

MUSLIM MILITARY ARCHITECTURE IN GREATER SYRIA

From the Coming of Islam to the Ottoman Period

EDITED BY

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THE CITADEL OF AL-RAQQA AND FORTIFICATIONS IN THE MIDDLE EUPHRATES AREA

STEFAN HEIDEMANN

1. *Introduction*¹

One of the almost forgotten and least known buildings in mediaeval al-Raqqā is its citadel. In the 1950s the citadel was completely removed. A citadel however, constitutes an important space defining complex for the historical development of a city. The citadel of al-Raqqā was located on a promontory of an elevated terrace formed by the Euphrates, situated at the southwestern corner of the citywall of al-Rāfiqa.

The cotton boom in the wake of the Korean War and the subsequent growth of al-Raqqā in the fifties of the twentieth century brought the end for the remains of the citadel. Nowadays the so-called Clocktower-Circle (*dawwār al-sā'a*) completely covers the site of the former citadel. The circle has become one of the main traffic distributors within the growing city. The retrieval of the citadel from literary sources and photographic archives gives us new insights into the development of an important mediaeval city.

Between 1936 and 1950s, a small path went along the southern side of the city wall. It ran towards the west cut through the citadel, south of its northeastern and northwestern tower.² On the ground, only the northeastern and parts of the northwestern tower were then still visible (Fig. 5.a).³ The northwestern tower of the citadel was equally the southwestern tower of the Abbasid city wall. The ruin of this tower is locally still remembered as *al-qulla*, 'the citadel tower' (Fig. 4.b).

Michael Meinecke, the well-known excavator of Abbasid al-Raqqā, knew about the citadel at the southwestern corner of the horse-shoe-shaped city. But he regarded it as a later Ottoman addition. Therefore he did not

¹ I like to thank Alastair Northedge for his valuable comments and for his thorough reading and correction of the English draft. The contribution presents some results of the ongoing research project "The New Economic Dynamics of the Zangīd and Ayyūbid Period", supported by the German Research Foundation (DFG).

² Institut Français d'Archéologie du Proche Orient, reproduction German Archaeological Institute (DAI), Damascus, photo-no. 88/2199 by P. Grunwald.

³ For the northeastern tower see photo from the 1950s in the possession of Kassem Toueir. A copy of it is in the collection of the author.

include it in any of his archaeological maps.⁴ However most of the photographic documents presented here go back to his research efforts. The sources for the citadel are therefore not archaeological, but data collected from travel reports, air and surface photos from the early twentieth century and finally mediaeval chronicles.

Firstly, I will give a brief outline of the history of exploration of the citadel; secondly, some early references to a *ḥiṣn al-Rāfiqa*; thirdly, some general remarks about the historical development of fortifications within northern Mesopotamia, the Jazīra, and fourthly, I follow the history of the citadel of al-Raqqa according to the literary and photographic sources. The last and fifth point will be the exploration of the possible function of the citadel within the spatial organisation of the city. This point takes the position of the Bāb Baghdād at the southeastern corner of the city wall into consideration.

2. *The History of Exploration*

The earliest view of the citadel is an engraving, added to the report of the Euphrates expedition by F. R. Chesney, from the year 1836. The citadel is visible in the distant background without showing any details except a towerlike structure.⁵ Chesney's companion W. F. Ainsworth and later E. Sachau in the year 1879 refer briefly to the citadel in their travel reports but without any useful description of the ruins.⁶ Between October 1907 and March 1908 and again 1910, Sarre and Herzfeld surveyed the region in order to find a prominent Islamic site suitable for a German ex-

⁴ Compare the one in the Encyclopaedia of Islam: Michael Meinecke, "al-Raqqa", *EI*² VIII, 410-414.

⁵ Francis Rawdon Chesney, *The Expedition for the Survey of the Rivers Euphrates and Tigris*, 4 vols., London (1850), reprint New York (1960); plate reproduced as well in Stefan Heidemann and Andrea Becker (edd.), *Raqqa II—Die islamische Stadt Mainz* (2003), fig. 18.2.

⁶ William Harrison Ainsworth, *A Personal Narrative of the Euphrates Expedition*, 2 vols., London (1888), 288: "Without the walls, at the south-east corner, were the ruins of a Saracenic castle, (...)". Ainsworth however seems to confuse the location of the citadel, when he writes about the southeastern corner. Ernst Sachau, *Reise in Syrien und Mesopotamien* Leipzig (1883), 242. See for Ainsworth and Sachau also Murhaf al-Khalaf and Kay Kohlmeyer, "Untersuchungen zu ar-Raqqa–Nikephorion/Callinicum", *Damaszener Mitteilungen*, 2 (1985), 133-162, at p. 159 and Kay Kohlmeyer, "Berichte über ar-Raqqa von europäischen Reisenden", Heidemann–Becker, *Raqqa II*, 87-93, at p. 89-93. Gertrude Bell, *Amurath to Amurath* London (1911), 55, misinterprets the northwestern tower of the citadel as a round minaret.

cavation project. For the publication, Herzfeld recorded the citadel of al-Raqqā in its basic square shape in a rough topographical sketch.⁷ In the years 1911 and 1913, the German archaeologist Max von Oppenheim visited al-Raqqā and took several photographs, most prominent in his photos appears the massive northwestern tower of the citadel the “*qulla*” (Fig. 4.b).⁸

After World War I, in 1922, the French mandatory administration commissioned several aerial photos of Syria, which included the region of al-Raqqā and its citadel (Fig. 3.a).⁹ In the early thirties, on a suggestion of Sir Keppel Archibald Cameron Creswell, the French administration commissioned new aerial views of the archaeological sites, endangered now by the rapid growth of the modern city (Fig. 3.b, 4.a).¹⁰ However, Creswell drew for his monumental *Early Muslim Architecture* (1940) a new map of the site, in which the citadel figured only as a square elevation without any further explanation. But Creswell’s text and photos recorded the prominent northwestern tower, which he believed to be part of the Abbasid construction.¹¹

3. *Ḥiṣn al-Rāfiqa*

When was the citadel built? Who built it? What was its purpose—defence or representation of royal power? Before going into details, I will give briefly

⁷ Friedrich Sarre and Ernst Herzfeld, *Archäologische Reise im Euphrat- und Tigrisgebiet*, 4 vols., Berlin (1911-1920), at vol. II, p. 356: “An der SW-Ecke liegt, zum Fluß vorspringend, ein Kastell, das nicht zum ursprünglichen Plan zugehören braucht”; vol. III, fig. 63 (drawing), fig. 64 (photography, view from the southeastern tower towards the citadel).

⁸ Archive of the Bank Sal. Oppenheim jr., Cologne. I am very grateful to Gabriele Teichmann and Dominik Zier for the kind permission to reproduce the photos of Max von Oppenheim.

⁹ Four small-scale air views of the citadel exist: Paris, Institut Géographique National, Photothèque Nationale. First photo: Esc. 55: A57/15. 2. 1922; reproduction DAI, Damascus, no. 88/20 (M. al-Roumi). Second photo: Esc. 55: A49/15. 2. 1922; reproduction DAI, Damascus, no. 88/21 (M. al-Roumi). Third photo: Esc. 55: A50/15. 2. 1922; reproduction DAI, Damascus, no. 88/22 (M. al-Roumi). Fourth photo: Esc 56: A92/27. 6. 1922 7h-3.500 26 ZGC, DAI, Damascus, reproduction 1987; detail see fig. 3a.

¹⁰ Institut Français d’Archéologie du Proche Orient, Rakka Poste Terrain FO 20/16. 3. 1936; reproduction DAI, Damascus, no. 1989/39-468 and 473; Rakka Terrain o. Aviation FO 20/16. 3. 1936, reproduction DAI, Damascus, no. 1989/39-463; reproductions by P. Grunwald, DAI.

¹¹ Keppel Archibald Cameron Creswell, *Early Muslim Architecture* II, Oxford (1940), 40-41.

some basic information about the citadel. The visible construction goes back mostly to the Ayyūbid period in the first half of the 7th/13th century. The conclusions drawn from the analysis of the aerial views point to the importance of the Ayyūbid citadel and the enclosure east of it, along the southern front of the city wall for the development and the history of the city. The enclosure ended in the east at the Baghdad Gate. In the south, it stretched 100 metres into the meadows of the flood-plain of the Euphrates (maps Fig. 1 and 2).

