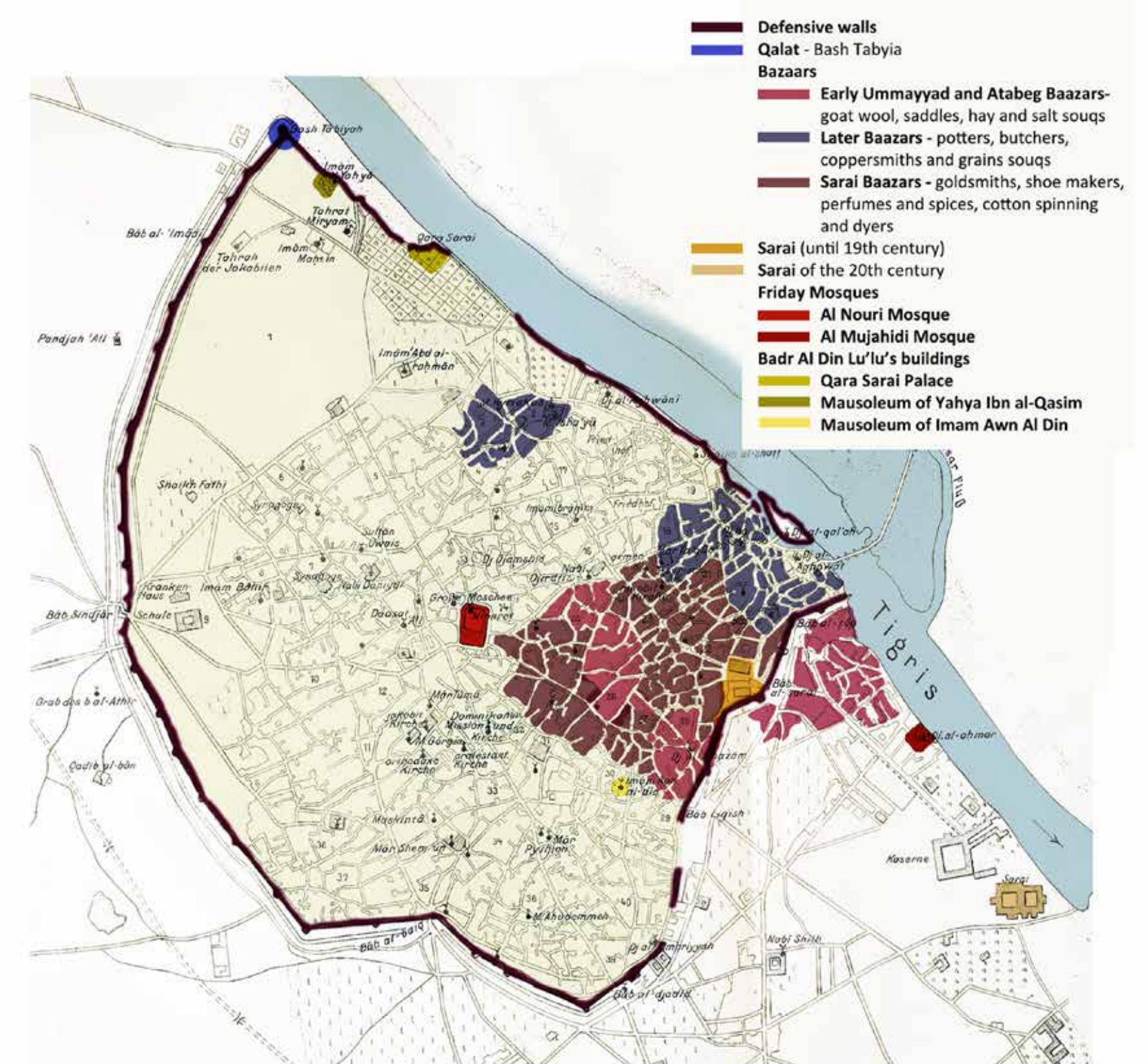
– the 19-century bazaars of goat wool, hay and saddles. The Ottoman Mosul, which had considerably shrunk during the Mongol invasions, expanded once again outside the city's walls towards southwest and southeast. It was probably during Ottoman rule that the bazar around Al Nouri mosque lost its importance and slowly subsided to the streets in the vicinity of the new Sarai neighborhood which became the main qaysaria of the city – the 19-century bazaar of goldsmiths, shoemakers, perfume and spices, cotton spinning,

dyers and pack saddles for mules. Mosul described by Neibuhr at the end of the 18th century had its northern parts mostly empty and ruined, while its south was overcrowded with official buildings, bazaars and caravanserais (inns).

The **Sarai** (Figure 27) – palace residence of the governor, seems to have shifted its location inside the Islamic city across the centuries.<sup>17</sup> The urban spatial organization of the Islamic city during Ottoman rule required the Sarai to be located on the border of the defensive wall, either inside the city's precinct, as seen in the cities of Antalya, or outside, as in the cities of the Middle East and North Africa. The Sarai together with the maidan (the Ottoman public square), forming the administrative and commercial centre of the city, were surrounded on 3 sides by the main bazaar, caravanserais, barracks, schools and cultural institutions. Mosul, an exception among the Middle Eastern cities, had its Sarai located inside the city's walls until the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century when it was moved far south, outside the city. For a brief period, the first Ottoman Sarai was located on the Citadel (*Qal'at*) Island with its maidan facing the island<sup>18</sup>. During Jalili rule, the Sarai was relocated in the city's south. This is when Suq al Sarai – the qaysaria situated in the vicinity of the Sarai – became the main qaysaria of the city, where one could find the most important inns with construction spanning more than 900 hundred years, Mosul Old City has a diverse architecture.

Representative of the city's public architecture are its mosques, shrines and churches, reflecting the artistic styles of the epochs in which they were created. Examples include Mosul's unique riverfront panorama with monumental buildings; and the Ottoman inns and bazars situated in its south.

According to the 2016 UN Habitat profile of the city, Mosul had some 486 Islamic monuments and historic mosques as well as 32 ancient churches and 6 monasteries.





Mosul's panorama along the Tigris, the city's unique architectural feature, was rounded off at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century by the ruins of the ancient Bash Tabiya citadel; the buildings of atabeg Badr Al Din Lu'lu- mashad of Imam Yahya Ibn al-Qasim (Figure 28) and the ruins of Qara Sarai palace (Figure 29); the Ottoman building of Shaykh al Shatt (incorporating remnants of the ancient Madrassa Kamalyia) and al-Aghawat mosques; and the Atabeg Al-Mujahidi (Al-Khidr) mosque.

In 1920, Herzfeld wrote in his diary, *"Mosul's history is only imperfectly reflected in the city's monuments. Only the Atabeg era is represented by significant buildings"*.<sup>19</sup>

These buildings can be divided into two styles: the early atabeg Zengid style and the style of Badr al-Din Lu'lu. Al Nouri and Al Mujahidi (Al Khidr) mosques are representative of the Zengid style. The two ***"were built with rectangular open courtyards and Prayer Halls with developed vaulting systems, usually featuring a major dome over the mihrab, flanked by subsidiary domical vaults."*** (Al Janabi TJ, 1975)

The simple, rather austere Zengid architecture contrasts sharply with that of Badr Al-Din. *"Their beauty is achieved through proportions, dimensions and excellent material, monumentality in the sense of the best classic epochs, with the exclusion of any ornament, except the simplest geometric one."* (Herzfeld E and Sarre F, 1910) Badr Al-Din Lu'lu's monuments are lavishly decorated by geometric decoration of brick facades, beautifully complemented with blue glazed bricks, epigraphic friezes, arabesques and figural reliefs.<sup>20</sup> (Figure 30, 31 and 32)

The architectural program of the so-called Mosul school of Badr al-Din Lu'lu *"was unique from an artistic point of view: his buildings were inspired by the contemporary Shii architecture of Fatimid Egypt, but also shared many shapes and decorative elements with the Christian architecture of northern Iraq, which suggests that they might have been built by local Christian architects. The usual domes were replaced with conical brick roofs with a ribbed surface. The breath-taking view of the interiors was enhanced by the use of so-called muqarnas vaults. Badr al-Din's architecture was absolutely original in its unique synthesis of trans-regional artistic identities and local traditions."* (Novacek K, 2017) (Figure 33 and 34)

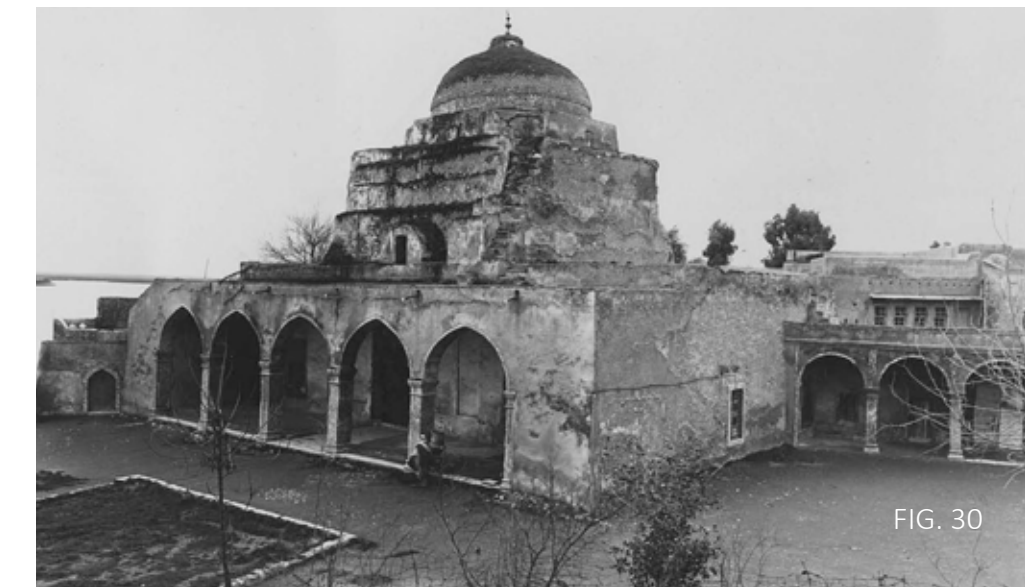






FIG. 33

Architectural **syncretism** is felt throughout the entire Old City, which should come as no surprise as generations upon generations of Moslawis have inhabited the city, their diverse religions and ethnicities leaving their individual and unique mark on what became Mosul's common architecture. Atabeg mosques of Mosul (of 12 and 13th centuries) may have been inspired themselves by the architecture of earlier churches, which in their turn may have found their inspiration in earlier **examples of the Assyrian empire's architecture**. Mashad of Imam Awn Al-Din's ornamentation, representative of Badr al-Din's architecture, is similar to that of Mar Tuma church, built some five centuries earlier (Figure 36 A-D). Badr al-Din's architecture, in its turn influenced Mosul's mosque and shrine architecture for centuries, as well as it may have been the source of inspiration for the Yazidi architecture, which with its temples and shrines topped by faceted domes, is reminiscent of Badr al-Din's architecture (Figure 35).

