

Religious Buildings And Historical Cities

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Abstract

This article focuses on the types of religious buildings in the religious beliefs of **ancient** civilizations in Iraq and Egypt as well as the Hindu and Buddhist; since they are continuous; and compare them with the religious buildings of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. These buildings are considered as sensitive part of the peoples' civilization because of the emotional connection to these buildings, as well as, for their role in various social services: culturally, economically, and medically. These sites added an aesthetic image to cities being over shadowed by a skyline and size dominance, In addition, their role in the establishment and growth of these cities.

The problem that was faced in this research was the lack of a comparative study that combines the functions and importance of buildings in religious beliefs in ancient civilizations that are still present and have many followers, and religious buildings in the three monotheistic religions (Judaism, Christianity, and Islam). Is it possible to analyze the pattern of these buildings and their emergence, down to their function, and to indicate their importance in society and the city?

The objectives of the research are to identify the types of religious buildings in civilizations of ancient Mesopotamia, ancient Egypt, Hinduism and Buddhism, and the buildings in the **Abrahamic** religions (Judaism, Christianity, and Islam), to arrive at an analysis showing the importance of religious buildings and their role in society and city planning.

The hypothesis was that the religious beliefs affect the forms of their buildings and the planning of cities, and there are some differences in the function of these religions.

To achieve the goal, the descriptive analytical method was utilized. It relied on collecting information and sources from library research through analyzing historical records, books and studies that dealt with the sites of the religious buildings in historical cities and their importance to obtain a set of indicators related to the urban, religious, social, and economic aspects, leading to its planning importance. A set of results emerged and divided into two main categories, the first related to the shape of the city in terms of planning and aesthetics, and the second to the population in terms of religious and functional terms. In addition, it was found that more attention to these buildings within their sites in historical cities is required and a rehabilitation is a priority to avoid petrification, and to emphasize the symbolic importance of these buildings and their restoration.

Key words: Religious buildings, historical cities, beliefs, non-Abrahamic religions, Abrahamic religions.

1. Introduction

Religious buildings represent an unparalleled asset in their art and culture, a period in which common values are embodied and an important source of public identity in living societies, in addition to their role in the economic value of the city.

This research is a comparative study between two groups of religious buildings including the patterns of their construction, function, and importance in society. The first group is ancient Mesopotamia and Egypt; since they are old beliefs that are no longer exist; in addition to Hindu and Buddhist which are still existing. The second is the monotheistic religions (Judaism, Christianity, and Islam).

To show its common function and its role in society and the city in general from an aesthetic and planning point of view. (Pongratz-Leisten, Beate, 2021) mentioned that the role of the temple in Mesopotamia had performed multiple functions as an administrative center, learning centre, jurisdiction place, healing centre, and as an economic institution, generating interaction with the surrounding world, thus transforming the temple into a center of urban life[1]. Also (Snape, Steven, 2014) who discussed that the Egyptian temples were not far away but rather close to the homes of other local residents and distinguished by their central location. This is observed in the modern kingdom, which was Thebes, the holy capital in that era, among the monuments of the grandiose temples in (Karnak), as the temple was the heart around which the city grew, and considering Thebes and Memphis as divine cities because the temples of the most important gods were there[2]. As for (Bharne, V., & Krusche, K., 2014) it has been shown that the state of Tamil Nadu has the concentric shape of the Tamil Temple City and has its hierarchical social path, street divisions and the temple's connection to the surrounding countryside while the sanctuary is distinguished by its vertical gates in each main direction.[3]. Reviewed Chen, Xing, 2021 Taiyuan Historical City to determine the relationship between religious buildings and urban spatial formation and urban process and the effect of religious construction on urban development. He revealed the social functions of religious buildings and reached that there is a need to preserve the historical city and emphasized on utilizing the religious architectural heritage as a culture and a path for economic renewal [4]. Studied (Shapiro, Ivanova-Ilicheva, & Buchka, 2021) comprehensively the architecture of synagogues in the southern region of the Russian Empire (Don region and the Caucasus) during the second half of the nineteenth century to the beginning of the twentieth century in the context of all of Europe and all of Russia trends of Jewish religious architecture and it has showed the location of the synagogues in the structure of settlements in the region and the cultural and historical landscape[5]. As for (Al-Saaidy, HJ, 2020) study in the emergence of Baghdad and the stages of its formation and transformation, and most of the historical parts occupy polar places in their ancient cities, and this is a prominent feature in the countries of the Middle East as compared to the rest of their city areas. These historical centers can give the city its own identity[6].

2. Religious Buildings

Buildings that reflect people's understanding and quest for faith and spiritual connection, forming bonds with them to meet their religious needs and requests for being the home of God. It is distinguished by its exquisite architectural and artistic styles to satisfy human

nature that gives people spiritual strength, as if people can communicate with the Creator in an effort to make believers feel the presence of God. Their establishment and formation varies according to different religions and creeds, and they are granted international protection, especially in the event of wars and conflicts as included in international humanitarian law (and in situations of armed conflict, these cultural objects and places of worship must be respected and protected from the possible effects of war (API Arts. 53 and APII Art). 16) and constitutes launching a Deliberate attack is a war crime), and Rules 38 and 41 [7].

3. Historic Cities

Historic cities are a complex of historical buildings, distinctive landscapes, and traditional social life, which are recorded with the formation and development of the city. They serve as carriers of historical and cultural heritage, constitute a unique place full of cultural and historical value, and are defined by their traditional character and architectural value [8]. They are part of our overall environment being the historical dimension, and they can be identified through the physical fabric of places since they include evidence of human activity in the past in a specific period, with their common uses, traditional characteristics, specific functions, historical identity, street style, social centers, economic and cultural life [9].

We can say that those active human settlements with a specific built environment, originated in the past and through which the development of its inhabitants, especially those living in its historical center and forming a living nucleus, can be identified. Abandoned areas and archaeological areas are excluded because they lack an organized and continuous social life.

4. Religious Buildings In Non-Abrahamic Religions, Their Emergence And Importance

Religious beliefs spread before the emergence of monotheistic religions, and their architecture was characterized by different forms between civilizations, which depended mainly on human beliefs in that era.

To know their emergence, development and role in society, four types of religious buildings will be studied (Mesopotamia, temples in ancient Egypt) because they are ancestral religions that no longer exist, and religious buildings in (Hindu religion and Buddhism), which are still present in the world and have many followers, for the purpose of showing its importance to the city and the population in general.