The citadel at the southwestern corner did not belong to the original plan of the city laid out under the Caliph al-Manṣūr in 154/770-1 (Map Fig. 1). The fortified city of al-Rāfiqa was built as a stronghold and garrison for a detachment of the Abbasid Khurāsānī army.¹² The plan of the city was almost a parallelogram with a pointed semi-circle added in the north.¹³ The southern wall was set on the brink of the rubble and loess-terrace formed by the Euphrates in order to get a solid foundation. Below this terrace lay the swampy marshes of the river, the literal meaning of *raqqa*. On the eastern and western ends of the southern wall two massive towers were erected. Smaller projecting half-round towers were built along the entire curtain wall.¹⁴ East of al-Rāfiqa lay the rectangular Hellenistic, mostly Christian—Jewish, city of Kallinikos/al-Raqqa. The name al-Raqqa was used for the entire urban complex. With the decline of the Hellenistic city early in the 5th/11th century the name was transferred to the much prosperous city of al-Rāfiqa, which was subsequently only called al-Raqqa in the sources.¹⁵ Hārūn al-Rashīd (reigned 170-193/786-809) might have added—according to much later sources—a second somewhat weaker wall (Fig. 6.a).¹⁶ However, a separate citadel for the ex-

¹² Cp. for the development of these garrison cities Alastair Northedge, "Archaeology and New Urban Settlement in Early Islamic Syria and Iraq", Geoffrey R. D. King and Averil Cameron (edd.), *The Byzantine and Early Islamic Near East II. Land Use and Settlement Patterns* (Studies in Late Antiquity and Early Islam 1), Princeton (1995), 231-265, fig. 47-57, here at p. 248.

¹³ About the mathematical principles underlying the plan see Udo Becker, "Ar-Rāfiqa—Mathematische Konstruktionsprinzipien", Heidemann—Becker, *Raqqa* II, 199-212.

¹⁴ Murhaf al-Khalaf, "Die 'abbāsīdische Stadtmauer von ar-Raqqa/ar-Rāfiqa mit einem Beitrag von Norbert Hagen", *Damaszener Mitteilungen*, 2 (1985), 123-131.

¹⁵ Stefan Heidemann: *Die Renaissance der Städte in Nordsyrien und Nordmesopotamien. Städtische Entwicklung und wirtschaftliche Bedingungen in ar-Raqqa und Harrān von der Zeit der beduinischen Vorherrschaft bis zu den Seldschuken* (Islamic History and Civilizations. Studies and Texts 40), Leiden (2002), 80; Stefan Heidemann, "Die Geschichte von ar-Raqqa/ar-Rāfiqa—ein Überblick", Heidemann—Becker, *Raqqa* II, 9-56, here p. 45.

¹⁶ The second exterior wall was almost removed during the 1950s. Only late sources refer to Hārūn al-Rashīd as builder of the city wall or explicit the second wall. Michael the Syrian (d. 596/1199): *Makṭabānūt zabnē* ed. and trans. J. B. Chabot, *Chronique de Michel*

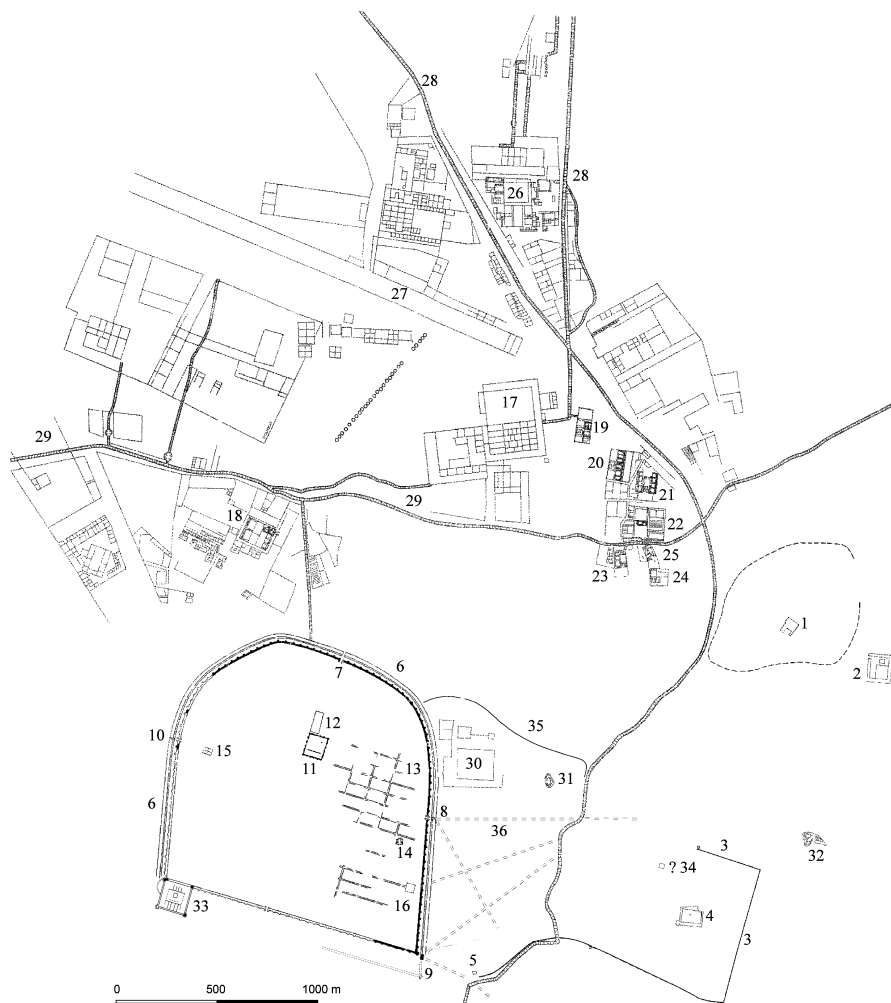


Fig. 1. Map of al-Raqqā/al-Rāfiqa, German Archaeological Institute.

- 1) Dair al-Zakkā.
- 2) Roman-Byzantine Square Building.
- 3) City Walls of Kallinikos/al-Raqqā.
- 4) Congregational Mosque of al-Raqqā.
- 5) Mausoleum of Uways al-Qaranī.
- 6) City Walls of al-Rāfiqa.
- 7) North Gate.
- 8) East Gate or Bāb al-Sibāl.
- 9) Bāb Baghdad.
- 10) West Gate.
- 11) Congregational Mosque of al-Rāfiqa.
- 12) Cistern.
- 13) Street Grit.
- 14) Qaṣr al-Banāt.
- 15) So-called 'Church'.
- 16) Square Complex.
- 17) Main Palace of Hārūn al-Rashīd.
- 18) Palace A.
- 19) Palace B.
- 20) Palace C.
- 21) Palace D.
- 22) North Complex.
- 23) Western Palace.
- 24) Eastern Palace.
- 25) East Complex.
- 26) Northeast Complex.
- 27) Hippodrom.
- 28) North Canals.
- 29) West Canal/Nahr al-Nīl.
- 30) Sāmarrā-Period Complex.
- 31) Tall Zujāj/Glass Tell.
- 32) Tall Aswad.
- 33) Ayyūbid Citadel.
- 34) Mausoleum of Yaḥyā al-Gharīb.
- 35) Wall of Ṭāhīr ibn al-Ḥusayn.
- 36) Main Street of al-Raqqā al-Muḥtariqa.

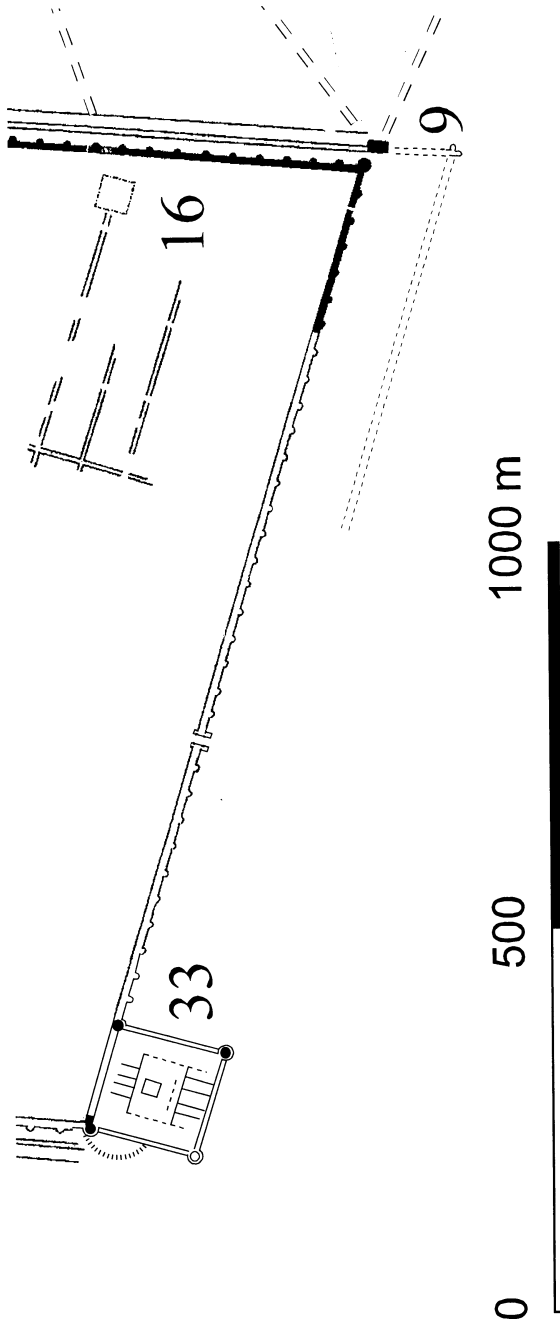


Fig. 2. Reconstruction of the citadel (33) and the enclosure south of the citywall (9).
Reconstruction S. Heidemann, first drawing J. Höpfner, electronic realisation R. Mendler.