Mosul seems to have been a **source of inspiration** for the other cities of the region. Such is the case of Erbil's citadel (UNESCO World Heritage Site), where Moslawi architecture – with its iwans, carved marble decorations and raised basements – can be seen employed in its larger mansions. (Figure 37)

Residential architecture takes its inspiration, in most cases in a simplified way, from the architecture of mosques and churches, decorations of some of the larger mansions rivalling the wealth of decoration found in the religious architecture.

Nowhere is more evident the appropriation into residential architecture of elements from the public one, than the case of *Iwan* – a vaulted room closed on 3 sides and open on one side – overlooking the courtyard.<sup>21</sup> *Iwans* were largely employed in Mosul's architecture, both in residential and public buildings, such as schools and hospitals.

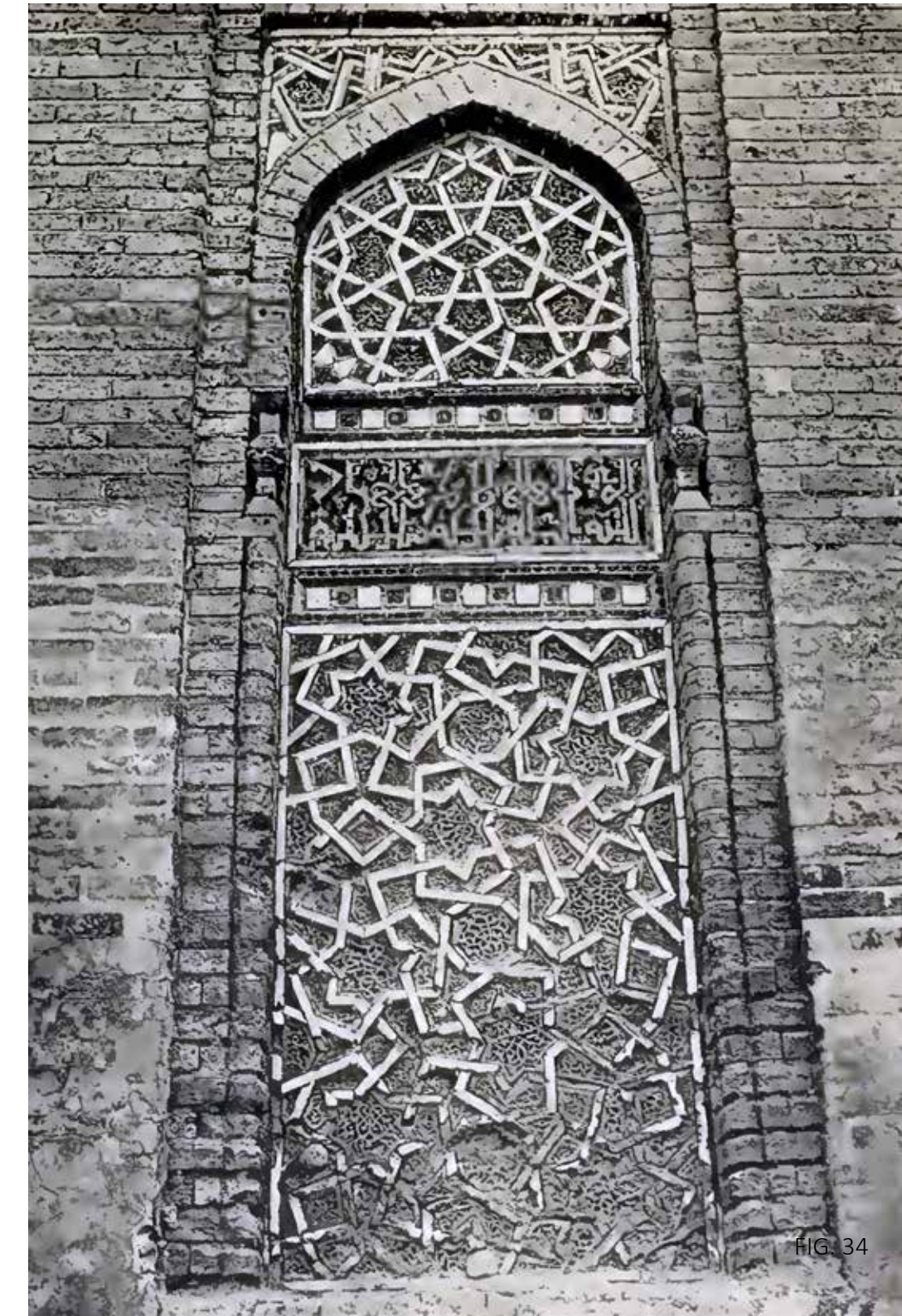


FIG. 34





FIG. 35



FIG. 37



FIG. 36- A



FIG. 36- B



FIG. 36- C



FIG. 36- D



### Mosul's residential architecture

Also, representative for Mosul are its **meandering streets** and **courtyard houses**, constituting the Old City's **residential urban fabric**, with constructions dating back mostly to the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century, with projecting jetties, arched passageways (*Al Sabat*) and decorative gates.<sup>22</sup> (reference to Figures 38 and 39 A-G). The Old City was a densely built and populated area, without green areas and vegetation except for a few garden-like courtyards in the largest houses.

Mosul is a city of ethnic and religious diversity. Historically, it was inhabited by many religious and ethnic diverse people- Arabs (mostly Muslim Sunnis), Kurds (Sunnis and Yazidis), Turkoman (both Sunnis and Shi'ites), Shabak (Shi'ites), Assyrians and Chaldean (Christians) and Jews. Mosul was divided into quarters also called *mahala*. According to Neibuhr's observations, the quarters were **ethnically and religiously mixed** for the most parts. He also observes, "*in no province of the Turkish Empire do the Christians live in such good understanding with the Mohammedans, as to Mosul.*"

The unit of the residential quarter is the house, which looks inwards, having very little or no openings to the exterior at the street level. Some openings may be found above the eye level and in the upper floors of the houses, in the form of traditional ***Shanasheels*** – jettied closed balconies – from where the street life can be observed without being seen. (Figures 38 and 39 A-G)



FIG. 38



FIG. 39-A



FIG. 39-B



FIG. 39-C



FIG. 39-D



FIG. 39-E



FIG. 39-F



## Main elements of traditional Moslawi courtyard house

Just like in most of the other historic madinas of the Islamic world, the Moslawi traditional courtyard houses are very diverse. Their planimetric shape, dimensions and cardinal orientation is varied, being the result of the organic transformation of the dwelling itself and of the city. They can have one to several interior courtyards and can be up to 4 levels in height. The average Moslawi houses are, however, quite modest in size – 150 to 200 square meters – having usually one courtyard, and two, sometimes three levels in height. Percy Kemp describes briefly the Moslawi houses. **“Houses were low and had no windows on to the street; most were built of burnt mudbrick, while door frames and columns were made of gypsum and of alabaster.”** In some cases, walls were made of river stones and a mix of gypsum and clay mortar. A great variety of ceiling types were employed, but more favoured were the vaulted ceilings made from burnt mudbricks and/or river stones. Barrel, segmental and semi-circular vaults were largely used in the more modest houses, while the squinch and domical vaults were employed mostly in the houses of the notables. Other ceilings types - flat ceilings, were employed as well. These were paneled wooden ceilings and ceilings made of compacted earth and gypsum laid on wooden beams.

**The traditional Moslawi household is very flexible** and adaptable in its usage of spaces. Both seasonal and daily movements occur throughout all the spaces. Only some functions are fixed and remain as such throughout the year, such as bathrooms, toilets and sometimes kitchens. All other spaces can **swap functionalities**. Seasonal movements are mostly vertical; in the winter the family may use the rooms from the first floor of the house due to the low sunrays, while later during the summer, moves to the ground floor, due to the

high sunrays The daily movements are both vertical and horizontal.<sup>23</sup> These movements were natural, traditional adaptations of Moslawi inhabitants to the harsh weather conditions of the region, Mosul’s climate being semi-arid, with long and extreme hot summers, relative short autumns and springs and cold, harsh winters. **The temperatures vary greatly between seasons**, between an average of low temperatures of 2°C in winter and an average high of 43°C in the summer.

The spaces in the Moslawi traditional courtyard house can be divided into **usable spaces, transitional spaces and architectural physical elements**.

**Albab** – the door or the gate, an architectural element, is usually the only decorated element of the façade at the street level, being an indicator of the importance of the building, of the identity of its residents and their social standing.

**Mejaz** – entrance passageway, a transitional space. Sometimes a space separated from the rest of the house simply with a curtain, in other instances it contains seats made in stone. In mansions, the *mejaz* is made up of a series of additional spaces: a room for the guards, WC, and informal reception room. The main access almost never opens directly in the courtyard, thus the family’s life is protected from the intruding eye of the outsider. The reception room(s) are situated close to the main entrance, while the private spaces were set as far back as possible from it.

The space following the gate can be another gate, a curtain, a space in itself with a seating area dedicated to visitors, or a corridor in an L shape. In only a few cases the gate opens directly into the courtyard. In such cases, on the

other side of the courtyard, there is a less private space, such as the Iwan, Riwaq, and corridors with staircases.

**Sirdab** – the basement of the house, a usable space. Often extending under the courtyard, sometimes including skylights. It is used for storing goods and siesta during summer afternoons.

**Rhahra** – the semi-basement of the house, a usable space. Situated under the house, 1 or 1.5 meters below it, the rhahra is used mostly for siesta during summer afternoons..

**Takthabosh** – A room between the ground floor and first floor where the elderly sit, a usable space. Its floor is usually made in wood and opens towards the courtyard.

**Satah** – the accessible roof of the house. It is constructed with high walls often with the height of a regular floor, and is used for sleeping during summer nights.

**Iwan** – a vaulted room open on one side, a transitional space as well as an architectural element. This is probably the most distinctive element of the Moslawi traditional courtyard house. This is a space into which the doors and windows of the other rooms open; most commonly bedrooms, but also kitchens and living rooms. It is a place where family sits sometimes, used in the wintertime if it is oriented towards south, or used in the summertime if it is oriented towards north. Iwans are situated on the ground floor of the house and usually their elevations are richly decorated with ornamental niches made in plaster and ornamental window and doorframes made in the famous Mosul alabaster.

**Tarma** – like the Iwan, is a transitional space, often situated on the first floor of the house. Tarma is a room open on one side, not vaulted but supported by 1 or 2 columns, which opens into the Riwaq.

**Riwaq** – is a loggia or a balcony, a transitional space used for accessing the rooms on the first floor of the house.

**Family rooms** – they are accessible through Iwans, Tarmas and Riwaqs. Due to their flexible adaptations, their interiors are devoid of any furniture. They are however decorated with ornamental niches at higher levels, being used to store bedding and/or household items.

**Shanasheel** – the closed balcony over the street, is both an architectural element as well as an efficient ventilation element.

In Mosul, one can find a series of ventilation and “passive” cooling architectural features used in all the other historic madinas with similar arid climate. The shanasheel, the badgeer and malqaf are employed. The badgeer conveys and pushes the cool air towards the lower floors through its vertical shaft, which reaches the level of the basement. The malqaf, commonly used in Mosul, is a type of skylight with ventilation flues on its vertical sides. It is higher than the level of the roof, to catch the cool and clean air, redirecting the fresh air to the lower rooms, thanks to a reversed chimney effect.

