

Approaches Preservation of the Cultural Heritage of Archeological Buildings from Repeated Wars Risks on Gaza City, Palestine (Case Study: Reconstruction and Restoration of Al-Kozomiry Mosque)

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Abstract-The paper deals with the identification of the historical importance of Gaza city through the ages and a sample of reconstruction and restoration of historical buildings of the ancient Gaza city which was greatly damaged during 2014 war. Wars and armed conflicts became a daily reality for many countries in the world, though, the effects of these conflicts are worsening day after day at all levels: cultural, social, architectural, environmental and urban. Therefore, wars destroyed many heritage valued buildings. This study focuses on "Al-Kozomiry archaeological mosque", which dates back to 1360 AD of the Mamluk era. It's located in Shejaeya quarter, and principles to be applied in heritage conservation of historical buildings, in addition to the clarification of intervention stages for the sake of its reconstruction and restoration according to the available resources. The paper presents information about the number and locations of those mosques damaged during the war beside the other existed in the historic urban system. It also identifies the dangers those buildings faced, such as demolition, vandalism and misuse, in addition to other problems that increase the challenges of preservation. The study showed the obstacles facing the process of their maintenance and the extent of their owners' awareness of the cultural importance of their historical buildings and the role of international institutions as well as its laws relating to the protection of cultural heritage.

Keywords- Architectural Reconstruction, Cultural Heritage, Quarter Development, Architectural and Historical Environment, Restoration of Historic Buildings

I. INTRODUCTION

The name "Gaza" is first known from military records of Thutmose III of Egypt in the 15th century BCE.[5] Gaza's habitation back to 5,000 years, making it one of the oldest cities in the world. It is located on the Mediterranean coastal route between North Africa and the Levant, for most of its history, it served as a key entrepôt of southern Palestine and an important stopover on the trade route traversing the Red Sea.[10] The arrival of the Muslim Arabs brought significant changes to Gaza; at first some of its churches were transformed into mosques, including the present Great Mosque of Gaza (the

oldest in the city), which was later rebuilt by Sultan Baibars, who endowed it with a huge manuscript library in the 13th century. Central Gaza is situated on a low-lying and round hill with an elevation of 14 meters above sea level. [9] Much of the modern city is built along the plain below the hill, especially to the north and east, forming Gaza's suburbs [Fig.1] Besides, the beach and the port of Gaza are located 3 kilometers west of the city's nucleus and the space in between is entirely built up on low-lying hills. [10] A prominent hill southeast of Gaza, known as Tel al-Muntar, has an elevation of 82 m above sea level.

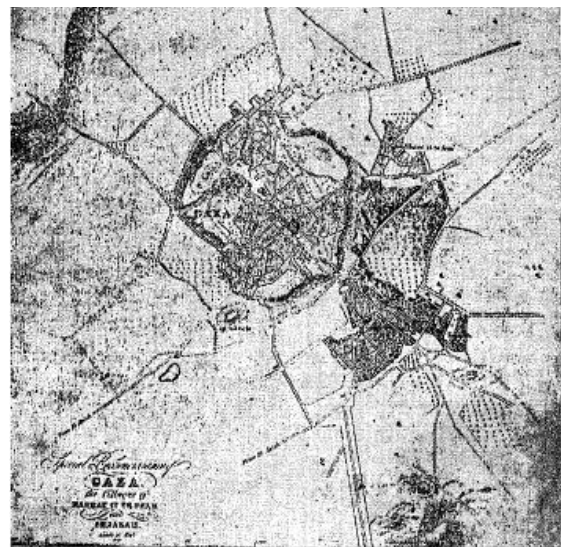


Figure 1. a map of the city of Gaza in 1843 showing the old city and surrounding quarters

The Old City forms the main part of Gaza's nucleus. It is roughly divided into two quarters; the northern Al-Daraj Quarter (also known as the Muslim Quarter) and the southern Al-Zaytun Quarter (which contained the Christian quarters)[Fig.2]. Most structures date from the Mamluk and Ottoman eras, and some were built on top of earlier structures.

