



ABSTRACT SUBMISSION

Following Don Whitcombs Patterns of Early Islamic Urbanism to the Frontiers: The Case of Anazarbos/Ayn Zarba in Cilicia

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Abstract

Don Whitcomb's brilliant scholarship as a one of the founders of Islamic Archaeology world has contributed enormously to several key areas most notably material culture and patterns of urbanism established in the first several centuries after the conquests. Don successfully applied his observations of patterns on the relationships of mosques, palaces, baths, and suqs, to his own excavations at Ayla, but also to numerous other cities: Fustat, Qaysariya, and Jerusalem to name a few. This paper, offered in the spirit of great admiration and gratitude, seeks to apply the same hypothetical and intellectually curious pattern-based approach to a city of eastern Cilicia that, on the Byzantine frontier was far from cities in more central lands. While the monuments and building programs that shaped Anazarbos from the late Hellenistic period to the fall of the Armenian kingdom in the thirteenth century have been highlighted by a host of travelogs, archaeological surveys, and excavations, the process and mechanisms of Late Antique to early Medieval/early Islamic transformations to a frontier town remain undocumented. New archaeological information and urban patterns of the Early Islamic cities formed from preexisting Byzantine ones in particular, makes it now possible to shed light onto Anazarbos' historical continuum and evaluate the local impact of the Islamic urban conversion. This paper hypothesizes that Anazarbos was transformed with the same arrangement of key urban institutions, as argued by Whitcomb, that were applied to Umayyad cities in central lands, intentionally as a way to 'civilize' the frontiers of Islam.

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