THE MOSAICS OF THE DOME OF THE ROCK IN JERUSALEM AND THE GREAT MOSQUE OF DAMASCUS: A MUSLIM SYMBOLISM

by

Elizabeth June Adey
B.A., University of Victoria, 1980

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT
OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF ARTS

in the Department
of
History in Art

We accept this thesis as conforming
to the required standard

[redacted]
Dr. S. Anthony Welch

[redacted]
Dr. John Osborne

[redacted]
Dr. John Oleson

Supervisor: Professor S. Anthony Welch

ABSTRACT

The Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem (completed 691-692 A.D.) and the Great Mosque in Damascus (705-715 A.D.) contain the only extant mosaic schemes in the Middle East executed during the Umayyad Caliphate. As such, they are among the earliest examples of Islamic architectural decoration. They remain, however, distinct from later developments in that they lack the geometric patterning and elaborate inscriptions associated with later Islamic monuments. Differences in context also separate these two buildings from each other. The Dome of the Rock, in form likely modelled on Christian martyria, was built on the site of Solomon's Temple in a city holy to the three scriptured religions -- Judaism, Christianity and Islam. It serves a commemorative function. The Great Mosque of Damascus, by definition a uniquely Islamic architectural form, serves as the main mosque of this trading centre, and Umayyad capital city.

Differences in decorative motifs further divide the two schemes. The Dome of the Rock mosaics display an abundance of luxurious acanthus plants, vine scrolls, cornucopias, vases and jewels. In the Great Mosque these elements, if present at all, are relegated

to a minor role; palaces, colonnades and a broad river comprise the major elements.

Due to the disparity in architectural setting and iconography of the two schemes art-historians have tended to consider each program as a separate entity. The formalist school dealing solely with aesthetic concerns, ascribed a decorative significance to the motifs. Conversely, writers using a sociological and political approach conclude that the mosaics of the Dome of the Rock have a greater import: they were directed primarily at non-Muslims and served to indicate that Islam had superseded the previous scriptured religions as the final and perfect embodiment of God's will. The mosaics of the Great Mosque are interpreted as depicting the material world under the domination of Islam. No element of congruity between the two schemes is suggested by either school. This thesis postulates that an underlying unity of conception links these two decorative programs. It proceeds from an examination of the historical and architectural importance of the Dome of the Rock in chapter one to a catalogue of its decorative motifs and addresses the sources, arrangement and symbolism of the decorative program in chapter two. Chapters three and four deal with the Great Mosque in Damascus in a parallel manner. It will be seen that when these mosaic schemes are examined in the light of Quranic paradise imagery, almost every motif from the verdant acanthus plants and scrolls of the Dome of the Rock to the towers, palaces and river of the Great Mosque are specific

references to paradise verses in the Quran. Each scheme illustrates aspects of the Muslim vision of paradise, together forming a complete visual explication of the paradise awaiting the True Believer.

Examiners: [redacted]

Dr. S. Anthony Welch

[redacted]

Dr. John Osborne

[redacted]

Dr. John Oleson

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PLANS

(All plans were taken from Oleg Grabar, The Formation of Islamic Art and drawn by Brian Grison)

PLATES

Dome of the Rock

Great Mosque of Damascus

(All plates were taken from K.A.C. Creswell, Early Muslim Architecture vol 1)

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I would like to thank my supervisor, Dr. Anthony Welch, for all he has taught me and Dr. John Osborne, Dr. John Oleson and Mr. Leslie Dawn for their help and encouragement.

DEDICATION

To my parents

INTRODUCTION

The decorative programs of the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem and of the Great Mosque in Damascus are the only surviving mural mosaics executed under Umayyad patronage in the Middle East.[1] The importance of these schemes as the foundation of a rich tradition of Islamic decorative art cannot be underestimated. Scholars have tended to consider the two programs as separate entities for a number of reasons: the differences in location of the two schemes, in purpose of the buildings -- the Dome of the Rock serves a commemorative function, while the Great Mosque is the central mosque of a large city -- and most strikingly of all, in iconography.

The mosaics in the interior of the Dome of the Rock display an abundance of acanthus plants, vine scrolls, cornucopias, vases and jewels. Those of the Great Mosque of Damascus, however, although similar in technique, manifest a startling change in imagery. Palaces, colonnades and a broad river form the main elements at Damascus. The major motifs at the Dome of the Rock, if present here at all, are relegated to a secondary role.

Two opposed scholarly methodologies have been applied to both decorative programs. Van Berchem, a formalist, deals almost exclusively with aesthetic concerns, and ascribes a solely decorative significance to the motifs. She is puzzled by the dichotomy of imagery between Jerusalem and Damascus.[2] Oleg Grabar, on the other hand, employs a socio-political methodology: the

mosaics of the Dome of the Rock are directed primarily at non-Muslims and indicate that Islam, the final and perfect embodiment of God's will, has superseded the previous scriptural religions -- Judaism and Christianity.[3] The mosaics at Damascus depict the material world under the domination of Islam.

Although of landmark importance, Grabar's hypothesis is somewhat fragmentary in its approach to individual motifs. While addressing the historical situation at the time of construction, it does not in every case explain the choice of motifs or the diversity of imagery between the two schemes.

This thesis will attempt both to synthesize previous scholarly research and to explain the dichotomy between the two mosaic programs, in the belief that the Quranic descriptions of paradise can account for the various motifs used in both buildings and the dichotomy between the two schemes.

For the convenience of the non-Muslim reader dates are provided from the Islamic and Gregorian calendars, and no diacritical marks are used. To avoid confusion, all architectural terms and proper names have been rendered in their common forms.

CHAPTER ONE: Historical, Religious and Architectural Concerns Pertinent to the Erection of the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem

The city of Jerusalem holds an important place in Muslim theology. Muslims regard it as the third most holy city in the world and as the site of miraculous events. Jerusalem was, in addition, a holy city for the two other religions accorded a special place by Islam -- Judaism and Christianity. Jerusalem acquired both a temporal and spiritual significance for Islam.

Jews and Christians erected splendid monuments in this city to glorify their holy sites. Clearly, if Muslims were to gain converts to their religion which offered the perfect and final revelation of God's word, it was of critical importance that they develop an architectural and artistic tradition which would bear comparison with those of the preceding religions.

The mosaics of the Dome of the Rock comprise one of the earliest complete examples of Muslim art to have survived. The decorative scheme must be viewed not only by itself, but also in the context of the building which houses it. Muslims regarded the site as having religious, historical and political significance. In conjunction with the then prevailing ideology of Muslim expansion, this largely explains the meaning of the building. This chapter will define the aspects which provide the broader context of the decorative scheme, without which any investigation would be incomplete.

As Jerusalem is crucial to the three great religions that have some common features of theology, the true importance of Jerusalem to Islam does not date from the political takeover of the city in 638 A.D. but rather from the inception of Islam. Aspects of the pre-Muslim history of Jerusalem were incorporated in Muslim theology, therefore the earlier history is significant.

King David seized the city of Jerusalem about 1,000 B.C. gaining thereby a capital from which to rule a national state. Jerusalem became the principal shrine for Judaism with the ceremonial transfer of the Ark of the Covenant from Kiriath-Jearim to Jerusalem. Bright suggests that David wanted to legitimize the state in the eyes of the populace by fostering the idea that the shrine in which the Ark was kept was a national institution.[1]

Upon the death of King David, his son Solomon became ruler (961-922 B.C.). King Solomon conducted no serious military campaigns during his reign, but concentrated upon strengthening his kingdom internally and maintaining amicable trade relations with his neighbours. Solomon took advantage of the country's proximity to the trade routes from Egypt and Arabia into northern Syria to establish strong trade relations. The Red Sea trade seems to have brought gold, silver, rare woods and ivory from the African coast, while the caravan trade from Arabia supplied gold, jewels and spices. Although Solomon was generally successful in maintaining the Empire, there were areas of difficulty. Edom and Syria both became trouble spots, and portions of each were eventually lost to the Empire.

Solomon also began a great building program in Jerusalem which as Kenyon states ". . . was completely to transform a small Late-Bronze-Early Iron [age] town into a city of famed magnificence."[2] The site, structure and subsequent history of the Solomonic Temple had much to do with the erection of the Dome of the Rock, as will be shown later. In addition to the splendid temple which housed the Ark of the Covenant, Solomon built an elaborate palace complex.

After Solomon's death his Empire disintegrated. Israel and Judah became separate states, sometimes in alliance, at other times in a state of war. During the mid-eighth century the two states prospered under capable leadership, and utilized the trade routes along the Transjordan, into northern Arabia and across to Phoenicia. The Red Sea trade also revived. This state of affairs continued without serious interruption for two centuries.

In 587 B.C. after Jerusalem had fallen to the Babylonians, Nebuchadnezzar ordered the city burnt and its walls levelled, including the Temple. A large portion of the Jewish population went into forced or voluntary exile. With the victory of the Persian King Cyrus over the Babylonians in 538 B.C., the Jewish community was free to return to Jerusalem and Cyrus ordered the Temple rebuilt. Subsequently Jerusalem was occupied by a succession of Eastern Mediterranean conquerors: in 332 B.C. Alexander the Great, in 203 B.C. Antiochus III, in 170 B.C. Antiochus Epiphanes. The Temple was desecrated. No longer the major shrine of the Jewish people, the Temple served the city. Dissenting priests apparently tried to

re-organise Judaism into a Syro-Hellenic cult, culminating in the introduction of the cult of Zeus.[3]

The Hasmoneans, a Jewish sect under the leadership of Mattathias (d. 167-166 B.C.) and his sons, rebelled against the restrictive edicts of Antiochus. A revolt that spread from the village of Modi'in united all those opposed to Antiochus' policy. By repeatedly defeating the Seleucid armies they ensured the continued existence of the Jewish religion. In 164 B.C. they took Jerusalem and purified and rededicated the Temple. An alliance with Rome was established in 161 B.C. In 152 B.C. the appointment of Mattathias' youngest son as high priest guaranteed an effective source of power. Later the role of high priest, ruler and commander of the Jewish peoples became a hereditary right of the Hasmoneans. Hyrcanus (134-104 B.C.) continued the territorial expansion by conquering Idumea, Samaria and portions of the Transjordan. Dissension between the Hasmoneans and the Pharisees, which had weakened Hasmonean power, erupted into open conflict during the reign of Yannai (103-76 B.C.). Pompey's annexation of Palestine brought Hasmonean power to an end.

The Parthians seized Jerusalem in 40 B.C. Three years later Herod's troops entered the city. Herod ruled over Judea for thirty-three years, dying in 4 B.C. He rebuilt and extended the city walls and initiated the re-building of the Temple.

In 70 A.D. Titus assaulted Jerusalem. A long siege ensued, ending in the sacking and burning of the Temple. The land was again placed under the administration of a Roman governor. After the

Bar Kochba revolt, Hadrian renamed the city Colonia Aelia Capitolina.[4] A temple dedicated to Dionysus was erected on the site of the Solomonic Temple, and Jews were excluded on pain of death from their Holy City.

After the Edict of Milan (313 A.D.) had legalized the Christian religion Jerusalem became increasingly a Christian city. Christians left the Temple area untouched as an open square and built many churches outside the old city boundaries. The visit of Helena, the mother of Constantine, in 326 A.D. coincided with the discovery of what was believed to be the True Cross. In 325 A.D. at the Council of Nicea, Bishop Macarius of Jerusalem had pleaded for the uncovering of the Tomb of Christ which tradition located under the Temple of Jupiter, west of Hadrian's Forum. Constantine gave permission and also commissioned the building of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre which was consecrated with due ceremony in 335 A.D.[5] This structure became one of the most holy sites in Christendom.

Jerusalem fell to the Persians under Chosroes III in 614 A.D. Upon the death of Chosroes in 628 A.D. the city was retaken by the Roman Emperor Heraclius and in 638 A.D. Muslim Arabs captured Jerusalem. The city fell after many months of siege. Baladhuri gives the following account of the surrender:

> ...the inhabitants of Jerusalem asked to capitulate to Abu-'Ubaidah on the same terms as those of the cities of Syria as regards tax and kharaj, and to have the same treatment as their equals elsewhere, provided the one to make the contract be

> 'Umar ibn-al-Khattab in person, Abu-'Ubaidah communicated this in writing to 'Umar who came first to al-Jabiyah in Damascus and then to Jerusalem. He made the terms of capitulation with the people of Jerusalem to take effect and gave them a written statement.[6]

Jerusalem was captured just six years after the death of the Prophet. The Muslim faith had come into existence with the revelations received from Allah between 610-632 A.D. by the Prophet Muhammad (570-632 A.D.). The faith started at Mecca, later the spiritual centre of Islam. A temporary migration named the Hijra from a hostile Mecca to a receptive Medina in 622 A.D. marks the inception of the Muslim religious and political state.[7] The new religion soon spread beyond Arabia motivated by proselytizing zeal. By 640 A.D. Syria, Palestine and Iraq were conquered, by 642 A.D. Lower Egypt; Iran fell in 651, and the conquest of Spain was underway by 711 A.D.

Although there are conflicting opinions as to whether the Quran was written down in full during the Prophet's lifetime, Muslims consider it to be the directly inspired, literal Word of God revealed through Muhammad.[8] The Quran preaches a message of strict monotheism and as such is seen as the final and perfect rendering of the message imperfectly transmitted in the Jewish and Christian Scriptures. The authenticity of the Quran as a 'revealed' document is sometimes questioned as it embodies concepts such as the Last Judgment, Paradise, Heaven and Hell, and names prophets common to Christianity and Judaism.

Sceptics suggest that Muhammad was influenced by the preceding scriptures and those of break-away Christian sects. If the Quran is considered within the context of Islamic belief, its nature as a 'revealed' book precludes any possibility that its transmitter merely copied earlier scriptures, but allows for his having reiterated the truths found in them.