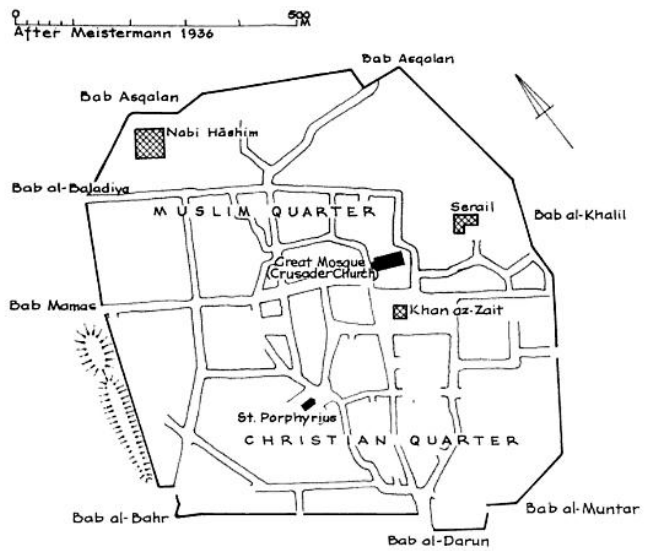
The ancient part of the Old City is about 1.6 square kilometers. [6]The Mamluks contributed to Gaza architecture by building, mosques, Islamic colleges, hospitals, caravansaries, and public baths. When the Arab traveler and writer Ibn Bat-tuta visited the city in 1355, he noted that it was "large and populous, and has many mosques." [10].

There are eight historic gates to the Old City: [Fig.2] Two Bab Asqalan (Gate of Ashkelon), Bab al-Darum (Gate of Deir al-Balah), Bab al-Bahr (Gate of the Sea), Bab Marnas (Gate of Marnas), Bab al-Balakhayah (Gate of the Town), Bab al-Khalil (Gate of Hebron), and Bab al-Muntar (Gate of Tel al-Muntar).[8] Al-Daraj Quarter contains the Gold (Qissariya) Market as well as the Great Mosque of Gaza (oldest mosque in Gaza) and the Sayed al-Hashim Mosque.[18] The Saint Porphyrius Church, the Katib Wilaya Mosque, and Hammam as-Sammara ("the Samaritan's Bathhouse") lie in Al-Zaytun [10]. The old city of Gaza was surrounded by walls of the Greek era, [Fig.2] subsequently, it's expanded in the Ayyubid and Mamluk era, where the establishment of residential quarters outside the walls of city including the quarters of Al- Shuja'ia, al-Tuffah and Al-Zaytoun. The urban extension has also continued in subsequent periods. There were many gardens around the city, houses built of mud and mosques and churches built of stones. [12, 18] The first extension of Gaza beyond its city centre was the quarter of Al-Shuja'iyah, built on a lie on east and southeast of the Old City during the Ayyubid period. [11] In the northeast, there is the Mamluk-era quarter of Al-Tuffah, which is roughly divided into eastern and western halves and was originally located within the Old City's walls. [9].

Othman bin Alkan Al-Kurdi" is one of the leaders of the Mamluk army in Gaza [Fig.4]. The western part includes the walled old town with its old quarters Al-Tuffah, Al-Zaitoun and Al-Darj [10].



Figure 3. A map showing the location of Gaza City to the State of Palestine and its neighboring countries



59 Gaza: plan of the town (before 1915), showing the location of the twelfth-century Latin parish church, today the great mosque (no. 92), and the church of St Porphyrius (no. 93).

Figure 2. Gaza: Plan of the town showing the location of the twelfth century old Gaza Gates. [8]



Figure 4. The Old Town, Gaza (1862-1863). Picture by Frances Frith

When the city developed, its buildings expanded north, east and south. Old Gaza is divided into two parts: the eastern part which includes Al- Shuja'ia quarter named after "Shujauddin

The relevance of the article is determined by the need to preserve historic buildings of the cities of Palestine, before, during and after wars, in addition to its need to organize and document all elements and materials of historic buildings and benefit of accumulated experiences of restoration as well as promising modern use of heritage and its adaptation to the conditions of conservation of the historical urban environment. Methods of urban planning regulation of buildings in areas of conflict and their important aspect of the relevance of this topic are needed to case detection, the status and the importance of

historical cities of Palestine, which are significantly affected during the period of wars in recent years.

