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A Mamluk Monument "Restored": The *Dār al-Qur'ān wa-al-Ḥadīth* of Tankiz al-Nāṣirī in Damascus

INTRODUCTION

Sayf al-Dīn Tankiz al-Nāṣirī governed the province of Syria and played a central role in the polity of al-Nāṣir Muḥammad Ibn Qalāwūn throughout most of the sultan's lengthy third reign.¹ Installed as *nā'ib al-shām* in 712/1312–13, Tankiz remained in this post until his deposition in 741/1340. An active architectural patron, Tankiz initiated numerous restoration projects, infrastructural endeavors, and new buildings throughout the Syrian province.² The pattern of his patronage has shown him to be not only a prolific builder, but also a sophisticated planner whose individual projects were predicated on long-range urban development schemes. This building program constituted one of the primary tools in the construction of the patron's public image. Moreover, Tankiz's patronage played a significant role in the development of Mamluk urban and architectural design. However, the corpus of Tankiz al-Nāṣirī's architectural work is represented today by only a few, geographically dispersed fragments in varying states of preservation. Some of his commissions survived into the last century and were documented—at least in part—by photographs or drawings. Others are known only through inscriptions or references in geographical texts, historical chronicles, or biographical compilations. In some instances, the only physical remnants of his commissions consist of *ex situ* fragments, sometimes re-used in later architecture. In a few cases, the patron's buildings still stand, although altered over time. This article will deal with one such case: a *dār al-qur'ān wa-al-ḥadīth* erected by Tankiz in Damascus, between 728/1327–28 and 739/1338–39. It will investigate the extent to which the original building can be reconstructed hypothetically, situate the

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¹Sources for Tankiz's biography include: Khalīl ibn Aybak al-Ṣafadī, *Kitāb al-Wāfi bi-al-Wafayāt*, ed. Hellmut Ritter et al. (Wiesbaden, 1962–), 10:420 ff; Aḥmad ibn 'Alī al-Maqrīzī, *Kitāb al-Sulūk li-Ma'rifat Duwal al-Mulūk*, ed. Muḥammad Muṣṭafā Ziyādah et al. (Cairo, 1934–72), 2:509 ff. Summaries of his career are found in S. Conermann, "Tankiz," *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd ed., 10:185b; L. A. Mayer, *Saracenic Heraldry* (Oxford, 1953), 218–19; Michael H. Burgoyne, *Mamluk Jerusalem, an Architectural Study* (London, 1987), 223; Ḥayāt N. Ḥajjī, "Al-Amīr Tankiz al-Ḥusāmī Nā'ib al-Shām fī al-Fatrah 712–741 H/1312–1340M," in *Dirāsāt fī Tārīkh Saṭānat al-Mamālīk fī Miṣr wa-al-Shām* (Kuwait, 1986), 199–283.

²On the subject of Tankiz's architectural and urban patronage, see Ellen Kenney, "Power and Patronage in Mamluk Syria: The Architecture and Urban Works of Tankiz al-Nasiri, 1312–1340" (Ph.D. diss., New York University, 2004).



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reconstructed building in the corpus of Mamluk architecture, and explore aspects of the foundation's social and political context.

Not surprisingly, of all the cities in the province, it was Damascus—the seat of the *niyābah*—to which Tankiz devoted the most attention over the longest period of time. His civil engineering and infrastructure projects included extensive repairs to the city's canalization system and revitalization of the agricultural zone to its south-east; reconstruction of sections of the city wall and at least one of its gates; numerous street widening and clearing campaigns, both inside and outside the city walls; and the rebuilding of at least one of the city's bridges.³ Among the commercial projects Tankiz commissioned in Damascus are the construction of two *qaysārīyah* buildings and a *khān*, as well as the renovation of Khān al-Zāhir.⁴ He carried out major restoration projects at the Umayyad Mosque, and also renovated other historic mosques in the city.⁵ His new monumental commissions include a congregational mosque and mausoleum, a bath, at least one new palace, a mausoleum for his wife, and the *dār al-qur'ān wa-al-ḥadīth* under discussion here.⁶ However, the priority that Tankiz gave to developing Damascus is not reflected in the city's

³On the canalization project, see Ismā'īl ibn 'Umar Ibn Kathīr, *Al-Bidāyah wa-al-Nihāyah fī al-Tārīkh* (Cairo, 1932–39), 14:144 ff., and al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk*, 2:289. For the patron's works in the Ghūṭah, see Muḥammad Farīd Kurd 'Alī, *Ghūṭat Dimashq*, rev. ed. (Damascus, 1952), 86. References to his repairs of the city walls include Mufaḍḍal ibn Abī al-Faḍā'il, *Al-Nahj al-Sadīd wa-al-Durr al-Farīd*, ed. and trans. Samira Kortantamer (Freiburg, 1973), 18 and 86, and Ibn Kathīr, *Al-Bidāyah*, 14:157. On his rebuilding of Bāb Tūmah, see *ibid.*, 165; Zayn al-Dīn 'Umar Ibn al-Wardī, *Tatimmat al-Mukhtaṣar fī Akhbār al-Bashar*, ed. Aḥmad Rif'at al-Badrāwī (Beirut, 1970), 2:436; and Gaston Wiet et al., *Répertoire Chronologique d'Épigraphie Arabe* (Cairo, 1931–82), 15:35, cat. #5650. Tankiz's rebuilding of a bridge over the Turah River is documented in an inscription published in Wiet et al., *Répertoire*, 15:48, cat. #5670.

⁴Sources for Tankiz's commercial works include Ibn Kathīr, *Al-Bidāyah*, 14:74, 156, 157; Wiet et al., *Répertoire*, 14:108, cat. #5368; and Jean Sauvaget, "Caravansérais syriens du Moyen-Age," *Ars Islamica* 7 (1940): 4.

⁵On the restorations at the Umayyad Mosque during Tankiz's governorship, see Ibn Kathīr, *Al-Bidāyah*, 14:92, 128, 133 ff., 148; 'Abd al-Bāsiṭ al-'Ilmawī, *Mukhtaṣar al-Ṭālib wa-Irshād al-Dāris*, ed. Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn al-Munajjid (Damascus, 1947), 270; H. Sauvaire, "Description de Damas," *Journal Asiatique*, 9th ser., no. 7 (1896): 214; K. A. C. Creswell, *Early Muslim Architecture*, rev. ed. (Oxford, 1969), 1:1:161, n. 3. On his restorations at other Damascus mosques, see Michael Meinecke, *Die Mamlukische Architektur in Ägypten und Syrien* (Gluckstadt, 1992), 2:132, cat. #9C/135 and 185, cat. #9C/404.

⁶References to Tankiz's *jāmi'*, *turbah*, and *ḥammām* are found in Ibn Kathīr, *Al-Bidāyah*, 14:81, 88; al-Maqrīzī, *Sulūk*, 2:184; 'Abd al-Qādir Ibn Muḥammad al-Nu'aymī, *Al-Dāris fī Tārīkh al-Madāris*, ed. Ja'far al-Ḥasanī (Cairo, 1988), 2:425–26; al-'Ilmawī, *Mukhtaṣar*, 228; Sauvaire, "Description," 237 ff. On his intramural palace, see Ibn Kathīr, *Al-Bidāyah*, 14:133 and al-Nu'aymī, *Dāris*, 1:123. On his wife's mausoleum, see Ibn Kathīr, *Al-Bidāyah*, 14:151; al-Nu'aymī, *Dāris*, 2:274; and Wiet et al., *Répertoire*, 14:267–68, cat. #5589.



extant architecture. His works either have disappeared altogether or survive in poor or fragmentary condition.

In the following pages, I will outline the history of this *dār al-qur'ān wa-al-ḥadīth*, review its modern historiography, situate the building in its urban framework, and describe its architectural characteristics based on a preliminary survey conducted in 1997.⁷ In the next section, I will synthesize this information to re-assess the preservation status of the building, to evaluate its role in the patronage program of Tankiz, and to analyze its place in the wider context of Mamluk architectural history.

ARCHITECTURAL HISTORY

Ibn Kathīr first mentions Tankiz's *dār al-qur'ān wa-al-ḥadīth* in his entry for the year 728/1327–28. That year, the *nā'ib* made one of his almost annual visits to Cairo to visit al-Nāṣir Muḥammad, who lavished him with gifts and honors. While in Cairo, Tankiz purchased some real estate in Damascus, including a house known as Dār al-Fulūs near Sūq al-Buzūrīyīn—a market located south of the Umayyad Mosque in a quarter sometimes referred to as al-Khaḍrā'. After reporting Tankiz's transformation of the old house into a new palace called Dār al-Dhahab, Ibn Kathīr continues: "and he demolished Ḥammām al-Suwayd near it [i.e., Dār al-Dhahab] and he made it into a *dār al-qur'ān wa-al-ḥadīth* of the utmost beauty. He provided it with endowments and organized its shaykhs and students as will be described."⁸ Later in his chronicle, under the entry for the year 739/1338–39, he states:

Among the events of this year was the completion of Dār al-Ḥadīth "al-Sukarīyah."⁹ Shaykh al-Imām al-Ḥāfiẓ Mu'arrikh al-Islām Muḥammad ibn Shams al-Dīn Muḥammad ibn Aḥmad al-Dhahabī took over as shaykh of hadith in it. Thirty were appointed as traditionists (*muḥaddith*), each of whom were provided rations (*jirāyah*) and pay (*jāmiqīyah*) every month of seven dirhams and half a *raṭl* of bread. For the shaykh, thirty dirhams and one *raṭl* of bread were assigned. Thirty persons were assigned to read the Quran, with one shaykh for every ten [of them]. For every one of the readers there was a counterpart among the traditionists. A prayer

⁷I am grateful to the administration, faculty, and students at the Kāmilīyah School for their assistance and forbearance with this survey.

⁸Ibn Kathīr, *Al-Bidāyah*, 14:133.