Jews and Christians were accorded a special position under Muslim rule as being Ahl al-Kitab, 'People of the Book'. They were recognised as possessors of a scripture and therefore as members of the 'revealed' religions.[9]

The taking of Jerusalem is especially important to Islam because Muslims venerate it as the third holiest city after Mecca and Medina. They called Jerusalem 'Iliya' madinat bayt al-Makdis (Aelia, the City of the Temple), usually shortened to 'bayt al-Makdis'. The reference is to Solomon's Temple in the 'al-haram al-Sharif' (the Sacred precinct).[10] In the Quran sura/chapter 5, verse/ayat 21 (The Table Spread), Moses says to his people: "O my people! Go into the holy land which Allah hath ordained for you.",[11] i.e. Israel. Hadith reports that the Last Judgment and Resurrection would take place in Jerusalem.[12]

The most complex Muslim traditions about Jerusalem arose in connection with the opening verse of Sura 17 (The Children of Israel): "Glorified be he Who carried His servant by night from the Inviolable Place of Worship to the Far Distant Place of Worship the neighbourhood whereof We have blessed, . . ." Arberry's translation renders the

verse thus: "Glory to Him, Who carried His servant by night from the Holy Mosque to the Further Mosque, the precincts of which we have blessed . . ."[13] The Holy Mosque refers to the mosque of the Ka'aba in Mecca. The Servant is generally assumed to be the Prophet Muhammad. The identification of the Further Mosque poses a problem.[14] One tradition identified this with a small sanctuary on the outskirts of Mecca. Another located it in heaven, and a third in Jerusalem, specifically the site of Solomon's Temple.[15]

Ibn Ishaq[16] in the earliest extant biography of Muhammad described the 'Night Journey' in great detail. In his account, the Prophet was awakened by the Angel Gabriel who placed him on the back of a white beast named Buraq, and was then transported from Mecca to Jerusalem. There, having met Abraham, Moses and other prophets, he was offered two vessels: one of wine and the other which he chose, of milk. When he returned to Mecca and told the people what had transpired, they disbelieved him until he described Jerusalem, and Abu Bakr, who had visited the city, confirmed his description. Ibn Ishaq then gives details of the Mi'raj or Ascension of the Prophet.[17]

Hadith usually link the Night Journey with the Ascension of the Prophet.[18] Soucek concludes that to use Jerusalem as the site of Muhammad's meeting with earlier Prophets and as the point of departure for his Ascension served a dual purpose. It ensured that under Islamic rule Jerusalem would retain its status as one of the most holy places on earth. It also linked traditions about the Solomonic Temple with Islam while rejecting Christian ideas about the Temple site.[19]

In any event the legendary association became firmly embedded in Islamic literature and art.

The Temple site was the focal point of Umar's reported visit to Jerusalem in 638 A.D. to sign the peace treaty. The Byzantine historian Theophanes writing his Chronographia towards the end of the eighth century states that:

> Sophronius,[20] the chief of Jerusalem, obtained from Omar a treaty in favour of all the inhabitants of Palestine, after which Omar entered the Holy City clothed in camel-hair garments all soiled and torn, and making a show of piety as a cloak for his diabolical hypocrisy, demanded to be taken to what in former times had been the Temple built by Solomon. This he straightway converted into an oratory for blasphemy and impiety. When Sophronius saw this, he exclaimed, 'Verily, this is the abomination of desolation spoken of by Daniel the Prophet, and it now stands in the Holy Place.'[21]

The Islamic view of this visit to Jerusalem is preserved in the Muthir al-Ghiram, written in 1351 A.D. by Jamal ad-Din Ahmad who cites the earliest Muslim traditions.[22] Al-Walid ibn Muslim states that the Temple site was covered with a dung heap which Umar ordered cleared away.[23] Shahad ibn Aus:

> . . . who accompanied Omar when he entered the Noble Sanctuary of the Holy City on the day when Allah caused it to be reduced by capitulation [related that] Omar entered by

> the Gate of Muhammad, crawling on his hands and knees, and all those who were with him, until he came up to the Court. There he looked around to right and to left, and, glorifying Allah, said: 'By Allah, verily this . . . must be the Mosque of David of which the Apostle spake to us, saying 'I was conducted thither in the Night Journey.' Then 'Omar advanced to the forepart of the Haram Area, and to the western side-thereof, and he said: 'Let us make this the place for the Mosque'.[24]

None of the earlier traditionalists mention a Mosque being built under Umar.[25] Arculf visiting Jerusalem in 670 A.D., however, states that: "On the spot where the Temple once stood, near the eastern wall, the Saracens have now erected a square house of prayer, in a rough manner, by raising beams and planks upon some remains of old ruins; this is their place of worship."[26] Creswell concludes that there is no reason to doubt that Umar had a mosque built in the Temple area.[27]

What did Solomon, called Suleiman by Muslims, mean to Islam and why is Umar reported to have insisted that he visit this site? The Quran contains many references to Solomon, placing him in the line of Prophets started by Abraham (Sura 4, Women verse 165). Later on the Quran states that Solomon could control the wind and make the jinns (spirits), work under his command (sura 34, verse 12 and following Saba). He was regarded by Islam as one of the four great world rulers along with Nimrod, Nebuchadnezzar and Alexander.[28] He was believed to have possessed powers of magic and divination allied with attributes

of wisdom and justice. Islam inherited a store of Rabbinic traditions about Solomon which enlarge on these themes.[29] Muslims so venerated Solomon that one of the most accomplished of the Ottoman Sultans took the regnal name Suleiman (Suleiman the Lawgiver 1520-1566 A.D.).[30] He was not unique in doing this.

Soucek's seminal article in The Temple of Solomon deals with the Islamic traditions concerning the construction, decoration and destruction of the Temple and the associations it had for Islam. She surveys the various Muslim historians who concerned themselves with the site, including Tabari (d. 923 A.D.) who described the throne of Solomon as being made of gold inlaid with magnificent pearls and jewels.[31] Tabari also mentioned trees that grew spontaneously in the Temple.[32] Muhallabi (d. 990 A.D.) elaborated on this theme describing gardens that contained artificial trees of gold which bore real fruit.[33] Dinawari (d.c. 895 A.D.) described the Temple thus: "It shone in the darkness of a moonless night like a brilliant lamp because of the quantities of jewels and gold used in its construction."[34]

We know that Solomon built the Temple on Mount Moriah over the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite (2 Chronicles 3:1).[35] He built it of dressed stone with a cedar roof and a cypress floor. An inner sanctuary at the rear end housed the Ark of the Covenant and at the front end there seems to have been a vestibule (1 Kings 6:1-18). The dimensions of the Temple are recorded as having been sixty cubits in length and twenty cubits in breadth, (i.e. 27.43 metres by 9.14 metres) the vestibule adding another twenty cubits to the length (2 Chronicles

3:2-5).[36] The walls and floor were covered with gold and decorated with carved figures of cherubim, palm trees, and open flowers (1 Kings 6:29-31). Settings of precious stones contributed to the marvellous effect (2 Chronicles 3:6). Josephus waxes enthusiastic: ". . . the whole Temple shined and dazzled the eyes of such as entered, by the splendour of the gold that was on every side of them."[37]

The Temple furnishings, as described in the Book of Chronicles were equally fabulous. They included elaborate altars, a 'molten sea', i.e. a huge cast metal basin, ten golden lampstands and two pillars wreathed with golden pomegranates (2 Chron. 3:15-16, 5:7). Josephus reports the Temple furnishings as: ten thousand candlesticks, eighty thousand pouring vessels and a hundred thousand gold vials, adding that "Solomon made all these things for the honour of God, with great variety and magnificence, sparing no cost, but using all possible liberality in adorning the temple, and these things he dedicated to the treasures of God."[38]

The Book of Ezra 6:3-5 informs us that during the reign of Darius a decree was found in which Cyrus stated that the Temple should be rebuilt, its dimensions to be a height and breadth of sixty cubits with three courses of great stones and one course of timber. The Book of Haggai records that work on the new Temple commenced in the second year of Darius' reign on the twenty-fourth day of the sixth month (Haggai 1:1, 1:14-15). For financial reasons, the building was not as big as the Solomonic Temple. The interior decoration was not described, but the vessels removed to Babylon from the Solomonic

Temple were to be restored (Ezra 6:1-6). These included a hundred thousand basins of gold and two thousand four hundred and ten vessels of silver (Ezra 1:9-11). Josephus may have used this account as his source for the furnishing of the original Temple.

Josephus lived in Jerusalem during the construction of the Temple under Herod the Great, and he described the Temple in detail. The approach to it was through three courts, the outermost for Jewish women, the middle for Jewish men, and the innermost for priests. Elaborate gates covered with gold and silver provided entrance to the courts and Temple. The Temple was in the middle of the innermost court. Its facade had a height and breadth of one hundred cubits. The interior seems to have been divided into two parts by a gate and a curtain embroidered with blue and fine linen, scarlet and purple, 'a kind of image of the universe', scarlet for fire, fine flax for earth, blue for air and purple for the sea. The gate that separated the two sections was covered with gold and adorned with golden clusters of grapes. The outward face of the Temple was covered with gold plate that reflected a fiery splendour.[39]

The Islamic accounts already referred to contain elements which were not included in the Bible or in the writings of Josephus. These elements seem to have been derived from the Talmud and other Rabbinical sources.[40] Islam saw the Solomonic Temple as one of the great religious monuments of the past and the site of miraculous events. Soucek concludes that: "While most of these legends had their origins in Jewish traditions, the history of the Temple was considered to be part

of the past of Islam, since Islam was heir to the Biblical tradition. In addition, certain aspects of the legends dealing with the Temple, such as its construction by demons and its opulent decoration appear to have been further elaborated on by Islamic authors."[41]

The Dome of the Rock

The Dome of the Rock, the earliest surviving monument of Islamic architecture, was completed in 691-692 A.D./72 A.H. on the site of Solomon's Temple. A mosaic inscription in the interior gives the following information: "HATH BUILT THIS DOME THE SERVANT OF ALLAH' AB[D ALLAH THE IMAM AL-MAMUN] COMMANDER OF THE FAITHFUL IN THE YEAR TWO AND SEVENTY-ALLAH ACCEPT OF HIM."[42] This appears on the south face, at the east end of the intermediate octagon. The date falls within the reign of Abd al-Malik and the bracketed letters are generally believed to be a substitution for his name by that of the Abbasid Caliph, al-Ma'mun (813-833 A.D.). The clumsily executed portion is thought to be a forgery. Creswell provides the two major reasons for this conclusion: the inscriber's failure to change the date and his crowding together of al-Ma'mun's name and title. The newer mosaic is of a darker tint than the rest of the band. Creswell states that the forgery probably took place in 831 A.D./216 A.H., as bronze plates on the lintels of the entrances bear inscriptions giving the name and date of al-Ma'mun.[43]

The date when construction began has not been firmly established. Grabar,[44] supported by the traditionalist Suyati,[45] mentions that

there is some evidence for a date of 688 A.D./69 A.H. Hoag suggests the dates 685-686 A.D., or 687-688 A.D., but provides no reasons for his conclusions.[46]

The Dome of the Rock is a domed octagonal structure with two ambulatories (plan 1). At its centre is the Rock that forms the top of Mount Moriah. The exposed portion measures about 18 metres from north to south and about 13 metres from east to west, with a maximum height of 1.5 metres above floor level. A cave beneath this is entered by a flight of steps on the south side. The cave measures 7 metres by 5 metres with a height of less than 3 metres.[47] On the right at the bottom of the stairs, there is a mihrab measuring 1.37 metres by 0.76 metres and consisting of the rock surface framed by an arch resting on two pilasters, set in a rectangular frame. Across the base of the arch runs an archaic kufic inscription. Creswell suggests that this is the oldest existing mihrab in Islam, dating from before 707-709 A.D. when the more usual concave mihrab was introduced.[48]

The wooden dome of the building is set on a 0.50 metre high drum and measures 20.44 metres in diameter. The height from the ground to the springing of the dome is 20.40 metres.[49] Ibn al-Faqih who saw the dome in 903 A.D. described it as having an inner and outer shell covered by sheets of lead and plates of copper gilt respectively.[50] The dome fell in 1016-17 A.D./407 A.H. and was restored in 1022-23 A.D./413 A.H.[51] Anodised gilt aluminum covers the present dome.

Each of the eight exterior walls is 9.5 metres in height from the ground to the beginning of the parapet, which adds another 2.60 metres. Five windows approximately 4.5 metres in height and 2 metres in width pierce each of the eight sides.[52] The windows have double grilles dated by inscription to the reign of Sultan Suleiman (1520-1526 A.D.).[53] Approximately twenty windows have retained their original inscriptions; the rest have been altered.[54] Ibn al-Faqih says that the windows were glazed.[55] Al-Umari mentions outer grilles of iron.[56] They are now covered by faience tile. Sixteen windows 3.3 metres in height by 1.4 metres in width are set in the rotunda of the dome.[57]

Of the four doors facing the cardinal points of the compass, the oldest dates from the time of Sultan Suleiman. No information about the original doors survives.[58] Eight columns support a portico with a vault running back to the southern entrance door. The northern and eastern porches have central vaults flanked by two small rooms. Traces of the original columns are still visible. The western porch is also flanked by chambers but no traces of the original columns can be seen. An inscription under the hood of the western door states that it was restored in 1194 A.H./1780 A.D. by Abd al-Hamid.[59] The southern portico seems to exemplify the original appearance of all the doorways. The three others were enclosed to provide flanking rooms before 1344-45 A.D.[60]

– The interior of the building consists of two arcades. The inner one is composed of groups of three columns on either side of a

pier -- in all, four piers and twelve columns, which surround the Rock and support the drum. The outer octagonal arcade has groups of two columns on either side of a pier -- eight piers and sixteen columns in all. The columns of both arcades are of varying types and diameters with shafts ranging from 64 centimetres to 85 centimetres in diameter. Some have Corinthian capitals, others composite capitals. The bases appear uniform because they are covered by panelled boxes of marble but they vary considerably in height and pattern.[61] Creswell suggests that they were 'borrowed' from other buildings.[62] Although the height of the columns has not been recorded they seem to measure approximately 5.3 metres from the foot of the base to the top of the capital. The arches above the columns add approximately another 3 metres.[63]

Abd al-Malik, the Caliph under whom the Dome of the Rock was built, had held several offices in the Umayyad Caliphate (661-749 A.D.). During the reign of his father Marwan (683-684 A.D.) receiving the governorship of Palestine, he remained in Damascus and sent a deputy in his place.[64] In 695 or 696 A.D. a uniquely Islamic coinage replaced figural imagery with words.[65] Abd al-Malik centralized power and made Arabic the language of administration. He reigned between 685 A.D. and 705 A.D.[66]

Abd al-Malik inherited a problem that had troubled the Umayyad Caliphate since its inception. Ibn Zubayr had opposed Umayyad rule and set himself up in Mecca in 680 A.D. as a rival Caliph. Yazid I despatched a force against him but died in 683 A.D., leaving Ibn

Zubayr in possession of Mecca.[67] At the height of his power Ibn Zubayr controlled the Hijaz and Iraq, and received nominal recognition from several other provinces. Abd al-Malik was only able to challenge Ibn Zubayr's hold in Iraq and the East after he had secured his own position in Syria. The struggle continued throughout the early years of Abd al-Malik's Caliphate and ended only with the death of Ibn Zubayr in 692 A.D. At this time Abd al-Malik was acknowledged as Caliph throughout the Empire.[68]

