

ملخص الرسالة إنجليزي

Abstract

Al-Birah in Crusader Period
"Archaeological and Architectural Study"

By

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The study presented includes an introduction, three chapters, a conclusion and an index.

Chapter one discusses site location, evolution of the site name, site history from the Chalcolithic Period through the Ottoman Period.

Chapter two discusses details of the archaeology and architecture of Al-Bira. It begins with the site plan in the Crusader Period and certain Crusader architectural remains, including a church, Curia (Al-Khan), Baika, Storage depots, an olive press, a tower, springs, and hydraulic installations.

Chapter two concludes with a discussion of Crusader Construction materials, stone quarries, types and details of stones used, and masonry marks.

Chapter three offers a comparative analysis of Al-Bira and other Crusader sites, first it compares Al-Bira with the fortresses than it compares with the Crusader villages planning (Qubeiba, al Ziph). Chapter three concludes with a consideration of the similarities in Crusader' architectural elements such as vaults, pointed arches, loopheles or embrasure-type windows, columns and capitals, doors and entrances, constructions materials such as plaster and stones, and masonry marks, across settlements types and locations.

The research I have conducted has yielded many results regarding architectural development in Al-Bireh, during the Crusader period, it was originally a nuclear settlement. An early Crusader

document dating from 1115 C.E. describes Al-Bireh as having a castle or a tower surrounded by a wall. Historians such as William of Tyre and Fulcher of Charters mention a tower in Al-Bireh used to shelter women and children from attack by the Fatimid army of Ascalon in 1124. The next phase of Al-Bireh's development during this period was from a nuclear settlements to an agricultural village, evidenced by houses on either side of (Shari Mughtarebeen), the main street, a church, administrative and other buildings. The plan of Al-Bireh at this developmental stage is similar to the plan of other villages such as Qubeibe and Al-Ziph. The village of Al-Bireh next grew and developed into a town, as described by the German historian Theodrich in 1172. At this stage, farms and manor houses surrounded Al-Bireh, which was called Magna Mahumeria, as distinguished from Qubeiba Brava Mahmeria.

During the period covered in my research, it is clear that the Crusaders imitated and adapted the art and architectural styles of many earlier periods, including Hellenistic, Roman, Byzantine and Islamic. Each of these forms of eastern architecture influenced the building styles of the Crusaders.

Without doubt, the remains of the Crusader-period buildings in Al-Bireh are in need of restoration, particularly the administrative building, depots and church. More information about Al-Bireh remains to be uncovered by examining architectural and archeological evidence such as pottery, coins, and glass still to be unearthed in future excavations.