⁹Akram al-'Ulabī considers this term a scribal error for "Tankizīyah" (*Khiṭaṭ Dimashq* [Damascus, 1989], 61).



leader (*imām*), a hadith reciter, and substitutes (*nawāb*) were appointed, and twenty dirhams and eight *awāq* of bread were provided for the hadith reciter. It turned out to be very beautiful in its appearance and construction. It is located in the direction of Dār al-Dhahab, which was commissioned by the founder, amir Tankiz. He endowed upon it many places, among them Sūq al-Qashāshīn in Bāb al-Faraj. Its length was twenty *dhirā'* from east to west. He registered it in the *waqf* document, along with Bandar Zaydīn and the old *ḥammām* in Hims. He also endowed on it shares from other villages. However, he struggled with everything other than al-Qashāshīn and Bandar Zaydīn and Ḥammām Ḥimṣ."¹⁰

Ibn Kathīr's organization of this information suggests that the project began in 728/1327–28 at the same time as the start of the Dār al-Dhahab rebuilding. Ibn Qāḍī Shuhbah, in his obituary for Tankiz, is more explicit in dating the construction to that year: "in the year 28, he built Dār al-Dhahab and opposite it he built a *dār al-qur'ān wa-al-ḥadīth*."¹¹ It appears, however, that construction was not carried out promptly, but took nearly eleven years to finish. To extrapolate from Ibn Kathīr's remarks, the bath property, which served as the site for the new building, may have been acquired at the same time as the palace property, during the patron's visit to Cairo. However, no specifics are provided: did Tankiz purchase this property, did he receive it as a gift, or was it obtained through a confiscation? Who was its former owner? About the exact dimensions and boundaries of the property nothing is mentioned, nor is there any indication whether the bath was operational or defunct, and what its physical condition was at the time of acquisition. An earlier topography of the city counts Ḥammām al-Suwayd among the baths of Damascus, but only says that it was located next to the house of a certain Ibn Munzū.¹²

Several years later, in 739/1338–39, the construction of the new *dār al-qur'ān wa-al-ḥadīth* was finished. This completion date, chronicled by Ibn Kathīr, is corroborated in the inscription on the lintel of its entrance (fig. 6):

In the name of God the Merciful, the Compassionate. This blessed school (*madrasah*) was founded and endowed for the mendicants (*fuqarā'*) occupied with the Glorious Quran and the scholars (*fuqahā'*) and the listeners (*masma'in*) of the Prophetic Traditions,

¹⁰Ibn Kathīr, *Al-Bidāyah*, 14:184.

¹¹Taqī al-Dīn Ibn Qāḍī Shuhbah, *Tārīkh*, ed. Adnan Darwich (Damascus, 1977–94), 2:146.

¹²Nikita Eliséef, trans., *La Description de Damas d'Ibn Asakir* (Damascus, 1959), 279, #15.



by His Most Noble Excellency Sayf al-Dīn Tankiz al-Nāṣirī, Guardian of the Noble Provinces of Syria, the Well-Protected, in the year 739, at the behest of (*bi-mubāsharah*) the poor slave Aydamur al-Mu‘īnī.¹³

From the mid-fourteenth century until the mid-nineteenth century, the only explicit references in literary sources to the Tankizīyah that I have found refer to personnel at the institution, rather than physical changes to its structure.¹⁴ Undoubtedly, during this long period the building underwent alterations. It is unlikely that it would have remained unscathed throughout the chronology of destructive events in the subsequent history of Damascus, including the revolts of the late fourteenth century, Timur’s invasion of 803/1400, and a series of natural disasters, notably the earthquake of 1173/1759.¹⁵ The latter was responsible for the collapse of the domes on an adjacent building, the Khān Asad Bāshā. In the normal course of events, the building would have been subjected to periods of poor upkeep, subsequent restorations, and possibly the depredations of later architectural patrons, who were known to have quarried old buildings for valuable materials.¹⁶

As late as 1129/1717, the institution was still running.¹⁷ By 1271/1855, however, Tankiz’s *dār al-qur’ān wa-al-ḥadīth* was being used as a private residence.¹⁸ ‘Abd al-Qādir Badrān, writing around 1330/1912, blames this shift to residential use on mismanagement of the foundation over time, which led to the gradual decline of the institution.¹⁹ He also includes a narrative about an intervention that prevented the owners from tearing down the portal, and ultimately resulted in the re-

¹³Wiet et al., *Répertoire*, 15:115, #5780.

¹⁴For example, Ibn Qāḍī Shuhbah, *Tārīkh*, 2:156, 510, 581; Muḥammad ibn ‘Īsā Ibn Kannān, *Yawmīyāt Shāmīyah*, ed. Akram al-‘Ulābī (Damascus, 1994), 287.

¹⁵A description of the political unrest in Damascus of the late eighth/fourteenth century is found in Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad Ibn Ṣaṣrā, *Al-Durrah al-Muḍī‘ah fī al-Dawlah al-Zāhirīyah [A Chronicle of Damascus, 1389–1397]*, ed. and trans. William M. Brinner (Berkeley, 1963). On the damage to the city’s urban and architectural fabric during the occupation by Timur’s army, see a translation of Ibn Iyās’s account in D. S. Margoliouth, *Cairo, Jerusalem and Damascus* (London, 1907), 269–74. The damage from the earthquake of 1173/1759 is assessed in a report excerpted in Muḥammad A. Duhmān, *Fī Riḥāb Dimashq* (Damascus, 1982), 193–217, and in Mustapha A. Taher, “Textes d’historiens damascènes sur les tremblements de terre,” *Bulletin des études orientales* 27 (1974): 105. A new edition of the report is forthcoming from Verena Daiber.

¹⁶Asad Bāshā, the patron of two monuments in the same neighborhood as the Tankizīyah, a palace and a *khān*, was known for this practice (Shafīq Imām, *Musée des Arts et Traditions Populaires, Palais Azem-Damas* [Damas, n.d.], 10).

¹⁷Ibn Kannān, *Yawmīyāt Shāmīyah*, 287.

¹⁸A. von Kremer, *Topographie von Damascus* (Vienna, 1853), 6.

¹⁹*Munādamat al-Aḥlāl wa-Musāmarat al-Hayāl* (Damascus, 1960), 64.



establishment of a school in the building. Badrān reports that under the superintendency of Shaykh Muḥammad al-Ḥalawānī, the interior was "improved." More extensive renovation took place under al-Ḥalawānī's successor, Shaykh Kāmil al-Qaṣāb in 1329/1911, as is commemorated in a second inscription on the portal.²⁰ Shaykh Kāmil restored the building and installed "upper and lower structures" in it, according to Badrān. The precise nature of these structures is not entirely clear. No early photographs of any portion of the building other than the portal have come to light. Along with alterations to the building's physical structure came changes to its moniker: still called the Tankizīyah in the early eighteenth century, it became known as the Osmanīyah in the nineteenth century, and as the Kāmilīyah in the early twentieth century. The *dār al-qur'ān wa-al-ḥadīth* was registered as a historic monument in 1367/1948.

MODERN SOURCES

Although the Tankizīyah has never been the subject of a detailed monographic analysis, it is mentioned in a number of publications cataloging the architectural and urban history of Damascus. In his mid-nineteenth century topographical survey of Damascus, A. von Kremer includes a very short notice on the building.²¹ He identifies it as a former madrasah, which in his day was being used as a private residence, and remarks on its beautiful stalactite portal and fine ashlar masonry. However, his incomplete reading of the foundation inscription led him to misattribute and misdate the building.²² In 1330/1912, Badrān published a survey correctly identifying the *dār al-qur'ān wa-al-ḥadīth* and providing some detail about its recent history.²³ On the subject of its architecture, he praises its portal and claims that the walls of the building retain some of their original construction. Badrān also reports that the building had undergone two phases of reconstruction in the period since von Kremer's publication.

Subsequent references to the *dār al-qur'ān wa-al-ḥadīth* tend to take more minimalist views of its preservation. The building is mentioned briefly in the topographical study on the city published by Wulzinger and Watzinger in 1924.

²⁰Ibn 'Abd al-Hādī, *Thimār al-Maqāsid fī Dhikr al-Masājīd*, ed. M. A. Ṭalas (Beirut, 1943), 215; al-'Ulābī, *Khiṭaṭ Dimashq*, 61; Muḥammad A. Duhmān, *Wulāt Dimashq fī 'Ahd al-Mamālīk* (Damascus, 1981), 172.

²¹*Topographie*, 7.

²²His transcription differs substantially from that published by Wiet. It leaves off after the term "*al-nabawī*" and resumes with "*bi-mubāsharah*"—thereby omitting the name and title of Tankiz and the date of the foundation. As a consequence, von Kremer erroneously attributes the foundation to "Aidemir-el-Muini," whom he identifies as a figure who died in the year 667/1268 (*Topographie*, 2:7, n. 2).

²³*Munādamat*, 64–68.



They provide the dates of its construction and of the later restoration, and then continue: "Inneres ganz verändert, Portalnische mit Stalaktiten."²⁴ The equally telegraphic entry in Jean Sauvaget's concise guide to the historical monuments of Damascus published roughly a decade later simply states: "Ecole de tradition prophétique bâti en 1338–39 par Tingiz. Beau *portail* à stalactites; intérieur remanié."²⁵ Muḥammad Ṭalas, in the appendix to his 1336/1943 edition of Ibn 'Abd al-Hādī's *Thimār al-Maqāsid fī Dhikr al-Masājīd*, includes a note on this building saying that it has a façade and decorated portal. He mentions the renovation of its upper level, and praises the building's masonry, ornamentation, and beautiful mihrab—but does not speculate about the dates for these elements.²⁶ An unnamed inspector from the Department of Antiquities leans toward the interpretation of Wulzinger and Watzinger and Sauvaget in his 1952 report, which claims that the façade and portal were all that remained of the original building.²⁷ Muḥammad Duhmān's 1963 study of Damascus in the Mamluk period states vaguely that the school still exists and retains much of its design.²⁸ Dorothee Sack's 1989 publication on the urban structure and development of Damascus mentions the building and echoes the Wulzinger-Watzinger/Sauvaget view: "teilweise abgetragen; Teile der Aussenwände und Portal erhalten."²⁹ Akram al-'Ulābī's topographical history of the city, published in the same year, reports that in his day the building was functioning as a children's school and retained its beautiful façade.³⁰ Michael Meinecke also treats the building very summarily in his catalog of Mamluk architecture, although he includes the portal and façade in a wider discussion related to architectural style.³¹

As this review of modern literature on Tankiz's *dār al-qur'ān wa-al-ḥadīth* reveals, it is generally accepted that the remains of the Mamluk building consist of a portal and façade, the rest of the present structure belonging to a series of later reconstructions. On the basis of these studies, the initial goal of my field research at the Tankizīyah was to examine and photograph the façade of the building. Presumably, the interior would be of interest only insofar as it might

²⁴Karl Wulzinger and Carl Watzinger, *Damaskus, die Islamische Stadt* (Berlin and Leipzig, 1924), 75.

²⁵Jean Sauvaget, *Les Monuments Historiques de Damas* (Beirut, 1932), 69, #44.

²⁶*Thimār*, 215.

²⁷Archive, Department of Antiquities and Museums, Damascus.

²⁸*Wulāt Dimashq*, 172.

²⁹*Damaskus: Entwicklung und Struktur einer Orientalisch-islamischen Stadt* (Mainz am Rhein, 1989), 104, #3.44.

³⁰*Khiṭaṭ Dimashq*, 61.