Scholars have addressed the possible reasons for the commissioning of the most elaborate building Islam had yet seen on a site with pre-Islamic associations. One theory often put forward suggests that the Dome of the Rock was established as an alternative pilgrimage site to the Ka'aba at Mecca. This theory which stems from Ya'qubi, one of the earliest Arab historians, writing in 874 A.D. is important enough to quote at length:

> Then Abd al-Malik forbade the people of Syria to make the pilgrimage to Mecca, and this by reason that . . . az Zubayr was wont to seize on them during the time of the pilgrimage, and force them to pay him allegience -- which, Abd al-Malik having knowledge of, forbade the people to journey forth to Makkah. But the people murmured thereat, saying. 'How dost thou forbid us to make the pilgrimage to Allah's house, seeing that the same is a commandment of Allah upon us?' But the Khalif assured them, 'Hath not Ibn Shihab as Zuhri (a celebrated Traditionalist) told you how the Apostle of Allah did say: Men shall journey to but three masjids;

> al-Masjid Haram (at Mecca), my Masjid (at Medina) and the Masjid of the Holy City (at Jerusalem)? So this last is now appointed for you in lieu of the Masjid al-Haram. And this Rock, of which it is reported that upon it the Apostle of Allah set his foot when he ascended into Heaven, shall be unto you in the place of the Ka'abah.' Then Abd al Malik built above the Sakhr a Dome . . . and the people took the custom of circumambulating the Rock even as they had paced around the Ka'abah, and the usage continued thus all the days of the dynasty of the Omayyads.[69]

Grabar states that this explanation was introduced by Goldziher and adopted by Creswell. It is based on the above-stated text of Ya'qubi.[70] Goitein adds further that according to Goldziher, Abd al-Malik intended to out-do Ibn Zubayr who was exploiting the holiness of Mecca for his own political ends.[71] Goitein writes that ". . . this theory about the motives for the erection of the Dome of the Rock has been generally accepted and invariably appears in historical textbooks dealing with the period. Abd al-Malik was nicknamed a second Jeroboam and even the circular ground plan of the magnificent building was explained as intended for the ceremony of the Tawaf, the circumambulation of the Sanctuary."[72]

Goitein points out, however, that the Muslim historiographers who deal with the conflict between the Umayyads and Ibn Zubayr, 'in the utmost detail', such as Tabari and the sources dependent on him, and Baladhuri, do not mention al-Malik's intention to establish

Jerusalem as a counter-Mecca. In fact Tabari points out that the four camps, those of al-Malik, Ibn Zubayr, Najda the Kharidjite and Ibn al-Hanafiya took part jointly in a pilgrimage to Mecca in 687 A.D./ 68 A.H.[73] It must be remembered, however, that the construction of the Dome of the Rock has not been conclusively proved to have begun before 69 A.H.; therefore it is hardly surprising that the four camps made a pilgrimage to Mecca.

Apparently as Islam spread through the Middle East, many of the faithful were unable to make the yearly pilgrimage to Mecca. Therefore some rites of the Hajj (pilgrimage), notably that of the Waquf -- the standing in the presence of God -- were observed in the provincial capitals. This, according to Goitein, probably accounts for the reports of Ya'qubi.[74] It is very unlikely that Abd al-Malik would have attempted to change such an important obligation as the pilgrimage to Mecca.[75]

In Early Muslim Architecture Creswell summarily dismisses Goitein's objections to this theory on the grounds that six Arab historians accepted the theory of the substitution without demur. Moreover the Dome of the Rock was not finished until 72 A.H. whereas the reported pilgrimage took place in 68 A.H.[76]

Grabar, however, supports Goitein's objections and adds a few details, the chief one being that it is doubtful whether the fairly small area of the Dome of the Rock would have been large enough to accommodate the complex rites of the tawaf. Further, if Abd al-Malik wanted to replace Mecca he would have chosen to build a structure that

more closely resembled the Ka'aba: "Since the sacramental and inalterable character of the Mekkan Sanctuary is fully apparent in its several reconstructions . . .".[77]

A second theory in wide circulation is based on the following passage from al-Muqaddasi:

> Now one day I said, speaking to my father's brother, 'O my Uncle, verily it was not well of the Khalif al-Walid to expend so much of the wealth of the Muslims on the Mosque of Damascus. Had he expended the same on making roads, or for caravanserais, or in the restoration of the Frontier Fortresses, it would have been more fitting and more excellent of him.' But my uncle said to me in answer, 'O my little Son, thou hast not understanding! Verily al Walid was right, and he was prompted to a worthy work. For he beheld Syria to be a country that had long been occupied by the Christians, and he noted herein the beautiful churches still belonging to them, so enchantingly fair and so renowned for their splendour, even as the Kumamah the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem, and the churches of Lydda and Edessa. So he sought to build for the Muslims a Mosque that should prevent their regarding these, and that should be unique and a wonder to the world. And in like manner is it not evident how the Khalif Abd al-Malik, noting the greatness of the Dome of al-Kumamah and its magnificence, was moved lest it should dazzle the minds of Muslims, and hence erected above the Rock, the Dome which is now seen there.'[78]

Creswell acknowledges this as a reason, although of secondary importance.[79] Goitein points out that Islamic buildings previous to this structure including the mosque described by Arculf, had been so simple that the splendid Christian churches could not have failed to make an impression on the second generation of Muslims. He concludes that:

> They intended to remove the fitna, the 'annoyance', constituted by the existence of the many fine buildings of worship of other religions. The very form of a rotunda . . . although it was foreign to Islam was destined to rival the many Christian domes. The inscriptions decorating the interior clearly display a spirit of polemic against Christianity, while stressing at the same time the Kuranic doctrine that Jesus Christ was a true prophet[80] . . . All this shows that rivalry with Christendom, together with the spirit of Islamic mission to the Christians, was at work at the creation of the famous Dome.[81]

Goitein's conclusions in this regard seem entirely reasonable.

The third explanation for the building of the Dome of the Rock is the sanctity of Jerusalem in the eyes of the Muslims, as evidenced by its place in the Quran and the legends which grew up around the Sura of the Night Journey mentioned earlier in this chapter, as well as the belief that on the Day of Judgment the Dead would be raised to life in Jerusalem. The veneration of the Holy Land was particularly cultivated by Muslim pietists and ascetics from a very early period.[82]

Grabar states that the exegesis of the Sura of the Night Journey as an explanation for the Dome of the Rock became generally accepted among Muslims.[83] He suggests, however, that it has its defects, notably that many early traditionalists, including Bukhari and Tabari, do not accept Jerusalem as the site of the Masjid al-Aqsa.[84] His second argument against accepting the association between the Ascension and the Dome of the Rock is archaeological. Since from very early times the qubbah al-mi'raj, the Martyrium of the Ascension, had stood next to the Dome of the Rock, it would have been redundant to have two buildings so close together commemorating the same event.[85]

The Dome of the Rock is built around the Rock which forms the top of Mount Moriah. Grabar raises the issue of whether the Rock had any significance for Islam at the time of the Conquest. There is no definite Biblical reference to the Rock, but the Talmud indicates that the Rock was a cornerstone for Herod's Temple.[86] Grabar states that ". . . in medieval times Mount Moriah in general and the Rock in particular were endowed in Jewish legend with a complex mythology. Mount Moriah, through its association with the Temple became the omphalos of the earth, where the tomb of Adam was to be found and where the first man was created."[87] He goes on to cite a more specific tradition that links the Rock to the sacrifice of Isaac by Abraham through an apparent confusion between the land of Moriah and Mount Moriah. This confusion can be seen in Josephus' Jewish Antiquities and became common throughout Jewish literature.[88] Christians transferred these associations to Golgotha.[89] Umar appears to have

been interested in the whole Temple site, not specifically the Rock, as Grabar points out.[90]

Abraham is revered in Islam as the first monotheist, the Friend of God, and the Ancestor of the Arabs.[91] Grabar offers a tentative hypothesis: "It is only through the person of Abraham that the ancient symbolism of the Rock could have been adapted to the new faith, since no strictly Muslim symbol seems to have been connected with it at so early a date."[92] If this were the case, Abd al-Malik had chosen the one symbol equally holy to Jews and Muslims.[93] Grabar may not place enough weight on the significance of King Solomon and his Temple to Islam. This significance must be taken into account in any hypothesis intended to explain the meaning of the Dome of the Rock.

The plan of the Dome of the Rock may have been influenced by local church architecture. Centrally-planned churches and martyria were especially common in the Holy Land from the reign of Constantine onwards. Churches were built at sites such as the Grotto of the Nativity, on the site of the Crucifixion and Resurrection, at the place on the Mount of Olives and at Mambre where Christ had taught the disciples.[94] A basilica is reported at the Grotto of the Nativity in Bethlehem as early as 333 A.D. Though it was replaced in the sixth century by the present building, the original foundations have been excavated. An octagon flanked by smaller rooms, was attached to the eastern side of the basilica hall. In the centre of the octagon three steps led up to a railing protecting a wide circular opening piercing the ceiling of the grotto beneath.[95]

The plan of the original Church of the Holy Sepulchre seems to have been a large rotunda with a concentric ambulatory surrounding Christ's Sepulchre. This centre room was encircled by twenty supports arranged in groups of four. A cross was formed by the four pairs of piers on the main axis. The original dome seems to have been timbered.[96]

Excavations on the Mount of Olives have revealed traces of the Imbomon, a sanctuary built in 370 A.D. by a Roman lady named Pomoenia to commemorate the site from which Christ rose to Heaven. A part of the circular outer wall has been found which indicates a diameter of roughly 18 metres for the rotunda. Remains of an outer colonnade were also found. Inside there seems to have been an ambulatory around a rock, thought to bear the footprints of the Ascending Christ.[97] This forms a striking parallel to the legend in which the Rock at the Dome of the Rock bears the footprints of the Prophet as he ascended to Heaven.

Centrally planned martyria appear on other sites throughout Palestine. Outside Palestine, however, centrally planned martyria were fairly rare in the fourth and fifth centuries. Krautheimer mentions the church of SS. Karpos and Polykarpos in Constantinople, probably built around 400 A.D. which seems to have had a domed centre room and an ambulatory. The plan and local traditions suggest that it was an early copy of the Holy Sepulchre.[98]

The Palestinian church of the Theotokos built on Mount Garizim and dated to 484 A.D., consists of an octagonal central room originally perhaps covered by a wooden dome or a pyramidal timber roof, with an ambulatory surrounded by chapels and galleries. It was dedicated to

the Mother of God and sanctified by a relic from the Rock of Calvary.[99]

As the Dome of the Rock serves a commemorative function the major part of the structure lacks the mihrab essential to a mosque; it is thus regarded not as a mosque but as a shrine or mashhad.[100] Grabar classifies it as a ciborium or reliquary above a sacred place similar to the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem.[101] Creswell points out that the diameter of the drum of the Dome of the Rock is 20.44 metres, strikingly similar to the diameter of the dome of the Holy Sepulchre at 20.46 metres.[102] Creswell claims that: "There is therefore little doubt that in designing the Dome of the Rock the diameter and proportions of the dome of the Anastasis (the Holy Sepulchre) were taken as a basis."[103] He also states that the Church of the Ascension on the Mount of Olives which was octagonal, had almost identical measurements to the outer sides of the intermediate octagon in the Dome of the Rock.[104]

It would certainly seem very likely that in form and association the structure of the Dome of the Rock serves an analogous function for Islam as the martyria scattered around Palestine did for Christians.

CHAPTER TWO: An Analysis of the Motifs, Sources and Symbolism of the Mosaics of the Dome of the Rock

The mosaics of the Dome of the Rock have presented a challenge to scholarly interpretation since serious study of the scheme began in 1924 with Creswell and Richmond. Their work was followed by that of Van Berchem in 1932.[1] Since this time, other theories have been offered by Grabar, Dodd, and others, on the significance both of the program as a whole and of individual elements. By and large, however, these interpretations have tended to ignore one important possible source for these images: the Quran itself. With this point in mind, this chapter will catalogue the motifs, examine past and present theories about them, and finally present an alternative interpretation based upon an analysis of the relationship of the motifs as a whole to Quranic descriptions of paradise.

The mosaics of the exterior of the drum were replaced by faience tile in 1545-1546 A.D./952 A.H. the date given in figures on the south-east buttress, south west face, top left hand corner. An inscription over the north door records that the mosaics of the outer walls of the octagon were replaced by faience tile in 1551-1552 A.D./959 A.H. These changes took place during the reign of the Ottoman Sultan Suleiman.[2] Early descriptions indicate that the decorative program of the exterior walls no longer reflects its original form, which paralleled that of the interior. Those mosaics in the interior of the Dome of the Rock that remain in their original form provide the primary source material for any investigation of this building.

Information about the missing exterior mosaics is limited. Muqqadasi in 985 A.D./375 A.H. reports that: "The pavement of the Sakhra as well as its walls, including the drum, are covered internally and externally in the manner we have described when speaking of the Great Mosque of Damascus."[3] Al-Umari in 1344-45 A.D./745 A.H., provides the first precise description: ". . . the building, externally is covered for a height of 7 cubits up to the gutter, by gold mosaic representing different plant patterns . . . and above the gutters is a wall 4 cubits in height, covered by mosaic of the kind just described."[4] In 1483 A.D. Fabri writes of palm trees, olive trees and cherubim.[5] (It is more likely that the so-called 'cherubim' were floral motifs flanked by wings, seen from a distance). De Aranda (1530 A.D.) states that: "This edifice, externally, from the middle downwards is all faced with very rich marble, from the middle upwards it is worked in rich mosaics, foliage, and other beautiful frescoes."[6] D'aveiro (1552 A.D.), amplifies this description slightly, adding that there are ". . . many designs of branches, roses, and other beautiful flowers."[7] These descriptions suggest that the lost mosaics of the exterior walls consisted of designs incorporating foliage, trees, scrolls and floral motifs on a gold ground, very much in the style of the mosaics surviving within.