Now, the traditional cooling and ventilation methods employed in the past, have given way to modern air conditioners and air coolers, using high amounts of electricity, fuel and water, weighing heavily on an old and overburdened electricity grid.<sup>24</sup>



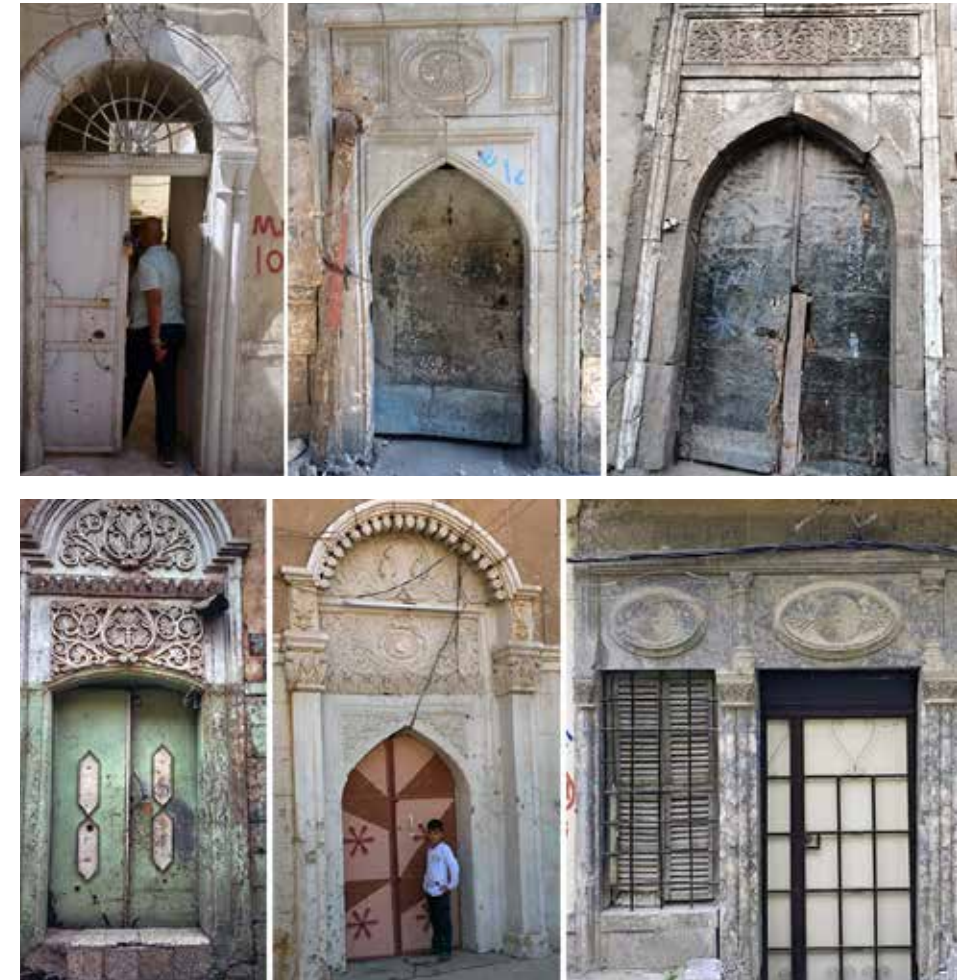




FIG. 41



## Typologies of Entrances and Courtyards

**The Gate:** There doesn't seem to be a preferred shape for entrance gates. According to a study conducted by Dr. Emad Hani Ismaeel of Mosul University, in which some 285 gates of the Old City were recorded, some 40% of the gates were simple rectangular shapes with no decoration whatsoever<sup>25</sup>, while 60% of the gates bore decorations to varying degrees of complexity. (Figure 40) The decorated gates were also employed in a variety of styles and shapes. Some gates are pointed arches, seemingly drawing cues from Mosul's medieval Islamic architecture, echoing the so-called Mosul style architecture; others are semicircular or rectangular, being more "modern" in their appearance, and adopting a neo-classical style.

Pillars, frames, spandrels, scrolls, cartouches and many other decorative features are used to decorate the frames of the doors. Most of these decorations are made in alabaster.<sup>26</sup> (Figure 41)

A type of double pillar is used quite often, being employed in the decoration of gates, in various forms and reinterpretations. This type is strikingly similar to the Lyre shape bundled columns used in the Al Nouri Mosque, or the lotus flower (bell shape) columns of Shaykh Fathi's mosque *mihrab*. The decoration of arches with beautifully sculpted vine leaves, seen both in the larger wealthier mansions and in churches, seem to have been also a preference of wealthy Moslawis.

Pillars are round or rectangular, simple, fluted or twisted and fluted. Mostly they end with capitals with diverse styles – mostly simple tapered prisms and in some cases with elaborate composite styles with acanthus leaves, fleur-de-lis (lily flower), chrysanthemum, lotus buds and volutes.

FIG. 42-A



FIG. 42-B



FIG. 42-C



FIG. 42-D

The great variety reflects Mosul's position as both a modern provincial capital of the empire – and thus influenced by the European architecture of the time – and as a traditional provincial capital, in search of its identity, looking back to its history and at its numerous monuments.

**The Courtyard** of the traditional Moslawi house is the modern-day living room and essentially the epicentre of the Moslawi family life. It is a multipurpose exterior space, mostly rectangular or square in shape, where most of the activities of the family take place. It provides both a climatically controlled space, providing light and ventilation to the other habitable spaces around it, and a socially controlled space, providing the privacy and security required in the Islamic society. All the other spaces are grouped around the courtyard

on three or all four of its sides, and all the rooms open directly or indirectly into it. Houses with more courtyards have their functions more segregated, the name of the courtyard giving an idea of the main function of that section of the house. Thus, one can find: the hoash al-tola – courtyard of the stable; diwan khana – courtyard of the guests; al-hareem – family quarters; al-mat-bakh – kitchen courtyard.

Mosul's proportions and decorations of the courtyards are also very diverse, with some of them pointing again to the Mosul architecture of the 13th century, while others are neo-classical in style-their simplicity and design reminiscent of Italian Renaissance cloisters. (Figure 42 A-D)



# Value & Significance

## of Al Nouri Mosque



It is often said that historical Islamic cities are unordered or unplanned, being the result of natural growth and development. However while this may be true in the case of the living quarters, the construction of the main important buildings were intentional acts, deliberately and carefully chosen by the city's rulers and Islamic endowments. Since its construction, the Al Nouri Mosque was invested with great significance, being the city's Great Mosque (Djami al Kabeer). This justified Nur ad-Din Zengi's choice for the placement of the mosque at the geographical heart of the city. **The Al Nouri Mosque, since its construction in the second half of the 12th century AD, has constituted a core site in the urban life and development of the Old City of Mosul.**

In fact, looking at the historical transformations of the city over the centuries, it appears clear how the complex can be classified among those 'main monuments' influencing the different street layouts (Figure 43). Before the 20<sup>th</sup> century interventions, the street layout of the Old City was characterized by a system of streets moving from the gates and heading to the Al Nouri Mosque. This system was interwoven with another network of streets which were heading from the various quarters to the river and to its south-eastern part, proof of the great importance that both Tigris River and commerce played in the existence of the city. Along these main lines, most of



FIG. 44

the religious monuments were erected over the centuries. These buildings acted as orientation points, landmarks inside the city's labyrinthine streets, some of them becoming **urban symbols**. Before recent conflict, the visitors strolling on Niniveh Street (main east-west artery of the Old City) were guided by the presence of two of the city's most important landmarks dominating its skyline, the bell tower of the Al Saa'a Church (Our Lady of the Hour) and the minaret of Al Nouri mosque (Al Hadba) (Figure 44). The Minaret is not just a symbolic landmark for Mosul but rather for Iraq itself, appearing for example on its 10,000 Iraqi Dinars bill. **Its tilt was Mosul's defining feature.**

In 2014, *Daesh* rushed to hoist its flag on top of the Mosque's Minaret, and its leader proclaimed from its Prayer Hall the "new caliphate". When the group tried to destroy the Minaret for the first time, **a human chain made by Moslawis, who risked their own lives, impeded the destruction.** The final blow happened in 2017 during *Daesh's* retreat, when the group rushed to detonate a series of explosives inside the minaret and the Prayer Hall.

Rebuilding Mosul's beloved Minaret and reinstating the Al Nouri Mosque to its rightful place as the main mosque of Mosul should not be seen only as a physical reconstruction, but as a **symbolic act of revival and rebirth**. The reconstruction of Mosul's landmarks aims at reinstating a sense of **belonging and identity** to all Moslawis, and the traditional spirit of Mosul, a place of multicultural **creativity, peace and prosperity**.



# History

## of the Al Nouri Mosque

The Al Nouri Mosque Complex is defined as being the entire site area, with the main use as a mosque. It belongs to the **Sunni Endowment**, and comprises notably the **Al Hadba Minaret and the Al Nouri Prayer Hall, as well as other related spaces**. The Al Hadba Minaret is the edifice situated in the north-west corner of the Complex. The Al Nouri Prayer Hall is the edifice occupying the south of the Complex.

This chapter presents the transformations, which the Al Nouri Mosque Complex and the Prayer Hall went through over the centuries, until present day. Historical texts offer **very little information about the transformations occurring in the complex until the 19th century**, an emphasis being placed more on the Prayer Hall. The available documentation on the transformations taking place on the Mosque between its initial construction in the late 13th century and the second half of the 19th century is also quite limited. However, through archive research and previous publications<sup>27</sup>, it is possible to identify key phases in the development of both the complex and the Prayer Hall..