³¹*Mamlukische Architektur*, 1:87, 182, and 2:180, cat. #9C/380.



represent a sampling of turn-of-the-century architectural remodeling in Damascus. However, the site inspection suggested that the building's stratigraphy was not as straightforward as the literature indicated, and that its analysis would require a close reading not only of the façade, but also of the other external wall and of the building's interior. What follows is a description of the building based on this survey.

DESCRIPTION

The Tankizīyah is located inside the city walls in the area south of the Umayyad mosque (fig. 1). It is situated on a block outlined by Sūq al-Buzūrīyīn to the west, Darb Ibn Matrud to the north, Darb al-Rayhān to the east, and Zuqāq al-Durr to the south (fig. 2). This block is immediately south of the former location of Dār al-Dhahab, the patron's new palace, at the present site of the Qaṣr al-'Aẓam. To the south lies the long commercial street, known in the Mamluk period as Sūq al-Kabīr, which runs east-west through the walled city. According to Ibn Kathīr, the *dār al-qur'ān wa-al-ḥadīth* replaced a pre-existing bath building known as Ḥammām al-Suwayd, which the patron apparently purchased and then demolished.³² The property occupies the north-east corner of the block. The north-west corner of the block houses another bath building, which predated Tankiz's construction: the large Ḥammām of Nūr al-Dīn (567/1171–72).³³ There appears to have been a narrow plot between the back of Ḥammām al-Nūrī and the east boundary of the *dār al-qur'ān wa-al-ḥadīth* site, which is filled today by a building. Whether this plot was built-up or unoccupied at the time of Tankiz's construction is uncertain. Al-'Ilmawī's information, which locates the Tankizīyah "to the east of Ḥammām Nūr al-Dīn al-Shahīd, below Dār al-Dhahab, behind Sūq al-Buzūrīyīn" could either suggest that there was no other building between it and Ḥammām al-Nūrī, or that what did exist there was unimportant, compared with these landmark buildings.³⁴ It is also possible that this plot formerly belonged to the property of one or the other of these two buildings, from which it was alienated subsequently. The plot south of the Tankizīyah is currently occupied by the Khān Asad Bāshā, constructed in 1166/1753. The sources are silent about this site in Tankiz's day, but reportedly two caravanserais, as well as several houses and shops were demolished to make way for the Ottoman *khān*.³⁵

The north façade of the Tankizīyah consists of the portal, situated at the west

³²Eliséef, *Description*, 279, #15.

³³This bath is also known as Ḥammām al-Buzūrīyīn.

³⁴Al-'Ilmawī, *Mukhtaṣar*, 21.

³⁵Al-'Ulabī, *Khīṭaṭ Dimashq*, 447; 'Abd al-Qādir al-Riḥāwī, "Khānāt Madīnat Dimashq," *Les Annales archéologiques de Syrie* 25 (1975): 64.



end of the building, and a wall of finely dressed stone, stretching eastward (fig. 4). To the east of the portal, two windows pierce the wall at the street level. Two projecting stories, constructed of plastered brick and timber, surmount the lower masonry wall. Around the corner, along the east façade, the same arrangement is found: a lower wall of stone surmounted by two projecting stories. A molding of carved stone forms a rectangular frame surrounding the finely dressed masonry of the monumental portal, although now the molding is lost in its lower segments. The portal consists of a deeply recessed rectangular niche, at the back of which opens the entrance to the building's interior (fig. 5). A flat arch, inscribed with a cartouche bearing the foundation inscription, surmounts the entrance (fig. 6). Above the inscription, a band of joggled *ablaq* revetment spans across and flanks the portal recess. Slightly above this band is an oculus, surrounded by a radial arrangement of joggled *ablaq* voussoirs, which together are outlined by a molding of deeply carved stone. The stone course at the base of this oculus bears the inscription commemorating the nineteenth-century renovations referred to above. Three courses of *muqarnas* form the transition zone from the rectangular niche to the semi-dome of the portal hood. The carvings of the hood represent a conch outlined by a zigzag pattern. Inscribed in the finely dressed masonry above the semi-dome and below the top of the molding frame is a long, recessed cartouche. It is unadorned, but may have been intended to receive an inscription.

East of the portal, another rectangular frame of stone encloses a pair of large rectangular windows. The masonry inside the frame, surrounding the windows, is finely dressed, like that of the portal. Both windows have been partially filled-in with cement, but their lower limits can be discerned one masonry-course above the bottom part of the frame. Flat lintels with relieving arches surmount the windows. Behind modern screens that have been installed in the remaining window portions, there are iron grills. Below the window frames, two and a half courses of unfinished masonry can be seen. In the area east of the window frame, five courses of masonry are visible, above which the wall is thickly plastered. While this masonry differs in quality from that inside the frames of the windows and the portal, it courses through precisely with the more finely dressed masonry. This suggests that all of the elements on the north façade of the building—the portal, the pair of windows, and the east extension of the wall—are contemporary with each other.

Around the corner, on the east side of the building, the same division of the elevation is found (fig. 7). Two tall upper stories project from the lower wall. The lower wall consists of six courses of exposed stone construction, surmounted by a thickly plastered wall. At the south end of the wall, fallen plaster reveals three additional courses of stone. About two-thirds of the way down the wall to the south is another large rectangular window surrounded by a rectangular frame of



stone molding (fig. 8). As on the north façade, the masonry within the molding is finely dressed. Here, too, the window is partially filled-in with cement. To the north of this window is another small opening, in the plastered section of the wall. Unlike the other windows, this one does not appear to have once been any larger than it is today. There is no evidence of in-fill in the masonry courses below it, nor is there any indication of the finely dressed masonry and molding frame that surrounds the large window to the south. The continuity of masonry courses between the north and east façades and the similarities in the treatment of the framed window compositions between the two sides indicate that the east façade is contemporaneous with the north.

Inside, the entrance leads into a vestibule space, which opens up into an *īwān*. The floor plan of the present building consists of four *īwāns* arranged around a central court with corner rooms in three of the four corners (fig. 3). The entrance vestibule occupies the northwest corner of the building in place of a corner room. On the west side of this vestibule rises a narrow wooden staircase. It is enclosed behind a plastered wall above its first several steps, which are built of stone. The vestibule leads into the west *īwān*, the back of which contains a built-in wooden cupboard constructed beneath part of the staircase and a tall rectangular recess in the wall. The west *īwān* opens onto the central court, which is uncovered. The walls of the interior are covered entirely with plaster which is coated with paint in the lower section. The *īwāns* on the east and west of the court are considerably shallower than those on the north and south. All four *īwāns* are covered with flat ceilings of timber.

The *qiblah* wall of the south *īwān* contains a large mihrab niche, also heavily coated with plaster and paint (fig. 9). Two engaged octagonal colonnettes flank the niche. Their square bases are chamfered at the upper corners to create a transition to the octagonal shafts. The capitals also correspond to the octagonal shafts, each face decorated with a shield-shaped *muqarnas* unit upon which is carved in relief a smaller *muqarnas* form and a tear-drop shape. The unity of the three elements—capital, shaft and base—suggests that they may have been conceived together. In the east and west walls of the *qiblah* *īwān*, doors lead into the south-east and south-west corner rooms, respectively.

The back wall of the north *īwān* is pierced by the two large windows on the north façade (fig. 10). On its east wall, a door leads into the north-east room. Corresponding to this door on the west wall of the north *īwān* is a recessed wall niche. In the east *īwān*, a broad staircase of stone construction lines the south side (fig. 11). It leads to a landing from which it continues in reinforced concrete to the upper story. Along the back wall of the east *īwān*, a row of faucets and a drainage basin have been installed. The large window on the east façade opens onto the east *īwān*, but it is partly blocked by the staircase.



The pavement of the *īwāns* is level with the court, rather than raised. There is no fountain or basin in the courtyard, nor are there channels for the collection and drainage of rainwater. The pavement is composed of a striking combination of black and creamy-colored stone. In the central court, the bi-chromatic stones are arranged in a striped pattern, while in the north and south *īwāns*, black stones create a rectangular outline of the space. In the west *īwān*, a similar outline of black stone traces around the staircase. The pavement of the east *īwān* is partially covered with modern tiles, and no black stones are in use there. The staircases in the east and west *īwāns* lead to a gallery in the second story of the building. This gallery runs around the central court, on the north, east, and west sides. It is lined by doors leading into rooms on all three sides. A third story of rooms surmounts this level. On the south side, the façade of the *qiblah īwān* rises up to the gallery level and the balcony does not run across it. Above the arch of the *qiblah īwān*, rooms corresponding to the third story have been erected. All of these upper story constructions are built of wood and plastered brick.

ARCHITECTURAL ANALYSIS

The similarity of the upper stories of the Tankizīyah to Damascus architecture of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and their correspondence with the building history described by Badrān, support their attribution to the period of Shaykh Kāmil's rebuilding.³⁶ Clearly, the portal of the building dates to the original Mamluk construction. The similarity between the framing zone of this portal and that of the paired windows east of it—as well as the continuity of the stone courses along this wall—indicate that the entire north façade belongs to the same construction phase. In light of the homogeneity of masonry on both the north and east exterior walls, the east façade can be considered contemporaneous with the north façade and its portal. Therefore, it, too, can be identified as an original element of the building. Of the four windows piercing these two walls, three clearly date to the initial construction period, although they have subsequently been partially in-filled. Their iron grills also represent typical fenestration details of Mamluk architecture in Syria.³⁷ The date of the fourth window is more ambiguous.

The exterior of Tankiz's *dār al-qur' ān wa-al-ḥadīth* is rather austere. Its masonry

³⁶On the characteristics of turn-of-the-century Damascus architecture, see Gérard Robine, *Palais et demeures de Damas au XVIII* (Damascus, 1990); Yves Roujon, *Le Midan: Actualité d'un Faubourg ancien de Damas* (Damascus, 1997); Brigid Keenan, *Damascus, Hidden Treasures of the Old City* (New York, 2000); Annie-Christine Daskalakis, "Damascus Eighteenth and Nineteenth Century Houses in the Ablaq-Ajami Style of Decoration: Local and International Significance" (Ph.D. diss., New York University, 2004).