Palestine includes a number of cities of religious and historical significance. The historic cities of Jerusalem, Bethlehem, Hebron, Jericho, Nazareth, Acre and Gaza are among the most important historic and cultural sites of the World Heritage that belong to ancient archaeological cultures. [10, 17] The most destroyed cities of Palestine during the recent wars is the old city of Gaza [Fig.5].



Figure 5. Shows map of the Gaza Strip and the most important monuments in which.

Because it is one of the oldest cities in the world, it is characterized by its maritime location, where there are some of the most important old ports on Gaza beach "Port Mayomas and Port Enteidon". For hundreds of years, Gaza's port was the gateway to the east. The coastline thrived and then waned leaving behind a coastal archaeological treasury. [Fig.6][11, 17] Many conflicts have arisen of Gaza's history as the city is located on a geographical edge and it's an important commercial area. It connects Asia with Africa through Egypt, which the Egyptians described as the Horus Road. [5]The most important of these stages:

1. In 796, Gaza city was destroyed during a civil war between the Arab tribes of the area. [7] However, by the 10th century, the city had been rebuilt by the Abbasids during Abbasid rule.
2. In 1100, The Crusaders conquered Gaza and King Baldwin III built a castle in the city for the Knights Templar in 1149. [8] He also had the Great Mosque converted into the Cathedral of Saint John. [6]
3. In 1187 the Ayyubids, led by Sultan Saladin, Gaza was captured and later the city's fortifications were destroyed in 1191. Ayyubid rule ended in 1260.
4. In 1294, an earthquake devastated Gaza, and five years later the Mongols again destroyed all that had been restored by the Mamluks. [11].
5. In 1352, Gaza suffered from a destructive flood, which was rare in that arid part of Palestine. [7] American scholar

Edward Robinson visited the city in 1838, Robinson noted that virtually all of Gaza's vestiges of ancient history and antiquity had disappeared due to constant conflict and occupation. [17] As each era finished, its people left behind remnants of their times' churches, monasteries, palaces and mosques, as well as thousands of precious artefacts.

6. In 1917, during the First World War, the old town of Gaza City came under the largest destruction on the level of important archaeological buildings, especially the Omari mosque great, from the British Mandate.
7. During the previous period, Gaza City came under three successive wars of 2008, 2012 and 2014 by the Israeli occupation. [19]

The architectural and archaeological heritage of Palestine is considered significant and different in the historical and cultural value of Islamic architecture, which requires a differentiated relationship, by choice of restoration methods, use of traditional and modern materials.

Preserving the architectural heritage of the community is desirable for many reasons. Cultural and historic buildings remind people of their roots and add depth and character to the built environment. Besides, preserving historic buildings provides a unique identity for urban structure and archaeological buildings trace unique styles and technical innovations, as well as reminding people of their traditions ancestors in the past, especially at the level of urban creativity.

The renovation of historic buildings and sites will increase cultural awareness about the great assets and encourage the utilization of some ancient architectural elements in contemporary architecture that still need more effectiveness and attention to cultural heritage.

Heritage is considered as one of the constituents that preserve the culture and national identity of any community because it is an important guide to the customs and traditions of that community. Awareness of cultural heritage would help in preserving historic buildings and achieving a balanced environment which reflects both originalities of the past and modernity. [2] Preservation and development of the historical environment of the city centres are the most remarkable and urgent tasks today. Modern problems of historic centres cannot be solved without keeping the internal structure of the historical building, owing to many reasons. But the reconstruction of the historic centre of Gaza has not been completed yet. At present, ancient buildings destroyed are being built up from modern materials with the preservation of old parts of buildings. Such as Al-Kozomiry mosque, reconstruction the destroyed parts of the mosque by modern technology materials and its facades cladding with ancient marble, so as to maintain the overall style of the mosque. [Fig.11].

The most important components of an Islamic ancient city are mosques that have been preserved in the structure of ancient urban areas, in addition to the markets and public spaces that require preservation as evidence of historical memory and national traditions.