### History of the Al Nouri Mosque Complex

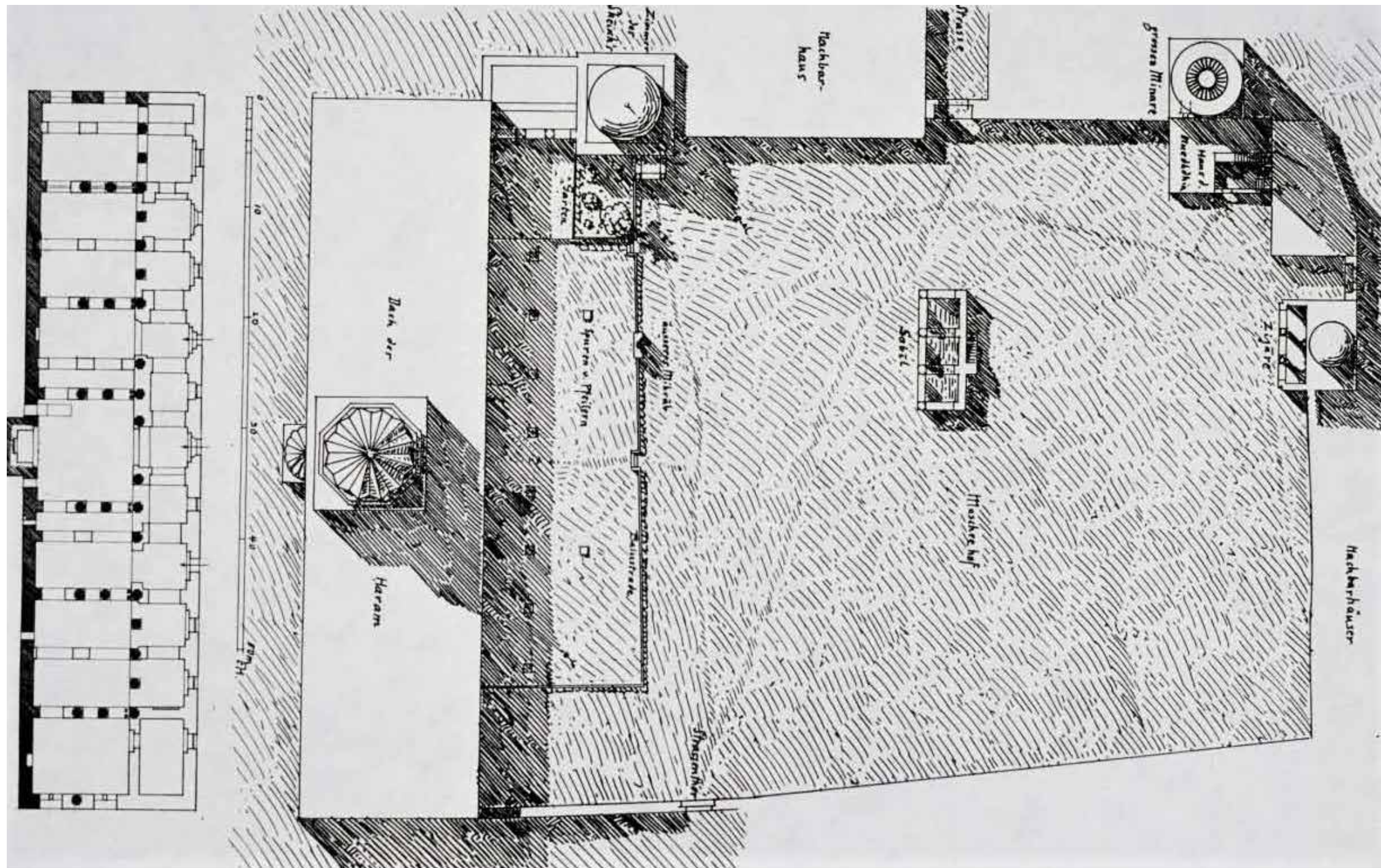
The Al Nouri Mosque Complex was founded by **atabeg ruler Nur al-Din Mahmud Zengi** during his visit to Mosul in 566 AH/1170 AD. Its construction was completed in just two years (Al-Diwahji A, 1949 and Tabbaa Y, 2002). Located in the northeastern sector of the Old City of Mosul, the complex is

surrounded by traditional courtyard dwellings. Historical studies indicate that the mosque complex and its Prayer Hall were originally established on a wide ruinous land **at the centre of Mosul's market area, directly chosen by Nur al-Din**, as the area to erect the second congregational mosque of Mosul<sup>28</sup>. Historical sources refer to the construction of a madrasa, a school, connected to the building of the Prayer Hall, but with no clear information about its possible location within the complex's area. Although the Al Hadba Minaret does not bear any inscription pertaining to its origins, the majority of scholars assign it to the same time, thus between 1170 – 1172 AD. Nothing is known about other buildings erected as part of the complex at that time.

### Shaykh Muhammad Ibn Jirjis al Qadiri Al-Nuri (1281-1286 AH / 1864-1869 AD)

It is during this intervention that the first more accurate information regarding the complex were recorded. Shaykh Al Nouri ordered the construction of several buildings such as the hospice, the school, his residence and the *ziyarah*<sup>29</sup>- also known as Al Nuri's tomb.

In approximately this form, **Friedrich Sarre and Ernst Herzfeld** documented both the Complex and the Prayer Hall in **1911** and drew their first recorded plans (Figure 45). In their book, *Archaeological Journey in the Euphrates and Tigris Region*, they describe extensively the entire complex and attempt a chronological sequence of events for the Prayer Hall<sup>30</sup>.





The archaeologists' plan of the Complex, covering an area of approximately 90 x 63 meters, was a large courtyard with the Prayer Hall on its southern premises and the minaret in its north-west corner. To the west of the Prayer Hall, connected to it, there were two buildings, the school and the hospice. Continuing north, on the same western side one could find Shaykh Al Nouri's residence. Further north, connected to the Minaret on its southern side, there was a building with an unknown function. Another building abutted the Minaret's base on its east, the **house of the muezzin**. Between the *muezzin's* house and the *ziyarah*, there was another building, not part of the Complex, with an unknown function. The *ziyarah* was a ground floor building presenting a portico (opening towards the courtyard) with three semi-circular arches, resting on columns with decorated capitals. Its flat roof was topped with a hemispherical dome. In the middle of the courtyard, there was a rectangular-shaped ablutions building, with three front arches and two lateral ones, resting on octagonal pillars.<sup>31</sup> There was a difference in the level of the Prayer Hall and the rest of the courtyard, the former being half a meter lower, and separated by a railing. To the west of this railing, there was the *mihrab* of the courtyard, made in alabaster.<sup>32</sup>

The site plan presented by Sarre and Herzfeld did not include the south houses abutting the Prayer Hall building (as they were not part of the complex at that time) nor the houses present on the north-eastern side of the complex, which were later included in the area of the complex. (Figure 46 and 47).

The Al Nouri Mosque Complex was accessed through three entrance gates, as it transpires from Herzfeld's plan: one eastern entrance closer to the Prayer Hall, accessed from a street on the east; one western entrance almost midway between the Prayer Hall and the *ziyarah*, accessed from a narrow street to the west; and a northern narrow access between the *ziyarah* and a building with an unknown function, accessed from a street on the north of the Complex.



FIG. 46

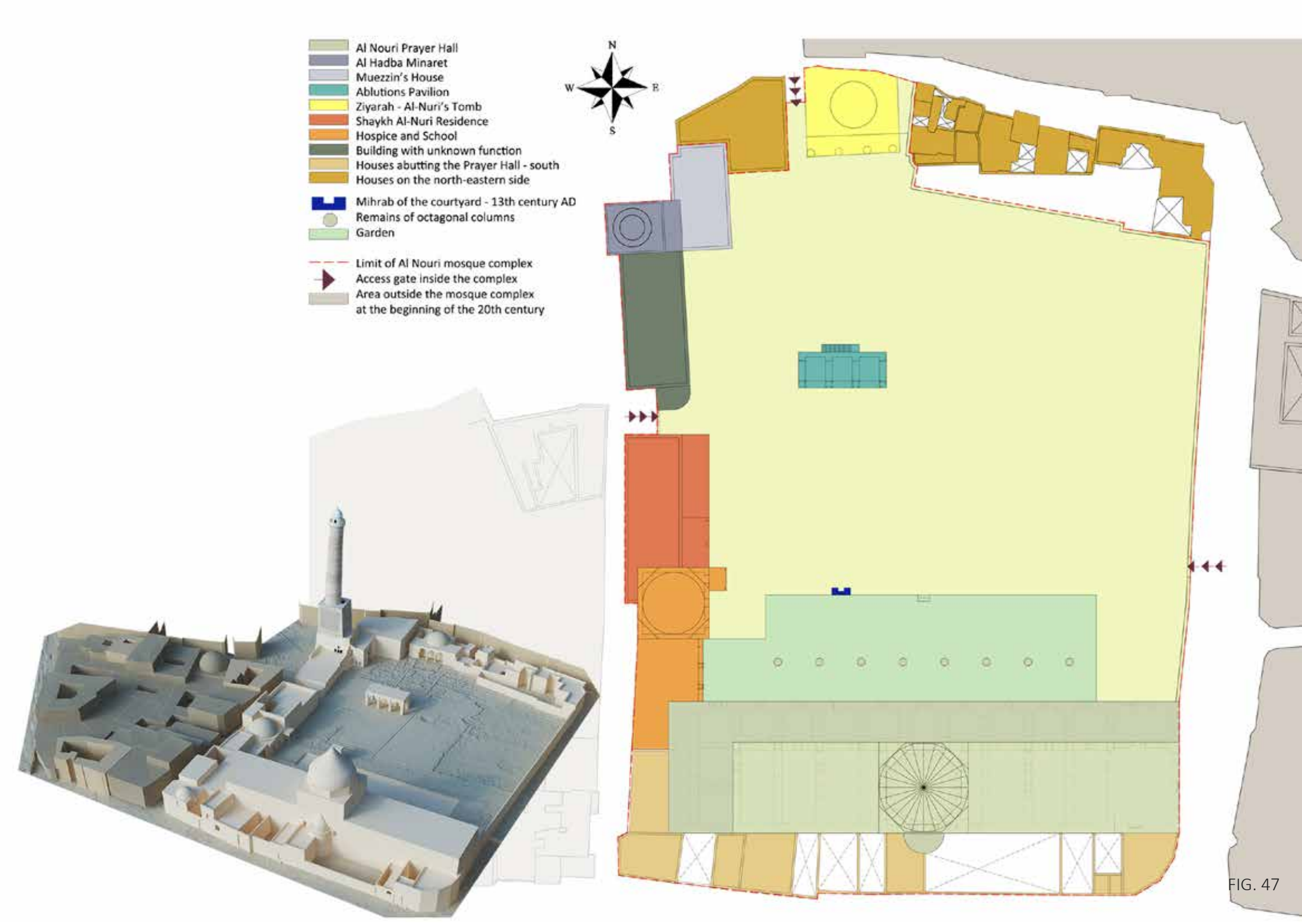


FIG. 47





**Sunni Endowment (between 1343 AH / 1925 AD and 1438 AH / 2017 AD – before the intentional destruction)** (Figure 48 and 49)

In 1925, the **Sunni Endowment planned to undertake works** on the overall Complex. This is when the rectangular ablutions building reported by Herzfeld, was demolished and substituted with a hexagonal edifice. It also turned a part of the courtyard into a garden and equipped it with fences. As part of the same intervention, a new access road was opened on the northeast and most importantly, the houses on the northeastern side were incorporated in the perimeter of the complex, with the intent of relocating inside them the residents of the houses abutting the Prayer Hall on its south. The houses on the south side were demolished at a later period, probably in 1944.

The **Sunni Endowment made several transformations to the site between 1940s and early 2000s**, which led the Complex to the configuration it had immediately before the 2017 destruction.