4.1 Religious buildings in the Mesopotamian civilization

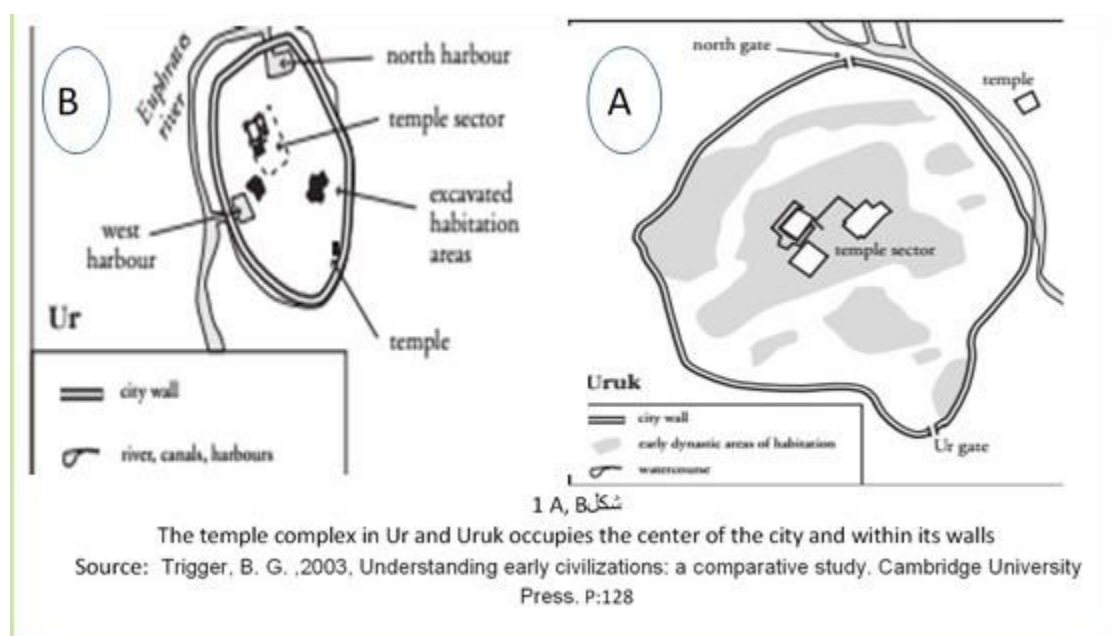
Ancient Iraqis believed that temples were the location of the presence of God on earth, as gods shrines, and they were not used for the purpose of gathering worshiper. The temple appeared as the center of the city, since the city has replaced the village, crafts, architecture, and trade appeared, social life was distinguished, and religion increased in composition [10].

In terms of evolution and types, the oldest Mesopotamian temples were built on low platforms then other level were added, where they were rebuilt on the ancient foundations of the previous sacred buildings. The oldest remains of Chalcolithic temple structures appeared in Mesopotamia during the fourth millennium (B.C), with a floor plan similar to that of a triangular house with a large central room extending along the width of the building with rows of a smaller room on either side" or "a house with an open courtyard and rooms on all

sides" [11]. The resemblance of a temple to a house reflected the ancient conception of a temple as a household or social and economic unit engaged in productive and commercial activities similar to those of any house or palace. [12]. In Ur's third period, ziggurats were erected in honor of the patron deity of every major city throughout southern Mesopotamia. At the same time, standardized plans replaced the more varied temple plans of the Early Dynastic period. Mesopotamian temples are referred to as mountains (Kur) and they believed that they were places of communication between earth and sky, which represented a descriptive expression of this concept [13].

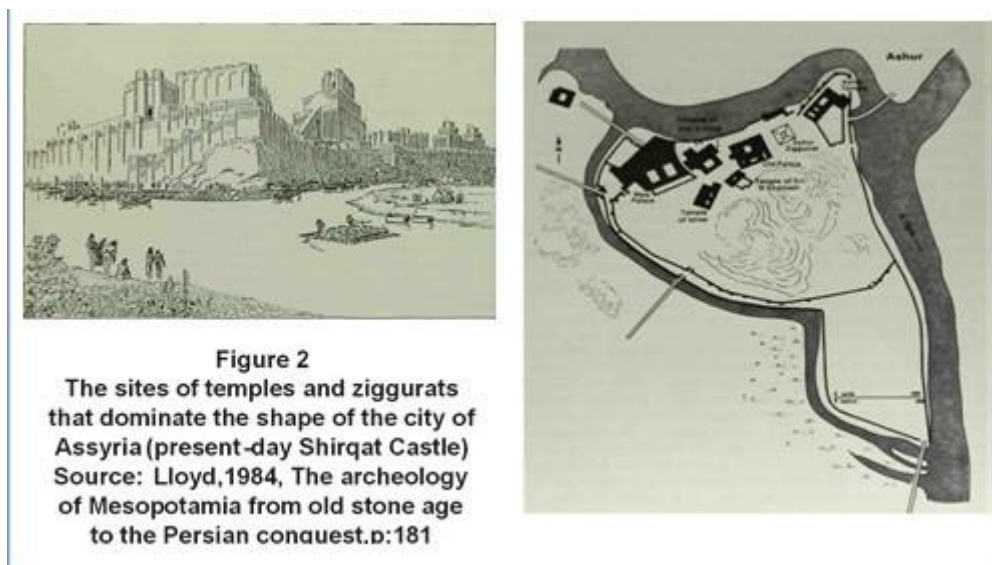
Temples were characterized by multiple functions in addition to their religious function known as "community temples", run by priests of both sexes, their main role is to intervene with the gods in order to enrich their communities through prayers and rituals for their gods, and people provide them with food, drink and clothing [14]. Culturally, it was the first place where novices learned to read and write, and the work of schools was done. Then they became centers for authorship, reproduction, research and education, In every important temple there was a library that contained many important scientific and literary texts that followed the royal libraries that were found in some palaces. [10]. **On the economic and administrative side**, they were distinguished being large social and economic organizations. The temple communities in Mesopotamia also had an impact on the economy and social livelihood of the cities. [10]. were responsible for collecting taxes, administering a system of price controls and regulating interest charges, and often also made loans to individuals. Even legally, temples played a role in maintaining social control, as marriages were held inside temples, priests granted divorces, births were registered, and the law was administered [15].

As for the location in the city the temple complex occupied the center of the city in contrast to the palaces. The rest of the built-up space in the city consisted of a network of winding streets and alleys lined with one- or two-story houses. Cities were also divided into sections, which were often separated from each other, with walls and had their own external gates. There was insignificant socioeconomic variation, which appears to be related to ethnic or kinship groups. Beyond the city walls, it contained suburban areas, orchards, fields, and country houses belonging to the people living in the city [13]. Cities are likely to have arisen



from settlements clustered around important shrines in strategic locations. Even after the city

governor's palace arose, the temples continued to play their role as well as the embodiment of the city's thought, and the palace and the temple shared a common interest and a common destiny, and both represented the "public sector" of city administration Figure (1). It dominated the shape of the city, especially its skyline (They were built on high levels like steps or terraces) [18]. As in the city of Ashur (its present location in the Citadel of Shirqat) the second millennium BC, you notice they are crowded buildings, which at that time created a wonderful silhouette, the temples rose to the maximum height on the northern side, and three ziggurats dedicated to the city deity Assyria were dominant in it. (Figure 2)[19].



4.2 *Temples in Egyptian Civilization*

The ancient Egyptians considered the temple a prerequisite for religion and the worship of the gods, so they could not depict the god without a private house in which he lived and where his rituals and special feasts were held. The place where the temple was built was considered a sacred place, therefore successive temples were built on the foundations and ruins of the previous ones [20].

In terms of phylogeny and species, the temples in the Nile Valley civilization were designed to be majestic, as they had huge stone walls and rows of columns carved with colorful religious images and hieroglyphic writing, because the temple was considered the house of God. The difference was clear in terms of building material between houses and royal palaces on the one hand, and temples and tombs on the other hand, where the first was distinguished by its construction with mud bricks or wood, while the in the second stones were used in construction or were excavated in solid rocks [21].

Pharaohs also built temples where offerings were made to preserve their souls in the afterlife and traditionally called "mortuary or funerary temples. These temples were often attached to or located near pharaohs tombs and considered different from divine temples while The Egyptians did not refer to mortuary temples by any distinguished name [22]. The rituals of both the dead and the gods were not mutually exclusive, while the symbolism surrounding death was present in all Egyptian temples. The cult of deities was to some extent present in funerary temples. Some temples were also used to commemorate deceased kings and to make offerings to their souls [22]

In terms of function The Egyptian temples were characterized by several functions in addition to their religious function, which worked to link the divine presence in the temple between the human and divine realms and allowed humans to interact with the gods through rituals, as it was believed that these rituals support the god and allow him to continue to play his right role in nature [2]. The economic function, as it was distinguished as the main centers of economic activity, due to their vast resources and the employment of tens of thousands of priests, craftsmen, and workers [24]. The temple structure was a major part of the city in which it was built. On the other hand, when the temple was built on empty land, a new city was built to support it.[25].