³⁷Numerous examples of typical Mamluk-period iron grill windows can be found in Burgoyne, *Mamluk Jerusalem*; in particular, see pp. 93–95.



is monochrome, with the exception of some details around the portal, and is articulated only by the moldings that frame the portal and windows.³⁸ In this respect, the *dār al-qur'ān wa-al-ḥadīth* relates to the mausoleum and *ribāṭ* structure which Tankiz erected nearby on behalf of his wife, Sutaytah, at around the same time (730/1330). Like the portal at this *turbah*, the *dār al-qur'ān wa-al-ḥadīth* portal is stylistically conservative. Absent are such distinctive features as the dramatic *ablaq* masonry that stretched along the façade of Tankiz's congregational mosque in Damascus, or the fan motif that graces that mosque's two portals, as well as the portal of his madrasah in Jerusalem. The façade of the Turbah al-Takrīṭiyah in the Ṣāliḥīyah district of Damascus (erected by 698/1299) provides a close stylistic comparison to the Tankizīyah façade, although its composition is different. There, the portal is more squat than that at the Tankizīyah, but its *muqarnas* hood is almost identical. The Takrīṭiyah portal is flanked on each side by a pair of windows, whereas at the Tankizīyah the arrangement is asymmetrical. An even closer analogy can be found in the façade of the mausoleum of Uljaybughā, located outside the walls of Damascus to the south-west. It has the same asymmetrical disposition of the portal with paired windows to one side and its portal bears an almost identical *muqarnas* hood. The façade of the mausoleum of Uljaybughā also has an oculus very similar to that at the Tankizīyah, composed of radial *ablaq* voussairs surrounded by heavy molding. The main difference between these two façade compositions is the placement of the oculus: on the former it is situated over the paired windows; at the latter, it makes up part of the portal decoration. This building is undated (its patron died in 754/1353), but, on the basis of its similarity to the Tankizīyah, Meinecke posits that it may have been constructed around 740/1339–40.³⁹

Regarding the interior of Tankiz's *dār al-qur'ān wa-al-ḥadīth*, is it "ganz verändert"? Some elements of the interior are unquestionably modern, most obviously the plumbing works and modern pavement in the east *īwān*. Regarding the staircase in the east *īwān*, the upper portion is clearly recent. Furthermore, the awkward relationship between the staircase and the original window suggests that the lower section also belongs to a later phase. As for the staircase in the entrance vestibule, its position and narrow proportions are more compatible with *comparanda* from the Mamluk period.⁴⁰ The first few steps might represent traces of an original staircase, but all of the rest—including the wooden constructions around and

³⁸Meinecke relates the absence of *ablaq* masonry in this building, and others dating slightly earlier and later, to the absence from Damascus of the workshop specializing in the technique (*Mamlukische Architektur*, 2:87).

³⁹*Ibid.*, 182.

⁴⁰See, for example, Burgoyne, *Mamluk Jerusalem*, 90, 161, 303, and 345–46.



below it—appear to be later. The timber ceilings of the four *īwāns* appear to be relatively new, and the balcony and all of the upper-story rooms belong to the turn-of-the-century renovations.

The general layout of the ground floor, on the other hand, is not necessarily due to one of the later renovations. The floor plan corresponds to a Syrian building type, featuring a central court flanked by *īwān*-like spaces or lateral prayer halls—a building tradition which spans over two centuries.⁴¹ These central-court buildings vary considerably in several respects: the nature of the spaces opening up off the courts, the number and depth of their *īwāns*, the disposition of the entrance vestibules, and the superstructures of the courts. In some instances, domes or vaults covered the central courts, while in others the courts were open. While the Syrian central court plan was applied most often to madrasah architecture, its use was not restricted according to building category. Tankiz's builders could have drawn on numerous local variations of this building type, such as the madrasah of Rabī'ah Khātūn (also called Madrasah Šāhibah), ca. 643/1245, located in the Šāliḥīyah quarter of the city.⁴² There, *īwāns* flank the central court on three sides and an axial entrance vestibule occupies the fourth. As at the Tankizīyah, corner rooms are arranged between the *īwāns*, although their disposition is a little different. Another Damascus building that shares the general design found at the Tankizīyah is the Turbah al-Ḥāfiẓīyah (also known as the Turbah of Bakhtī Khātūn), which dates to ca. 648/1250.⁴³ There wide *īwāns* and a lateral prayer hall open off a square central court, which was originally covered with cross-vaults. As in the later building, the entrance does not open directly into the court but rather through a lateral vestibule. However, the overall arrangement of the Ḥāfiẓīyah is considerably less symmetrical than that of the Tankizīyah. The madrasah of Afrīdūn al-'Ajamī (744/1343–44), constructed in Damascus about five years after the completion of the Tankizīyah, presents an even closer parallel to the Tankizīyah floor plan.⁴⁴ A lateral entrance vestibule in the north-west corner of the building leads into one of four *īwāns* disposed around a central court, while small rooms occupy the other three corners.

⁴¹For broader discussions of Syrian central court buildings, see Meinecke, "Rückschlüss auf die Form der seldschukischen Madrasa in Iran," *Damaszener Mitteilungen* 3 (1985): 190 ff.; idem, "Der Hammam Mangak und die Islamische Architektur von Busra," *Berytus* 32 (1984): 186–90; Yasser Tabbaa, *Constructions of Power and Piety in Medieval Aleppo* (University Park, 1997), 84–93 and 129–34.

⁴²Ernst Herzfeld, "Damascus, Studies in Architecture, III," *Ars Islamica* 11–12 (1946): 9–15, fig. 10. See also Tabbaa, *Constructions*, fig. 111.

⁴³Herzfeld, "Damascus, Studies in Architecture, III," 63–64, and fig. 149; Meinecke, *Mamlukische Architektur*, 1:79–80, fig. 62.

⁴⁴Meinecke, *Mamlukische Architektur*, 1:109 fig. 70, and 2:199 #16/15; Sauvaget, *Monuments Historiques de Damas*, 70.



Although the central court buildings of Syria sometimes feature four *īwāns*, they evolved as something quite distinct from the "four-*īwān* madrasah" building type that came to be prevalent in the architecture of Mamluk Cairo, such as the madrasah of al-Nāṣir Muḥammad (695 to 703/1295–96 to 1303–4) or the *khānqāh* of Baybars al-Jāshankīr (707 to 709/1307–8 to 1310).⁴⁵ The scale of the latter is generally much larger, with *īwāns* averaging almost twice the square footage of those in the Syrian examples, courtyards measuring up to four times as large, and elevations reaching considerably higher proportions. Their courtyards are usually rectangular rather than square, and their lateral *īwāns* are usually centrally placed on a long façade, flanked by rows of small chambers. However, by the second decade of the fourteenth century, the Syrian style of central court building can already be found in Cairo. In particular, two Cairo buildings—both constructed within the decade preceding Tankiz's *dār al-qur'ān wa-al-ḥadīth*—resemble the Damascus Tankizīyah quite closely, at least with respect to their floor plans: the madrasah of Al-Malik al-Jūkandār (719/1319–20) and the madrasah of Zayn al-Dīn Yūsuf (725/1325).⁴⁶ Both relatively small-scale by Cairene standards, they feature the same broad-*īwān*, cruciform plan as the Damascus building. Similarly, the mosque of Aḥmad al-Mihmandār in Cairo, which also dates to 725/1325, shares the overall cruciform plan.⁴⁷ Thus, not only was this central court format firmly rooted in the building tradition of the Syrian province, it also had become fashionable—relatively recently—in the architecture of the capital.

As these comparisons demonstrate, the general floor plan of the *dār al-qur'ān wa-al-ḥadīth* building as it survives today fits well within the architectural vocabulary of its time and place. The main difference between it and its antecedents in Damascus is that the Tankizīyah is slightly more symmetrical than the other examples of its type. For Ayyubid Aleppo, Yasser Tabbāa argues that the regularity

⁴⁵The question of the four-*īwān* madrasah type is discussed in K. A. C. Creswell, *The Origin of the Cruciform Plan of Cairene Madrasas* (Cairo, 1922); idem, *Muslim Architecture of Egypt* (Oxford, 1952–59), 2:132; L. Hauteceur and Gaston Wiet, *Les Mosquées du Caire* (Paris, 1932), 311 ff.; Ernst Herzfeld, "Damascus, Studies in Architecture, II," *Ars Islamica* 10 (1953): 13–29; Meinecke, *Mamlukische Architektur*, 1:64 f. Very useful reviews of these discussions can be found in Tabbāa, *Constructions*, 84–93 and 129–34; and Abdallah Kahil, "The Sultan Hasan Complex in Cairo" (Ph.D. diss., New York University, 2002), 79–85.

⁴⁶On the madrasah of Al-Malik al-Jūkandār, see Creswell, *Muslim Architecture of Egypt*, 2:270–72, fig. 149, plates 103a–c and 114b; and Meinecke, *Mamlukische Architektur*, 2:124 and 1:64, fig. 36, plates 47b and 52b. On the madrasah of Zayn al-Dīn Yūsuf, which apparently incorporated an earlier mausoleum (ca. 697/1297–98) into its south-west corner, see Laila Ali Ibrahim, "The Zawiya of Saih Zain ad-Din Yusuf in Cairo," *Mitteilungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts, Abteilung Kairo* 30 (1974): 79–110; Doris Behrens-Abouseif, *Islamic Architecture in Cairo* (Leiden, 1989), 111, fig. 23 and plate 78; and Meinecke, *Mamlukische Architektur*, 2:85–86, 139.

⁴⁷Meinecke, *Mamlukische Architektur*, 1:64, fig. 37 and 2:139.



of such building plans is a function of patronage: buildings constructed by more elevated patrons tend to be more symmetrical than those of lower level patrons.⁴⁸ This explanation applies just as aptly to Mamluk Damascus, where Tankiz had the wealth and clout to obtain a sizeable property—even in the built-up section of the intramural city. There, his architects could apply a relatively symmetrical plan without the constraints imposed by less expansive building sites. The fact that the present plan of Tankiz's *dār al-qur'ān wa-al-ḥadīth* compares so closely with typical madrasah floor plans is consistent with what little is known about *dār al-ḥadīth* architecture in Syria. Sauvaget has demonstrated that there was little difference architecturally between the two building types.⁴⁹

Not only does the floor plan of Tankiz's *dār al-qur'ān wa-al-ḥadīth* conform to a local building type found in Damascus both before and after the original construction date, it also has a close parallel in the corpus of Tankiz's own commissions: the Madrasah al-Tankizīyah in Jerusalem.⁵⁰ Its endowment deed survives in the form of a copy transcribed into an Ottoman court document, and provides additional information about the structure, including a description of sections of the upper story that no longer survive.⁵¹ The foundation encompassed multiple functions, including a madrasah for legal studies, a *khānqāh* of Sufi devotions, a *dār al-ḥadīth* for transmission of Prophetic tradition, and—across the square in a separate building—a *ribāt* for women. Tankiz ordered the construction of both the Damascus building and the Jerusalem building in the same year. The Jerusalem Tankizīyah is well preserved in its lower story. It retains much of its original superstructure and some of its upper story. Its portal leads through a cross-vaulted vestibule into the north *īwān*, and then into a spacious court furnished with a central fountain and deep *īwāns* on all sides. Corner rooms occupy the spaces between the “cross arms” of the cruciform floor plan created by the four *īwāns*.