Van Berchem saw fragments of the mosaics from the parapet above the exterior walls, in an architect's office in 1964. She judged them to be of an inferior quality with 'shapeless motifs' of foliage and scrolls in green on a gold background, crudely set into a layer of

white plaster. She ascribed them to a period when no craftsmen were available, or to an unspecified 'base period'.[8] There is no reason to doubt that these fragments accurately reflect the original exterior designs, but their dating is too imprecise to prove that the original exterior mosaics were technically inferior to those of the interior. Creswell mentions that traces of the original mosaic are extant on the soffits of the arch of the southern window in the northwest facade, but he provides no further information.[9]

In contrast to the exterior, the interior has suffered only marginal losses. The vaults of all four entrance porches may once have been decorated with mosaics.[10] Now, only the vault above the eastern door retains minor mosaic decoration in a checkerboard pattern with a border on three sides, (plate 1), tentatively attributed to restorations in 1027-28 A.D./418 A.H. on account of their rigid, unimaginative style.[11] The western entrance vault has been decorated with a modern copy of green and gold cubes with a tiled edge.[12] These patterns are of minor significance and appear nowhere else in the building. The northern and southern entrance vaults are now panelled in marble. The text of al-Umari (op cit.) suggests that mosaics once decorated the interior face of the circular arcade, now also panelled in marble. These losses are inconsequential, however, in comparison with the more than 1,200 square metres of surviving work.

In some places inscriptions record alterations and repairs. The mosaics of the drum, for example, bear an inscription in the lower register: "And the repairs to this glass mosaic took place in the

year 418"[13] i.e. 1027-28 A.D. (under the Fatimid Caliph Zahir). How fundamental these repairs were is a matter of dispute. Van Berchem states that the surviving interior mosaics form: ". . . a great homogeneous whole, conceived and carried out in the time of 'Abd al-Malik, various portions of which, however, had been more or less restored . . . the drum mosaics had been more or less re-done at the time of the inscription (418 A.H.) while preserving its original composition, with several portions practically intact."[14] Later the same writer points out that panels 9 and 10 of the drum are decorated with geometric designs in complete contrast to the rest of the decoration, done at some undetermined date.[15]

Stern, citing the insignificant position of the inscription, considers that some limited restoration took place.[16] While we can draw no sound inference about the exterior, it is generally agreed that most of the surviving mosaics of the interior were executed during the reign of Abd al-Malik.

The arrangement and sources of the mosaics of the Dome of the Rock and their symbolism have been a major preoccupation of scholars since serious research on this building began. Two major scholars in the field, Van Berchem and O. Grabar, represent dramatically opposed views.

Van Berchem, the formalist, suggests that the choice of motifs is governed by the shape of the surface to be covered. For example, the classical acanthus motif is chosen for a square or rectangular surface. When narrow, elongated surfaces are to be decorated,

however, vertical palm trees, olive trees, tall clumps of reeds or composite motifs such as vases bearing conventionalized flowers are used. Cornucopias laden with produce crown the summit of the return of the arches. Garlands of fruit and flowers reach up the narrow bands of the soffits.[17]

She states that: ". . . the decoration is constantly preoccupied in toning down the angles of the walls. In this vast decoration, where every movement is continuous, nothing must break the constant harmony. Thus the composition nearly always overflows from one surface to another, placed at right angles to the first."[18] There is an inherent contradiction between these two ideas. How can the decoration be tailored to particular surfaces and yet at the same time 'overflow from one surface to another.'?

Oleg Grabar, an art historian who employs a socio-political methodology, claims that: "Regardless of the Muslim associations that appear in the creation of the Dome of the Rock, the building's primary purpose was to be a monument for non-Muslims . . . an immanent (sic) building that served precise contemporary needs, the most crucial of which was to demonstrate to a Christian population . . . that Islam was here to stay."[19] He maintains that the use of crowns and jewels as decorative motifs ". . . was dictated by the desire to demonstrate that the 'unbelievers' had been defeated and brought into the fold of the true faith."[20] Further discussion of the views of these writers will be postponed until the motifs have been described in detail.

I suggest that the conception of paradise revealed in the Quran should be kept in mind as a possible iconographic source for the mosaics. In brief, the Quran depicts the True Believer dressed in fine silks and bracelets of gold and pearls, reclining in a verdant garden of palm trees, dates, olives, pomegranates and vines, through which flows a river. This imagery provides the means for understanding the motifs used in this beautiful scheme.

MOTIFS: A Catalogue Description

The mosaics display a rich variety of motifs, colours and details. No two motifs are repeated in exactly the same way. Only the major motifs according to Van Berchem's system of categorization, such as vases, scrolls and jewels, will be discussed at this point. Minor motifs such as border elements are considered in Appendix B.[21]

This vast mosaic scheme is composed of tesserae in six shades of blue glass ranging from dark indigo to turquoise blue, eight shades of green from aquamarine to a light green verging on lemon yellow, several shades of red from brick-red to a dark red-brown and also violet, brown, black, gold and silver. The glass tesserae are supplemented by stone cubes of white, gray and rose. Luminous circles of pale mother-of-pearl are scattered throughout the decoration. The background is gold. Cubes are all set flat with the exception of some of the gold and silver, which are inclined at an angle to produce a brilliant

shimmering effect in the reflected light. This is most noticeable on the spandrels and piers of the circular arcade.

Fantastic composite motifs of tree trunks bearing bulbous forms surrounded by palm fronds decorate the octagonal arcade, outer face, piers and spandrels. Plate 2 shows arch southeast 3. A chevron striped trunk supports branches laden with bunches of grapes or dates, and palm fronds in green and blue which enclose a bulbous motif with pine cone markings. Three tones, ranging from light to dark blue contrast with tones of green, brown and gold. The design is set on a background of glittering gold. Rosettes enclosing palmettes executed in green, gold and blue border the spandrel.

Each of the spandrels is decorated in minute detail. A conical ridged trunk supporting a bulbous floral motif, surrounded by palm fronds encircling naturalistic flowers, appears on spandrel 1 southwest 2 (plate 3). West 1 (plate 4) also has a ridged trunk. In this case, the trunk is encircled by a band developing into two scrolls enclosing floral rosettes and fronds heavy with bunches of grapes. The trunk terminates in a flower topped by a bulbous motif. Again, there are palm fronds marked with a variety of markings including chevron stripes. The border consists of rosettes and a row of four inverted palmettes in indigo, gold, green and blue. At the base of the border there is a pair of jewelled wings, with tips upwards.

An acanthus plant replaces the more usual palm trunk in spandrel northwest 4 (plate 5). A narrow vase banded by mother-of-pearl and gems springs from it, terminating in a large bulbous foliage

motif. Scrolls and branches bearing conventionalized flowers and bunches of grapes fill the remaining space. A long Quranic inscription (see appendix A) runs above the spandrels. In general, the motifs of the outer face of the octagonal arcade, while quite varied, are modelled on naturalistic forms.

The mosaics of the inner face of the octagonal arcade exhibit a variety of naturalistic and composite motifs. The eight piers of the inner face (plates 6-29) bear acanthus plants from which scrolls emerge. Each pier demonstrates a different assemblage of these elements. A rather plain acanthus plant supports a smooth-branched scroll decorated with gems and mother-of-pearl in pier 1. Bunches of grapes and various floral elements hang from the scroll, terminating in volutes enfolding two large fan-shaped flowers.

The acanthus plant on pier 2 is rendered in a more complex and lively style. Stems of the laurel leaf scrolls are inset with gems and mother-of-pearl. Again, there are naturalistic flowers and bunches of grapes.

Two superimposed acanthus plants decorate pier 6. Scrolls composed of acanthus calices encircle conventionalized floral elements inset with mother-of-pearl. Two jewelled crowns draw the scrolls together. A breastplate ornamented with jewels and mother-of-pearl appears in the otherwise similar scheme on pier 7. Pier 8 follows the established pattern with two jewelled bands drawing the scrolls together. Acanthus plants on these piers are usually rendered in green and gold, blue and silver, or blue and green. The scrolls are

green.

Trees or composite elements ornament the flanks of the piers. Palm-trees bearing bunches of dates decorate pier 1, left flank, pier 2, left and right flanks, and the right flank of pier 3. Trunks vary: plain, gem-studded, or inset with rosettes. Olive or almond trees decorate pier 3, left flank, and pier 4, right flank. A tuft of reeds replaces trees on the left flank of pier 4.

Composite elements fill the remaining flanks of the piers. On pier 1, right flank, a vase inset with gems and mother-of-pearl, and foliage supports, laden with fruit and flowers inset with mother-of-pearl and encircled by two collars appears. A stylized floral motif terminates the support. On pier 5, left flank, a vase emerges from an acanthus plant. Jewelled collars and necklaces surround the calices, which terminate in a bulbous floral motif in blue, green and gold flanked by palm fronds. Conventionalized flowers fill in the remaining space. The right flank of this pier displays a bowl supporting a clump of reeds, emerging from an acanthus plant. A scroll fills in the upper part, appearing and terminating rather abruptly. A gem and mother-of-pearl-studded vase supporting a foliage stem, lavishly encircled by a jewelled collar appears on the left flank of pier 6. The arrangement is terminated by a bulbous motif set with jewels and mother-of-pearl.

Some of the most elaborate composite motifs in the decoration are on the central arches of the octagonal arcade, inner face. Heavily jewelled scrolls terminate in a wild fantasy of floral motifs. The

left side of the east arch shows a vase-like motif inset with gems and mother-of-pearl, developing into a jewelled plate, crowned by a jewelled bulbous motif, itself supporting palm fronds and scrolls (plate 30). To the right, a similar vase-like shape supports a much larger jewel and mother-of-pearl-studded plate. Similar motifs even more heavily jewelled appear on the central arches of the north side (plate 31). In contrast, trunks replace vases and more naturalistic, less heavily jewelled scrolls and palm fronds decorate the west side central arches (plate 32). The jewelled plates are still used. Arches on the south side follow the established pattern.

Scrolls inset with gems and mother-of-pearl, often encircled by jewelled collars and laden with fruit and conventionalized flowers, decorate the spandrels of the inner face. The scrolls spring from cornucopias placed at the apex of the arches, or from composite vases at the base.

The soffits of the spandrels carry a variety of border motifs ranging from acanthus plants and garlands passing through blue and silver rings, to classical cornucopias interspersed with strange mushroom shapes which may be the result of a later restoration. Stars, half-flowers, twisted chains, palmettes, meanders and a dentil motif comprise the rest. The profusion and imaginative treatment of naturalistic, composite and jewelled designs on the inner faces of the octagonal arcade create a sumptuous effect unexcelled elsewhere in the building.

Mosaics cover all the upper zones of the outer face of the circular arcade. The master piers of the dome are decorated with much the same arrangements as the piers of the outer face of the octagonal arcade. Acanthus plants and laurel branch or acanthus calice scrolls fill the surface of the northwest, northeast, and southwest piers (plates 33-36). Scrolls heavily inset with mother-of-pearl, emerge from jewelled cornucopias on the northwest pier. Conventionalized floral elements are scattered throughout the decoration. A particularly luxuriant acanthus plant with a support of disks and calices terminated by a floral ornament decorates the northeast pier. The southwest pier deviates from the general pattern: an acanthus plant is balanced on a colourful mother-of-pearl-studded vase in red, green, gold, blue, indigo and mauve. The support of hearts and disks, inlaid with mother-of-pearl, terminates in an elaborate foliage spray. Scattered among caliced scrolls are naturalistic fruits and flowers.

Acanthus plants and scrolls decorate the spandrels of the arches below the drum. Some scrolls spring directly from the plant. Others emanate from a cornucopia buried in the plant (plate 37). The second column to the right of the northeast pier shows yet another variation: a scroll and its palmette-support spring from a full-bellied vase. The most elaborate supports appear in this part of the building. Fruits, flowers, mother-of-pearl and jewels are scattered among the decoration.

Jewel and mother-of-pearl-studded scrolls spring from bowls and vases of various descriptions on the flanks of the master piers. Sometimes, for instance, on the left flank of the southwest pier,

a simple scroll emerges from a vase. The northwest pier, right flank, by contrast, bears an elaborate support of conventionalized elements, crowned by a bulbous jewelled motif flanked by palm fronds.

The mosaics of the circular arcade utilize the same elements seen elsewhere in the building, in a less innovative fashion than those of the octagonal arcade, inner face. There are no composite motifs on the piers and spandrels of the circular arcade, and only one cornucopia on the northwest master pier. Colour schemes and borders follow established patterns.

The lower register of the drum is the largest unbroken band to be covered in mosaic, measuring 64 metres in length by 4 metres in width. There are sixteen mosaic panels. Because the drum has not been extensively photographed, the following descriptions rely heavily on Van Berchem's text.[22] Plate 38 shows the drum over the northeast master pier. Three composite vases are studded with gems and mother-of-pearl. The vases to the left and right are capped by bulbous floral motifs flanked by pairs of wings and palm fronds. The central panel lacks wings. Acanthus scrolls dotted with mother-of-pearl, conventionalized fruit, and flowers are scattered throughout. Three vases, one composite, the others with conventionalized supports, all topped by bulbous motifs and wings appear over the southeast master pier (plate 39). Green and gold predominate throughout the lower register. Conventionalized fruit and flowers are rendered in green, gold, blue, silver, red and gray. A unique quincunx border runs along the top and bottom of the lower register. On the whole, the decorative

motifs of the lower register are simple and regular, dominating by size rather than variety.

Sixteen mosaic panels placed between the sixteen windows cover the upper register of the drum. These have deteriorated badly, necessitating restoration and repair work. During the 1964-1965 restorations four of the panels were removed and repaired in the workshops. Others were repaired in situ. Van Berchem states that after having looked closely at the panels, she could identify 'four modern panels', while most of the others had features linking them to the period of Abd al-Malik. The mosaics had not been reproduced or studied before her 1964-1965 visit. She described each of the panels and photographed panels 9-14 (plates 40-41). The panels are numbered from one to sixteen, clockwise from the panel above the northwest master pier.

Details of execution differ from panel to panel. The pedimented vases, for instance, lack uniformity of size and height. They form a body of work generally consistent in style with the rest of the decoration. Tesserae are red, green, gold, rose, silver, blue and indigo.

A full-bellied red vase and two palms topped by a bulbous motif and wings fill panel 1. Panel 2 follows essentially the same formula. Panels 3, 5 and 6 show vases, acanthus scrolls, conventionalized supports, and bulbous motifs with wings. Panels 4, 7 and 8 follow the same pattern. An indigo vase with gadroons of silver and a band of gold decorates panel 11. Two broad acanthus leaves spring from this.

Two more green and gold acanthus leaves support a wide collar. Four palms spring from the collar and frame a bulbous motif at the summit which is not flanked by wings. Owing to the consistency of motifs in other parts of the building and the survival of the original border decoration, this panel has been definitely ascribed to the original composition along with panel 12.[23] Panel 12 bears a bulbous vase, a support of ovoid disks springing from a cornucopia, terminated by a pear-shaped motif flanked by palms. Again, there are no wings.