As for their location in the city The Egyptian temples were distinguished by their distinctive urban structure, wide areas and decoration, and most of the basic elements or designs that were used in the construction and maintenance of all ritual temples on the Nile River. Each element served a specific purpose in the events of worship that were established on the site, and each of them displayed the constant strength of the traditions of Egyptian history.[23]. They were not remote structures, but next to the homes of other residents, distinguished by their central location (figure 3)

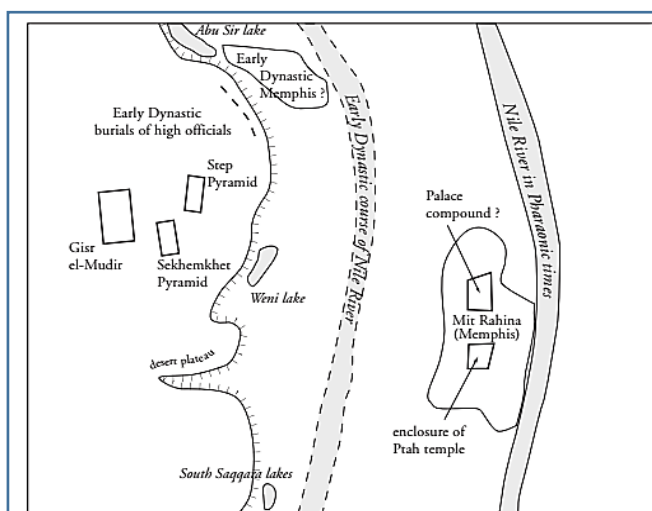


Figure 3

The administrative center of the ancient Egyptian kingdom in Memphis surrounded by the residential community and some royal burial sites and funerary temples west of the Nile River Trigger, Source: Bruce G., 2003. Understanding early civilizations: a comparative

This is what is observed in¹The New Kingdom, as the temple was the heart around which the city grew. It is common to speak of places such as Amarna, Per Ramses and (to a lesser extent) Thebes and Memphis as royal cities, but they can be considered as divine cities since the temples of the most important gods were in them. As for the royal mortuary temples, they dominated the landscape of the western bank of Thebes during the era of the New Kingdom [2].

The temples of Egypt are also among the most impressive monuments that have survived from the ancient world. Many of these structures are still among the greatest architectural achievements in human history. Ancient Egypt's temples were a source of admiration in the Greek and Roman times, and continued to amaze conquerors, explorers, and travelers long after the civilization that built them [24].

4.3 Hindu Temples

A Hindu temple is a structure designed to bring humans and deities together and is considered a symbolic home and seat of the divine body of Hindus. Using symbolism to express the ideas and beliefs of Hinduism [26].

In terms of origin and types: The religious architecture of Hinduism extends for more than two thousand years, consisting of a variety of temple forms, from temples carved in the

¹New Kingdom (1580-1085 BC)OriginatedAfter the eighteenth dynasty liberated Egypt from the Hyksos and continued in the nineteenth and twentieth dynasty. She was good The capital Holyin that era.Among its monuments are the grandiose temples at Karnak and the vast tombs built on the eastern and western sides of the city [20].

rocks to temples of huge cities. Although Hinduism is complex and polytheistic, the Hindu temple is based on a fundamentally simple foundation and a straightforward concept of worship, with ritual prayer always directed towards a single deity.

Temples started as they were carved in the rocks and caves, as they were characterized by two types of this architecture. The first, is a stony cave and very steep, consists of large internal chambers. The second type is carved into a free-standing rocky outcrop and may lack interior spaces. The main rock-cut temple consists of a small room preceded by a porch carved into the rocks. The entrance was decorated with buttresses and lintels.

After that stage, the construction evolved from carving in rocks to building with stones, which represents a shift in the structural construction from one style to another. It quickly developed into an impressive edifice, richly decorated with carvings as a complex carved in stone, built on a rock foundation. It is considered the most distinctive feature of the temple shape, as in Dravidian and Nagara styles [27].

The outer and inner walls of the Hindu temple were completely covered with symbolic statues and sculptures that describe the different aspects of earthly and heavenly life in which exciting scenes prevail, distinguished by their aesthetic and educational value [28].

Temple Religious function Being a spiritual destination for many Hindus where many rituals and services are performed [29]. From an **administrative and economic point of view**, the temples of southern India managed the function of regional development, such as irrigation projects, land reclamation, relief and recovery after disasters [30]. In addition to providing job opportunities for the poor. Some temples had a large treasury, with gold and silver coins, which served as banks [29]. **Culturally**, Some temple schools offered a wide range of studies, ranging from Hindu scriptures to Buddhist texts, grammar, philosophy, martial arts, music, and painting [31]. In addition, they provided **medical services** through some Hindu monasteries and temples [32].

As for their location in the city we can study that in the state of Tamil Nadu. The sacred assembly campus has a large, closed area, with concentric and rectangular stone walls Prakara and sacred gates Gopurams, which symbolize through their gigantic elements the urban scale of the sacred center. The shops inside sell a variety of supplies related to worship practices that have been passed down through generations.

The concentric shape of the Tamil temple city also reflects its hierarchical social path. The urban structure of the city begins with four wide "carriage streets" surrounding the temple. Four main streets build the comprehensive settlement, connecting Outer Gopurams of the central temple with the surrounding countryside As in Figure (4).

Their regional presence can be attributed as societies with concentric cores, surrounded by an agricultural economy based on irrigation by rivers. Each religious center has access to its own fields. These agricultural landscapes blur the boundaries between the various villages and cities. One could also see the dramatic horizon of distant objects that defined the many complex worlds nearby as cosmic symbolism, ritual landscapes, social inequality, and agricultural economies merged into one.[3]. **A Hindu temple is not only a sacred architectural object, but also an urban catalyst that has always attracted people to its works, thus nurturing everyone who comes around it. On the other hand, places with mythological associations of Hindu deities were marked and celebrated with temples that created sacred landscapes and greater social stability.**