ecution of power was not necessary, because the whole city served as garrison and the country was almost secure. The Abbasid palace complexes in the north of al-Raqqā and al-Rāfiqa were built during Hārūn al-Rashīd's residence. They were planed as an open area without any fortifications. Also during the middle-Abbasid period in the 3rd/9th century al-Raqqā served much of the time as capital for the western provinces including Egypt. It was also sometimes a border-fortress—alternately for the Abbasids and for the Ṭulūnids. The sources however do not point to any fortification in the south-west of the city-enclosure.

Only later, during the period of the Ḥamdānids and of the Bedouin domination in the 4th/10th and 5th/11th century, a “fortress of al-Rāfiqa” is mentioned briefly twice in the literary sources: firstly, during the rebellion of the amīr Abū l-Fāris al-Baqjūr¹⁷ in al-Raqqā/al-Rāfiqa.¹⁸ After the defeat of Baqjūr in 381/991, the “fortress of al-Rāfiqa”, *ḥiṣn al-Rāfiqa*, was

le Syrien, 3 vols., Paris (1905), here book XI.XXVI; trans. vol. II, p. 526, mentions Hārūn al-Rashīd as the builder of the second wall; cited also in Khalaf—Kohlmeier, “Untersuchungen”, 148. Yāqūt al-Ḥamawī (d. 626/1229), *Kitāb Muʿjam al-buldān* ed. Ferdinand Wüstenfeld, *Jacut's geographisches Wörterbuch*, 6 vols., Leipzig (1866-1870), at vol. II, p. 734, reports also two distinct city walls. ʿIzz al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn Shaddād (d. 684/1285), *Al-Aʿlāq al-khaṭira fī dhikr umarāʾ al-Shām wal-Jazīra* vol. III (al-Jazīra), ed. Yahya ʿIbbāra, Damascus (1978), 71: “He [Hārūn al-Rashīd] built the city wall”. Al-Khalaf, “Stadtmauer”, 127, knows only the passage by Ibn Shaddād and not the one from Michael Syrus. He does not connect this citation with the second city wall, which he believed to be constructed under al-Manṣūr. He argues that the passage from Ibn Shaddād refers to the coating of the first wall with baked bricks. The information provided by Michael the Syrian speaks against the argument of al-Khalaf. Furthermore the brick work of the congregational mosque of al-Manṣūr is the same as the one of the first main wall of the city. Both were built probably at the same time. About the brick work see N. Hagen in Khalaf, “Stadtmauer”, 131.

¹⁷ All the literary sources agree for the spelling of the name as *Baqjūr*. However the correct spelling of the name as *Baqjūr*. This is evident from a coin as an official document from Aleppo from the year 358/969-70; Ulla S. Linder Welin, “Sayf al-Dawlah's Reign in Syria and Diyarbekr in the Light of the Numismatic Evidence”, *Commentationes de Nummis Saeculorum IX-XI in Suecia Repertis I* (Kungl. Vitterhets Historie och Antikvitets Akademiens Handlingar Antikvariska Serien 9), Stockholm (1961), 17-102, at p. 98-99.

¹⁸ About the rebellion of Baqjūr see Maurice Canard, *Histoire de la Dynastie des Ḥamdānides de Jazīra et de Syrie* (Publications de la Faculté des Lettres d'Alger 2^e série XXI), Paris (1953), 852-854; Ramzi Jibrān Bikhāzi, *The Ḥamdānid Dynasty of Mesopotamia and North Syria 254-404/868-1014*, Ph.D. diss., Ann Arbor (1981), 975-977; Hugh Kennedy, *The Prophet and the Age of the Caliphates. The Islamic Near East from the Sixth to the Eleventh Century* London (1986), 326-327; Thierry Bianquis, *Damas et la Syrie sous la domination fatimide (359-468/969-1076). Essai d'interprétation de chroniques arabes médiévales*, 2 vols., Damascus (1986, 1989) [continuing pagination], 140-157, 178-187; Thomas Ripper, *Die Marwāniden von Diyār Bakr. Eine kurdische Dynastie im islamischen Mittelalter* (Mitteilungen zur Sozial- und Kulturgeschichte der Islamischen Welt 6), Würzburg (2000), 126-128.

handed over to the victorious Ḥamdānid ruler Saʿd al-Dawla.¹⁹ The second reference to a *ḥiṣn* is found within the context of an event which happened eighty years later. In the years 462/1070 and 463/1070-1 northern Mesopotamia saw the first massive advance of the Seljūqs towards Syria. The population of Ḥarrān sought refuge in the south, within the “fortress of al-Rāfiqa”, *ḥiṣn al-Rāfiqa*.²⁰ In both cases it can not be decided with certainty, whether *ḥiṣn* means here a separate citadel or named only the fortified city itself. Probably it means the latter.

4. Fortifications Within Northern Mesopotamia

Citadels are instruments for the execution of military power. In periods of political stability with peace in the land and with a sedentary military surveillance over nomads, cities are usually open and there is no need for city walls. When the peace in the land is threatened by nomads or by hostile sedentary powers, the investment in city walls becomes reasonable. The defence of a city wall however requires a considerable number of people experienced in warfare and, at least, the collaboration of the inhabitants. Both conditions were not always present. Separate castles do allow a comparatively small number of warriors to repel the hostile attack of a much larger army, even in the case where the enemy had already forced his entry into the city. A fortress was also necessary, when a city should not only be policed, but militarily controlled by a small number of armed personnel usually foreign to the indigenous population.

The politico-military situation during the second half of the 5th/11th century favoured the construction of fortresses on the middle Euphrates. The silence of the sources about such a complex in al-Raqqa for the Numayrid and ʿUqaylid period does not rule out the possibility of its existence. During the late 4th/10th and the first half of the 5th/11th cen-

¹⁹ Abū Yaʿlā Ḥamza ibn al-Qalānīsī (d. 555/1160), *Dhayl tāriḫ Dimashq* ed. Henry Frederick Amedroz, Leiden, Beirut (1908); reprint w/o place (Baghdad, Maktabat al-muthannā), w/o year (ca. 1970s), 38; ed. Suhayl Zakkar, Damascus (1403/1983), 64. Possibly the writings of Abū Ishāq Ibrāhīm al-Ṣābiʿ (d. 384/994) served as a source.

²⁰ Shams al-Dīn Abū l-Muzaffar Yūsuf Qizūghlū Sibṭ ibn al-Jawzī (d. 654/1256), *Mirʾāt al-zamān fī tāriḫ al-ʿayān* partial ed. Ali Sevim, *Mirʾātüʾz-Zeman fī Tarihiʾl-Ayan* (Ankara Üniversitesi Dil ve Tarih-Coğrafya Fakültesi Yayınları 178), Ankara (1968), 144-145 (*ḥiṣn al-Rāfiqa*). About the expedition of Alp Arslān see Suhayl Zakkar, *The Emirate of Aleppo (1004-1094)*, Beirut (1971), 176-177; Taef Kamal El-Azhari, *The Seljūqs During the Crusades 463-549 A.H./1070-1154 A.D.* (Islamkundliche Untersuchungen 211), Berlin (1997), 26-27, 31-34; Ripper, *Marwāniden*, 198-200.

tury, the Bedouin rulers of the Mirdāsids, Numayrids and ‘Uqaylids followed the Ḥamdānids in their sway over the Jazīra. Their need to present themselves as urban rulers was low at the beginning. Their main seat of power remained usually outside the cities in the camp, the *ḥilla*. A fortification would have only served the settled population in order to keep the nomads out. However a growing need of some tribal leaders to represent themselves as urban rulers could not be excluded. This need can be proved for some of the nomadic rulers even before the Seljūq conquest.