A full-bellied vase, a support of ovoid disks, a gem-studded band and palm fronds, one crowned by a small bulbous motif flanked by wings, decorate panel 13. While this panel has been restored, there are indications that some parts are original, notably the grapes, support and wide jewelled band. The wings are asymmetrical, therefore Van Berchem thinks they were re-done. The large, unevenly decorated vase and plain cornucopia of panel 14 suggest that major portions are not original.

Panel 15 is unphotographed. Green stems support a shapeless vase with palm branches springing from its elongated neck. An off-centre cornucopia supports a flattened-out bulb flanked by wings. Panel 16 follows a similar pattern. Van Berchem states that: "panels 15, 16 and 1.. had been painted over most of their surfaces before the restorations . . . it is most probable that they were entirely repaired in the workshop . . . the defects dating from a time when no skilled mosaicists were any longer to be found in the country."[24] A caveat should be added to this statement; panel 1 is noticeably more

consistent with the original decoration than panels 15 and 16.

Panel 9 displays a series of geometrical motifs in the form of interlocked circles with variously decorated interiors and a central support composed of ovoids and half-circles. Squares studded with gems and mother-of-pearl, alternating with squares of inscribed disks decorate panel 10. The panels are totally out of keeping with the rest of the scheme and, as Van Berchem points out, do not date to the time of the original composition (no date is suggested for them).

SOURCES, ARRANGEMENT AND SYMBOLISM

In order to determine the underlying meaning of the Dome of the Rock's decorative program, one must investigate the possible sources for the motifs as well as the specific arrangement of elements within the program itself. Research has been hampered by the fact that very few contemporary mosaics in Syria and Palestine remain intact. These schemes were the most likely source of inspiration for the motifs in the Dome of the Rock; however, surviving mosaics in other parts of the Byzantine world give an indication of the nature of mosaic decoration generally.

Few contemporary mural mosaics in Palestine have survived, in contrast to the large number of extant floor mosaics. Finds at Gerasa prove that glass mosaic was manufactured in Palestine and traces of mural mosaic have been found at Gerasa, Beisan, Tabgha, Garizim and Bethlehem among other places. The major subjects represented were

episodes from the Old and New Testaments and portraits of the donors, in the tradition of mosaics of Western Christendom.[25]

The only possibly contemporary extant mural mosaic scheme in Palestine is at the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem. (A question has arisen concerning the direction of influence between the two programs as portions of this scheme are strikingly similar to that of the Dome of the Rock.) The only remaining mosaics, which may date from the time of construction are those of the nave, representing a series of six Provincial and Ecumenical Councils between 272 A.D. and 680 A.D. A mosaic illustrating a seventh Council, at Nicea in 787 A.D. seems to have been added later.[26] Each of the Councils is identified and a passage from its proceedings written out above an altar and framed by an architectural niche. In one of the panels a cross surrounded by trees with a border of plants, scroll and vases crowned by a shell motif replaces the more usual vases and plants.

The panel dealing with the Provincial Council of Antioch (plate 42) best illustrates the style of these mosaics. Strips bordering the main composition contain vases, acanthus calices and wing motifs. In interval 4, the left border shows cornucopias flanked by foliage emanating from simply rendered acanthus plants topped by a foliage motif with floral elements. The border to the right consists of vases and acanthus calices terminated by a vase ornamented with gadroons and a rolled rim from which spring palm fronds, tipped by pearls and floral buds and terminating in a pair of wings supporting a bowl of fruit. A continuous acanthus border runs along the top

of the panels. Other panels show much the same arrangement of motifs. While these mosaics present many of the motifs found in the Dome of the Rock -- vases, acanthus plants, wing motifs -- the dating is so uncertain as to cast serious doubt on whether they could have provided inspiration for the Islamic mosaics.

Stern deals with the mosaics in the Church of the Nativity at length. He points out that these mosaics are analogous in motif to those of the Dome of the Rock and the Great Mosque of Damascus and places them at a mid-point between the traditional Christian style and the new Muslim style. He cites religious and political history in dating the series between 692 A.D. and 726 A.D.[27] The absence of figures is attributed to the religious and political domination of Palestine by Islam. He also states, however, that the Patriarch John V of Jerusalem (705-745 A.D.), in whose jurisdiction the Church of the Nativity fell, was a fervent adversary of Iconoclasm.[28] This would weaken Stern's argument. He concludes that the motifs are based on Umayyad styles with elements from Syro-Palestinian and Sasanian art.[29] The Cross and trees are attributed to the image of paradise prevalent in Christian art since the fourth century.[30]

Andre Grabar also addresses the question of the mosaics at Bethlehem. He too refers to the paradise imagery of the Cross surrounded by trees.[31] He suggests that the lack of figural representation in these pre-Iconoclastic mosaics serves two purposes. Firstly, it states through inscriptions the doctrines of the Christian Church in regard to the definition of the nature of the Trinity.

Secondly, in accordance with the Christian desire to accommodate Muslims, and other Semitic cultures, it avoids the representation of images.[32] While Grabar's first statement is self-evident, he provides no evidence for the statement that the Christians accommodated the Muslims, or that they would concur with 'the general proclivity' of Semitic countries to avoid figural representation. If, as Crowfoot states, the missing mosaics of Palestine dealt with Old and New Testament scenes, presumably they were figurative in nature. Grabar does not state clearly whether the Bethlehem mosaics preceded or followed the Umayyad mosaics, but he seems to suggest that the mosaics at Bethlehem influenced the Umayyads.[33]

Dodd, the most recent writer to address the problems posed by the Church of the Nativity, divides the decorative scheme into four principal elements; floral and vegetal motifs, architectural settings, pictorial religious symbols and inscriptions. She states that "Each of these four elements can be traced in early church decoration in Syria and Palestine or in established Byzantine iconography."[34] Certainly the surviving floor mosaics in Syria and Palestine contain all these elements. For instance, the mosaics in the nave at Ma'in depict architectural settings, floral and vegetal elements and vases, as do the mosaic pictures of towns in SS Peter and Paul at Gerasa. One would hesitate, however, to postulate an automatic transmission of imagery from floor mosaics to murals, as they stem from different traditions. If one looks at established Byzantine iconography in other parts of the Christian world, one also finds the elements that Dodd

has suggested, which concur with those used in the Dome of the Rock.

The surviving Justinianic wall mosaics in Santa Sophia (Constantinople) depict acanthus plants and scrolls. The mosaics of the Acheiropoietas Basilica at Salonika dating to the fifth century show leaves, floral decoration and vases, as do those of the Church of St. George (Salonika) which have jewelled acanthus scrolls emerging from vases. In Italy, acanthus scrolls are common, for instance, in the Chapel of SS Rufina and Seconda in Rome (fourth century) and at Ravenna in the Mausoleum of Galla Placidia (fifth century). Cornucopias appear in the mosaics of San Vitale at Ravenna and elsewhere. The wing motif used at both the Church of the Nativity and the Dome of the Rock appears on Byzantine pottery fragments, but is more common on Sasanian vases, the pillars at Taq-i Bustan and coins of Chosroes II (sixth century). One could expand Dodd's terminology and say that while the mosaics of the Church of the Nativity draw on earlier church decoration in the region and established Byzantine iconography, Sasanian art may also have provided inspiration.

Later in the article, Dodd refutes the hypotheses of Stern and A. Grabar:

> Since all the iconographical elements in the Church of the Nativity mosaics at Bethlehem may be understood in the light of contemporary Christian art, it is difficult to understand why scholarly opinion insists on a Moslem influence for the mosaics...it has been noted that the principal motifs in the decoration of

> the Dome of the Rock are understandable in terms of Christian art. Since the date of the Dome of the Rock coincides with the known dates of the Church at Bethlehem, it is difficult to say precisely which system of decoration may have influenced the other but the weight of the evidence points to the adoption by Islam of a contemporary Christian vocabulary. This is more readily understandable than the contrary proposal: that the Church at Bethlehem should have been influenced by Islamic practises which, if they existed at all at this time, had certainly not yet become established . . .[35]

Her suggestions seem eminently reasonable. It is more likely that the new culture -- Islam -- would draw motifs to serve its needs from those not only available, but also common in the art of the established cultures, rather than vice-versa. One can speculate that if the reverse were true and the mosaics at Bethlehem drew upon the Dome of the Rock, they may also have drawn upon those of the Great Mosque for the architectural motifs. This would necessitate a post-715 A.D. date for their execution, which has not been firmly proposed by Stern, Grabar or Dodd.[36]

Dodd compares the contents of the inscriptions in both buildings. She states that: "Finally, our understanding of the symbols at Bethlehem is completed by the fourth iconographic element on the walls, the inscriptions. The content of these inscriptions and their placement between the book and the Cross have an especial meaning . . . they represent passages from the Church Councils and the passages chosen in every case reflect decisions taken by the Councils over the definition

of the Trinity."[37] Both sets of inscriptions deal with the nature of God.

The two main approaches, formalistic and socio-political, to the decoration of the Dome of the Rock may now be considered. Van Berchem points out that motifs such as acanthus' and vases were common in Byzantine mosaics.[38] She then states that the fruits found in the mosaics of the Dome of the Rock -- pomegranates, olives, cherries, dates, figs, pears, etc. -- are typical of those sold at the market place in Jerusalem.[39] As was stated earlier, she considers the nature of the surface to be covered as the determining factor in the choice of motifs. Jewelled motifs are used on surfaces seen against the light, whereas scattered stones appear throughout the rest of the decoration. The jewels seem to follow Byzantine prototypes and their use is explained thus: "Floral decoration alone without ornament, was not likely to satisfy these artists born under Eastern skies, for them more richness and brilliancy were necessary . . .".[40]

Art historians who follow Van Berchem's interpretation see the mosaics at the Dome of the Rock as having a purely decorative significance. The motifs chosen are interpreted as a way of filling space and producing a rich effect without using the iconographic schemes characteristic of Christian churches. Such an analysis is superficial in the extreme. It tells us nothing of the possible underlying religious or political significance of the images, which may, in fact, be more 'unifying' than the decoration itself.

Stern mentions the influence of Byzantine and Sasanian models on the motifs of the mosaics of the Dome of the Rock, particularly sixth century Byzantine decoration in Palestine and Syria, and stresses the importance of Constantinople, but otherwise reiterates the views of previous writers. He concludes that the decoration ". . . is an amalgamation of the ornamental repertory of the two great arts of the Near East, from Byzantium and from Persia . . . creating . . . a perfectly homogeneous work of new character, foreign to Greco-Byzantine art."[41] One can hardly quarrel with his conclusions, but they contribute no new information.

O. Grabar has chosen an entirely different methodology in approaching the motifs in the mosaics. His scholarly commentary is based on an analysis of the cultural, historical and political significance of selected motifs -- crowns and jewels. Along with the mosaics, the inscriptions and location of the Dome of the Rock are studied in an attempt to ascertain the significance and meaning of the building to the Muslims of the period.

The inscriptions running around the base of the Dome emphasise the special position of the other 'People of the Book' in the theology of the new faith.[42] The contents of these inscriptions are not repeated in later buildings in the area. They may have been chosen specifically for this crucial site in this particular city where Muslims were a ruling minority, faced with long-established faiths. Grabar sees the Quranic passages as issuing an 'impatient' invitation to join the new and final faith and as an assertion of its authority and

therefore the authority of the new state.[43]

Grabar disputes Van Berchem's assertion that the presence and placement of jewels was governed only by aesthetic concerns. He assigns a deeper meaning to them.[44] All the necklaces, crowns, breastplates and other jewels are identified as either royal ornaments of Persian and Byzantine princes, or as ornaments worn by religious figures in Byzantine mosaics, and therefore they are symbols of holiness, power and sovereignty. After establishing that there does seem to have been a precedent for hanging crowns and jewels in sanctuaries or over the heads of religious figures,[45] Grabar asks, why would the Muslims blindly copy the customs of their conquered enemies? Was there any Islamic precedent for the practice?

Islamic texts mention that the Tibetan King had sent an idol of gold with a crown of gold and jewels set on an elaborate throne to the Ka'aba in the year 201 A.H., when he adopted the Muslim faith. (This event happened a fair time after the Dome of the Rock was built.) They were displayed at the time of the pilgrimage with an inscription indicating that they were sent as tokens of submission.[46] Texts also indicate that Abd al-Malik sent necklaces and al-Walid I sent cups and thrones.[47] While these would be roughly contemporary with the Dome of the Rock, they were unlikely to be regarded as tokens of submission.

Grabar suggests that there are two possible explanations for the inclusion of jewels in the mosaics:

> One can argue, first, that the crowns and jewels reflect an artistic theme of Byzantine origin which, also in an Islamic context, used royal symbols in a religious sanctuary -- to emphasise the sanctuary's holiness. But one can also suggest that the choice of Byzantine and Sasanian royal symbols was dictated by the desire to demonstrate that the 'unbelievers' had been defeated and brought into the fold of the true faith.[48]

Elsewhere, he states that:

> . . . regardless of the Muslim associations that appear in the creation of the Dome of the Rock, the building's primary purpose was to be a monument for non-Muslims. With all the Islam-wide ramifications of its symbolism, it was an immanent (sic) building that served precise contemporary needs, the most crucial of which was to demonstrate to a Christian population, which often still thought Muslim rule was a temporary misfortune, that Islam was here to stay.[49]

This analysis of the jewelled elements present in the scheme and their underlying meaning contributes significant new knowledge to the field. Until the same painstaking investigation is undertaken for the majority of the motifs in the program with the same results, Grabar's conclusions can only be tentatively accepted.

While it is evident that Muslims drew upon motifs in Byzantine and Sasanian art for the decoration of the Dome of the Rock, scholars have overlooked the important omission of elements that would have accorded with Islamic precepts against the depiction of human or animal forms in its official arts.[50] Orbs and sceptres, for instance, were and are symbols of power well adapted to the ideological needs of Islam, one would think. Books, tables, candles and architectural scenes, all found in the mosaics of the Church of the Nativity would also be permissible symbols for Islam. Yet these elements are absent from the mosaics of the Dome of the Rock. It is clear that the Muslims made a conscious selection of imagery for this decorative scheme.

What was the motivation or program behind this selection? Van Berchem attributes the choice of motifs to the nature of the surface to be covered. She does not address the possible symbolism behind the choices. Grabar suggests that certain isolated motifs -- crowns and jewels -- are utilized as symbols of holiness, power and sovereignty serving to indicate the might of Islam. In a footnote Grabar refers to the vegetal elements of the decoration as a Muslim parallel to the Christian iconography of paradise, a symbolism perhaps taken over without a deliberate parallel in mind.[51] This idea, which he does not pursue further, seems to me to provide the key to both the selection of motifs and the underlying meaning of the mosaics.