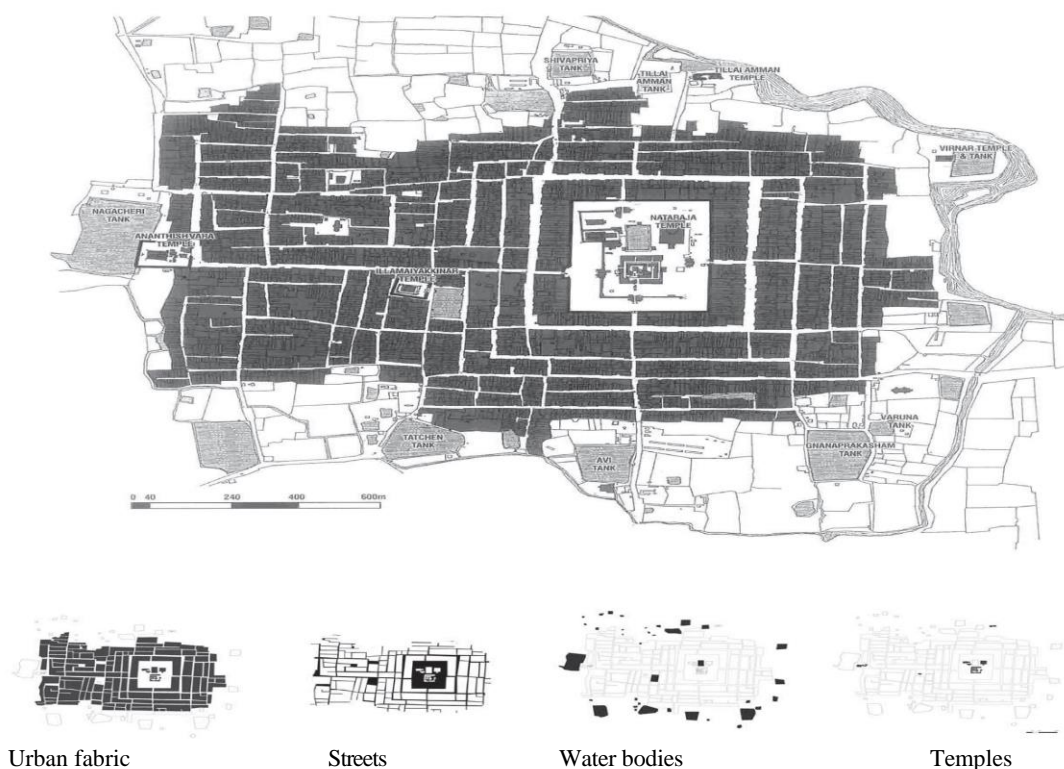


Figure 4

Tamil temple city showing the location of religious buildings with a plan of main streets and urban fabric Lakes used to irrigate agricultural areas

Source: Bharme, V., & Krusche, K. (2014). *Rediscovering the Hindu temple: the sacred architecture and urbanism of India*. Cambridge Scholars Publishing P:176

4.4 Religious buildings in Buddhism

Temples are buildings where Buddha delivered teachings and sermons to monks and public. Later, faithful people provided the land to build temples as housing for monks and for religious activities. Temples number has increased in line with the followers. Whenever and wherever a village or community is established, a temple is built in the form of a spiritual sanctuary for the members of the community, so temples have always been an essential part of the community.

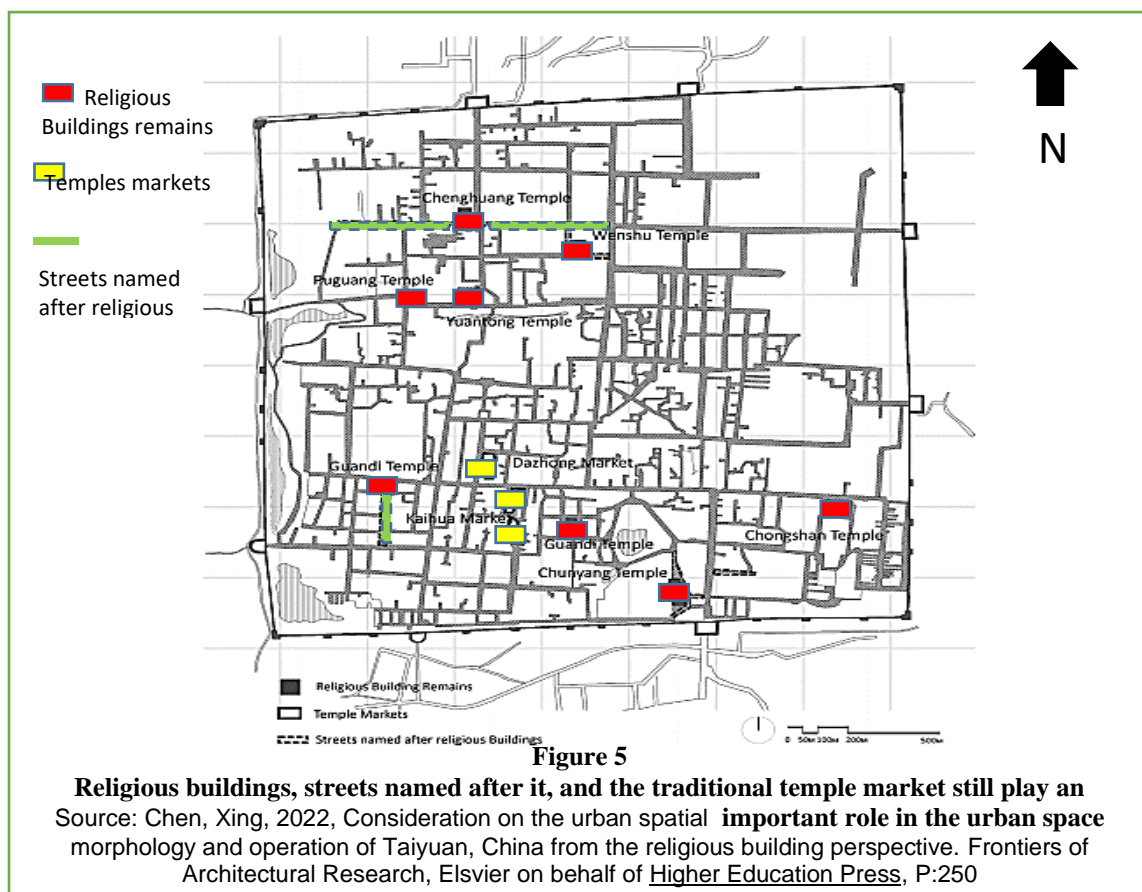
In terms of origin and types, Buddhist architecture has undergone a long development since its beginning in the sixth century BC. Beginning in India where it was later spread to exotic lands by missionaries in the 3rd century BC. Buddhist architecture can be categorized into several distinct categories as determined by their architectural programs, namely

monastery, rock-cut cave, stupa, and temple, and these types are not completely isolated structures, often found clustered in areas or groups of similar structures within the same site [33].

Their establishment with a religious function represented the functions of Buddhist religious buildings, by using them as places to perform their rituals in fulfillment of their spiritual aspirations, to perform common devotional practices, to prostrate, to make offerings, to recite traditional texts, and to pilgrimage. They are used in remembrance and chanting [30]. They worked as **economic engines** in the local community, as it benefited from the gifts and aid provided to them by the well-to-do, to support the monks, and this community used the income from these different types of loans to build and maintain infrastructure, and increase the areas of their land, supporting people after disasters, famines and wars by maintaining their farms and providing them with the necessary supplies and seeds to sustain their agriculture [34]. **In social terms**, temples provided secular activities for the welfare of the community, as a shelter for the poor and travelers, a club or meeting place for villagers, a community court, a place for consultation to solve daily and psychological problems, a recreational place for holding traditional festivals, a center for arts and cultural statues, a museum and an administrative center. For the community it is used by the village chiefs for meetings or to announce messages to the villagers, and a place to hold rituals related to rites of passage such as ordinations and funerals [35]. **Health services**, temples were places for medical treatment. However, some monks in temples still offer folk medicine by exploiting the temple spaces to treat chronic diseases or to rehabilitate patients with types of paralysis, although, this role has been reduced after the increased number of hospitals and health centers [35]. **Education centers** through their role in teaching people, as the monks considered reading, writing, and providing knowledge to others as a religious act, and one of the priorities of the service, as parents gave life, giving the monks the knowledge and the way to conduct and live this life. Therefore, wherever monks settled and established monasteries, they established schools, as in Ceylon (present-day Thailand) [36].