The arrival of the Seljūqs induced the building of fortifications. The Seljūq rule was regarded as foreign, in language, culture and in some regards also in religious belief. They were Sunni and a dominating share of the population were Shiite. As a professional military minority, the Seljūqs and their successors based their rule on fortifications and fortified cities. The fortress as instrument of power was necessary for the upkeep and security of Seljūq rule in the country. Under the pressure of the Seljūq conquest some of the Bedouin amīrs in the Jazīra and northern Syria accommodated themselves quickly to the new form of rule. A fortress allowed them a safe retreat and protection against the Seljūq army.²¹

The history of the neighbouring city Ḥarrān in the north of the Diyār Muḍar is in many regards comparable to the urban development of al-Raqqā.²² According to Yaḥyā of Antioch, in the year 423/1032 or 424/1033 the municipal militia (*aḥdāth*) together with the rural, poor and needy Muslim mob took the temple of the pagan religious community of the Ṣābians and transformed it into a stronghold (*ma‘qil*²³).²⁴ This construc-

²¹ See in detail Stefan Heidemann “Arab Nomads and Seljūq Military”, Irene Schneider (ed.): *Militär und Staatlichkeit* (Mitteilungen des Sonderforschungsbereiches “Differenz und Integration” 5. Orientwissenschaftliche Hefte 12), Halle (2003), 201-219.

²² Ḥarrān was explored by David Storm Rice and Seton Lloyd at the beginning of the 1950s; Seton Lloyd and William Brice, “Harran”, *Anatolian Studies*, 1 (1951), 77-111; David Storm Rice, “Unique Dog Sculptures of Mediaeval Islam. Recent Discoveries in the Ancient Mesopotamian City of Harran and Light on the Little-Known Numayrid Dynasty”, *The Illustrated London News* (20 September 1952), 466-467; David Storm Rice, “Medieval Harran. Studies on Its Topography and Monuments I”, *Anatolian Studies*, 2 (1952), 36-84.

²³ Bianquis, *Damas*, 489, reads in Yaḥyā al-Anṭākī (see fn. 24) *mu‘aqal* (?) and emends to *mu‘taqal* (prison). However during military campaigns captives were only made for commercial sales, therefore the reading as *ma‘qil*, stronghold, seems more probable. About the citadel and the discussion about the location of the Ṣābian temple cp. Lloyd—Brice, “Harran”, esp. at p. 96.

²⁴ Yaḥyā ibn Sa‘īd al-Anṭākī (d. 488/1067), *Al-Tārīkh al-Majmū‘* ed. Louis Cheikho, *Annales Yahia Ibn Saïd Antiochensis* (CSCO 51. Scriptorum Arabici III, 7), Paris, Leipzig (1909), 225; ed. ‘Umar ‘Abd al-Salam Tadmuri, *Tārīkh al-Anṭākī, al-ma‘rūf bi-ṣilat tārīkh Autīkhā*

tion was or had been integrated into the city walls.²⁵ In the year 451/1059-60, the amīr of the Banū Numayr, Manīʿ ibn Shabīb, transformed the former temple into a splendid fortified residence.²⁶ In the year 450/1058-9 some evidence makes building activities by Manīʿ ibn Shabīb in al-Raqqa/al-Rāfiqa likely too. So far, there are only hints of a restoration of the congregational mosque in al-Rāfiqa.²⁷

The final turn to fortifications as the residence for Arab rulers—having still their power base in the pasture—was made by the chief of the ʿUqaylid clan, the amīr Muslim ibn Quraysh (reigned in Mosul 453-478/1061-1085),²⁸ under the threat of Seljūq conquest. Muslim ibn Quraysh held sway over the city of al-Raqqa from 464/1071-2 on.²⁹ In the year 476/1083 during a rebellion of the local Ḥanbalite population in Ḥarrān against him and his Shiite governor, his men entrenched themselves in the fortress (*ḥiṣn*) of Ḥarrān—according to the later but detailed chronicle of Ibn al-ʿAdīm.³⁰ Ibn al-Athīr writes, that Muslim ibn Quraysh was

Tripolis (1990), 428-429; ed. Ignace Kratchkovsky, trans. Françoise Micheau and Gérard Troupeau, *Histoire de Yahyā ibn Saʿīd d'Antioche* (Patrologia Orientalis 47, fasc. 4, no. 212), Turnhout (1997), 518-519 [150-151] (*wa-jaʿalahū maʿqilan*). About the discussion in detail see Heidemann, *Renaissance*, 91-93.

²⁵ It is not yet determined when the city wall of Ḥarrān was constructed; cp. Thomas Alan Sinclair, *Eastern Turkey. An Architectural and Archaeological Survey*, 4 vols., London (1987-1990), here vol. IV, at p. 41.

²⁶ Rice, "Dog Sculptures"; Rice, "Medieval Ḥarrān"; Terry Allen, *A Classical Revival in Islamic Architecture* Wiesbaden (1986), 35-46.

²⁷ Stefan Heidemann, "Ein Schatzfund aus dem Raqqa der Numairidenzeit, die "Siedlungslücke" in Nordmesopotamien und eine Werkstatt in der Großen Moschee", *Damaszener Mitteilungen*, 11 (1999), 227-242.

²⁸ Shams al-Dīn Abū ʿAbdallāh Muḥammad al-Dhahabī (d. 746/1345-6), *Tārīkh al-Islām wa-tabaqāt al-mashāhīr wal-ʿalām* [471-480 h.], ed. ʿUmar ʿAbd al-Salam Tadmuri, Beirut (1994), 253-255; Moritz Sobernheim, "Muslim b. Quraysh", *EP²* VII, 492-493.

²⁹ Ibn al-Qalānisi, *Dhayl*, ed. Amedroz, 101, 106; ed. Zakkar, 168, 169; Muḥammad ibn ʿAlī, known as al-ʿAzīmī (d. 556/1161), *Tārīkh Ḥalab* partial ed. Claude Cahen, "La chronique abrégée d'al-Azīmī", *Journal Asiatique*, 230 (1938), 353-458, here p. 359-360; ed. Ibrahim Zaʿrur, Damascus (1984), 348; Kamāl al-Dīn ʿUmar ibn al-ʿAdīm (d. 660/1262), *Ḍubdat al-ḥalab min tārīkh Ḥalab* ed. Samī al-Dahhan, *Histoire d'Alep*, 3 vols., Damascus (1951-1968), here vol. II at p. 30-32, 42; ʿIzz al-Dīn ʿAlī ibn Muḥammad ibn al-Athīr (d. 630/1232), *Al-Kāmil fī l-tārīkh* ed. Carl J. Tornberg, 13 vols., Leiden (1851-1874); here vol. IX, at p. 165 (Ibn al-Athīr's dating for the occupation of al-Raqqa in 463 h. can not be corroborated in comparison with other sources), cp. also at p. 285; Ibn Shaddād, *A'lāq* III, 77. Rice, "Harran", 82; Zakkar, *Emirate*, 172 (erroneously year 453 h.), 180; Gesine Degener, *Das Emirat der Banū ʿUqail. Eine Untersuchung zum Zerfall des ʿabbāsīdischen Kalifats und zur Beduinisierung des Fruchtbaren Halbmonds*, Ph.D. diss., Göttingen (1987), 77.

³⁰ About the rebellion in Ḥarrān: Ibn al-ʿAdīm, *Ḍubda* II, 81-83; Ibn Shaddād, *A'lāq* III, 47; Dhahabī, *Tārīkh* [471-480 h.], 16-17; Ibn al-Athīr, *Kāmil* X, 83-84. Zakkar, *Emirate*, 208-209; Degener, *Emirat*, 84-85; Bianquis, *Damas*, 602; Ripper, *Marwāniden*, 206.

the first who fenced Mosul—which was previously undefended—with a wall, that the Seljūq governor Jikirmish (d. 500/1106) reinforced it, and that finally Zangī ibn Āqsunqur (d. 541/1146) walled Mosul with strong fortifications.³¹

Also for other tribal leaders and amīrs with a nomadic background we find castles and fortresses as the basis of their rule during this period. Groups of the Banū Numayr held sway over the fortress al-Najm (Qal'at al-Najm)³² and the fortress of Sinn ibn 'Uṭayr,³³ north of the Euphrates. In the case of the Munqidhids it was the fortress of Shayzar³⁴ and for the Banū Mulā'ib the fortress of Afāmiyā.³⁵

After the Seljūq conquest of Syria in the year 479/1086 the 'Uqaylid commander of the citadel of Aleppo Sālim ibn Mālik ibn Badrān al-'Uqaylī (d. 519/1125) was compensated with the fortress Ja'bar, also called Dawsar, and in addition with the fortified al-Raḡqa.³⁶ Although Qal'at Dawsar had served long before as refuge and retreat for Numayrid-Qushayrid highwaymen, the construction of a real fortress on that promontory at the Euphrates river happened probably first under Sālim ibn Mālik.³⁷

³¹ Ibn al-Athīr, *Al-Tārīkh al-bāhir fī l-dawla al-atābakīya* ed. 'Abd al-Qadir Ahmad Tulaymat, Cairo (1382/1963), 78. Cp. Ibn al-Athīr, *Kāmil* X, 293. A citadel did possibly exist before. It was mentioned by Sibṭ ibn al-Jawzī, *Mir'at* ed. Sevim, 30 (year 450/1058; *qal'at al-Mawṣil*).

