

Übersetzung des Artikels auf Al Jazeera aus der französischen in die englische Sprache von Dr. phil. Jürgen Jansen :

A German project to present Jerusalem architecture



Caption to go with photo 1 : The International Society for Castle Research is working on an exhibition on Muslim and Christian Pilgrimages to Jerusalem in medieval times (aljazeera.net)

The International Castle Research Society, based in Aachen, Germany, is pursuing its vision to create a travelling exhibition to tour Germany as well as internationally, entitled « Muslim and Christian Pilgrimages in Medieval Times – Meeting of Orient and Occident ». This exhibition aims to present to its visitors several exhibits representing common features of Muslim and Christian architectural styles thus furthering inter-religious dialogue.

Bernhard Siepen, architect and president of ICRS, talked about proposed representations of Jerusalem architecture, first of all models of the Dome of the Rock and the Church of the Sepulchre. These models will present common architectural features by showing a common point in the history of the two communities in connection with Aachen cathedral.

Mr Siepen talked to Aljazeera.net about the vision of the Society which was established in 1996, aiming to use its models and exhibitions to build inter-cultural bridges. So far, this vision has been pursued through three exhibitions that among others featured castles in medieval France or Muslim catapults and siege engines as well as castles both Muslim and Christian of Crusader times.



Caption with photo 2 : Mr Siepen, president of the International Castle Research Society, stressed the relations that exist between the cultures

Architecture and History

The German architect spoke of the great success these three exhibitions have had in Germany and Europe as well as in the US, drawing more than one million visitors, young and old, people interested in architecture as well those interested as in history. He also expressed his hopes for a similar success to be achieved by the coming exhibition of the ICRS featuring the Dome of the Rock and the Church of the Sepulchre.

A temporary representation model of the Dome of the Rock was created under supervision of an expert group of historians and architects. It uses hundreds of wooden elements and is precise in its dimension in relation to the original.

The representation model, on a base of 2 by 2 metres and 140 centimetres in height, opens up to one side so as to allow a view of the interior. It comes with copious explanations provided on the different stages of construction of the Dome of the Rock since its second rebuilding, especially also the grey colouring of the dome which existed for several centuries before former King Hussein of Jordan ordered the golden covering of 1963 then 1993.

The plan is to exhibit this temporary model of the Dome of the Rock alongside the model under construction of the Church of the Sepulchre, both representing in the state the buildings were in during the 12th and 13th centuries. This second model shows certain

elements of this famous church that have been lost over time such as its belltower that became the dome. According to Mr SIEPEN these two models will be arranged on a base of 29 square metres, accompanied by figurines representing Muslim and Christian visitors to Jerusalem from different ethnic groups and nationalities, all arranged in activities re-enacting scenes of the time.

Mr Siepen sees as his object the opening up of the German Castle Society to all those who in the Arab world are interested in an inter-cultural dialogue enabling them to participate in and support the Society's activities.



Caption to go with photo 3 : ELYAS stressed the specific situation of the city of Aachen where the models were created

Dr Nadeem ELYAS, who initiated the project, explained the aim of the exhibition is to strengthen the understanding of the cultural heritage common to Muslims and Christians living in Germany and to present the sites sacred to both communities at AL-Quds.

Dr ELYAS, former head of the Muslim Central Council in Germany, confirmed to Aljazeera.net that the fact Aachen was chosen to accept the two models was due to the specific situation of this German town which was the first centre of diplomatic exchanges between the occident and the Muslims. In the 8th century (according to European counting), then King Charlemagne sent three envoys from Aachen to the Abbasid Caliph Haroun Al-Rashid in Baghdad. Dr ELYAS, citing German historical and archaeological research, pointed out the parallel aspects of the polygonal shape, between the architecture of Aachen cathedral built by Charlemagne and the Dome of the Rock which was erected much earlier.

For original Arab text visit : <http://www.aljazeera.net/news/pages/80fb2f30-2f37-404d-ba52-3120cc55e502>