As for its location in the city, we can study China as an example of the influence of religious buildings on the context of the city, because religious constructions in ancient Chinese cities are almost not distinguished by their distinctive shapes, but they are known for their high number. Religion has rarely participated in building the basic social order in urban areas and in the administration of ancient China, but it does play a role in the continuous development of society.[4], as in the historic city of ²Tai Yuan Taiyuan, which served as the main artery linking the agricultural civilization of the central plains and the northern nomads. Urbanization entered Tai Yuan by Buddhists along the Silk Road from Tokhara in Central Asia [37]. After the expansion of the city in the seventeenth century, the temple Chongshan dominated over the southeastern part of the city. Due to its special urban status, preserving the beautiful natural environment, and the relative calm; made its pagodas a suitable environment for reading, which led to making this part of the city a cultural space based on the Buddhist temple, temples and palaces were concentrated in this area. (Figure 5) It is also noted that the heights of religious buildings (Pagoda and Drum Tower) at a high altitude ranging between 35-55 meters. **This achieved an urban spatial arrangement, through the regular arrangement with tall buildings as the exterior, and the remains of the religious buildings and streets that were named after them, and the market that converted from the traditional temple market still plays an important role in the urban space shape.**

²Tai Yuan Taiyuan It is in northeastern China, which is the capital and largest city of Shanxi Province.



5. Religious Buildings In The Abrahamic Religions (Monotheistic Religions)

The monotheistic religions and their beliefs by the prophets and messengers sent by God Almighty emerged almost 4000 years ago (Judaism in the fifteenth century BC, Christianity in the first century AD and Islam in the seventh century AD). Patterns and shapes that differed from what the temples used to perform in other beliefs, because they were directed towards the Creator, distinguished their architecture.

For knowing their patterns and composition for showing their importance to cities and the population in general, three types of religious buildings will be studied in the monotheistic religions (Judaism, Christianity, and Islam).

5.1 Religious buildings in Judaism

A designated place used for the purpose of Jewish prayer, study, assembly, and reading of the Tanakh (the entire Hebrew Bible, including the Torah).

In terms of origin and types, The Jews were affected by the higher altitudes, considering that holiness was closer to the mountains. This explains their concept of sacred

mountains, such as³Mount Zion⁴and Mount Sinai. In the period between their exodus from the land of Egypt until the arrival of King Solomon rule, the tent of meeting was a place for the ark of the covenant (the ark containing the two tablets of the Law (the Ten Commandments), and a place to present their vows at the hands of the priests and to atone for sins according to what was stated in the Mosaic Law. When the Temple (Solomon's Temple) was built, which effectively replaced the mountains as the holiest place for Jews in their worship, two important institutions distinguished Judaism, the Temple of Jerusalem (Jerusalem) and the Synagogue.

1. **The Temple:** What is meant is Solomon's Temple, which was built during the reign of King Solomon and took seven years to build [38] The Temple of Jerusalem (Jerusalem) was the focal point of the Jewish nation, as the remote center of worship, and the place where the political, economic, and spiritual affairs of Jews were discussed and determined. In 70 AD with the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple, the Jews were forced to search for new ways of worship to replace the Temple and offer sacrifices [39].
2. **Synagogue:** is designated place used for Jewish prayer, study, assembly, and reading of the Tanakh (the entire Hebrew Bible, including the Torah). Despite the nostalgic significance of the temple, halakhah (Jewish law) states that the collective worship of Jews may be practiced wherever they congregate minyan⁵ (a group of at least 10 adult Jews). Worship can also be done alone or with less than 10 people, but Halakha states that some prayers are considered communal, thus can only be recited by a minyan. In terms of their own rituals [40].

The archetype of the synagogue represents the tent of meeting that forms the focal point of the wandering wilderness community, and the text credits Moses with erecting the completed structure and arranging all the fixtures, from the slabs and columns to the parapet covering the outer gate. "When Moses had finished the work, the cloud covered the tent of meeting, and the presence of the eternal filled the tabernacle." [41].

The Babylonian captivity had reduced the effect of the temple itself, as sanctity became in the places where the Torah was located, and wherever it went, it made the place sacred. As for the construction plan, it included a prominent site for the Torah shrine, which includes the ark of manuscripts, and the place of the Bima⁶ which is raised in the middle of the worship hall to line up the worshipers around it. It also contains drawings and statues symbolizing the temple, which bear witness to the preservation of its customs. [46].

The differences between the temple and synagogues can be seen, in the worship and ritual practices. The temple was the only center of religious activity in the form of a sacred rite of animal sacrifice, while the synagogue, is a center to study the Torah, which takes place only on feast days and Saturdays, for prayer, for rituals and for legislation. [39] The Synagogue does not replace the long-destroyed Temple in Jerusalem, which existed long before the destruction of the Second Temple in 170 BC by the Macedonians. [47].

³ Mount Zion is a hill in Jerusalem located outside the walls of the Old City. The term Mount Zion was used in the Hebrew Bible first for the City of David [42],[43];[38],[44] and later the Temple Mount, but its meaning has changed and is now used as a name for the western hill of ancient Jerusalem.

⁴ Mount Sinai is the mountain on which the Ten Commandments were given to Moses by God [Exodus]. In Deuteronomy, these events are described as having occurred at Mount Horeb. In general, scholars considered that "Sinai" and "Horeb" refer to the same place [45]

⁵ Minyan is the quorum of the ten Jewish adults required for certain religious duties. In the more traditional currents of Judaism, only males of 13 years of age and over can form a minyan; In the more liberal (non-Orthodox) currents, women also count.

⁶ Bima It means "the podium" and refers to the platform in the center of the synagogue from which the Torah is read.

Symbolism also appears in some matters related to the design of the synagogue. Traditionally in Europe and the Americas, it is to be towards the east, that is, towards Jerusalem, which indicates the attachment of the Jewish people to the Land of Israel. Judaism has also proven to be very pragmatic and very diverse in its architectural responses, through the different styles of synagogue building in the world, where they were using Gothic style (Synagogue in Prague completed in 1270AD), Baroque style (Wlodowa Synagogue in Poland 1764AD), and others. By the nineteenth century, Jewish emancipation had spread and there were fewer restrictions on how synagogues could be built. The symbolic importance of different building styles continued to emerge in the minds of architects, while in the same period when the Moroccan style appeared (Moorish Style) in synagogue architecture, first in Europe and then in America, this was seen as more acceptable, resulting from a desire to associate Jews with a sentimental idealistic view of the Orient, where Judaism arose especially when it was mixing with the styles above like (Princes Road Synagogue in Liverpool, Gothic-Moorish style completed in 1874), (Great Synagogue in Czech Rep., Moorish-Romanesque style completed in 1892) [48].

The functions of religious buildings relate in terms to being a place of worship, not only of the privileged few, i.e. priests, but rather of a large and participating community that satisfies the individual's need for self-expression, and a structure to house the shrine of the Torah. In social terms, the synagogue formed the heart of the Jewish establishment, as a "gathering place" on a regular (i.e. daily) [49]. The **cultural role** as an educational institution for children and a place for discussions between classes of scribes and teachers. In addition to carrying out an administrative and legal function, it was used as a house of justice, judging people, freeing slaves, and adjudicating civil disputes using Jewish law [50].