I propose that the decorative program of the Dome of the Rock should be viewed as a visual complement to the messages conveyed

through the inscriptions. The inscriptions stress the monotheism of God and the role of Muhammad, warn backsliders and Unbelievers of their peril and point to Islam as the final revelation of God's will. The mosaics, however, depict in glowing terms elements of the paradise which awaits the Faithful as revealed in the Quran. Furthermore, the Quranic passages describing paradise account for the majority of the motifs in the mosaics.[52]

Sura 9, verses 20 to 22 (Repentance) describe the rewards due to the believer in general terms:

> Those who believe, and have left their homes and striven with their wealth and their lives in Allah's way are of much greater worth in Allah's sight. These are they who are triumphant. Their Lord giveth them good tidings of mercy from Him, and acceptance, and Gardens where enduring pleasure will be theirs; There they will abide for ever. Lo! with Allah there is immense reward.

In sura 11, vs 108 (Hud) the rewards are further clarified: "And as for those who will be glad (that day) they will be in the Garden, abiding there so long as the heavens and the earth endure save for that which thy Lord willeth: a gift unfailing."

A rhetorical question is asked in sura 2, vs 266 (The Cow): "Would any of you like to have a garden of palm-trees and vines, with rivers flowing underneath it, with all kinds of fruit for him therein . . ." Allah's beneficence is outlined in sura 6, vs 100 (Cattle):

> He it is who sendeth down water from the sky, and therewith We bring forth buds of every kind; We bring forth the green blade from which we bring forth the thick-clustered grain; and from the date-palm, from the pollen thereof, spring pendant bunches; and (We bring forth) gardens of grapes, and the olive and the pomegranate, alike and unlike. Look upon the fruit thereof, when they bear fruit, and upon its ripening. Lo! herein verily are portents for a people who believe.

Verse 142 in the same sura states that:

> He it is Who produceth gardens trellised and untrellised, and the date-palm, and crops of divers flavour, and the olive and the pomegranate, like and unlike. Eat ye of the fruit thereof when it fruiteth, and pay the due thereof upon the harvest day, and be not prodigal. Lo! Allah loveth not the prodigals.

Sura 16, vs 11 (The Bee) restates the message: ". . . He causeth crops to grow for you, and the olive and the date-palm and grapes and all kinds of fruit. Lo! herein is indeed a portent for people who reflect." Sura 80, verses 27 to 31 (He Frowned) further extends the imagery: "And cause the grain to grow therein And grapes and green fodder And olive-trees and palm-trees And garden-closes of thick foliage And fruits and grasses . . .".

The Quran contains many examples of this kind of imagery, too many to quote in this context. These selected passages, however, give

both a general and precise concept of the Quranic vision of paradise as a luxuriant garden. The quoted examples mention palm-trees, rivers, grapes, olives, pomegranates, almond trees, 'all kinds of fruit', grain, foliage and grasses. The mosaics of the Dome of the Rock depict these elements with the exception of rivers.

Palm-trees with bunches of dates decorate the flanks of piers two, three and four of the octagonal arcade, inner face. Some trees are rendered in a veristic manner while others are more fantastical, their trunks studded with jewels. Pier three, left flank, and pier four, right flank, each bear trees which Van Berchem describes as olive or almond trees. Pier four, left flank, depicts a tuft of reeds.

Scrolls bearing bunches of grapes are the most frequently occurring motif in the decoration, appearing on the piers, arches and soffits of the octagonal arcade. Pier one, south side, inner face, depicts a scroll springing from an acanthus plant inset with gems and mother-of-pearl, bunches of grapes and a flower. Scrolls are also prominent throughout the circular arcade. For instance, a caliced scroll with bunches of grapes springs from a cornucopia embedded in an acanthus plant over the first column to the right of the southeast pier. Similar scrolls ornament the drum.

Garlands of fruit and foliage decorate the soffits of the octagonal arcade. Fruits in the soffit mosaics include pomegranates, grapes, apples, figs, olives, pears, dates, marrows, limes, lemons, prunes, quinces and cedrats. Bowls of fruit are placed on the second soffit of the octagonal arcade and over column three, south side, of

the circular arcade. Soffit three, southwest side, circular arcade shows corn sheaves and grain. Other foliage scattered throughout the decoration are vine, fig, ivy and laurel leaves.

In sura 19, verses 23 to 26 (Mary) the palm-tree is given a special role: "And the pangs of childbirth drove her unto the trunk of the palm-tree . . . And shake the trunk of the palm-tree toward thee, thou wilt cause ripe dates to fall upon thee. So eat and drink and be consoled." The palm-tree appears to symbolise fertility and fruitfulness.

These Quranic verses satisfactorily account for the fruit, floral and vegetal elements in the mosaics. One could, however, argue that the passages revealing the earth transformed under Islam are more specific in their descriptions than the passages about the garden which awaits the True Believer. Following this hypothesis, the mosaics would depict merely the earthly paradise. This would be so, if it were not for the fantastical nature of the compositions and the presence of jewels and crowns.

Jewellery is mentioned several times in the Quran. Sura 22, verse 23 (The Pilgrimage) promises that: "Lo! Allah will cause those who believe and do good works to enter Gardens underneath which rivers flow, wherein they will be allowed armlets of gold, and pearls, and their raiment therein will be silk." Sura 76, verses 11 to 22 (Time or Man), impresses on the Believers that Allah has:

> . . . warded off from them the evil of that day, and hath made them find brightness and joy; And hath awarded them for all that they endured, a Garden and silk attire; Reclining therein upon couches, they will find there neither (heat of) a sun nor bitter cold. The shade thereof is close upon them and the clustered fruits thereof bow down. Goblets of silver are brought round from them, and beakers (as) of glass (Bright as) glass but (made) of silver, which they (themselves) have measured to the measure (of their deeds). There are they watered with a cup whereof the mixture is of Zanjabil, The water of a spring therein, named Salsabil. There serve them youths of everlasting youth, whom, when thou seest, thou wouldst take for scattered pearls. When thou seest, thou wilt see there bliss and high estate. Their raiment will be fine green silk and gold embroidery. Bracelets of silver will they wear. Their Lord will slake their thirst with a pure drink. (And it will be said unto them): Lo! this is a reward for you. Your endeavour (upon earth) hath found acceptance.

Vases such as the one on the southwest master pier of the circular arcade decorated with bands of red, gold and green, inset with mother-of-pearl and red and blue gems are hardly too sumptuous for the paradise described above. The mosaics may be viewed as depicting a rather formal celestial garden, the plants potted in elaborate vases.

While we do not find goblets of silver and crystal or bracelets of silver, fantastical compositions studded with gems lift this

decoration out of the earthly realm. For instance, the support on the northwest pier, right flank, circular arcade is composed of rosettes and ovoids topped by a gem-studded artichoke-like motif, springing from a gem-set vase. There is the fantastical composite motif on the octagon, outer face, pier southwest two, which shows a conical trunk with ridges of bark and palm fronds enlivened by a conventionalized floral motif, or pier west three in the same arcade where the conical ridged trunk is decorated with chevrons studded by clusters of hearts terminating in a fleuron crowned by palm fronds with chevron markings and flowers. The composite motifs on the inner spandrels of the octagon bear even less resemblance to reality. The central arch, west side, depicts a conical trunk inset with gems and a disk studded with mother-of-pearl, developing into a jewelled plate with mother-of-pearl pendants and terminated by a bulbous motif studded with mother-of-pearl and scrolls bearing conventionalized fruit and flowers. In all there are twenty-five composite arrangements spread throughout the decoration.

The crowns and wing motifs add to the splendour of the mosaics. Possibly the crowns could be regarded as part of the garb of the Faithful in paradise; in this instance, however, Grabar's assertion that they are symbols of the power of Islam seems more probable.

Sura 76 brings to light elements of paradise imagery which are not depicted in the mosaics of the Dome of the Rock in addition to the goblets and bracelets, such as the couches, silk attire, springs, and youths. Sura 44, verses 51 to 55 (Smoke), describes paradise thus:

"Lo! those who kept their duty will be in a place secure Amid gardens and water-springs, Attired in silk and silk embroidery, facing one another. Even so (it will be). And We shall wed them unto fair ones with wide, lovely eyes. They call therein for every fruit in safety."

The incomplete portrayal of paradise in the Dome of the Rock mosaics seems at first sight to weaken the hypothesis that Islam drew upon the Quranic descriptions for the decorative program. Almost all the missing elements occur, however, in the second great extant mosaic scheme executed under Umayyad patronage at the Great Mosque of Damascus. The decoration of the Great Mosque completed between 705 and 715 A.D., less than twenty-four years after the Dome of the Rock will be discussed in chapter four.

CHAPTER THREE: Historical, Religious and Architectural Concerns Pertinent to the Erection of the Great Mosque of Damascus

The Great Mosque of Damascus was built between 705 and 715 A.D./ 86-96 A.H. It, too, contains extensive and important mosaic schemes. The Great Mosque is analogous to the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem in that both were built on sites utilized first by other religions, both were erected under the patronage of the Umayyad dynasty, and both were decorated in similar fashion. There are, however, notable differences between the cities of Jerusalem and Damascus. Jerusalem was, and is, a city of major importance to three religions. Damascus seems to have been important only as a trade city, with a history of occupation. It receives no mention in the Quran, whereas Jerusalem is mentioned frequently.

In addition, the two monuments served different purposes. The Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem has a commemorative function, while the Great Mosque is the Jami mosque -- the central and most important mosque of a large city.[1] The major Friday service at which the Faithful would gather to pray and listen to the Friday sermon took place in it. The architectural forms of the two buildings reflect this difference in function.

Damascus was captured three years before Jerusalem. Umar b. al-Khattab concluded a peace treaty with the inhabitants in 635 A.D.; he promised them security for their lives, property and churches.[2] Damascus became the capital of the Umayyad Caliphate in 661 A.D.

under Mu'awiyah.

The Umayyads centred in Damascus maintained an attitude of toleration towards the subject peoples. Many of the tribesmen who had previously fought in Byzantine armies were employed by the new rulers. The chiefs of these armies had been given Byzantine titles and were familiar with Constantinople and the principles of Byzantine government. Ex-Byzantine officials continued to staff the administrative services of Syria. Gibb (and others, e.g., Grabar) suggests that the Umayyad Caliphate tended to emulate Byzantine rulers and customs.[3]

Muslim historians wax eloquent on the charms of Damascus. Muqqadasi writes that: "Damascus is a city intersected by streams and begirt with trees. Here prices are moderate, fruits and snow abound, and the products of both hot and cold climes are found. Nowhere else will be seen such magnificent hot baths, nor such beautiful fountains, nor people more worthy of consideration."[4] Istakhri writes from hearsay: "Damascus is the most beautiful city of Syria, the finest in situation, the most temperate in climate, the most humid in soil, having the greatest variety of fruits, and the utmost abundance of vegetables."[5]

Legends soon arose sanctifying Damascus and its environs. Ibn Jubair ascribes the birthplace of Ibrahim (Abraham) to the hillside of Jabal Kasiyun, at the village of Barzah near Damascus:

> The birthplace is a cave, long and narrow, and they have built a Mosque and a high minaret on it. Abraham used to view the stars from the cave, also the sun and the moon . . . About a mile or more from the cave of the birthplace, is a cave called the Cave of Blood, because above it in the mountain is seen the blood of Abil (Abel), whom his brother Kabil (Cain) slew . . . This is the place from which Kabil went and sought his brother to slay him, and afterwards he carried his body into the cave. Here it is said, Abraham, Moses, Jesus, Lot, Job, and the Prophet all made their prayers . . . At the summit of the mountain, and above all the gardens and lying west of the city, is the hill mentioned in the Kuran as the place where the Messiah dwelt with his mother.[6]

Unlike Jerusalem, there were no Muslim legends attached to specific sites in Damascus where a mosque could be built. During the early years of Islamic rule, Muslims may have used the eastern half of the large and centrally located Church of St. John as the Jami mosque. Ibn Jubair gives the most detailed explanation of how this came about:

> . . . Abu 'Ubaidah ibn al Jarrah had (during the seige) entered the city on the west quarter, and had reached the western side of the church, and here had made a capitulation with the Christians, while, in the meantime, Khalid ibn al Walid had taken the eastern part of the city by assault, and had from this side arrived at the eastern wall of the church. The eastern portion . . . thus came by conquest into the hands of the Muslims, and they had made of it a mosque; but the western half, where the treaty of capitulation had been granted, had remained to the Christians . . .[7]

Prior to the Christian era the site of the Church of St. John had a pagan temple dedicated to Hadad and Atargatis. Under the Romans it was re-dedicated to Jupiter Damascene. Traces of the inner and outer temenos remain. They indicate that the trapezoidal enclosure measured about 385 metres from east to west and 305 metres from north to south. There were four entrances, the major one being in the centre of the west side. A bazaar ran all around the interior of the outer temenos. The walls of the temple proper measured 157.5 metres in length from east to west and nearly 100 metres from north to south. A square tower filled each corner. Of these, only the southwestern tower remains intact. It is nearly square, 12 metres by 11 metres, and rises to a height of 20.73 metres above the platform. A staircase lit by windows runs up the northwest corner of the tower which has four floors of two rooms each.[8]

Under Theodosius I (379-95 A.D.) pagan ceremonies in the Temple ceased and Christians took possession. Textual information about the Church is slight. Malalces in his sixth century Chronographia states that Theodosius I made the temple at Damascus a Christian Church.[9] A Greek inscription placed above the western doorway is still extant. It reads: "Thy Kingdom, O Christ is an everlasting Kingdom, and Thy Dominion endureth throughout all generations."[10] An inscription paraphrasing verse 4:2 from the Book of Revelation was apparently placed above the eastern entrance.[11]

The Arab historian Ya'qut mentions a Greek inscription found over a gate. It read thus:

> After the world hath renewed its youth, the signs having been manifested of what is to come to pass, it is necessary there be a renewal thereof; even as have foretold those aged in life and stricken in years. And the worship of the Creator of created things shall be instituted here, when the lover of horses commands the building of the Temple of his own monies; and this shall be after the passing of seven thousand and nine hundred years since the days of the people of the Columns. And if the builder lives to enter therein, the building will be named as the best of acts. And so to ye all, Peace.[12]

The 'People of the Columns' were an ancient sect of philosophers, but the 'lover of horses' has not been identified. This inscription only appears in Ya'qut. Muslim historians also mention that the supposed head of St. John was discovered during the building of the Mosque, and was placed under the fourth pillar on the eastern side.[13]

The lack of historical and archaeological information concerning the Church of St. John leaves us uncertain as to whether the Christians used the existing Temple or whether they built their own structure on the site.[14] Dussaud suggests that a Christian church was built along the south wall of the temple, consisting of an immense nave and three aisles of equal width. A transept was added later.[15] The necessity to build a church arose because the Temple was oriented in the wrong direction for Christian worship. The orienting of churches, however, seems to have varied from region to region at this time, so Dussaud's reasoning may not be correct. The suggestion is made that a triple portico in the south wall, above which were texts honouring the Trinity, served as the main entrance to the church. Dussaud concludes that the

Muslims simply took over the church as it stood.[16]

Watzinger and Wulzinger put forward the theory that the Temple of Jupiter Damascenus stood in the middle of the temenos and was converted into a church by Theodosius. They suggest that a new church was built by Heraclius in 629 A.D. (the old church having been damaged by an earthquake of 602 A.D. and the Persian invasion of 613 A.D.). This church then became the prayer hall of the mosque, al-Walid merely adding a dome to the transept.[17]

Creswell dismisses the above theories on several grounds. He points out that it was not normal practise in Syria for churches to have three aisles of equal width such as the Mosque has. The alignment would have been wrong for a Mosque; therefore the old arcades would have had to be pulled down and re-erected on the correct axis. Capitals and columns for the Mosque were taken from a variety of buildings, rather than from just the Church.[18] He questions the conclusions of Watzinger and Wulzinger which are, according to Creswell, unsupported by any texts indicating that Heraclius built a church at Damascus, whereas his building programs elsewhere are recorded in detail.[19]

Creswell believes that the Christians and Muslims shared the temenos, but not the Church itself. In the absence of textual support this point is open to dispute. The evidence available indicates that the Muslims and Christians shared the actual building. The currently accepted theory is that al-Walid had the Church destroyed when construction of the Mosque began, but that the four walls of the temenos were retained, along with the four corner towers.