- | | |
|------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1- Al-Alami House | 11- Al-Kamalei School |
| 2- Pasha Palace | 12- Omar Al Mukhtar Street |
| 3- Katib Velaia Mosque | 13- Al-Kozomiry Mosque |
| 4- Great Omari Mosque | 14- Ibn Marwan Mosque |
| 5- Perferos Church | 15- Palestīne Square |
| 6- Al Qaysariya market | 16- Christian Quarter |
| 7- Al-Samrah Hamam | 17- Al-Mahkama Mosque |
| 8- Al-Rifaya Sabil | 18- Ibn Osman Mosque |
| 9- Al-Alami Sobat | 19- Said Hashim Mosque |
| 10- Al Ahmadiya Zawiya | 20- Al-Zawiya Market |

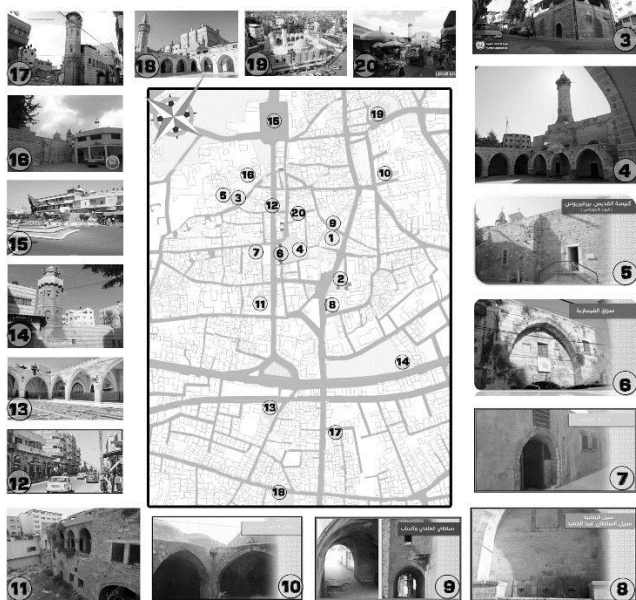


Figure 6. The plan of the Old City of Gaza, and the most important archaeological buildings that it contains

II. INTERNATIONAL CONVENTIONS AND LAWS RELATING TO THE PRESERVATION AND PROTECTION OF CULTURAL HERITAGE

The issue of preserving the urban heritage and architecture of the city is one of the most complex issues because of the different views around conservation operations and nature of the place and the multiplicity of opinions of specialists. Each one deals with socio-economic as variable factors. Therefore, the international bodies, government institutions and non-governmental, holding seminars, conferences and workshops alert the dangers, which are exposed to historical cities and archaeological buildings; further, they issued international covenants, which are considered as reference for all countries in the enactment of laws and legislation, regulating for conservation and development, as well as providing us with the international conventions as an outline of the related concepts on the protection of the historical elements and preservation and respecting and non-exposure to them, which confirms their historical and artistic value in addition to the definition of terms and general principles. [15] Architectural heritage is one of the values and privacy cherished by all people, as it represents the importance of civilization and a symbol that reflects the identity and originality of peoples. Since Palestine in general and the Gaza Strip, in particular,

possess this identity of sites and buildings that are characterized by their history, originality and civilization, so we strive to preserve it as much as possible. [13] However, this heritage suffers from the problem of international protection, against the targeting of the Israeli occupation of archaeological buildings, especially in war 2014 AD. At Gaza city, where the occupation deliberately destroyed many archaeological buildings of historical and cultural value. Thus, it was necessary to know the international role in the protection of architectural heritage, the objectives and international agreements which are interested in the methods of dealing with cultural Heritage and the priorities adopted in the documentation and restoration of historical buildings through international laws to preserve the heritage of civilization in the world.

Several international conventions have been issued for the protection of antiquities, which are now known as conservation covenants, a set of international standards and principles, with a technical recipe, which defines the general framework for dealing with the effects, in order to preserve them from extinction, destruction and change. The following are some international conventions, which the Israeli Occupation Government did not abide. [13, 14] (Especially in the recent war on Gaza Strip in 2014):

- 1) International humanitarian law, particularly the principles relating to the protection of cultural heritage, during the armed conflict of 1907 AD.
- 2) Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949 AD.
- 3) The Hague Convention of 1954 AD For the Protection of Cultural Property during the armed conflict and its recommendations «UNESCO».
- 4) The principles contained in the United Nations Organization conventions. Education, Culture and Science, on the protection of cultural heritage.
- 5) The International Declaration issued by UNESCO, about the deliberate destruction of cultural heritage 2003 AD.