³² Ibn Shaddād, *Al-'lāq al-khaṭira* [part I/2]. *Waṣf li-shamāl Sūriya* ed. Anne-Marie Eddé, *Bulletin d'Études Orientales*, 32-3 (1980-1), 265-402, here at p. 292 (arab. at p. 111); Yāqūt, *Buldān* IV, 165. Dominique Sourdel, "Kal'at Nadjm", *EP* IV, 482.

³³ Yāqūt, *Buldān* III, 169; Ibn al-Athīr, *Kāmil* IX, 281 [double numeration of the pages!]; X, 383; Ibn Shaddād, *A'lāq* III, 93.

³⁴ Stephen R. Humphreys, "Munqidh", *EP* VII, 577-580.

³⁵ Ibn al-'Adīm, *Bughyat al-ṭalab fī tārīkh Ḥalab* ed. Suhayl Zakkar, 12 vols., Damascus (1988), here vol. VII, p. 3354-3359.

³⁶ Ibn al-'Adīm, *Ḍubda* II, 101; Ibn al-'Adīm, *Bughya* IX, 4157-4159; Ibn al-Qalānisi, *Dhayl*, ed. Amedroz, 118-119; ed. Zakkar, 194-195; Sibṭ ibn al-Jawzī, *Mir'at*, ed. Sevim, 238-241 (mentions only Qal'at Ja'bar as compensation for Sālim ibn Mālik, 'Āna and Hīt at the Euphrates, but not al-Raḡqa, p. 240); Ibn Shaddād, *A'lāq* III, 48, 77, 110-111; Dhahabī, *Tārīkh* [471-480 h.], 28-29, 32-33; Cp. Ibn al-Athīr, *Kāmil* X, 97-98, 105. Rice, "Harran", 56-57; Zakkar, *Emirate*, 217-219; Degener, *Emirat*, 89-92; El-Azhari, *Saljūqs*, 64-71; Ripper, *Marwāniden*, 229-233.

³⁷ The fortress Ja'bar was rather unimportant before the rule of the 'Uqaylids. Its origins are obscure, except for some ruined late Roman fortifications. Dawsar was only mentioned on the occasion of an expedition by the Fāṭimid governor of Aleppo Anushtagīn al-Dizbarī into the region of the middle Euphrates in the year 432/1040-1. Afterwards it came into the hands of a Ja'bar ibn Sābiq al-Qushayrī or al-Numayrī. In the year 464/1071-2 the fortress was mentioned once more, when Ja'bar ibn Sābiq was murdered there. Under Numayrid-Qushayrid rule the citadel Ja'bar had the reputation of a hiding place for notorious highwaymen. The conquest of the fortress Ja'bar by the Seljūq sultan Malikshāh

The ‘Uqaylids preferred as their seat of government the fortress Ja‘bar rather than the already fortified al-Raqqā, which lies in the swampy marshes of the mouth of the Balikh river. Al-Raqqā was—according to the literary sources—at the end of the 5th/11th century—much more important as a city, but Qal‘at Ja‘bar had a much better strategic position on an elevated hill overlooking an important part of the middle Euphrates and controlling it militarily.

Al-Raqqā was governed usually by a son or a brother of the reigning ‘Uqaylid amīr of Qal‘at Ja‘bar. It was still fortified with the Abbasid city walls. Until now, only a single piece of evidence for ‘Uqaylid building activities in al-Raqqā remained in the form of an inscription for an endowment, *wāqf*, with a terminus post quem of 500/1106.³⁸ Although there is no unambiguous evidence in the literature, the beginning of the construction of a fortress at the southwestern corner of al-Rāfiqa within the Numayrid and ‘Uqaylid period cannot be ruled out either.

5. “The New Citadel”

A single literary source provides reports about a reinforcement and “The New Citadel”, *al-qal‘a al-jadīda*, during the Ayyūbid period in the 7th/13th

ended this situation. The fortress developed into an important city after the hand-over to the ‘Uqaylid Sālim ibn Mālik. The archaeological analysis does not contradict the literary evidence. On the basis of her study of the pottery Cristina Tonghini came to the conclusion that a significant settlement on Qal‘at Ja‘bar started in the second half of the 5th/11th century; Cristina Tonghini, *Qal‘at Ja‘bar Pottery. A Study of a Syrian Fortified Site of the Late 11th-14th Centuries* (British Academy Monographs in Archaeology 11), Oxford (1998), 30, 35, 40-41; Cristina Tonghini, “A Recent Excavation at Qal‘at Ja‘bar. New Data for Classifying Fritware”, Karin Bartl and Stefan R. Hauser (edd.), *Continuity and Change in Northern Mesopotamia from the Hellenistic to the Early Islamic Period* (Berliner Beiträge zum Vorderen Orient 17), Berlin (1996), 287-300, here esp. at p. 290; personal letter of 22 March 2000. Tonghini however takes as terminus post quem for the settlement of the citadel and in turn for the beginning of the pottery production the murder of Ja‘bar ibn Sābiq in the year 464/1071-2 (Ibn al-Qalānīsī, *Dhayl*, ed. Amedroz, 100-101; ed. Zakkār, 168). But her findings do not contradict the hypothesis that an enforced settlement on the citadel coincides with the beginning of ‘Uqaylid rule in the year 479/1086. The ‘Uqaylids had an interest in the development of the fortification into a viable city, whereas the Qushayrids were only characterised as bandits in the sources. Her study of the pottery from the excavations on Qal‘at Ja‘bar allows the conclusion that the so-called fritware 1 ‘Tell Minis ware’ had already been produced for a certain time, before it reached the citadel in significant numbers. The fritware 1 was probably made in al-Raqqā. Fritware 1 diminishes after 564/1168-9.

³⁸ Claus-Peter Haase, “Inschriften in islamischer Zeit”, Heidemann–Becker, *Raqqā* II, 99-111, here at p. 109 no. 22.

century. The choice of the name “The New Citadel” suggests that an earlier construction already existed, probably constructed during the early Ayyūbid or perhaps during the Zangīd, ‘Uqaylid and even the Numayrid period.

In the year 529/1135 Zangī ibn ‘Aqsunqur took the city of al-Raqqā from the ‘Uqaylid amīr without force but with the help of a ruse of war. Since then, al-Raqqā/al-Rāfiqa had continuously a garrison under the command of a Turkoman amīr.³⁹ In the year 578/1182 Saladin (reigned 564-589/1169-1193) conquered the city. Al-Raqqā however, remained for the time being in the hands of the Zangīds, now acknowledging Ayyūbid overlordship. It gained considerable importance as junction between the principalities of Aleppo and Mosul and became, together with Ḥarrān, capital of the Diyār Muḍar. After Saladin passed away in the year 589/1193, his brother al-Malik al-‘Ādil Abū Bakr, then in Ḥarrān, took the city from the once allied, but now mutinous, Zangīd amīr. After his succession as overlord of the Ayyūbid realm in 596/1199, al-‘Ādil Abū Bakr made his son al-Ashraf Mūsā lord of the Diyār Muḍar. Between the years 597/1201 and 626/1229, al-Ashraf Mūsā resided temporarily in Ḥarrān and in al-Raqqā.⁴⁰ He took considerable interest in the development of the city. The Ayyūbid chronicler Ibn Naẓīf (d. 637/1240) reports building activities within an existing citadel:

‘In this [year 622/1225] al-Ashraf ordered the demolition of five towers of the city wall of al-Raqqā opposite of the palace-complex, which he erected within “The New Citadel”’.⁴¹

This description of “The New Citadel” corresponds to the ruins we see on the photos and aerial views of the early twentieth century. However, an interpretation of the aerial views must take into consideration that,

³⁹ Ibn al-‘Adīm, *Ẓubda* II, 257; Ibn Shaddād, *A’lāq* III, 78 (reference to Amīrak al-Jāndār); Anonymous (written about 592-3/1195-7), *Bustān al-jāmi’* ed. Claude Cahen, “Une chronique syrienne du VI^e/XII^e le “Bustān al-jāmi’”, *Bulletin d’Études Orientales*, 1-8 (1937-8), 118-158, here at p. 123-124. Also in Aḥmad ibn Yūsuf ibn ‘Alī ibn al-Azraq al-Fāriqī (d. after 563/1168), *Tārīkh al-Fāriqī, al-dawla al-marwānīya*, partial ed. and trans. Carole Hillenbrand, *A Muslim Principality in Crusader Times* (Nederlands Historisch-Archeologisch Instituut te Istanbul), Istanbul (1990), 173; trans. 79-80.