In terms of its location in the city Synagogue buildings are usually erected on a high place in a city or village, in the center of the city or near a water source. While for the diaspora, they were set up in different locations in their cities and villages. For example, in Baghdad, it had the largest gathering of Jews in Iraq. Their number had increased from 2,500 in 1794 AD to 77,418 in 1947 AD according to censuses that were held on those years [51]. They lived in Rusafa especially in the Torah district. Then they settled in Bab al-Sharqi, Karada and al-Saadoun. It is noted that there is a very old synagogue and the shrine of Sheikh (Ishaq Al-Gawoni) in Hanun Market (Torah district) (Figure 9). Meir Taweig Synagogue in Al-Saadoun/Al-Bataween, is still present which was established in 1942 after the Jews settlement in Al-Bab Al-Sharqi area, Al-Saadoun and Karada [52]. However, it was abandoned due to Jews immigration from Iraq and few left. Therefore, it is no longer possible to achieve Minyan to perform religious rituals there. The synagogue also houses material from temples and other communal buildings that are no longer active [53].

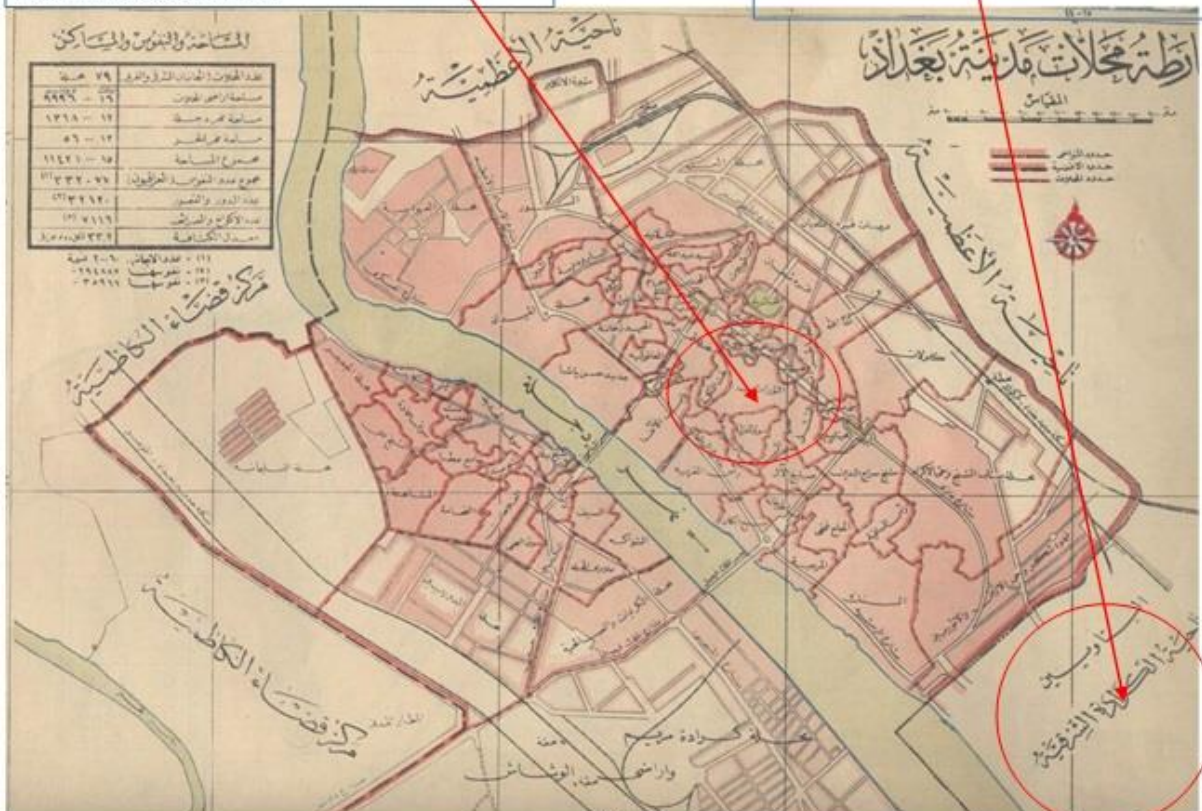


Figure 9
Baghdad districts map early twentieth century
المصدر: سوسة، احمد، 1952، اطلس بغداد، مطبعة مديرية المساحة العامة- بغداد، ص:20.

5.2 Religious building in Christianity

Churches in Christianity are considered sites of worship for them. The word church comes from (Knousht), which means a group of Jews, but in Syriac (Eadto) The word pledge comes from the Syriac word (Beatho) in the sense of an egg, referring to its oval shape that comes from the shape of the ship or the ark, because Christians do not have a lasting homeland on earth, so they are always in a continuous journey, directing their thoughts towards the heavenly port, which is their eternal home, and their orientation towards the east [54].

In terms of variety and species Five types of church buildings can be classified in relation to the time period of their existence, as follows:

- 1. Chapel:** They are small houses used for congregation existed since the apostolic era at the beginning of the spread of the Christian religion until the third century.[55] .
- 2. Tomb churches or Catacombs** Because of the continuous persecutions that the Church had been faced in the early centuries; Christians used some places for prayer and to

serve the Mass, and to commemorate their dead. These places were close to cemeteries and reached through specific underground tunnels. [54]

3. **Churches** are building dedicated for worship that have appeared since the first three centuries, and when the decree of religious tolerance was issued (⁷Milan Decree) in 313 AD. Some abandoned non monotheistic temples were taken and converted into churches after some modifications being made to them [54].
4. **Cathedral:** the term was derived from Cathedra which mean s chair or throne in the Latin language. It is a specific type of ecclesiastical building, which serves as the central church for a diocese or an episcopate, especially for denominations with an episcopal hierarchy [56]. It is a very large stone building for Christian worship, and is the largest and most important church in the diocese [57].
5. **Monastery Abbey:** It is a group of rooms inhabited by hermit monks who have withdrawn from the social life and are devoted to prayer, fasting and acts of mercy. The monastery includes one church or more, to perform collective and individual religious rites and serve as the center of the monastery, and the beginning of their emergence was in Egypt by St. Anthony at the beginning of the fourth century AD [58].

Functions of Churches and monasteries are many. They have the religious and **spiritual function**, being the house of God, and He fills and sanctifies them with His presence. All saints, whether they are alive or moved to the heavenly life, in these buildings are honored and blessed [59]. **Culturally**, they have great role in establishing schools in the Mesopotamian region since the second century AD and were specialized in philosophy and sciences as in (Zoqnin Monastery/ Diyar Bakr- Turkey in the third century, Qartmin Monastery (Monastery of Mar Gabriel) in Tur Abdin- Turkey at the end of the fourth century, Qinsharin Monastery near Aleppo/ Syria in the sixth century, the monastery of Mar Matta / Nineveh- Iraq at the end of the seventh century until the thirteenth century) and others [60]. In Europe, since the Middle Ages, the Church has established many universities, such as Cambridge and Oxford. Many historians state that the cathedral universities and schools were a continuation of the interest in learning that monasteries promoted [61]. **Its social role** Since the inception of Christianity, various acts of mercy have included such as feeding and clothing the poor, visiting prisoners, and supporting widows and orphaned children [55]. Also, marriage ceremonies were and still take place only inside churches and with the priest's blessing and the ecclesiastical marriage contract. **Health and charitable work**, when Christianity was declared as an accepted religion in the Roman Empire, it led to the expansion of health care and charitable work, the construction of a hospital began in every cathedral city, as hospitals became scattered in most parts of the Christian East in the Byzantine world [62]. This was a transformation from the pre-Christian era of the Roman Empire where no civilian hospitals were available [63]. Churches added **aesthetic effect to the cities** through building forms, as in Westminster Abbey in London, Abbey de Clairvaux and abbey church of St Denis in France, Monte cassino in Italy and Fulda abbey in Germany [64]. These buildings draw attention by being different from most of the buildings that make up the urban fabric. For example, in Ostuni city in Italy, which is famous in its white color for almost all the buildings, churches are revealed in silhouette using different materials and colors. In addition, the dimensions of the churches are larger than other buildings and located at a higher point in the city, in addition to their shapes which characterized by domes and towers, and by their styles which were developed like Byzantine style, Gothic style, Romanesque style, until to Modern and Post modern style in twentieth century [65].