The fact that the Jerusalem madrasah—built almost concurrently with the *dār al-qur'ān wa-al-ḥadīth* in Damascus and commissioned by the same patron—shares so many features with the extant floor plan of the Damascus building supports the attribution of the latter to the original Mamluk construction phase, at least in its general layout. Working in the other direction, moreover, the better-preserved Jerusalem madrasah provides a model from which to hypothesize about original aspects of the Damascus building that no longer survive. For example, in the Jerusalem madrasah, as well as in other central-court buildings in Damascus and

⁴⁸Tabbaa, *Constructions*, 134.

⁴⁹*Les Monuments Ayyoubides de Damas* (Paris, 1938), 1:15–25.

⁵⁰Burgoyne, *Mamluk Jerusalem*, 223–39.

⁵¹Kāmil al-‘Asalī, *Wathā'iq Maqdisīyah Tārīkhīyah* (Amman, 1983), 105–24.



elsewhere, the pavement of the lateral *īwāns* or chambers is elevated in relation to the central court. However, the current pavement of the *dār al-qur'ān wa-al-ḥadīth* in Damascus is level throughout. Also, the absence in the Damascus building of any kind of basin or fountain at the center of the court distinguishes it from most other buildings of its type in the region. Presumably, there would have been ample infrastructure for such a water installation, since the site formerly housed a *ḥammām*. These inconsistencies suggest that the pavement was re-done at some point in the building's history, eliminating original raised *īwān*-floors and perhaps a central basin or fountain also. The fact that the black flagstones of the west *īwān* form an outline around the staircase and cupboard, features that probably post-date the original building phase, supports this idea. The bi-chrome pavement itself sheds little light on the issue, since this feature had a very long currency in the region.

The question of the original superstructure poses another dilemma. While the external walls and the internal divisions of space can be attributed to the initial construction phase of the building, they provide no evidence about how the building was roofed-over. Were the *īwāns* originally vaulted, or were they covered with flat ceilings of wood? Both ceiling types are found in local *comparanda*, and both are present in the Jerusalem Tankizīyah. Was the central court originally covered, or was it open, as it is today? Either possibility is plausible. In Jerusalem, the court is covered. Interestingly, its roofing system can be considered something of a trademark of Tankiz's buildings and represented an innovation in the architectural history of the city, newly introduced to Syria from the Anatolian region. It is a type of cross-vault in which the groins are incised, sometimes referred to as a "folded cross-vault."⁵² The fact that this vaulting device was being employed by the patron elsewhere in Damascus contemporaneously is demonstrated by its presence in the mausoleum of Sutaytah. Might the same vaulting device have been employed at the *dār al-qur'ān wa-al-ḥadīth*? This question remains open. However, one feature of the floor plan may hold a clue. The central court forms an "inscribed square"—that is, instead of right angles formed by the adjoining *īwān* walls protruding into the court, one finds inverted angles (except in the north-west corner). Certainly, not all cross-vaulted spaces of the period share this feature. However, in the contexts in which the inscribed-square plan is found—more often than not—there is a cross-vault, usually a folded cross-vault.⁵³ Such

⁵²For a discussion of this vaulting device and its connection with Tankiz's patronage, see Kenney, "Power," 420–23. On the development of the folded-cross vault, see Hauteceur and Wiet, *Les Mosquées du Caire*, 277; Burgoyne, *Mamluk Jerusalem*, 90; Hayat Salam-Leibich, *The Architecture of the Mamluk City of Tripoli* (Cambridge, MA, 1983), 102–6; and Meinecke, *Mamlukische Architektur*, 1:145.

⁵³See, for instance, the Madrasah al-Nūrīyah in Tripoli (Salam-Leibich, *Mamluk Tripoli*, 122–23),



configurations originally may have been designed to help absorb the pressure created by the vault above.

A theory of the patronage process behind the construction of the Damascus Tankizīyah might go something like this: by 728/1327–28, Tankiz had decided to commission a number of projects, including two institutions: a *dār al-qur'ān wa-al-ḥadīth* in Damascus and a multi-purpose foundation in Jerusalem. A general plan was drawn up that would be applied to both buildings. This plan was somewhat familiar to the Damascus setting, having a number of antecedents there and in other towns of northern Syria, and had recently been adopted in Cairo. In Jerusalem, on the other hand, it was novel, and its introduction there demonstrates the complex nature of the regional transfer of architectural design in the early Mamluk period.⁵⁴ Interestingly, this floor plan—once introduced into the Jerusalem repertoire—became very popular there.⁵⁵

In his chronicle, Ibn Kathīr explicitly praises the beauty of Tankiz's *dār al-qur'ān wa-al-ḥadīth* (see above). Presumably, the finished building would have been embellished with some kind of decorative program, but there are no remains of such features in evidence at the building today. It is tempting to imagine the *dār al-qur'ān wa-al-ḥadīth* decorated with the elements employed in many of Tankiz's other constructions: polychrome bands of marble paneling, intricate patterns of marble mosaic, gilded friezes of marble or stucco bearing scrolls or epigraphy—all of which were broadly characteristic of mural decoration in monumental architecture of the early Mamluk period. Perhaps the program also included the etched-marble medallion panels or the glass mosaic with which the patron was more specifically associated.⁵⁶ It may be that once the decoration specialists were done with Tankiz's other projects, they were available to put the finishing touches on the interior of patron's *dār al-qur'ān wa-al-ḥadīth*. Interestingly, the characteristic work of these specialists begins to appear in a series of buildings in Cairo, not immediately after its last dated use in Tankiz's other Syrian commissions but several years later—at

or the numerous examples in Jerusalem: the Madrasah al-Arghūnīyah (759/1358), the Madrasah al-Lu'lu'īyah (775/1373–74), the Madrasah al-Ṭashtamurīyah (784/1382–83), and the Dār al-Sitt Ṭunshuq (Burgoyne, *Mamluk Jerusalem*, 360, 425, 462–63, and 495).

⁵⁴On this phenomenon in general, see Meinecke, "Mamluk Architecture—Regional Architectural Traditions: Evolution and Interrelations," *Damaszener Mitteilungen* 2 (1985): 163–75.

⁵⁵Variations of this plan can be found in Jerusalem at the three madrasahs cited in note 53, as well as the Madrasah al-Baladīyah (782/1380). See Burgoyne, *Mamluk Jerusalem*, 443–55.

⁵⁶On Tankiz's connection with these decorative elements, see Kenney, "Power," 436–53; Caroline Williams, "The Mosque of Sitt Hadaq," *Muqarnas* 11 (1994): 55–64; Finbarr Barry Flood, "Umayyad Survivals and Mamluk Revivals: Qalawunid Architecture and the Great Mosque of Damascus," *Muqarnas* 14 (1997): 57–79; Meinecke, *Mamlukische Architektur*, 1:95–99, plate 60.



around the same time that the Damascus Tankizīyah was completed.⁵⁷

ENDOWMENT

Considering that the *waqfiyah* of the Damascus Tankizīyah has not been found, we are fortunate to have some fragmentary information about endowment for the institution from Ibn Kathīr and al-Nu‘aymī.⁵⁸ Although Ibn Kathīr makes no claims to have consulted the original records on the institution, the details that he provides are so specific (albeit incomplete), that he probably did so. Al-Nu‘aymī, on the other hand, explicitly cites a *waqf* record. However, it seems that his record was an amended version of the institution’s *waqfiyah*, reflecting changes in the property holdings, the positions provided, and the salaries allocated. Both authors limit their discussions about the *waqfiyahs* to the categories of endowments and staffing, whereas the original *waqfiyah* would probably have included other topics as well, such as a description of the building’s location, site, and infrastructure, a description of the building itself including materials used in its construction and decoration, specifications for the particular functions of its various spaces, allocations of funding for the necessary furnishings (such as oil, lamps, candles, and floor coverings), stipulations about the qualifications of people who could study and work there, and detailed job descriptions of the personnel.⁵⁹

Ibn Kathīr acknowledges that the properties he enumerates represent only a few of the places Tankiz endowed for the *dār al-qur’ān wa-al-ḥadīth*. Al-Nu‘aymī also lists only a few properties, but does not indicate that it is a partial account. Both historians include Sūq al-Qashāshīn at Bāb al-Faraj, the north-west gate of the city bordering the citadel and leading out to the important extramural zone known as Taḥt al-Qal‘ah. Ibn Kathīr provides the dimensions of the *sūq* as being twenty *dhirā’* in length from east to west, while al-Nu‘aymī describes its components: nineteen shops on the interior of the *sūq* and eighteen on the exterior. Tankiz owned a number of other shops in the vicinity of Bāb al-Faraj, the total value of which amounted to 85,000 dirhams, as reported in the inventory of the patron’s holdings that were confiscated after his arrest and execution in 741/1340.⁶⁰ The next property on Ibn Kathīr’s list is called simply “Bandar Zaydīn.” Al-Nu‘aymī’s version clarifies this entry: “and the *kharājī* [property subject to land

⁵⁷Mosque of Alṭunbughā al-Māridānī, 738/1338 (Meinecke, *Mamlukische Architektur*, 2:178, #9C/373); the foundation of Aqbughā ‘Abd al-Wāḥid, 740/1339–40 (ibid., 186, #9C/412); mosque of Sitt Ḥadaq, 740/1339–40 (ibid., 183, #9C/395).

⁵⁸For Ibn Kathīr’s passage on the endowment, see above; al-Nu‘aymī, *Dāris*, 1:123–26. See also Badrān, *Munādamat*, 64–65.

⁵⁹Cf. the patron’s *waqfiyah* for his Jerusalem foundation (see note 51 above).

⁶⁰For the confiscation inventory, see al-Ṣafadī, *Kitāb al-Wāfi*, 10:429.



tax] was a garden known as al-Bandar in Zaydīn." Zaydīn can be identified as a village in the Ghūṭah, a verdant agricultural district east of Damascus, where the patron owned additional property and a decade earlier had overseen an extensive public-works project and installed a pleasure garden.⁶¹ Al-Nu‘aymī lists no other properties, while Ibn Kathīr includes a bath in the town of Hims (which he designates as the "Old Bath"), and the proceeds from "other villages." The confiscation inventory lists a number of other holdings in Hims belonging to Tankiz. It is intriguing to note Ibn Kathīr’s remark about the "struggle" that the patron had with the endowments other than those listed. What was the nature of the difficulty? Was the income that these properties yielded insufficient? Was their ownership disputed?