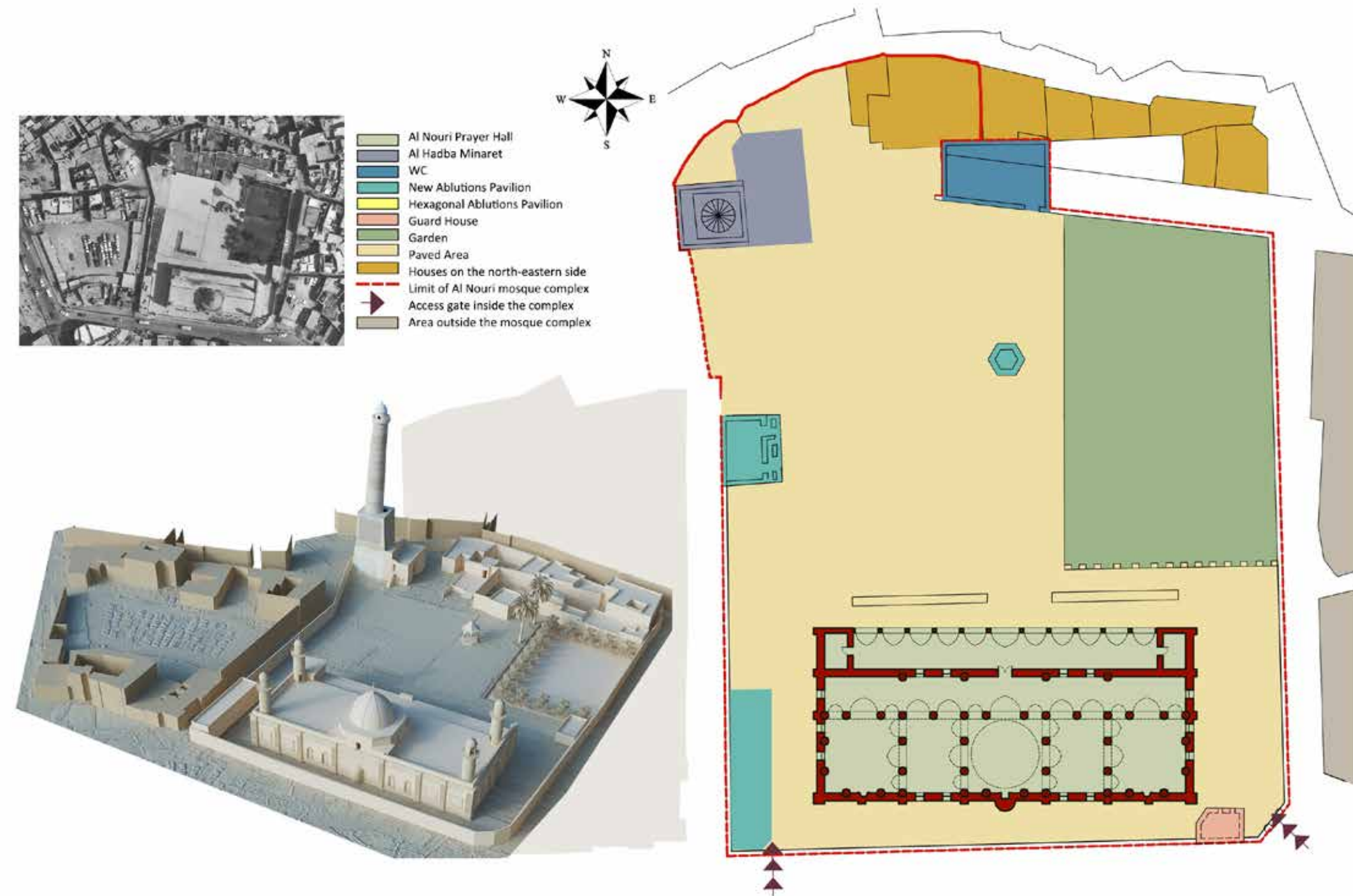
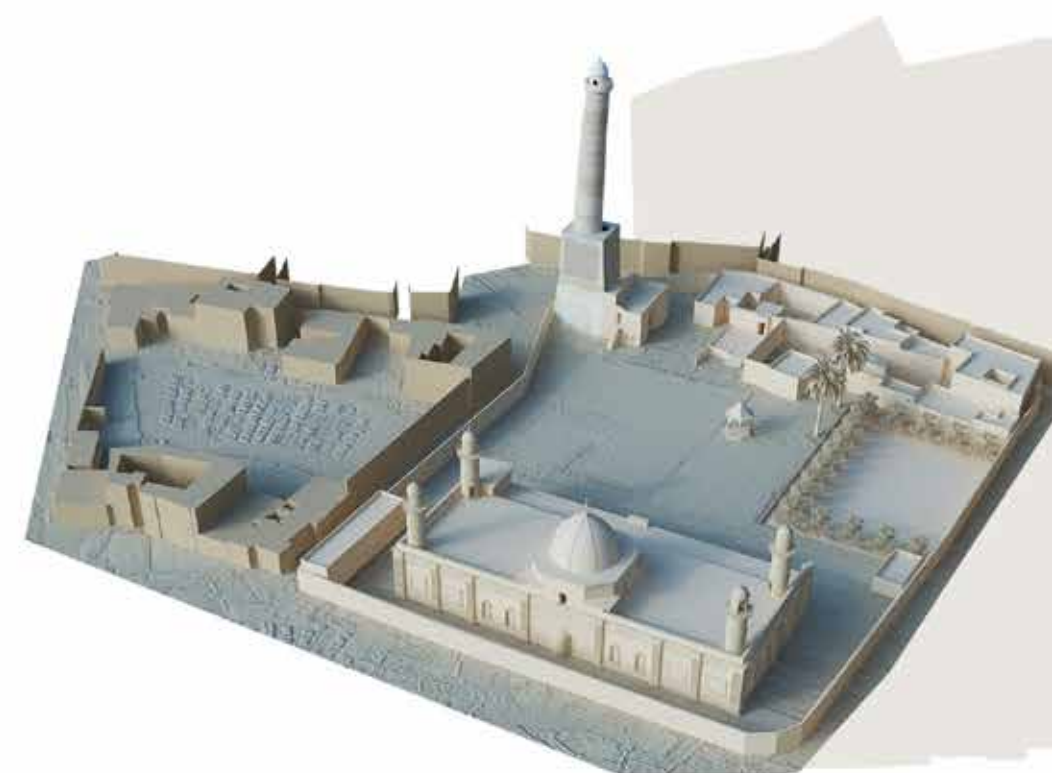
Between 1945 and 1950, when the Prayer Hall was entirely rebuilt, works on the overall Complex were also undertaken. These included especially **demolitions of some pre-existent buildings**, such as the Shaykh Al Nouri's residence, the *ziyarah* and the houses on the south side of the Complex.

The building connected to the Minaret on its south side was demolished and rebuilt several times to new designs until being completely demolished between 1979 and 1981. Although not part of the present competition project, it is worth mentioning that during this time, the Al Hadba Minaret suffered its most important transformations<sup>33</sup>.

Other works inside the Complex saw the construction of public toilets and ablutions buildings on its north and west sides. In addition, the structure of the hexagonal shaped ablution was reinforced by adding a new concrete structure around the old one.

The courtyard was paved, and it received a storm drain system, the garden was modified, enlarged and a summer praying area was created. New fences were also built.

At the end of the 1990s, the Sunni Endowment started **planning a possible expansion** of the Al Nouri Complex beyond its original perimeter. This plan of expansion entailed the acquisition of properties all around the Complex, a plan only partially commenced due to the unstable security situation that the country was going through during that period.







**Situation in 1438 AH / 2017 AD after the intentional destruction** (Figure 50 and 51)

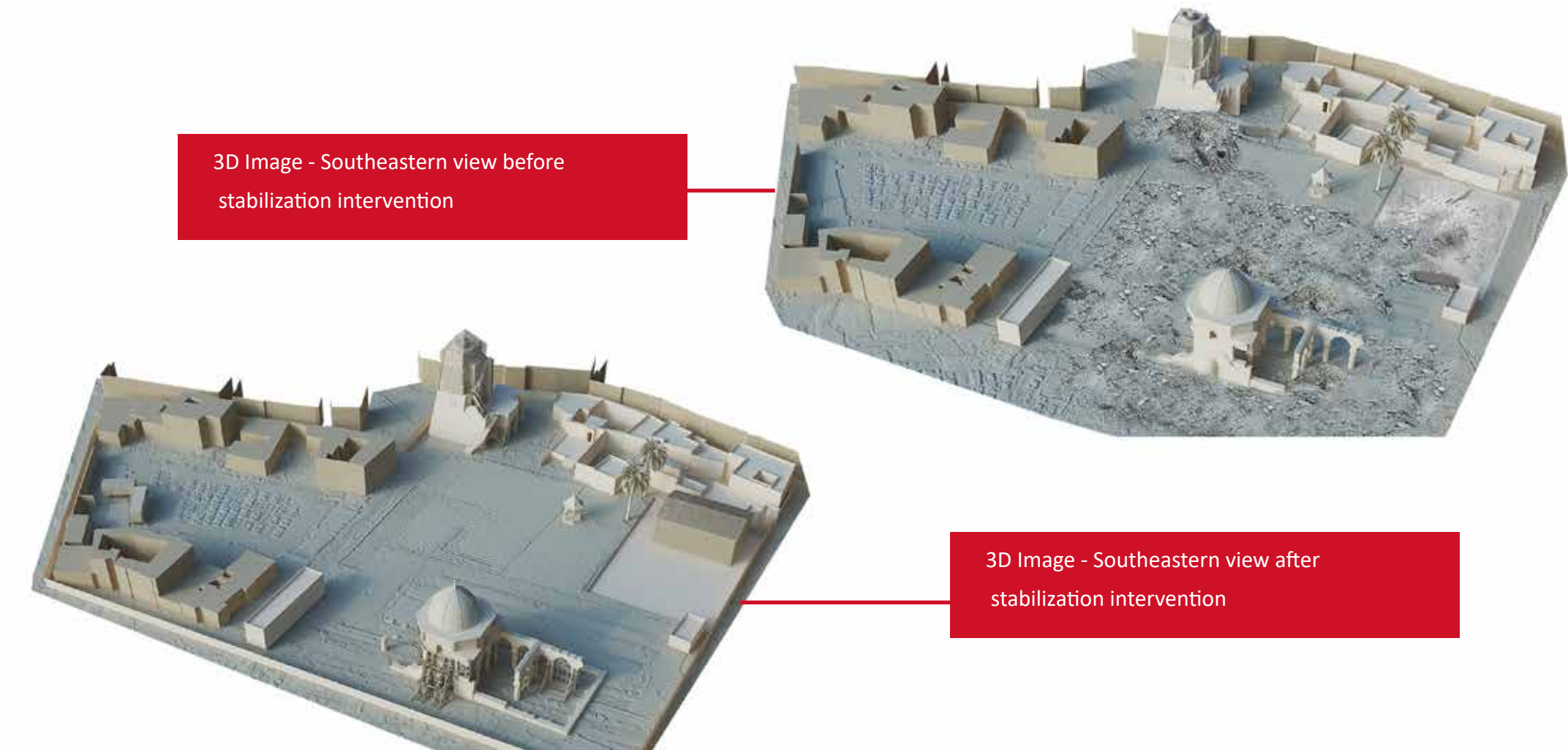
The complex was **seriously damaged** in the summer of **2017**. During their retreat, *Daesh* placed a series of explosives meant to destroy the complex's two famous landmarks: the Prayer Hall and the Al Hadba Minaret. As a result, the Minaret lost its entire cylindrical shaft with the lantern and the balcony. Now, only 15 of the 45 meters-tall structure are still standing, representing its two lower bases. The house adjacent to the Minaret on its eastern side, suffered some damages<sup>34</sup>, presenting significant fractures across the remaining walls and vaults. Both structures, as well as the nearby buildings, were covered by rubble, making the entire area almost inaccessible.

The Complex's beautiful gardens and its summer praying area were destroyed and partially covered in debris. The other buildings making up the Complex suffered **varying degrees of damages**. The houses on the northeastern side

sustained more serious damages, while the hexagonal ablutions pavilion, the modern ablutions and WCs buildings were barely touched.