⁴⁰ About the political situation see Stephen R. Humphreys, *From Saladin to the Mongols*, Albany (1977), 90, 125, 198-199. Al-Ashraf Mūsā was also during his period in Damascus an active patron of architecture, cp. Hans L. Gottschalk, *Al-Malik al-Kāmil von Egypten und seine Zeit. Eine Studie zur Geschichte Vorderasiens und Egyptens in der ersten Hälfte des 7./13. Jahrhunderts*, Wiesbaden (1958), 34-35, 150-152 and Humphreys, *Saladin*, 208-214.

⁴¹ Abū l-Faḍā’il Muḥammad ibn ‘Alī ibn Naẓīf al-Ḥamawī (d. 637/1240), *Al-Tārīkh al-Manšūrī* ed. Abu l-‘Id Dudu, Damascus (1401/1981), 114 (*wa-fihā amara ‘l-Malīku ‘l-Ashrafū bi-khīrābi khamsati abraḡatin min sūri ‘l-Raqqati qubālata ‘l-ādari ‘llatī ‘ammarahā fī ‘l-qa’ati ‘l-jādāda*).

during the 10th/16th century, an Ottoman restoration or new building of a fortress might have occurred. The latest building phase might be the most visible one on the photographs.

According to Ibn Naẓīf a part of the city walls was torn down in order to connect the palaces within the citadel with the city itself. Because he noticed only a modification of the complex, “The New Citadel” must be built prior to 622/1225. The distance between the projecting half-round towers of the city wall was between 32.65 and 36 metres—measured from their centre.⁴² The distance between the five towers corresponds to a square complex of about 140 by 140 metres. The measurement includes the southwestern corner and the fifth tower (seen from the west) of the city wall, which were obviously not entirely teared down. Creswell’s sketch provides a similar measurement.⁴³ The complex is almost symmetrical to a slightly shifted north-south axis. At all four corners, towers are visible and prominent. The northwestern tower of the citadel, the *qulla*,—that is the southwestern tower of the city wall—corresponded in its dimensions with the southeastern tower of the city wall, that is the one behind the Bāb Baghdād.

Both towers were massive. In 1908 Herzfeld saw both still with their original coating of burnt bricks. He calculated a diameter of 15.30 m for the southwestern tower of the city wall. The coating had a thickness of about 2.85 m.⁴⁴ The southeastern tower had a diameter of 15.60 m and a coating 2.30 m below tapering to about 1 m above. Herzfeld assumed that the coating he saw was a later addition to the Abbasid construction. After some sondages Creswell confirmed a casing of the south-eastern tower. Creswell later saw only the core of unburnt bricks of the north-western tower.⁴⁵ A close-up by Oppenheim from 1913 taken from the south gives an impression of how massive the stump was (Fig. 4.b), although the dismantling was in process.⁴⁶ Although the three other towers of the cit-

⁴² Sarre–Herzfeld, *Archäologische Reise* II, 356-357; Creswell, *Early Muslim Architecture* II, 39-42; Khalaf, “Stadtmauer”; K.A.C. Creswell, *A Short Account of Early Muslim Architecture. Revised and Supplemented by James W. Allen* Aldershot (1989), 242-243; Michael Meinecke, “Raqqā on the Euphrates. Recent Excavations at the Residence of Harun er-Rashid”, Susanne Kerner (ed.), *The Near East in Antiquity. German Contributions to the Archeology of Jordan, Palestine, Syria, Lebanon and Egypt* II, Amman (1991), 17-32, here at p. 20-21.

⁴³ In S. Heidemann, “Die Zitadelle von ar-Rāfiqa”, Verena Daiber–Andrea Becker (edd.), *Raqqā* III, 49-55, the measurement of the citadel was erroneously given as 200 by 200 metres.

⁴⁴ Creswell, *Early Muslim Architecture* II, 40-41, fig. 2a and 2c.

⁴⁵ Cp. a photo of this tower taken by Herzfeld in Creswell, *Early Muslim Architecture* II, fig. 3c.

⁴⁶ According to some aerial views of 1922 and 1936 a second not very solid outer

adel had the same dimension on the ground, their ruins are much flatter than that of the northwestern tower (*qulla*) (Fig. 5.a). They seem to have had a weaker wall surrounding them, now perhaps the exterior wall. The flatness ruins mean that they were probably not as massive as the *qulla*. They might be towers with an inner staircase, comparable to other early Ayyūbid towers, for example the ones at Ḥarrān. Newly erected massive towers were unknown in this period.

South of the northwestern corner the photos (Fig. 2, figs. 3.a, 4.a) show clearly a kind of a ruined construction attached to the western wall of the citadel, which runs up to the middle of the wall. Its use and date is unknown. Within the square complex, an open courtyard seems to be present, comparable to that of the Ayyūbid palace on top of the citadel of Aleppo.⁴⁷ On all four sides of the courtyard *riwāq*-like structures may have stood. At least the northern and southern *riwāq* were divided into several rooms. They seem to be three rooms in axial order. On the eastern and western sides a division into compartments seems probable too. A central court with four *iwāns* cannot be excluded.

In front of the northern *riwāq* there is a nearly square structure. An Ottoman building should be considered a possibility, because such a construction does not seem to belong to a four-*iwān* complex. Also a ruined and sunk cistern of the original building cannot be ruled out. On the southern side of the courtyard, a wall or at least an elevation stretches almost all the length of the southern part of the court in front of the *riwāq*.

6. Interpretation and Purpose

When was “The New Citadel” built? Huge corner towers are a feature for early Ayyūbid fortifications, especially from the reign of al-ʿAdil Abū

elevation seems to have surrounded the northwestern tower. But this encircling elevation seems only to be accumulations of earth by brick-robbers. Oppenheim-Archive, D617, Inv.-no 8001364,2 (here fig. 4.b). On the right side a part of the casing of burnt brick is still visible. The photos of the Oppenheim-Archive D575, Inv.-no. 8001363,10, and D576, Inv.-no. 8001363,11, show also heaps and piles of the harvested bricks.

⁴⁷ Cf. Heinz Gaube and Eugen Wirth, *Aleppo. Historische und geographische Beiträge zur baulichen Gestaltung, zur sozialen Organisation und zur wirtschaftlichen Dynamik einer vorderasiatischen Fernhandelsmetropole* (Beihefte zum Tübinger Atlas des Vorderen Orients, Reihe B Geisteswissenschaften Nr. 58), Wiesbaden (1984), map I no. 346. Terry Allen, *Ayyubid Architecture*, 6th edition, Occidental/California (1999), (<http://www.sonic.net/~tallen/palmtree/ayyfront>; March 2002) chap. 5, section “Plan and Context” and “Courtyard”.



Fig. 3.a. The citadel on 27. 6. 1922, detail; Paris, Institut Géographique National, Photothèque Nationale; Esc 56: A92/27. 6. 1922 7h - 3.500 26 ZGC.



Fig. 3.b. The citadel from the south east. Institut Français d'Archéologie du Proche Orient, Rakka, 16. 3. 1936; reproduction DAI, Damascus, no. 1989/39-468 and 473, P. Grunwald.



Fig. 4.a. The citadel from the south east. Rakka, 16. 3. 1936, reproduction DAI, Damascus, no. 1989/39-463, P. Grunwald.



Fig. 4.b. The northwestern tower of the citadel (1913). Max von Oppenheim collection D617. Inv.-Nr. 29/15.9. S. 45a.

Bakr onwards.⁴⁸ Preceding al-Ashraf Mūsā's activities in al-Raqqa were the reinforcement of the Zangīd and Numayrid citadel of Ḥarrān. Al-ʿĀdil Abū Bakr took residence in Ḥarrān between the years 588/1192⁴⁹ and 596/1199. He rebuilt and reinforced the citadel of Ḥarrān. He laid out four almost round, eleven-sided towers at the corners of the citadel.⁵⁰ He seems to envisage a defence line against his eastern and northern allies who had been previously forced into submission and were possibly ready for a revolt, namely the Zangīds in Mosul and the Artuqīds in Mardīn. The historical situation suggests that the visible citadel in al-Raqqa was built during al-ʿĀdil Abū Bakr's reign in the Diyār Muḍar too. Hanisch supposed for the elaborated eleven-sided towers in Ḥarrān a more representative than defensive character. This seems to hold true for the layout of the citadel in al-Raqqa as well.⁵¹ However for a military interpretation of the citadels in Ḥarrān and in al-Raqqa, it has to be taken into account that these citadels were not designed in order to resist extensive sieges like the castles in Syria. The menace of the crusaders in this region had disappeared with Zangī's conquest of al-Ruhā' in the year 539/1144. The wars with the eastern allies of the Ayyūbids—the Zangīds and the Artuqīds—bore more the character of field campaigns. In military terms these citadels served probably as garrisons and occasionally as winter camps.