⁷ Edict of Milan 313 AD: The Roman Emperor Constantine issued the free religious practice of "Christians and all others". This agreement is called "the decree giving the Christians in the East the freedoms those in the West have for all the provinces under his control." [66].

In terms of their location in the city Churches distribution depended on the presence of the population, for example, Baghdad in the nineteenth century, as Christians lived together in certain districts and nothing separated them from other Baghdadi areas, as most of them were concentrated in Al-Midan area near the inner castle, and the other section extends in the locality of Souk Al-Ghazl in an area known as (Akkad al-Nasara). At the forefront were the Armenian Orthodox, who made up most of Baghdad's Christians, and their church is still present in Al-Maidan area, which was established in 1640 in the name of the Virgin Mary.⁸ An Armenian Catholic church in Akkad al-Nasara was built in 1854 AD in the name of Our Lady of Assumption. After the Armenians in terms of the number of Chaldeans Catholic, in the year 1853 they opened their first church, known as the Mother of Sorrows Church in Akkad al-Nasara. They are followed by the Syriac Catholic sect. Their first church was built in 1851 in Akkad al-Nasara, known as the Virgin Mary, and in 1853 a new church was opened during that period, known as the Immaculate Conception close to the previous one⁹[67]. There are also some minorities, such as the Latin, and one of their important churches in Baghdad is the church of **Saint Joseph** which was built in the same area in 1871 and is located opposite to the Caliphate Mosque. The building is in the form of a cross with a hemispherical dome with a circular drum and windows at the level of the church wing. It is 32 meters high, topped by an octagonal lantern with a cross on its top. From a distance, we can clearly see the church as a beacon in the neighbourhood. It also specifies the map of Baghdad for the year 1854 Figure (10) Prepared by (Felix Jones and Sir Collinkwood) The Old City of Baghdad and the site of the Akkad al-Nasara and its churches.

5.3 Religious buildings in Islam

Mosques in the Islamic religion are places of prayer and gathering for celebrations, and other religious events. The word mosque in Arabic refers to a place where people prostrate by the action of bending their foreheads and knees to touch the ground. A mosque is defined as an area of land dedicated for worship, freed from personal ownership, and accordingly the mosque is an area of land that is not owned by anyone and in which ordinary, advocacy, educational and other tasks are performed[68].

Origin and types small or large lands can be used to build mosques, but the most important factor is to determine the prayer direction and to be dedicated to worship. Some mosques fence their lands, and huge buildings, ceilings, domes, and minarets may be built above them. The first mosque built in Islam was Quba Mosque in Medina. It was very simple and became the basis for the establishment of Islamic mosques in all parts of the world. Most mosques have a middle part called the courtyard surrounded by four corridors, the largest of which is the Qibla. A prayer hall contains the pulpit and the Mihrab. The ceilings bear arches based on columns of marble, stone or brick. Most mosques are characterized by their huge entrances, domes, and minarets [69].

The mosque represents the spiritual, cultural, and political center of the Islamic city, and the prominent identity in it. The expression of this identity came through its functional status and symbolic significance. Usually, the mosque and the emirate house mediate in the formation and revival of Islamic cities, "where the functional center occupies more than the geographical one because its location is mostly not subject to the foundations of engineering

⁸According to the official website for the debts of the Waqf of Christians and other religions, in 1960 Bishop Narsis Tiroyan sold it and bought in its place a large plot of land in Eastern Karada, where the Armenian Catholic Cathedral is located today <https://cese-iq.net/churchesAndConvents/ChristianCon/ArmenianCatholic/SaeydatAlEnteegal-Baghdad/SaeydatAlEnteegal-Baghdad.html>

⁹After leaving it, the roof of the church collapsed and became an abandoned place, and a commercial center was established in its place (source: the researcher)

planning as much as it responds to the need of the Muslim urban community for a place that bring them together and organize their life.” [70]. Mosques are classified into:

1. **Musallah:** It is used to perform the five daily congregational prayers for Muslims who are in an institution, factory, school...etc. It can accommodate at least forty worshippers, or to serve the residents of a neighborhood, a residential group, or a small village.
2. **Local mosque:** plays the role of providing religious services to the residential locality, and it is recommended that the walking distance to it be within the range of 150 to 200 meter. As for its size and expansion, it depends on the number of residents of the locality or residential neighborhood it serves.
3. **Jami Mosque:** It is a big mosque in which, in addition to the five daily prayers; Friday prayers and the two Eid prayers are performed. it is one of the most important public facilities in the city in the Islamic era because of its essential role in the community life. Besides its religious function, it was a center for researching political, religious, educational and social affairs.

Mosques are destination for **religious and spiritual purposes**. Muslims attend them to pray and ask mercy from their God. **Socially**, the mosque is the center of interaction and communication for the Islamic group, and it is a physical structure in which they attend to pray and exchange opinions and go to the latest news of their group. It is considered as the best place to inculcate the value of citizenship in the Muslim. It is a shelter for strangers who have no home, in which Alms and Zakat are collected and distributed to the needy **Culturally**, the mosque is considered as a school that serves as an intellectual center in which they teach students to read, write, memorize the Qur'an, hadith, jurisprudence, language, and literature [71]. This aspect has developed until it became universities specialized in arts, sciences, and Sharia, as in Al-Azhar University in Egypt. The mosques were also distinguished by their aesthetics, through geometric symmetry, high harmony and their studied mathematical relationship that made them balanced and harmonious, representing continuous kinetic transitions in horizontal and vertical directions [72].

In terms of its location in the city, the mosque has its role in forming the urban fabric of the city and giving the identity of the Islamic city. It contributes into the city's functional structure to be in harmony with its functional gradations local, sectoral, Friday mosques, and Jami Mosque [84]. The Islamic cities arose within a homogeneous cohesive mass, with a certain texture and fixed skyline that adhered to the height of one or two floors, excluding minarets and domes that rise vertically. Big Mosques are considered the heart of the city and important feature in its architectural planning, and usually built close to main roads and markets [73].

When a new city was established, Muslims used to build a mosque next to the governor's palace or in the center of the city, and then traverse the streets and lanes such as in Mecca and Yathrib. The concepts of Islam with a dynamic application helped by the Hesba system in all its forms, taking into account the status of the mosque first, then housing the forces and the rest of the community, noting the provision of markets and the rest of social services to its residents and in innovative urban and engineering ways, and these cities include Basra, Kufa, Baghdad, Samarra and Cairo [74].