After 2017, the Sunni Endowment **continued its efforts to purchase new properties** and expand the boundaries of the Complex. Recently a western parcel was added to the Complex, thus enlarging the area pertaining to the Mosque. The buildings in this expansion area also suffered damages in 2017, with the three historical buildings being worst affected.

In February **2018**, the Al Nouri Mosque became the subject of a large **restoration project** "Revive the Spirit of Mosul by rebuilding its historic landmarks namely the Al Nouri Mosque and its Al Hadba Minaret, as well as the Al Tahera Church and Al Saa'a Church". Since then, the entire area of the Complex was subjected to interventions of **clearance** of war remnants, **removal of rubble**, and temporary **stabilization** works on the remains of the Al Hadba Minaret and the Prayer Hall.







### History of the Al Nouri Mosque Prayer Hall

There are no historical records of the 12th century AD Prayer Hall, thus its original shape, dimensions and architectural features are **still debated** by scholars today. It is believed that, at the time of its construction, the Prayer Hall presented a **hypostyle structure with Moslawi marble octagonal columns**, alabaster capitals with arabesque decorations and inscriptions written in the Thuluth script of Qur'anic verses from the Suras of Al Nur, Al Tawba and Al Baqara. The number of bays of this initial building is unknown.<sup>35</sup>

The available documentation on the transformations that occurred between this initial construction and the second half of the 19th century is scarce. However, based on the collection of available sources, the following **main transformations** can be here recalled:

#### Atabeg Badr Al-Din Lu'lu' (607-657 AH / 1211-1259 AD)

Under the Atabeg ruler, the original dome was restored. The main purpose of this intervention was to revisit its external architectural configuration, probably moving from an original hemispherical-shaped structure to the

16-faceted conical dome still visible in the photographs dating back to the beginning of 20<sup>th</sup> century. The exterior *mihrab* of the courtyard was built during this period; this *mihrab* is supposed to have been initially somewhere inside the Prayer Hall, but moved to the courtyard during a later intervention. Finally, the stucco decoration of the *Qibla* wall may have also been completed as part of this intervention<sup>36</sup>.

The newly restored faceted conical dome aimed to replace what is believed to have been an **original double-shell hemispherical dome**, a theory generally accepted by scholars although there is no direct evidence for it.<sup>37</sup> The execution of the stucco ornament on the *Qibla* wall, the *mihrab*, and possibly the decoration of the interior with its 24 ribs fluted dome, were also attributed to this intervention. It is believed that the whole interior of the central bay with the dome would have been lavishly decorated. However, only the stucco of the *Qibla* wall and one window frame had survived the centuries and were still visible in the Prayer Hall at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, testimony brought forward by a series of photos commissioned by the General Directorate of Antiquities around 1930s.<sup>38</sup>

FIG. 52

The surviving stucco, window frame and the *mihrab* are displayed now in Baghdad and Mosul museums.

#### Sultan Hassan al Taweel's (871-882 AH / 1466-1477 AD)

This intervention on the Prayer Hall was recorded on stone fragments decorating the *Qibla* wall, detailing the demolition and reconstruction of a part of the building's west wing. The same fragments recorded the restoration works of a main *mihrab* situated under the dome of the Prayer Hall.

#### Husain Pasha Al-Jalili (1151 AH / 1738 AD)

The interior of the Prayer Hall was cleaned and repaired and furnished with carpets after a supposed period of disuse of some hundreds of years during which the edifice may have been used for other purposes, such as manufacturing goods.

#### Shaykh Muhammad Ibn Jirjis al-Qadiri Al-Nuri (1281-1286 AH / 1864-1869 AD)

Under Shaykh Al-Nuri, the Prayer Hall went through several more remarkable (and **better documented**) interventions. The building, which was suffering from major structural problems, was consolidated. With this occasion, its

initial supporting hypostyle structure of octagonal marble columns with decorative capitals was reinforced with additional internal walls, with more octagonal marble columns- without decorative capitals, and with new rectangular marble pillars- columns with Lyre capitals. The interior dome with its 24 ribs was also consolidated with gypsum plaster.

The central *mihrab*<sup>39</sup> was ascribed to this intervention as it bore the date of 1281 AH / 1865 AD. Another *mihrab* was brought in from the Umayyad Mosque in Mosul. This *mihrab* dated to 345 AH/ 956 AD and was originally placed in the west wing of the Prayer Hall<sup>40</sup>.

Functionally, the eastern corner of the Prayer Hall was assigned to dervishes and scholars, and divided to create residential spaces.

It is believed that **the portico of the Prayer Hall was demolished** during this intervention. Remains of this supposed portico were still to be found in the courtyard at the time of Friedrich Sarre and Ernst Herzfeld's visit in 1911<sup>41</sup>. The Prayer Hall's northern aisle was refurbished, and the low gallery was created, still visible in the configuration reached by the Prayer Hall at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

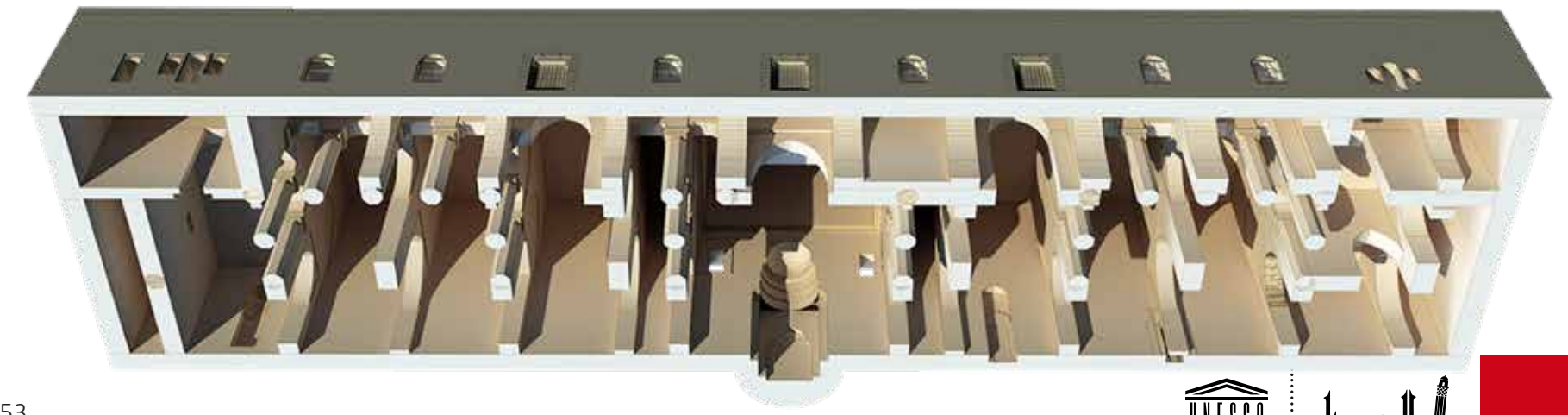


FIG. 53



**Architecture of the Prayer Hall at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century** (Figure 52 to 60)

At the time of Herzfeld’s visit, the Prayer Hall was a long and narrow structure approximately 17 metres wide and 67 metres long with a dominant *Maqsura* dome. The building was made up of a series of prisms: a rectangular one (of 6 metres)– corresponding to the low gallery shaped during Shaykh Al-Nuri’s intervention; another rectangular higher one (of 11 metres)– corresponding to the higher original supporting structure, on which rested a third and fourth prisms– rectangular and octagonal. The 16-faceted conical dome (total height of around 25metres) rested on this octagonal prism. The exteriors were austere with very few windows. The only decorations on the exteriors were the alabaster frames of the three doors of the northern face and the small exit to the terrace, flanked by two columns and topped as well by a faceted dome.

The plan presented 1 and 1/2 bays deep and 13 bays length. Seven of the 13 bays may have been a part of the original structure, while six of the bays were the later attempt of Shaykh Al Nouri to reinforce the original supporting one.

As with the exteriors, the interiors were austere, being simply finished with white gypsum plaster, and very dark. The only decorations were those of the capitals of the octagonal columns, the *mihrabs*, the *Qibla* wall with its rich stucco panel and a window frame. Nothing is known about the ceilings of this building. Scholars support different possible variants: with barrel vaults, domical vaults and even the existence of a flat ceiling.

The only known image of the dome, a photograph of 1930s, presents the dome with its 24 ribs disappearing under a thick layer of plaster, before it transforms into what seemed to be a hemispherical dome with a small lantern at its centre.