The division of the building or site of the Church of St. John seemed to suffice for a number of years; eventually, however, pressure of population forced the Umayyads to alter the terms promised under the Peace Treaty of 635 A.D. Al-Walid wished to take over the whole site. Muslim historiographers report that this caused indignation among the Christian population:

> And the Christians sought to turn him from it, saying: 'Verily it is written in our books that he who shall destroy this church shall choke to death.' But al Walid cried out 'Verily I will be the first to destroy it.' So he went up into the Church, and there was a yellow dome there, and this he destroyed with his own hand. And the people pulled down other portions, as he set the example.[20]

Ibn al-Faqih relates that this turn of events distressed the Byzantine Emperor: "When the Church had thus been destroyed, the King of Rum (Byzantium) wrote to the Khalif saying. 'Verily thou hast destroyed the church which thy father did purpose to preserve. Now, if thou didst right, thy father then did wrong, and even if he did wrong, was it for thee to set thyself in opposition to him?'"[21] One would question the theory that Muslims simply took over the Church of St. John in the face of Muslim assertions that it was pulled down and the Great Mosque built to be 'unique and a wonder to the World.'[22]

Literary accounts of the splendour of the Great Mosque abound. Muqqadasi considers that:

> The Mosque of Damascus is the fairest of any that the Muslims now hold, and nowhere is there collected together greater magnificence. Its outer wall built of squared stones . . . and crowning the walls are splendid battlements. The columns supporting the roof of the Mosque consist of black polished pillars in a triple row, and set widely apart. In the centre of the building, over the space fronting the Mihrab, is a great dome. Round the court are lofty colonnades, above which are arched windows, and the whole area is paved with white marble. The (inner) walls of the Mosque, for twice the height of a man, are faced with variegated marbles; and, above this, even to the very ceiling, are mosaics of various colours . . .[23]

Muqqadasi goes on to describe the entrance porches, minarets, fountains and so on. He also gives the information that Khalid Omar ibn Abd al-Aziz, at one time wanted to demolish the Mosque and use its materials for public works projects, but was dissuaded.[24]

Ya'qubi writes that: "Al Walid spent on the building of the Mosque at Damascus the land-tax of the Empire during seven years. The accounts of the expenditures were brought in to him on the backs of eighteen camels, but he ordered them burnt."[25]

In contrast to the texts concerning the Dome of the Rock, texts about the Great Mosque provide information about the workmen employed to build the Mosque and/or execute the decoration. Ibn Asakir (c. 1160 A.D.) states that:

> When al-Walid ibn 'Abd al-Malik wanted to build the Mosque of Damascus, he needed a great number of workmen, so he wrote to the Byzantine Emperor: 'Send me 200 Rumi workmen, for I wish to construct a mosque, the like of which has never been built and never will be again. If you do not comply I will invade your country with my armies. I will destroy all the churches in my territory, including those of Jerusalem, Edessa, and all the Rumi monuments . . .'[26]

Muqqadasi (985 A.D.), however, wrote that foreign workmen were employed only for the mosaic work:

> It is said that Khalif al-Walid, in order to construct these mosaics, brought skilled workmen from Persia, India, Western Africa, and Byzantium, spending thereon the whole revenues of Syria for seven years, as well as eighteen shiploads of gold and silver, which came from Cyprus. And this does not include what the Emperor of Byzantium and the Amirs of the Muslims gave to him in the matter of precious stones and other materials for the mosaics.[27]

Medieval descriptions of the Mosque became increasingly florid. Ibn Jubair in 1184 A.D. writes that:

> The Khalif al Walid was he who began to build the Mosque. He applied to the King of the Greeks at Constantinople to send him twelve thousand men of the artificiers of his country, at the same time threatening him with chastisement if he delayed. But the King of the Greeks

> did as he was commanded with all docility, and many embassies went from one Sovereign to the other, even as is related in the books of history.[28]

Van Berchem cautions that nearly five centuries had passed between the erection of the Mosque and the later accounts. Furthermore, given the political conditions of the period, it is unlikely that the Emperor of the Greeks would act as a humble vassal of the Umayyad Caliphs. Also, there were a number of active schools of mosaicists in Syria and Palestine at the time of the Muslim conquest and the mosaic decoration of the Dome of the Rock shows that the Umayyads did not need to borrow workers from Byzantium.[29]

Creswell supports Van Berchem's arguments and cites three major objections to the use of Byzantine workers. Firstly, the earliest accounts concerning the Great Mosque do not mention Byzantine mosaicists. Secondly, Ibn Asakir stated that the Khalif wrote to the Emperor, whereas in a ninth century account the Emperor wrote to al-Walid.[30] Finally, the ill-feeling between the Caliph and the Emperor made the request and subsequent help unlikely.[31]

The theory is put forward by Creswell that the legend of Byzantine workers sent by the Emperor, has become attached to the Great Mosque of Damascus by mistake. The legend really concerns a church at San'a. This church was built by Abraha, an Abyssinian general who wrote to Justinian 1 (527-565 A.D.): ". . . that he intended to build a church at San'a' to be a monument of lasting fame

and he begged Kaisar to help him in the matter, and so Kaisar helped him with workmen and mosaics and marble."[32] While the church at San'a' was well-known to Islam and there is a close similarity in events,[33] it was built nearly two centuries before the Great Mosque.[34]

Gibb dismisses many of the objections raised by Van Berchem and Creswell. Ex-Byzantine officials continued to staff the Syrian administrative services and the Umayyads increasingly adopted Byzantine ways.[35] As there is no tradition concerning Byzantine workmen and materials attached to the Dome of the Rock, it is not a standard formula applied to every Islamic monument by later historians, but rather a specific tradition attached to specific monuments. Van Berchem's objections on historical grounds are dismissed as 'entirely unconvincing' as they presuppose a modern attitude of mind which should not be applied to medieval history. Furthermore, there is evidence that commercial relations did continue to exist with Greek territories and Byzantine workmen may well have been employed at Damascus.

Unlike the Dome of the Rock inscriptions do not form an important part of the decoration of the Great Mosque. Only one inscription contemporary with the construction of the building has been recorded by the historian Mas'udi (943 A.D.):

> The Khalif al Walid gave orders to set an inscription in gold on lapis lazuli in the court of the Mosque, and it ran as follows: 'Allah is our Lord, and we worship none but Allah. The servant of Allah, al Walid, the Commander of the

> Faithful, hath ordered the building
> of this mosque, and the destruction
> of the church which was here in former
> days. Set up in...the year 87.'
> These words, written in gold, may be
> seen in the Mosque of Damascus in these
> our own days, in the year 332 A.H.36

It is an inscription which gave information, rather than setting forth tenets of the faith, as the earlier inscription had done.

In contrast to the Dome of the Rock, the Great Mosque of Damascus has suffered badly from fires and earthquakes which have damaged the architecture and destroyed much of the original decoration.[37] The present Mosque follows the structural lines of al-Walid's building, although much of the marble panelling and mosaic decorating the interior has been replaced.

The Great Mosque is rectangular in plan (plan 2). The north, south, east and west sides measure respectively 122.47, 122.61, 50.08 and 47.87 metres.[38] Arcades two tiers high surround the courtyard on three sides. The lower tier has nine arches on the east and west sides and twenty four on the north. The second tier of arches corresponds in size and level with those of the prayer hall. An open timber roof covered with sheets of lead now caps the arcades. The eaves are 15.35 metres above the ground.

The prayer hall on the south side measures 136 metres in length by 37 metres in depth. It is three arcades deep, split into two almost equal sections by a domed transept leading to the main mihrab at the end. To the west is a mihrab enlarged

in 1328 A.D./728 A.H., and a fourth mihrab which is quite modern.[39] The prayer hall aisles measured from the courtyard to the qibla are 12.01, 12.05 and 11.54 metres wide at the west end and 11.85, 11.82 and 11.86 metres at the east end. The transept itself is set slightly askew, inclined on an axis of 60 centimetres towards the west.

One could enter the Mosque through any of three large gateways on the east, north and west sides, called the Bab al-Barid, Bab al-Faradis and Bab Jairun respectively. A smaller door, the Bab az-Ziyada gives immediate access to the prayer hall. The Bab Jairun, the main gateway, is flanked by rooms and approached by an impressive flight of steps.

Three doors set in a monumental arched facade, capped by three windows, lead to the prayer hall. This portal is set off from the rest of the facade and rises to 10 metres above it. The cornice rises 25.67 metres above the pavement. When the mosque was first built, this entrance led to a transept with a central oblong bay probably capped by a wooden dome resting on cross-beams.[40] At a later date this was changed to a square bay in order to support a dome. The two piers near the mihrab bear four 'practically identical' kufic inscriptions carved on marble slabs set in the north and south faces. They state that the Seljuq Sultan Malik Shah: "has ordered the construction of this dome, this enclosure, this roof, these arches, and these piers in the year 475".[41]

Today there are minarets at the northern, south-eastern and south-western corners. Muqqadasi, however, mentions a minaret above

the northern entrance and calls it 'modern'. He says it was decorated with mosaic.[42] This seems to have been burnt and rebuilt by the time of Ibn Jubair in 1184 A.D. The top part was rebuilt again between 1914 and 1918 A.D. The south-eastern minaret at the time of Ibn Jubair seems to have been a corner tower of the ancient temenos. Earthquakes damaged it in 1202 A.D./598 A.H. It was rebuilt, but burnt in 1247 A.D./643 A.H., and again rebuilt in 1249 A.D./645 A.H. The present minaret dates to 1401 A.D. The western minaret was burnt in 1479 A.D./884 A.H. and reconstructed in 1488 A.D./893 A.H.[43]

The site of the Great Mosque of Damascus does not have the historical significance of the site of the Dome of the Rock. Neither does Damascus rival Jerusalem in being revered as a holy city by the three scriptured religions. Nevertheless, Damascus plays an important part in Muslim history, and the Mosque was and is one of the most important Muslim monuments.

Completed less than twenty-four years after the Dome of the Rock, the first major Islamic monument outside of Arabia, and decorated in the same medium -- mosaic, it is a crucial building in any study of Umayyad architecture. As the only other Umayyad religious monument with extant mosaic decoration in the Middle East, it is of seminal importance for an understanding of Umayyad mosaics. The final chapter of this thesis will examine the mosaics of the Great Mosque and their relationship to those of the Dome of the Rock.

CHAPTER FOUR: An Analysis of the Motifs, Sources and Symbolism of the Mosaics of the Great Mosque of Damascus

The mosaics of the Great Mosque of Damascus comprise the second surviving scheme executed under Umayyad patronage. Although it shows a similarity of technique to that of the earlier scheme, there is virtually a complete change in pictorial imagery. Motifs prominent in the Dome of the Rock: acanthus plants, scrolls, cornucopias and vases form a minor part of the Great Mosque's decorations and are located in secondary areas; houses, colonnades, palaces and towers are the major elements.

The largest panel of original mosaic shows villages and palaces dominated by huge trees on the banks of a broad blue river. With one exception the crowns, jewels and wing motifs so prominent in the Dome of the Rock are not repeated at Damascus, nor are there any Quranic inscriptions.

Unlike the mosaics of the Dome of the Rock which are still largely intact, those of the Great Mosque have been heavily restored. Restorations and additions took place in 1089-90 A.D./482 A.H., under the Seljuq Sultan Malik Shah, during the reign of his son Sultan Muhammad (1109-10 A.D./503 A.H.); under Zengid Sultan Nuraddin in 1159 A.D./554 A.H.; the Mamluk Sultan Baybars in 1269 A.D./668 A.H.; the Ottomans in the 15th century; the Turks in the 19th century and after 1929. The fire of 1893 significantly reduced the area covered by mosaic.[1]

Prior to 1929 scholars could only piece together an impression of the original decoration through an analysis of the few extant mosaic fragments, and from a few references in historical texts to the subject matter of the mosaics. Muqqadasi, the most informative historian, described the decoration thus: ". . . in the gilt parts . . . are pictured trees, cities, and inscriptions of the greatest beauty and delicacy, of exquisite workmanship. There is hardly a tree or notable town which has not been pictured on these walls."[2] Ibn Jubair is eloquent rather than informative: ". . . all its walls were overlaid with the mosaic work . . . With this ornamentation they depicted in various colours all manner of objects such as trees . . . also there were interlaced scrolls of mosaic, whereon were depicted various novel and wonderful subjects most astounding to behold; so that, on account of their brilliancy and splendour, those who came were fain to cover their eyes."[3] Mas'udi merely records the inscription discussed earlier.[4]

In 1929 the uncovering of the so-called 'Barada' panel on the rear west wall of the court substantiated the impression of architectural decoration given by the literary descriptions. A number of smaller panels were uncovered in the same year on the arcades of the west entrance and the west side of the court. These were previously covered by plaster.[5] Further fragments came to light in the northwest angle of the portico in 1953-54.