The most historical buildings damaged during the war of 2014 in the old city centre in Gaza, Palestine. [Fig.8 and Fig.9] The most important archaeological sites that were completely destroyed are the Al-Mahkama mosque and “Al-Kozomiry mosque” in Shejaeya Quarter on the east of Gaza city and “Al-O’mary mosque” in Jabalia, north Gaza. “Maqam Khalil Al-Rahman” in Khan Younis city of southern Gaza. “Maqam Al-Khader” in Deir El-Balah city of centre Gaza Strip.

Archaeological sites have been partially destroyed such as “Al Blakhya” Archaeological Site, known as the port of Antidon, “Al-Saqa House”, “Tel AlMuntar” and the mosque of “Al-Sayyed Hashim” in Gaza. The location of “Tel Al-Sakan” in Al-Zahra city at the centre of Gaza Strip. The “Tel 86” in Khan Younis city of southern Gaza, in addition to many archaeological houses in Gaza city.

The most important buildings damaged in the vicinity of the great Omari mosque in the old City of Gaza are: [Tab.1] [Fig.7 and 8]

- 1) Al O'mary great mosque located at the center of the old town in Al Daraj quarter. It is one of the biggest and most important archaeological mosques in Gaza. Its surroundings were exposed to shelling, leading to some cracks in the archaeological walls. [18]
- 2) Al- Basha Palace Museum located of the northern part of old town in Al-Daraj quarter. It's the most important buildings of Islamic architecture due to the methods of construction, art, decoration and inscriptions. Its surroundings were also exposed to shelling which led to some cracks in the archaeological walls and damaged many of the artifacts in the museum. [18]
- 3) Al-Kozomiry mosque located off the eastern part of the old town in Shejaeya quarter, which is one of the most prominent monuments in the Islamic. It was hit by a direct shelling as a result of the targeting of the attached modern part resulting in cracks in the archaeological walls, cracks in the ceilings consisting of cross-arches. Moreover, it destroyed some parts of the ancient walls and collapse of two ancient Iwans as a result of shelling. [12, 18]
- 4) Al-Mahkamah mosque located on the northeastern part of the Old Town in Shejaeya quarter. After targeting the mosque with direct shelling resulting in complete destruction, the only left was a minaret of sandstone. [18]



Figure 8. The most important buildings damaged during the war. [Researchers]

III. PRINCIPLES TO BE APPLIED IN HERITAGE CONSERVATION OF HISTORICAL BUILDINGS [4]

When planning work to heritage items, the following principles should be considered. They should also be addressed if a conservation management plan is being prepared.

1. Make a visual distinction between the Old and New: Whilst being sympathetic and respectful to old material, detail of new work should generally be distinguishable from the old. On close inspection, it should be clear whichever is old and whichever is new. There is a number of techniques for achieving this subtle difference, including: 1.1 Slight recession of new material; 1.2 New fabric to be a different material; 1.3 New material to have a different texture; 1.4 Surface treatment of the new material; 1.5 Outlining the new material; 1.6 Dating new material.
2. Avoid Precise Imitation of Architectural Detail
3. Ensure Alterations are Sympathetic
4. Respect the Ageing Process
5. Respect Previous Alterations: If there are previous alterations, these may also contribute to the building's significance and should be respected. Emphasis should not be placed on one period of a building's development at the expense of others unless it is much more significant. Later alterations may be removed if they are much less significant than the earlier fabric. Consider removing alterations if they: 5.1 Are unsympathetic; 5.2 Make the building stand out from its context; 5.3 Disrupt an otherwise intact building; 5.4 Consist of paint or render on a previously uncoated building.
6. Discontinue Previous Unsound Practices: Previous unsound practices or details should not be continued, whether in original work or subsequent repairs. Critical failures, such as the absence of a damp course, should be corrected as soon as possible.
7. Seeking Design Excellence: These principles provide a safe, respectful approach to heritage buildings, but they cannot be guaranteed to produce fine architecture. They should not prevent inventive, interpretive, contemporary design solutions of high architectural quality. New work may be quite different in spirit and appearance from the existing fabric, but still sympathetic to its heritage values.