FIG. 54



FIG. 55



FIG. 56



FIG. 57

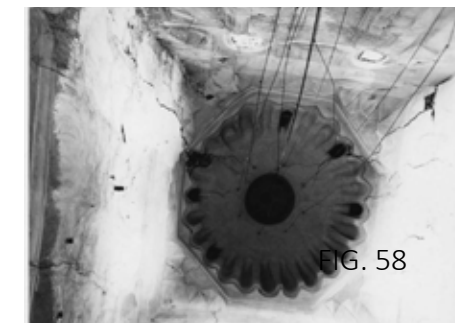


FIG. 58



FIG. 59

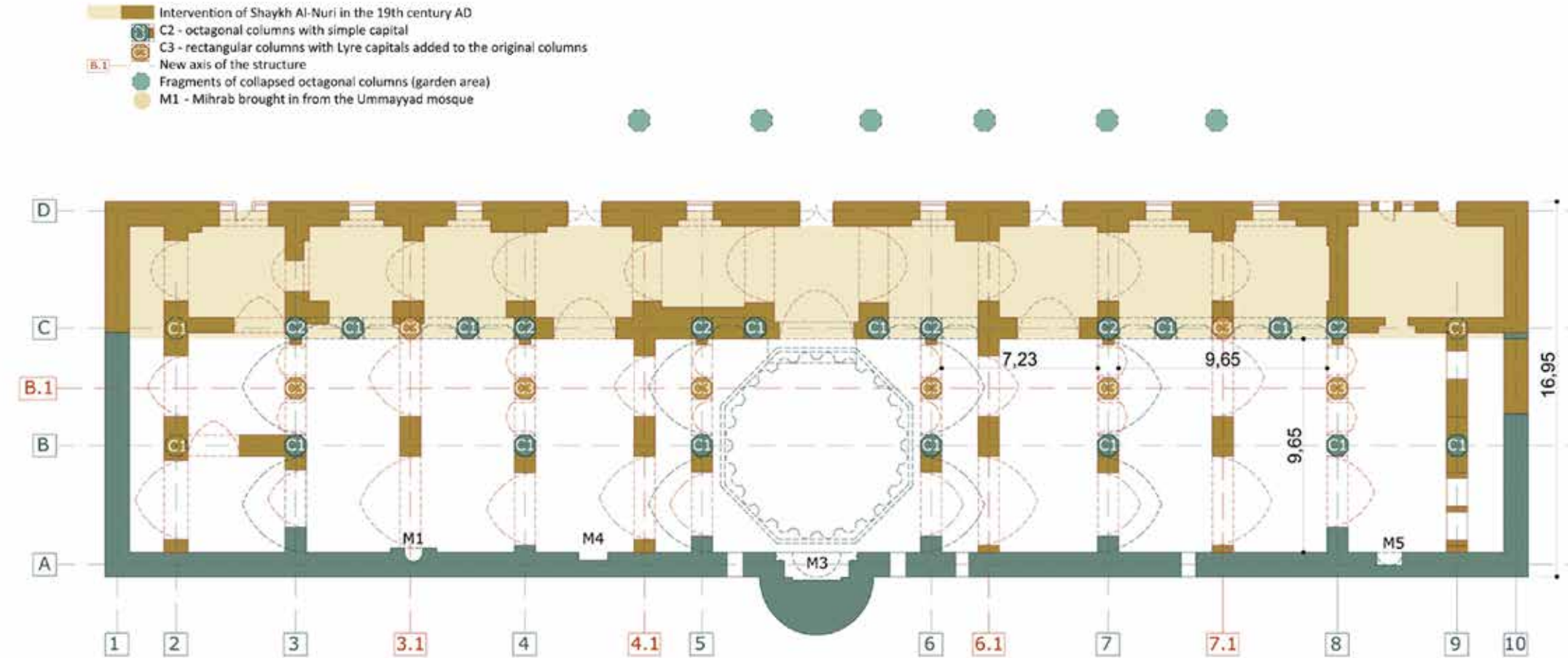






FIG. 61

**Sunni Endowment (between 1364-1369 AH / 1945-1950 AD and 1438 AH / 2017 AD – before the intentional destruction)**

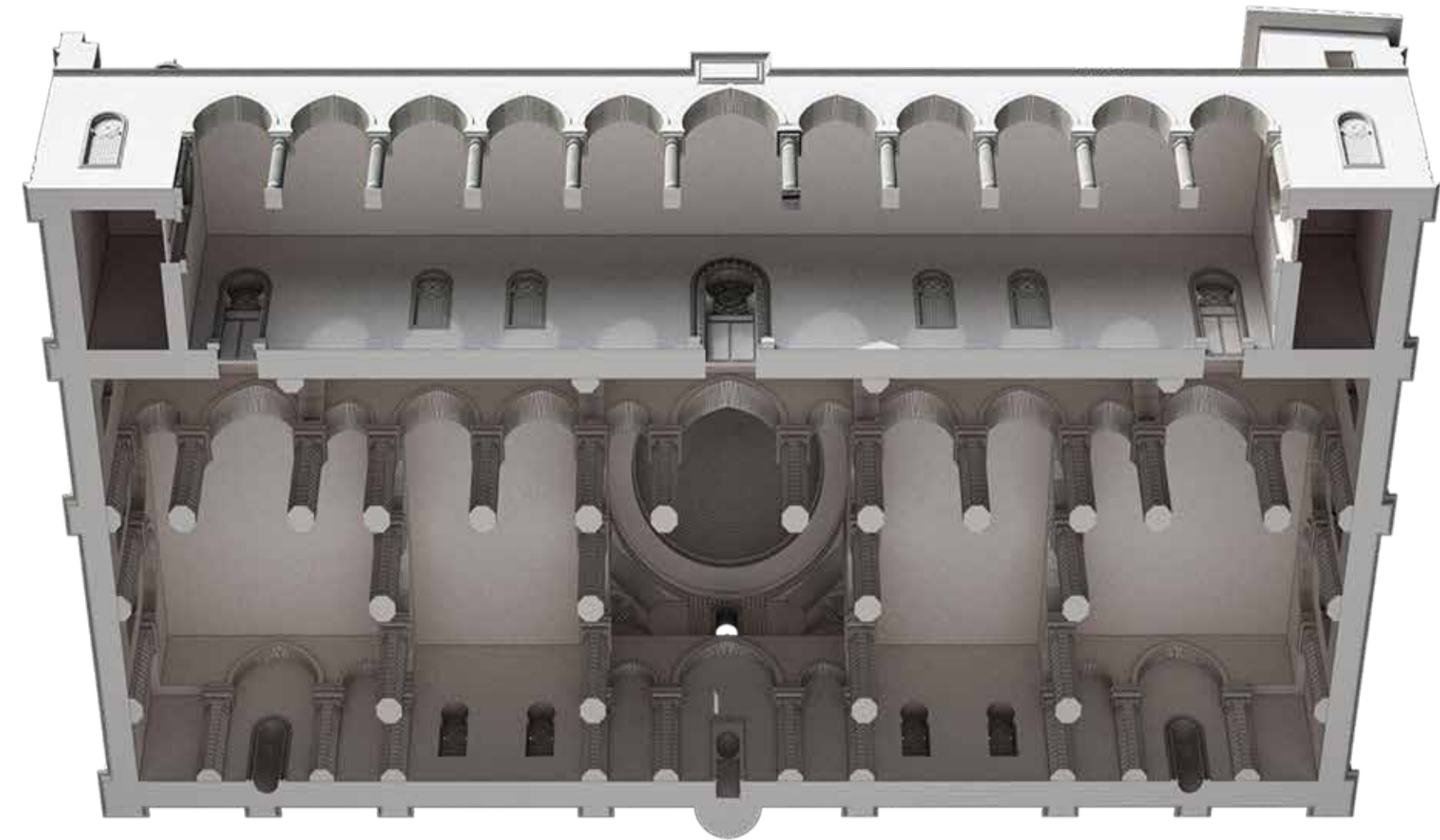
Between 1944 and 1950, the Prayer Hall was torn down and a completely new Prayer Hall was built. The new building had a completely different architectural feature, different dimensions and new materials were used in its construction. This modern building retained its main architectural features, until its partial destruction in 2017. The most notable transformation occurred in early 1990s, when the simple stone facing of the building was replaced with a new, more elaborate design, also in stone.

**Architecture of the Prayer Hall after mid- 20<sup>th</sup> century** (Figure 61 to 68)

The new Prayer Hall was a rectangular prism roughly 22 metres wide, 49

metres long and 7 metres high. Its roof was flat, presenting a hemispherical dome (total height of about 17 meters) which covered the central bay of the hall and rested on an octagonal prism, which in its turn was set on a square one. **Four minarets** were placed on all its corners. This building was constructed of stone masonry, reinforced concrete and some of the original **octagonal marble columns**, refurbished from the demolished Prayer Hall.

The only original elements which were kept and became part of the Prayer Hall were: some twenty-four octagonal columns with decorated capitals; the *mihrab* of the Umayyad Mosque (present now in the middle of the Prayer Hall) and four rectangular columns with Lyre capitals, which became columns of the *mihrabs* in the west and east wings.





The building was a hypostyle structure with **40 octagonal alabaster** (Moslawi marble) **columns**. The columns held high pointed arches made from the same material, alabaster.

The layout of the building was of five bays length and 1 and 1/2 bays deep, with an added **portico** of another 1/2 bay deep, on the northern façade. The five bays were of different dimensions, alternating between square and rectangular shapes. The square ones were of 9.60 metres width, while the rectangular ones were of 7 metres.

The entrance inside the hall was made through three semi-circular doors situated on the northern façade, under the portico.

The interiors were lit up through a series of semi-circular arched windows with keystones. On the north and south facades were four windows each, while on the west and east there were three each.

The initially simple façades covered in **Al Hillan stone** with no decorations were later replaced with the same type of stone, but this time with tiles of different dimensions and textures. Pillars representing the interior hypostyle structure enlivened the southern, western and eastern facades. The same facades were decorated with square panels with circular medallions, containing some of Allah's 99 names. Horizontal strips of green ceramics and a top strip in stone with Arabic writings from the Quran wrapped around the building from the three sides.



FIG. 63



FIG. 64



FIG. 65



FIG. 66



FIG. 67



Elements of the previous hall:

**C1** - 24 octagonal columns with decorated capitals.

**M1** - The mihrab of the Umayyad Mosque, situated in the west wing in the previous building.

**4** rectangular columns with Lyre capitals, which became the columns of the mihrabs in the west (M3) and east (M2) wings.



**Situation in 1438 AH / 2017 AD after the intentional destruction** (Figure 69 to 74)

In 2017, the explosives placed by *Daesh* inside the building left the Prayer Hall in ruins. Its western wing, its portico and all its external walls were entirely destroyed by the force of the explosions. The Prayer Hall retained only the central dome, some of its related pillars and a limited portion of its eastern sector. The dome's south-western pillar collapsed, while its other remaining ones, located immediately under the western side, are visibly rotated. Extensive losses occurred in the superimposed masonry of the octagonal prism, thereby leaving the remaining portions in a very unstable situation. Only 15 of the Prayer Hall's octagonal marble columns remain standing.

A significant quantity of rubble resulting from the explosions made the Prayer Hall inaccessible.

The Prayer Hall is one of the components of the same project concerning the Al Nouri Mosque Complex, launched in 2018. The works for the temporary stabilization of the Prayer Hall started in October 2019 and were completed in February 2020. The clearance of war remnants, removal of rubble and retrieval of important historical fragments were executed along with the temporary stabilization works on the building's remains. The temporary stabilization measures included: installation of **wooden pillars**, props and shores for the structure under the dome, the eastern wing and southern wall; execution of **new masonry** to reinforce the structure and fill gaps; introduction of **tensioned stripes** to prevent the collapse of the dome's supporting structure.



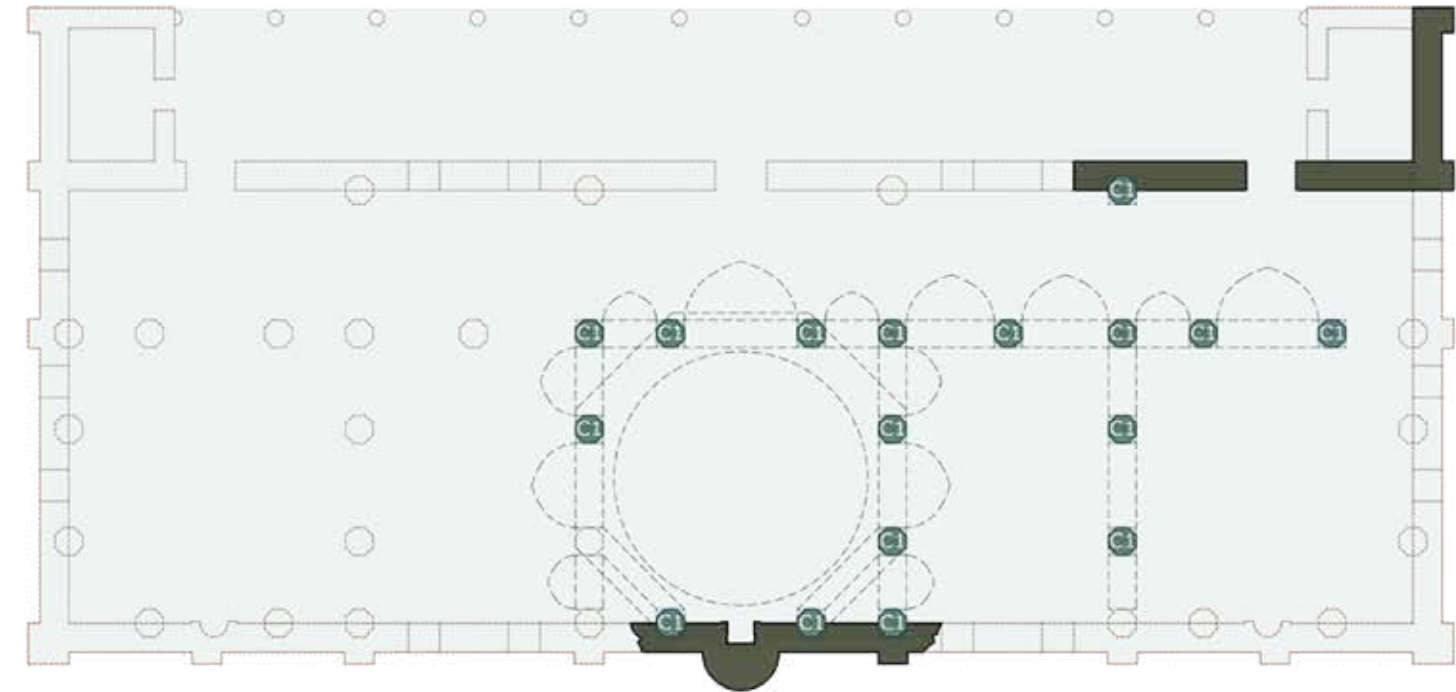
FIG. 69



FIG. 70



FIG. 71



- Remains of the modern prayer hall built in the '40s
- C1 Remains of C1 original columns and new replicas after the originals
- Outline of the destroyed parts