When Ibn Shaddād (d. 684/1285) visited the region on the eve of the Mongol invasion, he recorded the main buildings of al-Raqqa. At first sight, he seems to be silent about a citadel, although this impressive square building existed at the time of his visit. His description of al-Raqqa helps nevertheless with the interpretation of the function of the citadel with particular regard to the spatial order. The *riwāqs* and the courtyard on the aerial views belong probably to those palace complexes which Ibn Naẓīf calls *ādar* within "The New Citadel (*al-qaʿa al-jadīda*)". Ibn Shaddād does not mention a *qaʿa*, however he speaks about palaces, *jawāsiq*, built by al-

⁴⁸ Cp. Hugh Kennedy, *Crusader Castles* Cambridge (1994), reprinted (2001), 113-115. Keppel Archibald Cameron Creswell, "Fortification in Islam Before A.D. 1250", *Proceedings of the British Academy*, 38 (1952), 89-125, here at p. 122-125.

⁴⁹ Bahā' al-Dīn ibn Shaddād (d. 632/1234), *Al-Nawādir al-sultāniya wal-mahāsīn al-yūsufiyya, sīrat Ṣalāh al-Dīn* ed. Jamal al-Dīn al-Shayyal, Cairo (1964), 208-209; ʿImād al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad ibn Ḥamīd al-Kātib al-Iṣfahānī (d. 597/1201), *Al-Fath al-qussī fī l-fath al-qudsī* ed. Mustafa Fahmi al-Kutubi, Cairo (1321/1903), 308; trans. [of the Landberg-edition] Henri Massé, *Conquête de la Syrie et de la Palestine par Saladin* Paris (1972), 382-383; Jamāl al-Dīn ibn Sālīm ibn Wāṣil (d. 697/1298), *Mufarrīj al-kurūb fī akhbār banī Ayyūb* ed. Jamal al-Dīn al-Shayyal, vol. 2, Cairo (1957), 378-379.

⁵⁰ Lloyd-Brice, Harran; Hanisch, Wehranlagen.

⁵¹ Hanisch, Wehranlagen, 71.

Ashraf Mūsā. Unfortunately Ibn Shaddād does not localize them within the city of al-Raḡqa. These *jawāsiq* might be identical with the palaces within “The New Citadel”.⁵² This would point more to a representative residential complex than to a military fortification. Also Herzfeld questioned, whether the strong brick-coating of the southwestern and southeastern tower of the city wall ever belonged to the original construction. The similarity of the brick-coating suggests that the citadel had a spatial reference to the southeastern corner and the Baghdad-Gate.⁵³ The dating of the Baghdad-Gate is much disputed. In spite of the recent early dating by Lorenz Korn, many arguments brought forward by John Warren for the 4th-5th/10th-11th century and Robert Hillenbrand for the late 5th/11th and the 6th/12th century are still valid.⁵⁴

The aerial views⁵⁵ shows clearly the spatial situation in the southeastern corner (Fig. 2 and figs. 6.a,b). The Baghdad-Gate stands in the extension of the eastern second exterior wall. The northern boundary of the gate stands on the line of the inner side of the southern interior main wall. The east-west axis of the Baghdad-Gate passes the southeastern tower

⁵² Ibn Shaddād, *A'lāq* III, 72.

⁵³ The spatial reference to each other is visually underlined in a panoramic view from the Baghdad-Gate to the citadel in Sarre–Herzfeld, *Archäologische Reise* IV, plate 63.

⁵⁴ Herzfeld in Sarre–Herzfeld, *Archäologische Reise* II, 358-359, points to parallels in the architecture of Samarra, but dates the gate on historical reasons into the period of Hārūn al-Rashīd. Creswell dates the gate into the time of al-Manṣūr; Creswell, *Early Muslim Architecture* II, 42-45; cp. Creswell, *Short Account*, 244-247. On the basis of the brick decoration John Warren dates the gate into the 4th-5th/10th-11th century; John Warren, “The Date of the Baghdad Gate at Raḡqa”, *Art and Archaeology Research Papers*, 31 (1978), 22-23. Hillenbrand saw parallels in the Seljūq architecture of the Zangīd period of the 5th/11th or 6th/12th century; Robert Hillenbrand, “Eastern Islamic Influences in Syria: Raḡqa and Qal‘at Ja‘bar in the Later 12th Century”, Julian Raby (ed.), *The Art of Syria and the Jazīra 1100-1250* (Oxford Studies in Islamic Art 1), Oxford (1985), 21-48, here at p. 27-38. Meinecke agreed to the dating of Warren and Hillenbrand; Meinecke, “Raḡqa on the Euphrates”, 21. Lorenz Korn questioned again this dating and saw much more the impact of the architecture of Samarra, especially of the Qaṣr al-‘Āshīq, on the architecture and decoration of the gate. He subsequently dates it into the second half of the 3rd/9th century; Lorenz Korn, “Das Bagdad-Tor”, Verena Daiber and Andrea Becker (edd.), *Raḡqa III—Baudenkmäler und Paläste* I, Mainz (2004), 11-18. In addition to the arguments presented by Hillenbrand, the row of polylobed arches at the Baghdad Gate has its their parallels not only in the *Qaṣr al-Banāt*, in al-Raḡqa itself, but also in the niches of minaret of ‘Āna—dated into the late 5th/11th and 6th/12th century—and in the entrance gate of the Bīmāristān al-Nūrī in Damascus as well; Alastair Northedge, Andrina Bamber and Michael Roaf, *Excavations at ‘Āna-Qal‘a Island* (Iraq Archaeological Reports 1), Warminster (1988), 19-20. This underlines the dating by Warren and Hillenbrand.

⁵⁵ Creswell, *Early Muslim Architecture* II, map on p. 42 fig. 28; fig. 3a. See also Sarre–Herzfeld, *Archäologische Reise* II, 356-357.



Fig. 5.a. The citadel from south east (1913). Max von Oppenheim collection D615. Inv.-no. 29/15.9. S. 44a



Fig. 5.b. The Bāb Baghdād (1913). Max von Oppenheim Collection D120.



Fig. 6.a. The enclosure between the citadel and the Baghdad-Gate. Rakka 16. 3. 1936, reproduction DAI, Damascus, no. 1989/39-476, P. Grunwald.



Fig. 6.b. The enclosure south of the Baghdad-Gate. Rakka 16. 3. 1936, reproduction DAI, Damascus, no. 1989/39-467, P. Grunwald.

almost tangential because of its diameter of about 15.60 metres. The Baghdad-Gate has in its design and layout a largely representative, symbolic character and it is militarily weak. But it is strategically placed next to the southeastern tower. From the elevated top of the tower it was easily possible to repel any invader forcing his entry through the Baghdad-Gate (Fig. 6.b). Not the design, but the position of the gate in relation to the tower dictates its possible defence function. This position did not refer immediately to the citadel. Citadel and gate were probably not planned together. Nevertheless they might have stood in a relation to each other. The second early-Abbasid exterior wall had enclosed the city with a space of about 21 metres from the main wall.⁵⁶ On the above mentioned aerial view in Creswell's book it can be seen that the eastern second exterior wall extended a further 100 metres towards the south where it ended in a kind of double tower. From this point a wall or a rampart seems to run westwards towards the citadel (Fig. 2; figs. 6.a,b). Because the area south of the main wall became inhabited already at the beginning of the twentieth century and it was used agriculturally, only the beginning of the wall or rampart can be detected on the photos, but cannot be followed up to the citadel.⁵⁷ This wall or rampart enclosed an area which lay in front of the city. It is limited in the north by the old interior wall, in the south by the supposed wall or rampart, in the west by the citadel and in the east by the Baghdad-Gate and the extension of the second eastern city wall. I offer three interpretations for this area.

- First, this area could be easily overseen and controlled. It could harbour and protect temporarily merchant- or pilgrim caravans or passing army units as well as nomads with their live-stock destined for the urban market. For reasons of mutual safety these temporary foreign visitors were kept outside the city proper, and at the same time they were well protected against any peril from outside.
- The second interpretation points to a *maydān*, a race-course for horses, an area for the sport of polo, or for military exercises. Such places in the vicinity of the citadel are known for the Ayyūbid period in Aleppo, Damascus, Cairo and other cities. Ibn Shaddād however does not give any reference to a *maydān* in his description of Ayyūbid al-Raqqā.⁵⁸

⁵⁶ Khalaf, *Stadtmauer*, 125.