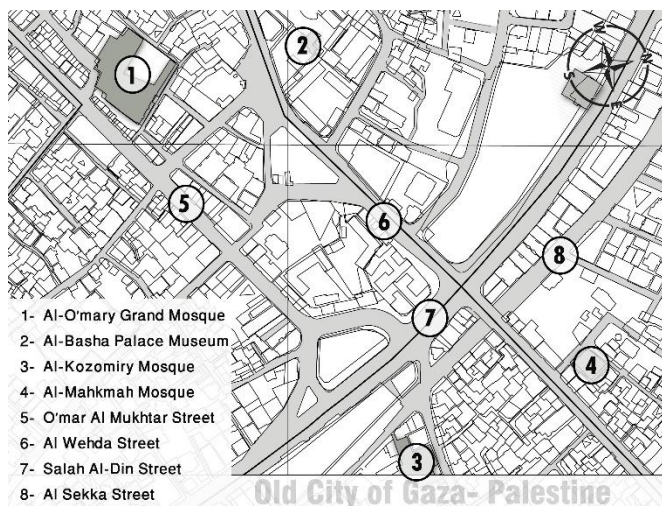


Figure 7. Scheme for buildings archaeological damaged during the 2014 war. [Researchers]

TABLE I. SHOWS THE MOST IMPORTANT SITES AFFECTED, IN THE CENTER OF THE OLD CITY OF GAZA CITY. [RESEARCHERS]

No	Building's name	Age	Historical era	Percentage of damage
1.	<i>Al- O'mary grand mosque</i>	3000 years ago	Roman era	10%
2.	<i>Al- Basha palace museum</i>	1277 AD.	Mamluk era	15%
3.	<i>Al-Kozomiry mosque</i>	1360 AD.	Mamluk era	70%
4.	<i>Al Mahkamah mosque</i>	1455AD	Mamluk era	95%

We have put in the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities in cooperation with the Ministry of Awqaf, the necessary architectural plans for one of the destroyed archaeological mosques, "Al- Kozomiry mosque", which was destroyed

during the 2014 war; therefore, ancient Iwans, some walls and all of the modern part including services, columns, library, minaret, along with the southern Iwan were destroyed. The percentage destruction about 70% of the mosque area. It was built from clay, marble and sandstone and crushed of many historical stones of ancient walls. [Fig.9] Community participation has a big role in the reconstruction and restoration of the mosque as the costs of reconstruction were adopted by residents of the Shejaeya quarter because of the economic crisis in the government and neglect of competent institutions.

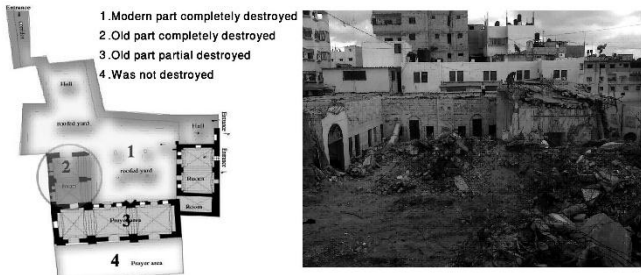
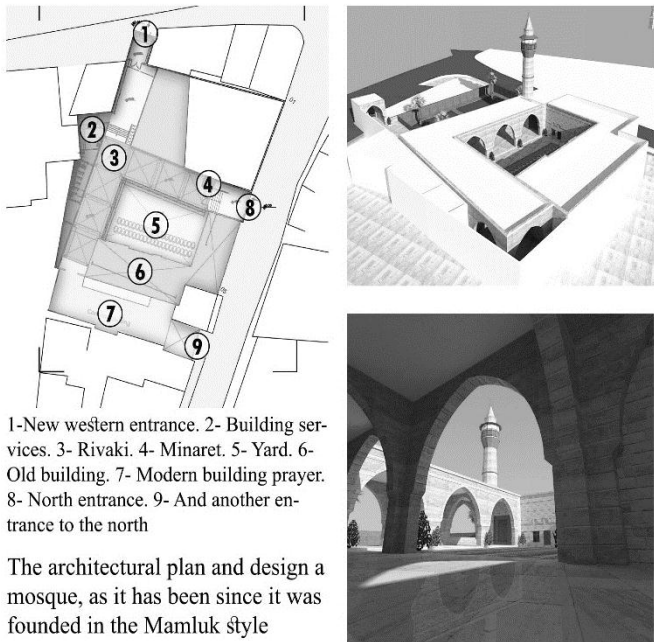