FIG. 73



FIG. 74



# Endnotes

1 A number of International Conventions and Charters related to heritage conservation and reconstruction can be consulted online by participants. Such documents are: ICOMOS, Venice Charter (1964); ICOMOS, Burra Charter (1979), ICCROM, Riga Charter (2000) and the UNESCO/ World Heritage Centre, Warsaw Recommendation on Recovery and Reconstruction of Cultural Heritage (2018). The list provided is not exhaustive

2 Situated in the western wing and separated from the main hall through a curtain.

3 The stair leading to the balcony was situated under the portico between the main door and the western door. This stair was probably demolished when the balcony fell in disuse, after the introduction of speakers.

4 It is accepted by scholars today that Mepsila was however present-day Eski Mosul – Old Mosul, some 30 km north of nowadays city of Mosul.

5 Christian sources attest the existence of Christian settlements as far back the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD.

6 Possibly the episcopal seat of the Assyrian Church of the East.

7 According to French historian Nikita Eliseeff in his 1967 book *Nur ad-Din, Un grand prince musulman de Syrie au temps de Croisades (511-569H./1118-1174)*

8 This mihrab was probably brought in the 19<sup>th</sup> century AD by Shaykh Muhammad Ibn Jirjis al-Qadiri Al-Nuri. Reutilizing decorative elements from a disused or ruined building, was a practice common in Iraq according to Yasser Tabbaa.

9 “Yet, it could not compete with the great Ottoman cities, such as Damascus, Aleppo or Cairo. Modest in size, it maintained strong ties to the regional economy, which linked south eastern Anatolia, southern Kurdistan, Baghdad, and Aleppo”

(Khoury DR, 2002)

10 Qal’at Island, an island in the form of a narrow triangle 170 m long and 60 m wide, only 2.5 hectares in size, was once separated from the city by a ditch. On the Qal’at Island stood the minaret of Qal’at, which Herzfeld assigned to the same time of construction as Al Hadba minaret.

11 Ihsan Fethi wrote in 1977 in his doctoral thesis about the demolition of city’s walls: “perhaps more than any other morphological change, this single act represented a dramatic physical gesture of the newly gained sense of security. Symbolically, the sudden and ruthless destruction of these walls was a signal to the ‘opening up’ of these historic towns to the rest of the world. Physically, it started the death of the inward-looking Arab madina (city) and paved the way for a full-scale expansion beyond the limits of these walls. When seen in aerial photographs, these madinas contrast sharply with the modern grid-iron layouts. Their characteristic pattern is usually recognized by their pedestrian tree-like network of narrow alleyways which eventually lead to the center.”

12 Al Shaziani Street starts from the southern-most gate of the city and continues to Al Saa’ church on Niniveh Street. Al Farooq Street is a continuation of Al Shaziani and starts from Al Saa’ church, goes in the vicinity of Al Nouri mosque and leads towards Bash Tabiya citadel.

13 Works executed as part of this masterplan are: the third bridge (1979), fourth bridge (1986) and fifth bridge (1988) over Tigris, the Mosul dam, the University of Mosul, many hospitals, including the General and Al Salam hospitals, and the well-known hotels of Mosul. This plan did not concern the Old City.

14 “This artery definitely represents a cut in the area and creates a barrier between the Old City and the new northern expansions, where a new urban fabric is developing with building typologies and morphological characters of different scale

and grain, though maintaining the traces and alignments of the former wall circle and preserving the most relevant historic monuments.” (Pini D, 2019)

15 In all, some 47 buildings were levelled: 42 Islamic buildings - mosques, mausoleums, tombs and graves, and also a school and 4 Christian monuments. “The remaining churches and monasteries were reportedly looted or set on fire.” (Novacek K, 2017)

16 Bash Tabyia seems to have played an important role in the successful defence against the Persian prince. “Muslims and Christians passionately defended their hometown. The general belief was that the two great saints of Mosul, St. George and Jonas, personally helped the defenders, and the Holy Virgin appeared on the great bastion.” (Herzfeld, 1910)

17 A change in the urban organization of early Islamic cities took place when the shift of “political power from the Shura (consultative) system of early Islam to authoritative regimes especially under the late Ottomans resulted in transferring the political quarter from the centre to the edge of the city in the form of a fortress, the Ottoman Sarai, to provide better protection for the rulers. Social and legal issues in the early Islamic cities were taken over by religious scholars who lived in central places close to the main mosque (the main public institution) and the public life, where disputes mostly arose. The Sarai was surrounded by its own walls and constituted a district on its own with its own mosque, guards, offices, and residence.” (Hayaty H, 2015)

18 “It never was the Mosul Citadel, just a special defence for the bridgehead. In 1908, completely ruined, it served as a timber yard” (Herzfeld, 1910).

19 Among the monuments built by Atabeg rulers are: Shaykh Fathi mosque, Al-Mujahidi (Al-Khidr) mosque, madrassa Al-Kamaliya (remains of it are part of Shaykh Al Shatt) – one of the first schools of Mosul 1180 AD, Imam Bahir shrine, Nabi Djirdjis mosque and mashad Al Imam Abd-Rahman (remains of a madrassa).

20 Herzfeld calls it “an un-architectonic spirit, a completely painterly view of architecture, with a material of not so good quality, often bad, but hidden under an

overwhelming ornamentation.”

21 The adoption of Iwan into the architecture of the house proves also that traditional architecture looked for inspiration in the great monuments of earlier periods, monuments as ancient as Hatra, with one of the earliest known Iwans, which in its turn possibly originating from ancient Niniveh.

22 “The streets of Mosul, narrow and unpaved, were dusty in summer, muddy in winter, and formed a veritable labyrinth” (Kemp P, 1979).

23 During summer days, in the early mornings the family descends from the roof to the courtyard where it spends the first hours of the morning. Later in the afternoon, the family descends to the basement for siesta, while later in the evening they will sit once again in the courtyard or in the shaded wing of the house, before going to sleep on the roof for the night. Horizontally, different wings of the house, depending on their cardinal orientation, are used both during the summer or winter.

24 According to UN Habitat’s Initial Planning Framework for the Reconstruction of Mosul (2019), West Mosul was serviced by 19 electrical substations. Out of these, only 8 were still functioning after the liberation of the city, the rest being 80-100% destroyed. Now, residents rely mostly on neighbourhood generators.

25 According to the same study, these entrances are however a result of several modern transformations of historic houses such as demolitions, collapses and reconstructions. Now inhabitants of these houses are often unable or unwilling to maintain and repair them.

26 The vast utilization of the material surprising Neibuhr, who in his book writes that marble is so superfluous in Mosul that one often sees house doors framed with it, when in Baghdad and Babel, this precious material is used only for important buildings.

27 26 Research studies of scholars such as Herzfeld and Sarre, Al Diwahji, Tabbaa, Al Janab, Al Jumaa, Pagliero, Bruno and others



28 After the Umayyad mosque of Marwan II.

29 A shrine, a place for pilgrims dedicated to making wishes and prayers.

30 Timeline contested nowadays by scholars

31 “modern gypsum square building with closed backwall and open sides. The front has 3 arches on top of octagonal pillars, covered by 3 domes. On the back-side, there are steps to the roof. The bases of the pillars are half in the ground and show rests of ornaments, which resemble the capitals of the octagonal pillars of the mosque.” (Sarre F and Herzfeld E, 1920)

32 “The Mihrab of the court is not in situ, rather badly rebuilt with old broken features. This Mihrab is not dated. Its Nashki-inscription have Quranic content. The artistic style is from other work of the time of Badr al-Din Lu’lu in Mosul, Sinjar and other Christian structures.” (Sarre F and Herzfeld E, 1920)

33 During the intervention of the Directorate General of Antiquities in 1979-1981, a set of massive consolidation interventions were planned to happen, including: the construction of a one-meter high concrete belt around the minaret’s base and adjacent building on the eastern side; the placement of a series of radial iron tie-rods directed perpendicularly to the wall; disposition of root-poles under the ground level and all around the minaret’s base and underneath foundations. The one-meter high concrete belt is visible today around the minaret’s base and adjacent building on its eastern side, however the executions of the other planned works is unclear.

34 The building is structurally damaged with its façade collapsed even before the conflict.

35 Herzfeld recounts in his book of contradictory opinions from Moslawis, who some believed that in the “old times the entire sahn (court) was roofed, so that the hall of the mosque could accommodate all the inhabitants of Mosul, and that the sabil (well), was inside the hall and there was no court to the structure.” This opinion is unlikely.

36 Some scholars attribute the stucco ornament and the mihrab to the 12-century original construction.

37 This theory is supported also by the fact that to Badr Al-Din Lu’lu’ is attributed the construction of at least two other similar domes in Mosul, that of Mashad Imam Yahya (1239 AD) and Mashad Imam Awn Al-Din (1248 AD), both having 12 faces (Tabbaa Y, 2002). Nevertheless, this dome (creation or not of Badr Al-Din Lu’lu’) is “considered to have been the earliest known faceted double-shell dome in Iraq – a style of domes predominant only in the northern part of Iraq. Furthermore, this dome is considered to have had a great deal of influence, acting as a local prototype for later buildings.” (al-Janab TJ, 1975)

38 “Fluted or ribbed domes are indigenous to Mosul and its surroundings, where they are generally datable to the 1<sup>st</sup> half of the 13<sup>th</sup> century AD” (Tabbaa Y, 2002). Examples of domes from the same period come to support the hypothesis of a decorated and ribbed interior dome, such are the domes of Mar Behnam in Mosul, Sitta Zeynab in Sinjar or Mirjan turba in Baghdad.

39 Mihrab, which no longer exists. Three earlier mihrabs were unearthed behind this one during the demolition conducted between 1945 and 1950.

40 This mihrab is present today in the middle of what is now the prayer hall, an edifice erected between 1945 and 1950.

41 They are the bases of the octagonal columns mentioned by Herzfeld, but not surveyed

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