⁵⁷ Creswell, *Early Muslim Architecture* II, fig. 3 a and b. Institut Français d'Archéologie du Proche Orient, *Ruines de Rakka* FO 20/16. 3. 1936; reproduction DAI, Damascus, no. 1989/39-476; by P. Grunwald.

⁵⁸ The Abbasid hippodrome lay within the palace area north of al-Raqqā/al-Rāfiqa. See map on fig. 1 no. 27.

- A third much different interpretation is possible too. Ibn Shaddād speaks of precious gardens (*basātīn*) which the Ayyūbid ruler al-Ashraf Mūsā cultivated:

When al-Malik al-Ashraf took possession of it [ar-Raqqā] he planted many gardens in it and he imported for it seedlings from every country, even palm-trees and bananas.⁵⁹

The need of watering the tropical plants made it probable that such gardens lay south of the city towards the meadows of the Euphrates. The Baghdad-Gate might look too monumental as a garden entrance (figs. 5.b). However the geographer Yāqūt mentions under its own entry the “Bāb al-Jinān”, the “Gate of the Gardens” of al-Rāfiqa. Assuming the third explanation, then the name “Bāb al-Jinān” might refer to the Baghdad-Gate.⁶⁰ Also a pair of remarkable iron doors from the gates of al-Raqqā might be—with caution—related to the most significant gate. Their presence was mentioned when they were brought to Aleppo and built into the Bāb Qinnasrīn in the year 654/1256.⁶¹ These gates originally belonged to the booty of al-Mu‘taṣim billāh when he conquered Amorion or ‘Am-mūriya in the year 223/838. He transferred them to Samarra, where they were seen by the Khatīb al-Baghdādī, who died 463/1071.⁶² Later, when

⁵⁹ Ibn Shaddād, *A'lāq* III, 71-72 (*wa-lammā malakahā 'l-maliku 'l-Ashrafu gharasa bihā basātīna kathīratan wa-jalaba ilaihā 'l-ghurūsa min kullī baladīn hattā 'l-nakhli wa'l-mawz*).

⁶⁰ Yāqūt, *Buldān* I, 443; II, 125.

⁶¹ Ibn Shaddād, *Al-A'lāq al-khaṭīra fī dhikr umarā' al-Shām wal-Jazīra* [part I/1] ed. Dominique Sourdel, *La Description d'Alep d'Ibn Shaddād* Damascus (1953), 19-20; followed by Abū l-Faḍl Muḥammad ibn Shihāb Ghāzī ibn al-Shihna (d. 890/1485), *Al-Durr al-muntakhab fī tārikh mamlakat Halab*, ed. 'Abdallah Muhammad al-Darwish, Damascus (1404/1984), 40-41. Ibn Shaddād refers to Ibn al-'Adīm as his main source in his description of the Bāb Qinnasrīn. The passage about the Bāb Qinnasrīn in Ibn al-'Adīm, *Bughya* I, 55, on which the first part of Ibn Shaddād's note is based, does not mention these iron doors from al-Raqqā. This second part is possibly a personal transmission to Ibn Shaddād, as he admitted (*mā ḥakāhu lī*). Yuḥannā Abū l-Faraj ibn al-'Ibrī, known as Barhebräus (d. 688/1289), *Maktābānūt zabnē—Chronicon Syriacum* ed. and trans. E. A. Wallis Budge, *The Chronography of Bar Hebräus*, 2 vols. in 3 parts, Amsterdam, London (1932), reprint Amsterdam (1976), trans. 114-115. (reference to the double winged doors). About these door leaves see in detail Heidemann, “Geschichte”, 48-49.

⁶² Abū Bakr Aḥmad ibn 'Alī ibn Thābit ibn Aḥmad ibn Mahdī al-Shāfi'ī, known as al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī (d. 463/1071), *At-Tārikh al-Baghdādī* ed. Cairo (1349/1931), reprint Cairo (Maktabat al-Khānjī-Dār al-Fikr) without year, vol. III, 344. Much later in the 8th/14th century the Iraqi chronicler Ibn al-Ṭiqṭaqā claimed that at his time (*al-ān*) the gates from Amorion were part of the western main gate of the palace of al-Mu‘taṣim billāh, the Bāb al-'Āmma. However at the time of Ibn al-Ṭiqṭaqā the doors were not longer in Samarra and the report of the eyewitness al-Baghdādī must be given preference. Ibn al-Ṭiqṭaqā (d. after 701/1302), *Kitāb al-Fakhri fī ādāb al-sultāniya wal-duwal*

Samarra lay in ruins (*kharibat*), they came to al-Raqqā.⁶³ It can not be excluded that these pair of iron doors might have belonged to the most representative gate in Ayyūbid al-Raqqā. This is the Bāb Baghdād.

It is evident, that the construction of the Ayyūbid citadel in al-Rāfiqa had more a representative function as a princely residence than a military value for the defence against any military power, which might be rival Ayyūbids, Crusaders, Khwārizmshāhs and so forth. The Mongol wars in the middle of the 7th/13th century prove that the military value of the fortifications of al-Raqqā was estimated as low by all parties. On the one hand, this has something to do with the strategic position of al-Raqqā in a plain which is difficult to defend. On the other hand, the fortifications of al-Raqqā were further weakened in the course of the slow and hesitating Ayyūbid preparations for the defence against the Mongols.

The Ayyūbid citadel in al-Raqqā was at the latest destroyed in the early Mamlūk period in the years around 663/1265. In those years all cities and fortifications in the middle Euphrates region were razed for tactical reasons.⁶⁴ Ibn ‘Abd al-Zāhir reports in 685/1288 the fate of the last six survivors of the population.⁶⁵

6. *The Ottoman Afterlife*

After the Ottoman conquest of the region in 922/1516 a military post was established in the city at the latest in the time of Sulaymān Qānūnī (reigned 926-974/1520-1566).⁶⁶ This is attested by an building inscription,⁶⁷ found at the beginning of the twentieth century in secondary use at the entrance of mausoleum of Uways al-Qaranī. It reports about the restoration or

al-islāmīya, ed. W. Ahlwardt, *Elfachri-Geschichte der islamischen Reiche vom Anfang bis zum Ende des Chalifates von Ibn etthiqthaqa*, Arabisch Gotha (1860), 275-276.

⁶³ Ibn Shaddād, *A'lāq* I/1, 20. At the end of the 5th/11th century other parts of Samarra were plundered for building material as well. Wood was transported from the mosque of Samarra to Baghdad in the year 484/1091; Sibṭ ibn al-Jawzī, *Mir'āt al-zamān fī tārikh al-ā'yān*, ed. Misfar ibn ‘Arīj al-Ghamidi, Mekka (1407/1987), 158.

⁶⁴ Ibn Shaddād, *A'lāq* III, 82. About al-Raqqā in the period for of the Mongol wars see Ludger Ilisch, *Geschichte der Artuqidenherrschaft von Mardin zwischen Mamluken und Mongolen 1260-1410 AD*, Ph.D. diss., Münster (1984), 51-52.

⁶⁵ Ibn ‘Abd al-Zāhir (d. 692/1292), *Tashrīf al-ayyām wal-‘uṣūr fī sīrat al-Malik al-Manṣūr*, edd. Marwan Kamil and Muhammad ‘Ali al-Najjar, Cairo (1961), 146.

⁶⁶ See Heidemann, “Geschichte”, 51-54; Kohlmeyer, “Berichte”, 93-95.

⁶⁷ Khalaf-Kohlmeyer, “Untersuchungen”, 160 and fig. 47b. Haase, “Inscriben”, 106 no. 4.

erection of a citadel and a sanctuary (*jaddada*⁶⁸ *hādhihi l-qaʿata wal-ḥaram*). Ainsworth possibly saw this inscription still in situ within the ruins of the citadel.⁶⁹ The mentioned *qaʿa* may refer to the Ayyūbid citadel or to a new building on top of the ruins in the southwestern corner. However no structure on the aerial views can be recognised as belonging without doubt to this mentioned building activity. Further answers about the history and function of the citadel of al-Raqqā need archaeological excavations.

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⁶⁸ According to Max van Berchem, *Matériaux pour un Corpus Inscriptionum Arabicum*. Part 2, *Syrie de Sud*, vol. 1 *Jérusalem “Ville”*, Paris (1922), 301, *jaddada* was used also for “to erect new” in the sense of *anshaʿa* in the Mamlūk period.

⁶⁹ Ainsworth, *Narrative*, 288.

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