Figure 9. It describes the extent of Al-kozomiry mosque destruction during the 2014 war. Source. [Researcher]

maintained and used as cladding facades [Fig.11] and the rehabilitation of the mosque completely. The aim of heritage conservation is to ensure that the cultural significance of historical building items is maintained over time. While changes may be necessary of destroyed archaeological buildings to adapt these buildings to modern building materials, it is important to ensure that these changes do not compromise the heritage significance of historical building items and its historical value.



Figure 11. Al-Kozomiry Mosque their facades, they have been reconstruction from modern technology materials and cladding with ancient marble



1-New western entrance. 2- Building services. 3- Rivaki. 4- Minaret. 5- Yard. 6- Old building. 7- Modern building prayer. 8- North entrance. 9- And another entrance to the north

The architectural plan and design a mosque, as it has been since it was founded in the Mamluk style

Figure 10. The architectural plan and design of a mosque, as it has been since, it was founded, in the Mamluk style

We had to reconstruct and restore this mosque as a model to preserve all sites and archaeological buildings in Gaza Strip, in preparation for the development of future plans to avoid the wars' risk on these important buildings. It is to take advantage of local resources for the works of reconstruction and restoration of the historic parts of this mosque and use the damaged archaeological marble of this mosque which was re-

The importance is the care of archaeological buildings, especially the mosques that contains the value of heritage. We, in Gaza Strip, have a lack of the necessary resources and materials for the restoration of many historic buildings, which had been affected to many disasters such as wars, interventions wrong: such as removal or change in the structure of building archaeological.

“Our cultural heritage is doubly valuable, in time of war conflict or troubles”. [3]

For hundreds of years, Gaza's port was the gateway to the east, exporting perfumes, grain, textiles and spices. Coasts and beaches of Gaza city flourished in the ancient periods then diminished leaving a coastal archaeological treasure-trove.

IV. HOWEVER, THERE IS A LIMITED INTEREST FROM THE RESIDENTS OF GAZA CITY FOR ARCHITECTURAL MONUMENTS FOR MANY REASONS

1. The repeated wars and destruction they cause on the residential, commercial, health level and so on. It led to a lack of attention to the importance of the ancient buildings.
2. Lack of specialists and experts in the restoration of archaeological buildings in Gaza city, led to the deterioration of many sites and archaeological buildings in the city.
3. The occupation also prevents the introduction of the necessary materials for restoration and maintenance works and for the archaeological buildings.

4. Most of Gaza's are preoccupied with all aspects of social life because of many wars in the city, so they do not care about archaeological buildings.
5. Gaza City is one of the most famous cities that contain many architectural monuments. However, we lack the cultural awareness of the importance of those buildings.

V. RESULTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The cultural heritage revival of the old town of Gaza needs more attention from local and international institutions as well as trying to revive some historical buildings, which were destroyed at different times as a result of wars. [12] Therefore, it is necessary to take advantage of the available information and data, preparation of plans, and the required database to protect this cultural heritage in the future. Aforementioned protection should be based on scientific bases, international standards, and premise documentation for buildings of historical value, redrawing and photographing, with the participation of those concerned with this aim. Furthermore, there is a need for communicating with the concerned authorities, particularly UNESCO, to find and develop future resolutions to preserve those buildings, especially during wars, which may destroy them. It also requires, communicating with international human rights organizations to end the occupation's violations for international law and to preserve the cultural heritage of the people. And the role of institutions is to avert all the ancient buildings, especially the religious ones, any wars may possibly destroy them.

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