PERSONNEL

Ibn Kathīr provides a list of positions established at the Tankizīyah, but only mentions the salaries of a few of them. According to his information, Tankiz provided for thirty traditionists (*muḥaddithīn*) and thirty Quran students.⁶² He established one position for a hadith shaykh and three for Quran shaykhs. Also on the staff were one prayer leader, one hadith reciter, and an unspecified number of substitutes. The shaykh’s salary was to be thirty dirhams and one *raṭl* of bread per month, the hadith reader was to earn twenty dirhams and eight *awāq* of bread per month, and the *muḥaddithīn* were paid seven dirhams and half a *raṭl* of bread per month. Ibn Kathīr mentions no staff for the maintenance of the building and its revenues. Some of the terminology employed in the foundation inscription of the Damascus Tankizīyah is at odds with that found in the accounts of Ibn Kathīr and al-Nu‘aymī. In the inscription, the institution is referred to as a madrasah rather than a *dār al-qur’ ān wa-al-ḥadīth*. Interestingly, the hadith scholars are referred to as *fuqahā’*, a term more commonly used for students of law at a madrasah, and *masma’in*.⁶³

At the *dār al-ḥadīth* established as part of Tankiz’s multi-purpose institution

⁶¹On Tankiz’s other properties in the Ghūṭah, see al-Ṣafadī, *Kitāb al-Wāfi*, 10:429; on his projects there, see Kurd ‘Alī, *Ghūṭat Dimashq*, 86, n. 1.

⁶²The first individual to be appointed as shaykh of the Tankizīyah was none other than the famous scholar and prolific author Shams al-Dīn al-Dhahabī. Earlier, Tankiz had appointed him to a position at the madrasah and turbah of Umm al-Ṣāliḥ. Not long after that, the *nā’ib* promoted him to the Dār al-Ḥadīth al-Zāhirīyah, and then gave him an additional post at the Nafīsīyah. Al-Dhahabī retained the post at the Tankizīyah until his death in 748/1348. Interestingly, Tankiz’s patronage of al-Dhahabī did not guarantee a favorable epitaph from the scholar (Ibn Qāḍī Shuhbah, 2:155; M. Bencheneb, "al-Dhahabī," *EI*², 2:214–16).

⁶³This usage is discussed in Gary Leiser, "The Endowment of the al-Zahiriyya in Damascus," *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 2, no. 1 (1984): 47–48.



in Jerusalem, the *waqf* provided for twenty traditionists, who were given seven and a half dirhams and a half *raṭl* of bread; one hadith shaykh, paid forty dirhams and one *raṭl* of bread; one assistant whose salary seems to be omitted; and one reader, paid twenty dirhams and a half *raṭl* of bread.⁶⁴ The Jerusalem *waqfiyah* also supported several staffers. Thus, the faculty-to-student ratios and the salaries allocated at the two institutions appear to have been comparable, except for the shaykh's salary, which was higher in Jerusalem than in Damascus. There is no indication that the Damascus foundation was meant to be residential. The *dār al-ḥadīth* component of the Jerusalem institution was not.

In the *waqfiyah* consulted by al-Nu'aymī, the student-staff ratio had changed considerably. The faculty positions included a shaykh for recital (*mashyakh al-iqrā'*), whose salary goes unmentioned;⁶⁵ a prayer leader (*imām*), who was to be paid 120 dirhams monthly;⁶⁶ three hadith shaykhs, each of whom earned fifteen dirhams per month;⁶⁷ and one *kātib al-ghaybah*, who was paid ten dirhams monthly. This *waqfiyah* also provided for a large staff to perform a variety of duties. Forty dirhams per month were provided for a muezzin, a doorman, and an unspecified number of caretakers. A *dīwān* representative (*ṣaḥābat al-dīwān*), a supervisor (*musharrif*), and a bookkeeper (*'āmil*) were also on the payroll, each at forty dirhams per month. The position of revenue collector (*jabāyah*) was allocated fifty dirhams monthly, while the positions of overseer of property (*shahādat al-'imārah*) and the inspector of property (*mashadd al-'imārah*) paid twenty-five dirhams each. The *waqf* also provided for a builder/architect's post (*mi'mārīyah*), to be paid fifteen dirhams monthly. Moreover, the staff included a superintendent (*nāẓir*) and a lieutenant-superintendent (*nā'ib al-nāẓir*). As for the student body, al-Nu'aymī mentions only twelve Quran students (*al-mushtagalūn bi-al-qur'ān al-'aẓīm*), each of whom would be given seven and a half dirhams per month, and five hadith "listeners" (*mustam'ūn*), each of whom earned seven and a half dirhams per month. It should be noted that while the student stipend had not changed, the provision covered fewer than half the Quran students and only a quarter of the traditionists originally supported.

⁶⁴Al-'Asalī, *Wathā'iq*, 113–16.

⁶⁵According to al-Nu'aymī's source, this post was designated for an individual by the name of al-Burhān al-Irbidī (*Dāris*, 1:127). I have yet to identify this figure.

⁶⁶The version of the *Dāris* excerpted by Badrān lists a Quran shaykh (*Munādamat*, 64), but the Cairo edition does not.

⁶⁷These posts were also designated for specific individuals: one was held by al-Burhān Ibn al-Taḳī; another was assigned to the son of the shaykh; and the third was for al-Shams al-Armawī. Again, I have no firm identification yet for these individuals.



PATRONAGE AND THE PAST

As the historical sources cited above suggest, the construction of the *dār al-qur'ān wa-al-ḥadīth* appears to have extended over a prolonged period of around eleven years, beginning in 728/1327–28 and ending in 739/1338–39. This timing is interesting in light of the broad patterns of Tankiz's patronage activity.⁶⁸ It coincides with a building boom that included projects in a number of cities throughout the *niyābah*, as well as Damascus. Prior to the start-up of this *dār al-qur'ān wa-al-ḥadīth* project, Tankiz's nearest-dated monumental construction in Damascus had been his congregational mosque, finished around a decade earlier. After the completion of that project, there is a hiatus of over five years in dated building works sponsored by Tankiz. This hiatus was followed by a sudden surge in the patron's building activity. The projects he undertook in Damascus concurrent with this 728/1327–28 to 739/1338–39 time-span of the *dār al-qur'ān wa-al-ḥadīth* construction include: ongoing repairs to the waterways (727/1326–27 and 729/1328–29); intramural street widenings at Bāb al-Barīd (east of the Umayyad Mosque) and in the market area between the south-west of the Umayyad Mosque and the area of Sūq al-Buzūrīyīn (728/1327–28 to 729/1328–29); several extramural street widenings (729/1328–29 to 732/1331–32); ongoing restoration work at the Umayyad Mosque (727/1326 to 730/1329); the new palace mentioned above; the mausoleum and *ribāṭ* of the patron's wife (730/1330); repair of one of the city gates, Bāb Tūmah (734/1333); rebuilding of a bridge over the Turah River (735/1335).⁶⁹

Outside of Damascus, the patron was equally active during this period, sponsoring a major ongoing project in Jerusalem, which included work on the city's canalization (727/1326–27 to 728/1327–28), the madrasah, *khānqāh*, *dār al-ḥadīth*, and *ribāṭ* foundation (729/1329), two baths, a *qaysārīyah*, and a number of restorations on behalf of the sultan at the Ḥaram al-Sharīf.⁷⁰ Tankiz also undertook restoration work at the Ḥaram al-Khalīl in Hebron (732/1332); construction and restoration in Ajlun (728/1328); alterations at the congregational mosque of Gaza (729/1330); and the rebuilding of Qal'at Ja'bar (733/1332–33 to 736/1335–36).⁷¹ The fact that Tankiz had so many commissions underway concurrently could account for the unusually long delay in completion of the *dār al-qur'ān wa-al-ḥadīth*. The difficulties that he encountered with the institution's endowments, reported by Ibn Kathīr (see above), might also have contributed to the delay.

The significance of the physical setting for Tankiz's *dār al-qur'ān wa-al-ḥadīth* must not be overlooked. At a time when the majority of new architectural

⁶⁸On these patterns, see Kenney, "Power," Chapter Six.

⁶⁹Sources for these works are cited above.

⁷⁰Kenney, "Power," Chapter Three. See also Burgoyne, *Mamluk Jerusalem*, 223–48 and 273–98.

⁷¹Kenney, "Power," 281–315 and 347–59.



commissions were situated outside the city walls, Tankiz erected his structure at the heart of the walled city. The fact that he was able to construct three of his new commissions in Damascus at such plum intramural sites demonstrates the patron's purchasing power and political strength. An incident involving Sanjar al-Jawilī suggests the risk involved in refusing to cooperate with Tankiz's schemes of property acquisition. According to al-Maqrīzī, Tankiz wanted to purchase a house owned by Sanjar located in the vicinity of the Jāmi' Tankiz. Sanjar refused to sell, so Tankiz took the matter before the sultan. Sanjar ended up in prison for eight years.⁷²

The site of the *dār al-qur'ān wa-al-ḥadīth* had other characteristics to recommend it, in addition to its intramural location. Its proximity to the Umayyad Mosque to the north, Sūq al-Kabīr to the south, and important markets streets to the west, guaranteed a steady stream of pedestrian traffic in its neighborhood. Passersby would be reminded of the patron's generosity by seeing the building and by hearing the patron's name included in the prayers conducted there.⁷³ This district south-west of the Umayyad Mosque became something of a focal point for Tankiz's *intra muros* architectural and urban patronage. It was in this zone that he erected his magnificent new palace and his wife's mausoleum, as well as his *dār al-qur'ān wa-al-ḥadīth*. Tankiz was responsible for refashioning this area in other ways as well. Around the same time that his *dār al-qur'ān wa-al-ḥadīth* construction commenced, Tankiz began a major overhaul at the Umayyad Mosque. This renovation included the reopening of the south-west gate of the mosque, Bāb al-Ziyādah, which had long been closed.⁷⁴ Bāb al-Ziyādah led to a network of market streets south of the mosque, which Tankiz also reshaped. In 729/1328–29, he widened Sūq al-Silāḥ, a market street located on the north-south artery leading to the newly opened Bāb al-Ziyādah.⁷⁵ In the same year he ordered the clearing of encroachments and the widening of Sūq al-Nashābiyīn, the bowmakers' market, which ran east-west linking Sūq al-Silāḥ and Sūq al-Buzūrīyīn.⁷⁶ In a zone farther

⁷²*Al-Mawā'iz wa-al-I'tibār bi-Dhikr al-Khiṭaṭ wa-al-Āthār* (Bulaq, 1853), 2:389.