The religious role was the most important in the development around mosques and shrines, represented by the growth around the shrine of Imam Musa al-Kadhimi in Kadhimiya, where the Persian Safavid period (1508-1638) in Baghdad had the great architectural impact on the fabric of the city through the construction of buildings that were characterized by high

craftsmanship and wonderful monuments. Like the Golden Mosque at al-Kazimin which was built in 1515 and this holy shrine was the first development to the north of the walled city and later became the most prominent settlement outside the oldest area of Baghdad. This era witnessed the same distinctive pattern that characterized the neighboring neighborhoods, along with the meandering grid, which was similar to the oldest part of Baghdad (Fig. 11) [7]. The ancient city of Najaf is a clear example of an Islamic city. Where its formation resulted in the presence of the holy shrine of Imam Ali bin Abi Talib with its golden dome, which is considered the developmental axis of the city, and its presence expressed the privacy of the place and the natural urban product of the Arab Islamic city [75]. In addition to the growth that had taken place north of Baghdad in Al-Adhamiya around the mosque and shrine of the greatest Imam Abu Hanifa al-Numan Figure (12). Al-Adhamiya is one of the main cities in Baghdad, and its growth was limited in its early stages around the shrine, and the city is in the form of a peninsula surrounded by Tigris River from Three sides. In 459 AH/1066 AD, The city's growth and expansion increased when the School of the Great Imam Abu Hanifa was established and many scientists and students had moved to live closer to it. This had contributed to its development culturally and scientifically [76]. Another example is the popularity of the suburbs around the shrine of Sheikh Abdul Qadir Al-Kilani in Al-Rusafa (Bab Al-Sheikh area). [77]. It also specifies the map of Baghdad for the year 1854 Figure (10) Prepared by (Felix Jones and Sir Collinwood) The Old City of Baghdad and the site of the Al- Risafa concentrated mosques depended on Muslims people.

6. Conclusions

Religious beliefs affect the forms of religious buildings in different beliefs and religions. It has been observed that many similarities exist between them in general social functions, except for the religious job, which depends on the faith of their followers. About their locations in the city, it was noted that the religious buildings in the Mesopotamian civilization were in the center of the city, in the Egyptian were the basis for the emergence of cities, while in the Hindu and Buddhist beliefs they chose places of beautiful nature, close to rivers or hills. The emergence of religious buildings in the monotheistic religions was considered the basis of the existence of the population.

The importance of religious buildings can be classified into two main points. The first is their effect on the city's shape and the second is on its population.

Regarding the first, religious buildings have given an aesthetic impression through the prominence and dominance over the different perspectives through which the landscape is viewed, and they have become prominent features of urban landscapes, which has changed the aesthetics of the city's interior sites. Also, from the planning point of view, its active role in urban planning emerged through attracting people and being as centers of economic growth for cities, while providing vital sources of social and spiritual support for local communities.

Regarding their effect on population, religious buildings usually emerge in a form that gives people spiritual strength through certain religious practices that are held in these places. They are products of the fusion of the sacred model of faith and the secular model of life. It is a kind of a space, that is not only expresses the historical nature of the religion itself, but also reflect the spatial integration of different civilizations.

Their functional role can be seen in the development of the Mesopotamian, the Nile Valley, the Chinese, the Indian and the Islamic civilizations. Religion in each of these societies gave its members the courage to survive in an unfavorable environment, by offering support to

all who come to it in need. In many cases, religions were the basis for art and culture, and the observation and experimentation from which science developed. In addition to their role in opening many charitable institutions such as hospitals and rest houses to help the needy and the poor that are usually financially supported by people's alms.

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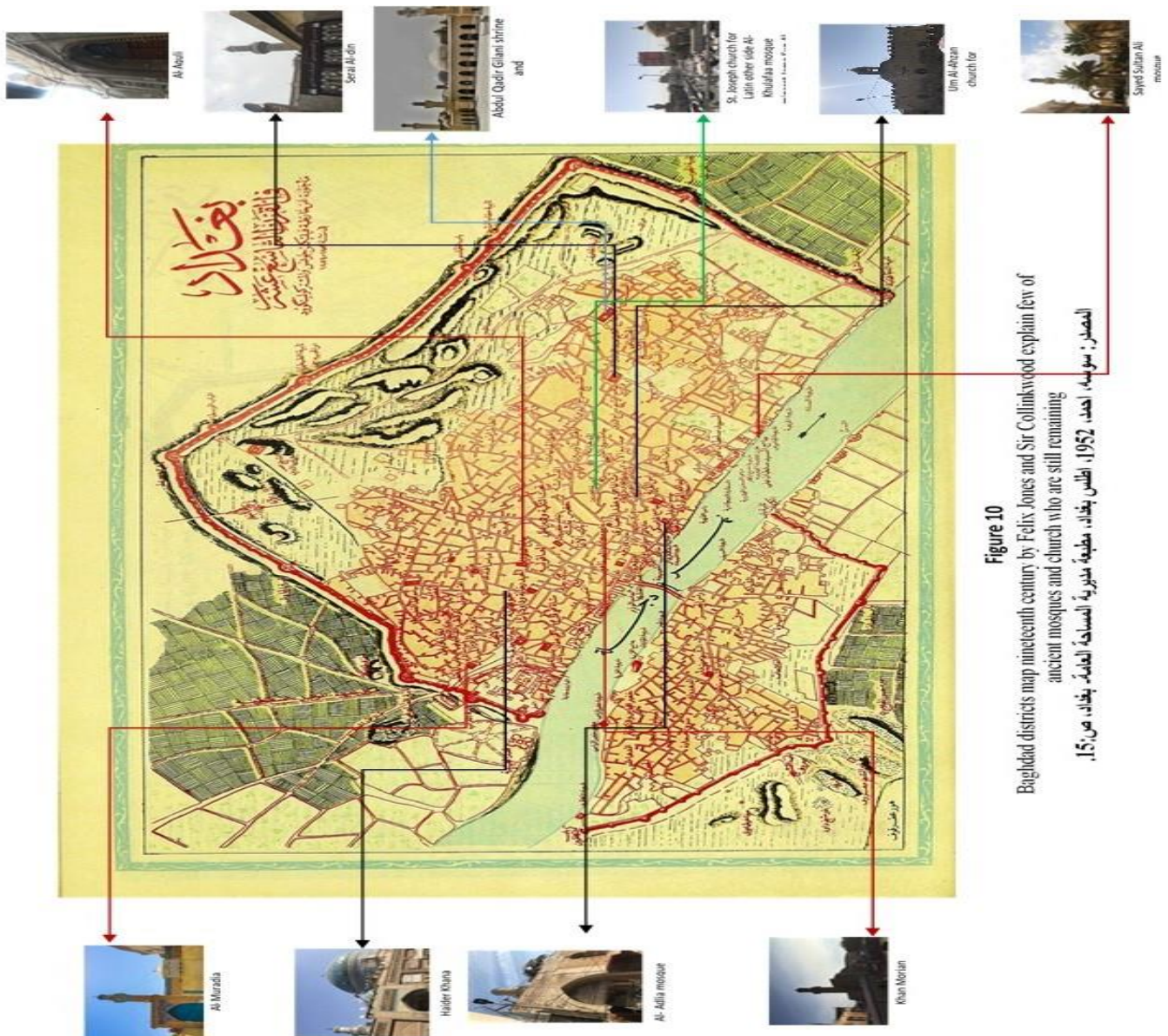


Figure 10
Baghdad districts map nineteenth century by Felix Jones and Sir Collinwood explain few of ancient mosques and church who are still remaining
المصدر: سوله، احمد، 1952، اطلس بغداد، مطبعة مديرية المساحة العامة، بغداد، ص: 15.



figure 11

Al-Kadhimiyan Mosque with its gilded dome and its four minarets in Baghdad, surrounded by residential shops Al-Saaidy, H. J. (2020). Lessons from Baghdad City Conformation and Essence. *Sustainability in Urban Planning and Design*. 0-0



Figure 12

Mosque and mosque of Imam Abu Hanifa al-Numan in Adhamiya

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