⁷³According to al-Asyūfī's model for the ideal *dār al-qur'ān*, lessons were to be preceded by "supplications for divine rewards for the endower, his family, and the Muslim dead in general." (Donald P. Little, "Notes on Mamluk Madrasahs," *Mamlūk Studies Review* 6 [2002]: 14). In the *waqfiyah* of the Jerusalem Tankizīyah, this requirement was made explicit in the curricula for the traditionists, the law students, and the Sufis, as were the locations in specific *iwāns* of the building for their instructional and devotional activities (al-'Asalī, *Wathā'iq*, 113–16).

⁷⁴Flood demonstrates that the new gate was installed slightly to the east of the original one (*The Great Mosque of Damascus: Studies on the Makings of an Umayyad Visual Culture* [Leiden, 2001], 142).

⁷⁵Ibn Kathīr, *Al-Bidāyah*, 14:144 f.

⁷⁶Ira M. Lapidus, *Muslim Cities in the Later Middle Ages* (Cambridge, 1967), 262, n. 55.



to the west between the city gates, Bāb al-Naṣr and Bāb al-Jābiyah, he had shops demolished, benches removed from the streets, and even a mosque torn down and rebuilt in a different location (735/1335).⁷⁷ The following year, Tankiz ordered further clearing work in the coppersmiths' market, located next to the Umayyad Mosque.⁷⁸ A number of the patron's commercial properties were found in this area south of the Umayyad Mosque, as well. On the western end, at Bāb al-Jābiyah, there was one known as Khān al-'Arāsah. At the southeast corner of the Umayyad Mosque was another, known as Sūq al-Dahshah. A third, Khān al-Bayḍ, was located on the north side of Sūq al-Kabīr.⁷⁹

This zone south and west of the Umayyad Mosque was rich in historic associations. In Tankiz's day, part of it was still called al-Khaḍrā', a reference to the Qaṣr al-Khaḍrā', the Umayyad palace that had once stood there.⁸⁰ It was in this zone that a cluster of monuments erected by Nūr al-Dīn was also to be found: the famous *bimāristān*, the funerary madrasah, and—on the plot next to the one Tankiz chose for his *dār al-qur'ān wa-al-ḥadīth*—the bath which supported Nūr al-Dīn's madrasah endowment. Tankiz's choice of building type may be related to an interest in creating associative links between himself and renowned rulers of the city's past. Supposedly, it was Nūr al-Dīn who founded the first independent *dār al-ḥadīth* institution, which he erected in Damascus.⁸¹ Prior to this development, hadith study had generally taken place under the aegis of other religious institutions or at the residences of the instructors. Nūr al-Dīn's model was immediately adopted by other patrons and appears to have been particularly popular in Damascus. One of the characteristics of Tankiz as a builder was his astute manipulation of architecture, space and history—of the "iconography of architecture"—to promote the construction of his own image.⁸² By obtaining a property in this historically charged location for his new foundation, the patron was able to make his mark in history—quite literally. Just as he situated his building in physical proximity to

⁷⁷Ibn Kathīr, *Al-Bidāyah*, 14:171.

⁷⁸Sauvaire, "Description (Conclusion)," 204.

⁷⁹Ibn Kathīr, *Al-Bidāyah*, 14:74; Riḥāwī, "Khānāt," 53–54.

⁸⁰See, for example, the description of this neighborhood in Ibn Baṭṭūḥ's account (Guy Le Strange, *Palestine Under the Moslems: A Description of Syria and the Holy Land from AD 650 to 1500* [London, 1890], 270).

⁸¹Fuat Sezgin, "Dār al-Ḥadīth," *EI*², 2:125–26.

⁸²For an innovative application of Richard Krautheimer's theory of the iconography of architecture ("Introduction to an 'Iconography of Medieval Architecture,'" *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 5 [1942]: 1–33) to Mamluk references to the Umayyad past, see Flood, "Umayyad Survivals," 57–79; on this theme, see also Bethany Walker, "Commemorating the Sacred Spaces of the Past: The Mamluks and the Umayyad Mosque at Damascus," *Near Eastern Archaeology* 67, no. 1 (2004): 26–39.



important monuments of the past, he positioned himself relative to their illustrious founders.

Furthermore, it is interesting to note that Tankiz introduced an additional element to Nūr al-Dīn's concept, by combining a Quran school with the *dār al-ḥadīth*. In fact, Tankiz has been credited with innovating this particular type of dual-purpose foundation.⁸³ However, it is not entirely certain that this was, in fact, an innovation; nor is it clear how significant such a distinction of function was at the time. Part of the problem lies with the slippery terminology, which confounds the taxonomies and chronologies of historians, both medieval and modern. For example, at the much earlier *dār al-ḥadīth* founded by Ibn Shaddād in Aleppo (618/1221), the foundation inscription specifically labels the building as a *dār al-ḥadīth*, but then goes on to state that the endowment was to provide instruction in Quran studies as well as hadith.⁸⁴ Al-Nu'aymī's list of *dār al-qur'ān wa-al-ḥadīths* in Damascus puts the Tankizīyah as the earliest such institution. Yet, as pointed out above, the building's foundation inscription contains no mention of the term *dār al-qur'ān wa-al-ḥadīth*, but rather refers to the building as a madrasah.⁸⁵ With such variability of institutional nomenclature and function, it is difficult to claim that Tankiz's foundation represents a distinct innovation and that such an innovation would have had significance in the patron's own time. In any case, as a dual-purpose building type, the *dār al-qur'ān wa-al-ḥadīth* does not appear to have attained the popularity among subsequent building patrons that Nūr al-Dīn's *dār al-ḥadīth* did. Al-Nu'aymī's survey of institutions in Damascus lists only three *dār al-qur'ān wa-al-ḥadīths*, as opposed to thirteen *dār al-ḥadīths* and seven *dār al-qur'āns*.

CONCLUSION

In light of the centrality of Tankiz in the political arena of his day, the impact of his building works on Mamluk architectural development, and the interest of his commissions for the study of architectural and urban patronage, it is important for the extent of his works to be understood as well as possible. In the case of the patron's *dār al-qur'ān wa-al-ḥadīth*, the remains of the original building appear to

⁸³Sezgin, "Dār al-Ḥadīth," 126.

⁸⁴Tabbaa, *Constructions*, 43–44.

⁸⁵The inscription also raises another intriguing point. What exactly was the role of Aydamur al-Mu'īnī, at whose behest the building was constructed, according to the text? I have not arrived at a satisfactory identification for this figure. He clearly is not who von Kremer supposed him to be: an individual who died in the year 667/1268. Von Kremer erroneously attributes the building to that Aydamur and dates the building according to his death date (*Topographie*, 2:7). Also intriguing is the physical composition of this part of the inscription: it is inserted in two parts outside the frame of the cartouche bearing the foundation information. Was it an afterthought, or perhaps a later addition? Or did the engravers simply run out of space within the cartouche?



be under-represented in the scholarship on the architectural history of Damascus. It seems likely that the alterations to the interior mentioned by Wulzinger and Watzinger, Sauvaget, and others are not as comprehensive as these authors suggest. The turn-of-the-century revisions undertaken by Shaykh Kāmil probably correspond primarily to the elements of wood, brick, and plaster construction—the stairways, ceilings, balconies, and upper-story rooms. The lower level, with its solid construction of large stone masonry and its classic floor plan of four *iwāns* and corner rooms surrounding a central court, could very well belong to the original building and could provide at least a general outline of its configuration. The renovations appear to have been more additive than transformative in nature. In effect, the original building, which has been reduced over the course of the centuries architecturally through a succession of alterations, has been further diminished through a process of scholarly transmission. “Restoring” what remains of the original building to the corpus of Mamluk architecture of Damascus contributes to a clearer understanding of the architectural chronology of the region and of broader issues about Mamluk architectural patronage.



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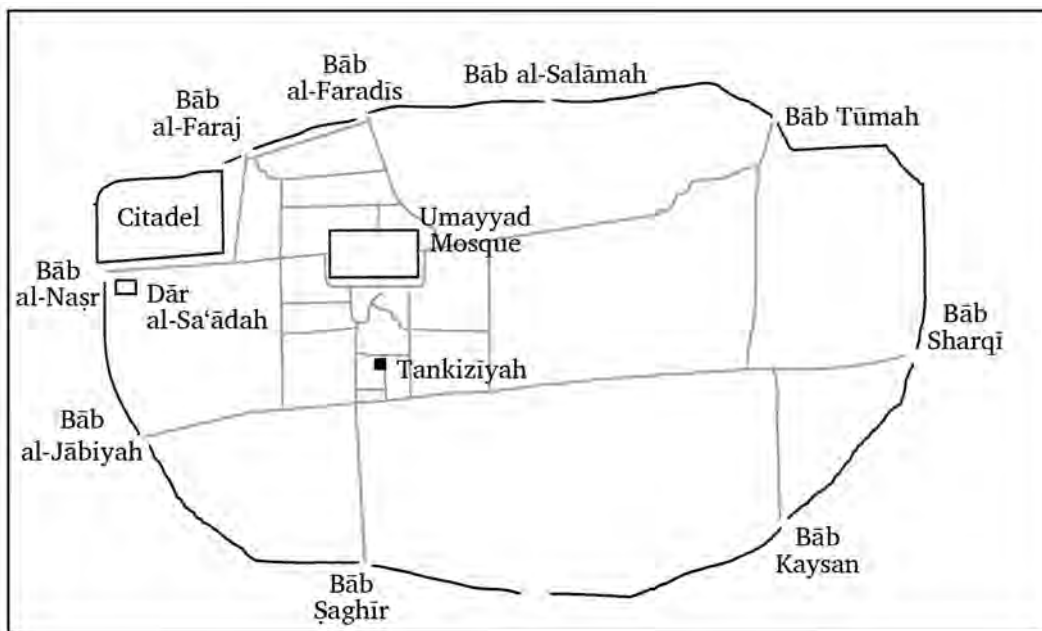


Fig. 1. Damascus, Tankizīyah: location map (not to scale)



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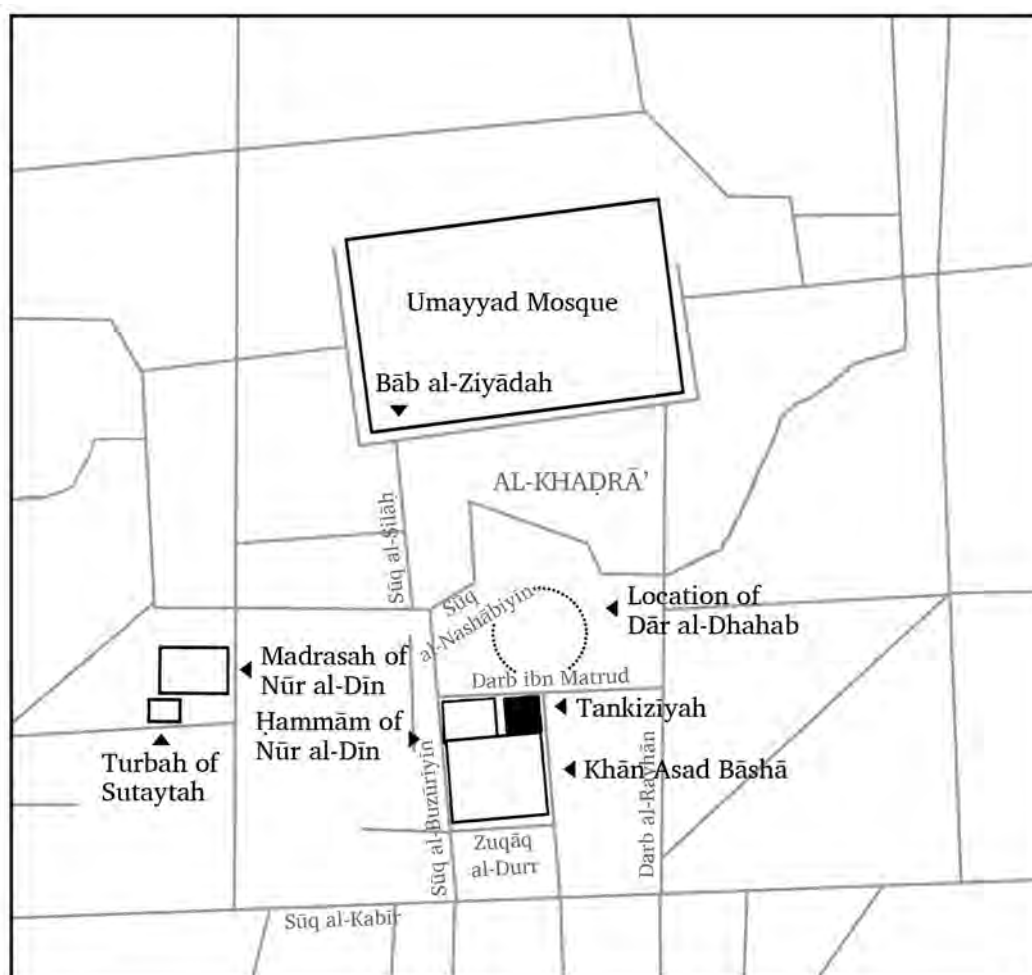


Fig. 2. Damascus, Tankizīyah: site map (not to scale)



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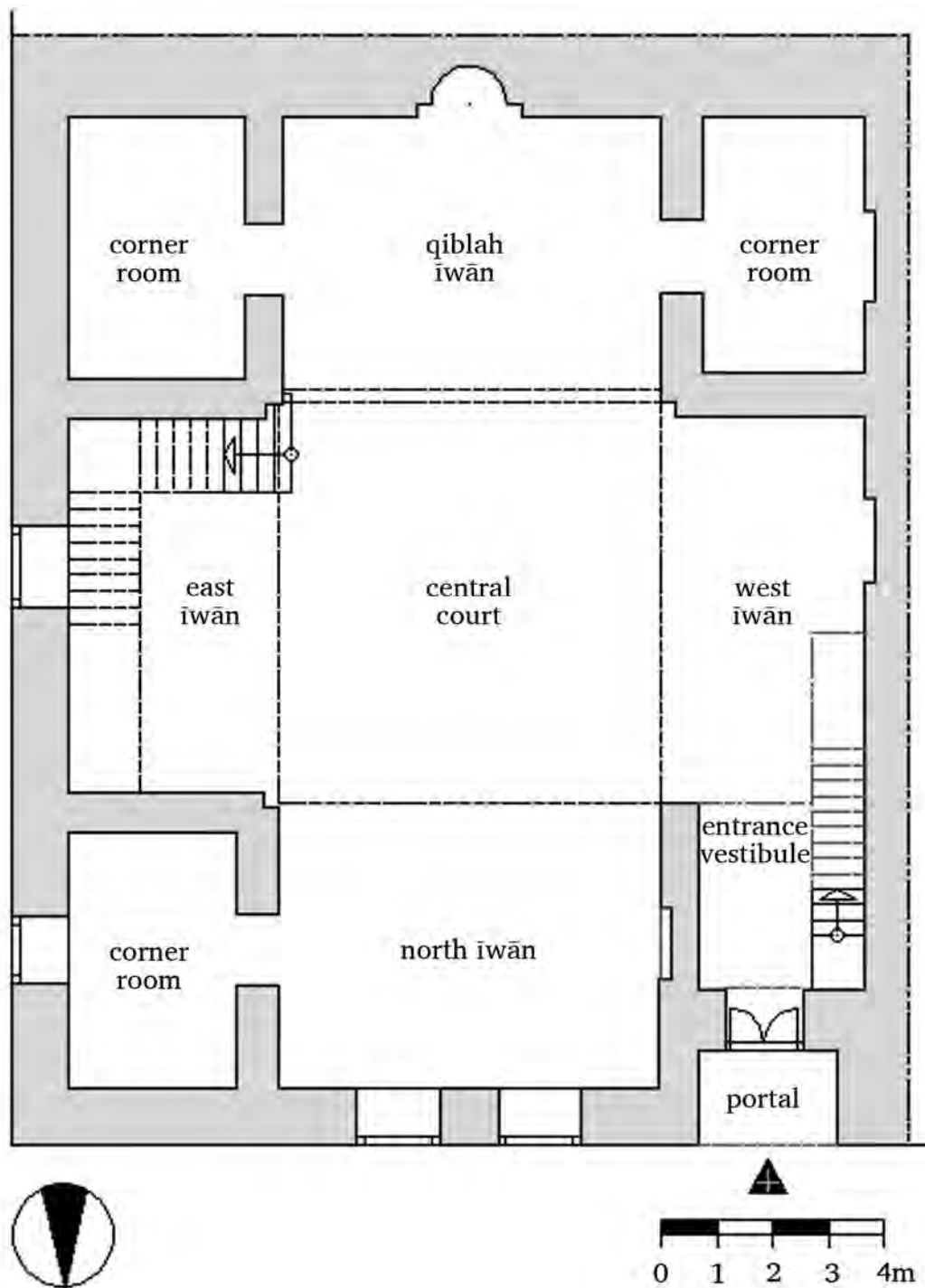


Fig. 3. Damascus, Tankiziyah: floor plan (S. Poschmann)



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Fig. 4. Damascus, Tankizīyah: north façade



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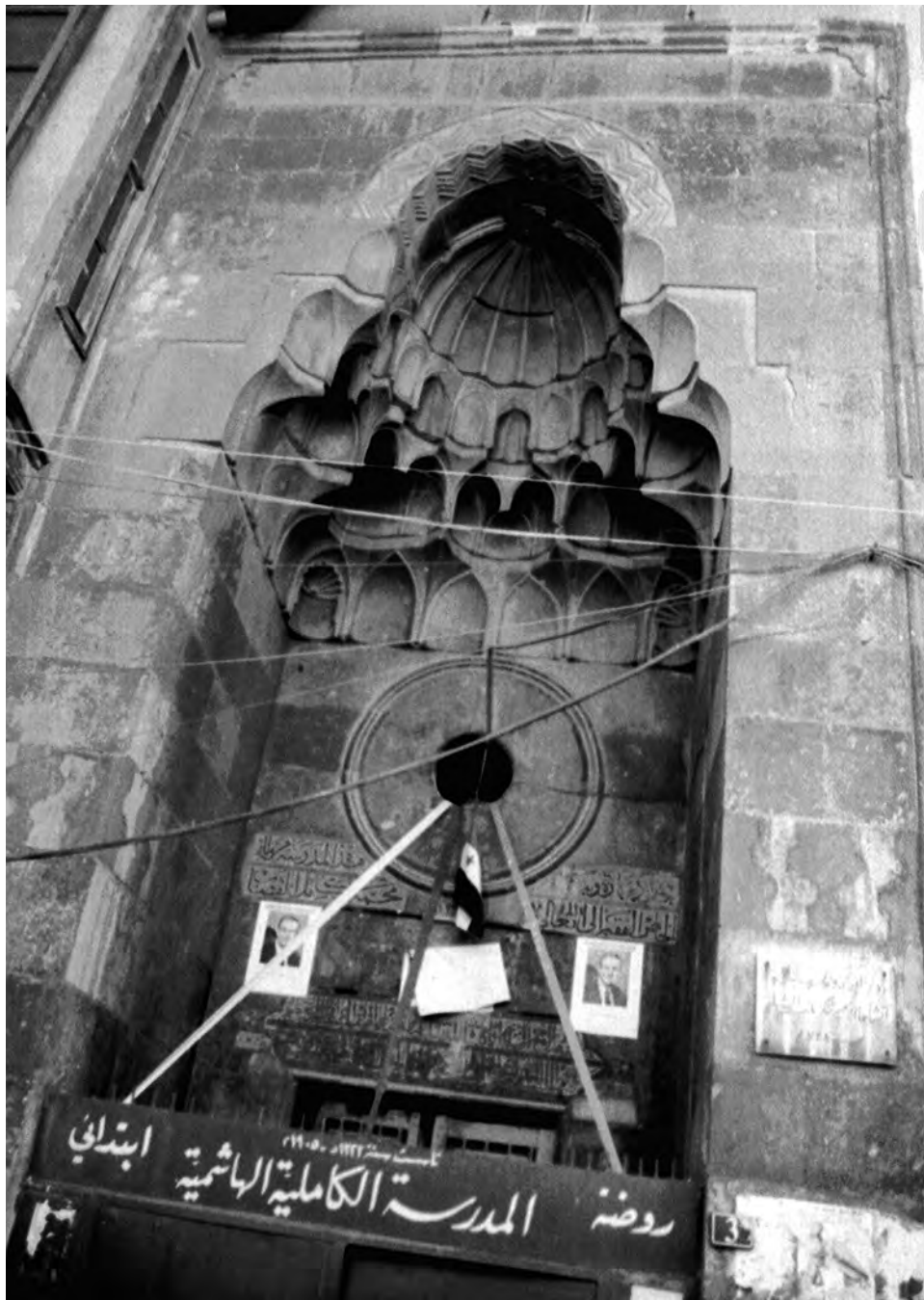


Fig. 5. Damascus, Tankiziyah: portal



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Fig. 6. Damascus, Tankizīyah: foundation inscription



Fig. 7. Damascus, Tankizīyah: east façade



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Fig. 8. Damascus, Tankizīyah: east façade, large window



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Fig. 9. Damascus, Tankizīyah: interior, view of south *īwān*



Fig. 10. Damascus, Tankizīyah: interior, view of north and west *īwāns*



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Fig. 11. Damascus, Tankizīyah: interior, view of east *īwān*



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