Since 1929 Van Berchem, Stern and Grabar among others, have studied the mosaics. In 1969 Van Berchem published a revised and

expanded edition of her 1932 discussion of the mosaics at Jerusalem and Damascus, including new observations and photographs. Stern published a lengthy article in 1972. With the exception of these major works, surprisingly little research has been done on the mosaics of the Great Mosque.

The lack of continuity in motifs between the mosaics of the Great Mosque and its predecessor the Dome of the Rock has puzzled art-historians. This chapter will catalogue the motifs, examine scholarly work on the scheme and finally, in a new interpretation point to the Quran as a source for the imagery of both the Dome of the Rock and the Great Mosque.

TECHNIQUE AND MOTIFS

The decoration at Damascus and Jerusalem employed very similar techniques. The most conspicuous parts were done by master-craftsmen, while the less visible parts were left to less-skilled workers.[6] In both schemes inclined and flat gold tesserae formed the background. Again, the tesserae were almost identical in scale, transparency, and range of colours: black, nine shades of blue from cerulean to indigo, thirteen shades of green from lemon yellow to a dark hue, several shades of gold, three shades of silver and red ranging from brownish-red to brick, and in the stone cubes light rose and grayish white. Traces of underpainting indicated the guidelines for the mosaicists at Damascus.[7]

The decoration of the Great Mosque is now fragmented and difficult to date accurately because of its poor condition and numerous restorations. To judge from the location of surviving portions, mosaic seems to have covered the inner and outer surfaces of the porticoes, entrances and both the interior and exterior of the prayer hall. The following description of the mosaics will move clockwise from the northern to the western portico.

In the eastern facade of the north portico original fragments remain above a pier and two columns (plates 43-45). Beneath the inscription that crowns the pier is a two-storied palace. In this image, two columns support a portico bearing a roof covered with branches of foliage. The mosaic has so badly deteriorated that one can only just make out the decorative elements that filled the space between the two columns. These appear to include a winged crown supported on a pedestal, the only such motif in the entire scheme.

A decorative panel separates this composition from the naskhi inscription above, attributed to the reign of Nuraddin (1146-74 A.D./ 541-69 A.H.).[8] Three striped columns, a central one in red and white flanked by two in green, black and white, support a blue cupola decorated with silver palmettes and gold volutes which fill the spring of the arch. Two columns flank the inscription at the top, capped by a bulbous dome. The space above the inscription is filled by a portico with five striped green and gold columns and open work lattices forming rounded balconies. While the silver palmettes and gold volutes resemble similar elements at the Dome of the Rock, the pillars and balconies represent a complete

departure.

A luxuriant citrus tree fills the area above the first column to the right, while the second column bears traces of a palm-tree. A two-storey facade of columns and high arched doors decorates the panel above the citrus tree. Above this is an architectural structure standing on columns flanked by two towers and capped with bulbous domes. At the foot of the panel a green and red boat glides along a blue river. Acanthus plants, scrolls, bowls, vases and funnel-shaped cornucopias as at the Dome of the Rock, fill the space above the palm tree. Traces of acanthus plants and scrolls remain in the arches of the bays.[9]

Another naskhi inscription is placed above the second arch from the north of the eastern portico. It is dated to 1159 A.D./554 A.H. and bears the name of Nuraddin.[10] The motifs surrounding the inscription are also of a later date.[11]

What seems an original fragment survives in the east entrance. Consistent in technique and style with Umayyad remains it is placed to the right of the central door immediately above marble facings, also surviving from the original construction. The fragment shows acanthus scrolls, a tree and an architectural motif.

The south side of the court bears fragments on the outer facade above the three entrance doors (plate 46). The fragments to the left show thick branches covered with citrus fruit in the foreground. In the background a slender tree casts a shadow over gabled houses, colonnaded porticoes and a tower. To the right is a two-storeyed

palace, its entrance formed by two high semicircular arches supported on columns with Corinthian capitals. Green scrolls on a deeper green ground decorate the tympanum of the palace. Here as in other cases, a motif of major importance at the Dome of the Rock plays a minor part at the Great Mosque. The curves of the arches are outlined by a chequered border. Through the openings two buildings are visible: that on the right has a terraced roof, dominated by a tall, round tower; that on the left has a bulbous roof. Above this portico appears the interior of a polygonal hall. Its pillars and columns support shell-shaped vaults. Scrolls decorate the back wall below four windows. Above the hall, two houses adjoin a small circular building capped by a low ribbed dome. Through a high, arched doorway can be seen an inner partition decorated with scrolls and ending in a semi-circular apse with a shell-shaped vault.

The fragments on the right show houses with porticoes and a tall building with a sloping roof. A polygonal hall with vaults supported by columns and a scroll-covered back wall, resembles the hall on the left fragment. Above the palace there is a large apse supported by scroll-covered spiral columns. Two symmetrical wings extend from this central portion.[12]

In the entrance to the prayer hall fragments of mosaic on the soffits of the three windows show acanthus plants and funnel-like cornucopias which surround floral and foliate medallions at the apex of the arches[13] (plates 47-49). These, though somewhat like the plants and cornucopias at the Dome of the Rock, are less elaborate and have

medallions. Although the mosaics of the interior of the prayer hall were badly damaged by the fire of 1893, enough fragments remain to show that they continued the architectural motifs of the exterior facade. Mosaics once covered the upper walls of the prayer hall, while the lower walls were decorated with marble slabs.

A portico of three columns with Corinthian capitals and two horse-shoe arches, capped by merlons, decorates the summit of the arch below the central window (plate 50). Acanthus foliage fills the space between the arches and two round towers flank the portico. That on the left has an arched door and a lobe-shaped window. That on the right is decorated with an interlace design. Foliage caps both towers. To the left of this composition a portico is depicted that has a large arch divided by a column supporting two smaller arches. The portico extends to the right with smaller arches. Floral motifs ornament the whole; above this runs a frieze imitating polychrome brick. Directly above the portico stands an architectural composition which Van Berchem describes as a mosque. She interprets the sloping portion leading to the central facade as a mosque courtyard, its pavement indicated by straight lines converging towards the three doorways and the towers flanking the structure as minarets.[14]

The space between the left window and the recess of the arch was filled by a large tree with outspread foliage.[15] To the right of the third window were two colonnaded pavilions with pointed roofs, fitted with cloth hangings and separated by a palm tree. Below the border of trilobed fleurons ran the edge of the windows, and beneath that were

depicted towers, arches and colonnades surrounded by trees. This section of mosaic is no longer extant.[16]

At one time all the piers of the dome were decorated with mosaic. Now, fragments survive only on the north face of the northeast dome pier and the northwest pier, south face (plates 51-52). The northeast pier has a naskhi inscription dating from the eleventh century.[17] Above the inscription a portico of two arches leads to vaulted galleries decorated with small gold palmettes and a row of columns at the end. A panel of gold scrolls on a blue background fills the space above the portico. Two slender columns striped in red and silver, gold and black decorate the northwest pier. In the background stands a group of buildings including a tower on the left with a doorway capped by a triangular pediment on the ground floor and twin windows on its upper storey.[18]

The western porticoes and entrances of the Mosque contain the most extensive surviving mosaics. They decorate the tympana of the arcades, the soffits, and the back walls to the left and right of the west entrance. The soffits of the arch above the central doorway are decorated with two trees with smooth trunks and foliage in two shades of indigo and three or four shades of green, standing out on a gold ground (plates 53-54). The apex of the arch has a medallion of five fruits, enclosed in a chevron border.[19]

A mosaic panel above the main entrance door, depicts a semi-circular colonnade with Corinthian capitals and a foliate roof. Windows open within each arcade, framed by golden vines. A gold lattice-work

balustrade runs along the base (plate 55).

Mosaic decorates the panels above the two lateral doors. The panel above the left door has not been photographed or described. The panel above the right door shows a palace two storeys high composed of a hypostyle hall with vaults supported on five columns. The back wall of the palace has four open doors through which can be seen three stairs. In each doorway hangs what Van Berchem refers to as a mother-of-pearl pendant. It is more likely that this represents a lamp on a chain and is an allusion to the sura of Light, sura 24, verses 35 and 36.[20]

The upper part of the north wall of the entrance (plate 56) depicts a village consisting of houses and towers. A wall with an archway from which hangs a lantern runs along the base of the composition. Two tall narrow houses with gable roofs flank the gateway; a bigger house is placed above them. Behind this house, stands a round tower, capped by a bulbous blue and silver dome. A tall tree fills the space to the right of the composition.

Although a long mosaic inscription from the reign of Sultan Baybars (658-676 A.H./1260-1277 A.D.) is still extant on the south wall of the west vestibule, the mosaics are too much damaged for its design to be worked out.[21]

Mosaics depicting architectural scenes also decorate the north and south lateral arcades of the entrances (plates 57-58). To the left and right above the middle column that supports the two arches, two palaces face each other. The one on the south side has a small niche on the lower level with columns and mother-of-pearl pendants or lamps,

and a shell-shaped vault. Above this is a larger rotunda with mother-of-pearl pendants or lamps, enclosed by two columns and a vault with looped-back curtains. Scrolls topped by vaults fill rectangular panels on each side of the central design.

The composition on the north side consists of a large central apse at the base of which is a rotunda with columns, mother-of-pearl pendants or lamps, and a foliate roof. Above this, two tall fluted columns support a vault from which hangs a single knotted curtain. On either side rectangular panels seem to be filled with acanthus. Clusters of houses and villages fill the space to the left and right of the two palaces, above the arches and at the two ends of the arcades. Acanthus scrolls on a yellow background decorate the facades of the arches.

The mosaics covering the tympana of the three transverse arches of the west entrance, outer face, depict a group of trees. The soffits of the lateral and transversel arches of the entrance are decorated with acanthus scrolls and plants springing from horn-shaped cornucopias. Again, themes familiar from the Dome of the Rock are used in a secondary location.

The western arcades of the court are covered with mosaics on both the inner and outer surfaces. These consist of acanthus scrolls and architectural compositions. Olive, almond, fig and apple trees fill the spaces above the columns of the outer face, while acanthus scrolls fill the spaces above the columns of the inner face. Architectural compositions occupy the spaces above the piers (plate 59). Above the

second pier from the south is a two-arched apse with a shell vault. Scrolls springing from acanthus plants fill the spaces between its arches. Two short, squat, Corinthian columns flank the arches. Above this composition five columns support two arches and an openwork balustrade. On the back wall are four open doors capped by windows. Pearl pendants hang from gold chains in the doorways. A foliate roof crowns the structure which is flanked by clusters of houses.

A fragment of mosaic above the first pier from the south (plate 60) is decorated at the base with architectural structures, in keeping with Umayyad models. At the top, however, the buildings differ significantly in style from those executed under the Umayyads. The flat, undecorated architecture is crowned by a bulbous ribbed dome. Van Berchem attributes this structure to restorations carried out 'fairly recently' under Turkish rule.[22]

THE BARADA PANEL

The Barada Panel runs along the back wall of the western portico. It is the most extensive mosaic surviving from the Umayyad period, measuring 34.50 metres in length and 7.30 metres in height. This panel will be described in detail from its south to its north end. The panel consists of a line of tall trees through which villages and buildings can be seen, along the banks of a river (plate 61).

At the south end stand two villages, the first a group of four houses rising one above another, dominated by a round tower capped by a bulbous dome, and the second, a compact group of varied buildings. On the shore of the river that runs along the bottom of the panel, stands a little gabled house, a round tower with a foliage-covered pointed roof, and a portico with five thick, round columns. An orchard of fruit trees is visible behind these buildings. Above rocks indicating a mountain perch three more buildings (plate 62). A third village, placed between the third and fourth trees, consists of houses and square towers. Above it, rocks indicate a mountain and below a stream passes under a bridge.

To the right of the fifth tree stands a building with a pagoda-shaped roof. Between the sixth and seventh trees appears a colonnade with square towers at each end. At the back of the colonnade can be seen six doors with gold frames on a blue ground. Two houses with terraced roofs are attached to the right hand tower. Beneath the colonnade, a cluster of miniature houses rests at the edge of the shore-line. Further back, a group of tall, narrow buildings and a tower capped with a bulbous dome perch on rocky ground (plate 63).

This complex scene also shows two palaces each with three large columns on the ground floor supporting the balconies. These are flanked by doorways through which can be seen towers. At the sides of the door-way are five more columns. The second storey of each palace is polygonal with six columns supporting a shell vault, flanked by more pillars and doors, the whole capped by gabled and domed roofs. A

vaulted passageway links the two palaces to two columned pavilions capped by pointed roofs and heavily decorated with scrolls. While the palaces extend down to the river's edge, the pavilions are set back a little with a wharf at the edge (plate 64).

Two clusters of houses and towers, separated by rocks, appear to the right of the palaces. Between two rigid cypress trees a canopied structure supported on columns is visible, covered by vines and capped with a foliate roof. Houses and porticoes appear at the side of this structure, a courtyard at the back (plate 65). A second group of buildings, separated by rocks, with a crenellated wall pierced by two arched openings seems to lead to another town. At the north end, several more clusters of buildings and porticoes complete the panel.

SOURCES AND SYMBOLISM

The themes in the mosaics of the Great Mosque of Damascus -- landscapes, houses, colonnades and palaces -- belong to the Graeco-Roman and Byzantine repertoire of frescoes and mosaics. No single scheme, however, contains such a concentration of these motifs.

The early Roman frescoes from Boscoreale (1st. century B.C.), depict architectural landscapes: houses, square towers, colonnades and temples piled one above the other with the same disregard for one-point perspective as in the Great Mosque. The Boscoreale frescoes also contain pillared pavilions with Corinthian capitals, vine decoration and pointed roofs, similar to the two pavilions in the Barada panel.

Examples of architectural landscapes occur in buildings closer in time to the Great Mosque. A mosaic at the Great Palace in Constantinople depicts water gushing under two arches into a river. Above the walls, buildings with gabled and terraced roofs and a round tower with a conical roof are set among trees. This mosaic bears thematic and visual parallels with portions of the Barada panel.[23]

The mosaics in the dome of the rotunda at St. George in Salonika portray architectural facades resembling those at Damascus.[24] Each of the facades at Salonika has a central portico flanked by colonnades. Several of the porticoes frame 'ciboria', consisting of a dome resting on four columns, somewhat similar to the pavilions of the Great Mosque. Liturgical furnishings such as chancel screens, crosses, candlesticks, curtains, and Gospel books are secondary motifs.

The iconography and symbolism of the mosaics at St. George's has occasioned much debate. Andre Grabar suggests that the architectural scenes, derived in form from the classical scaenae frons, were endowed with Christian religious symbolism through the liturgical furnishings depicted and represent the architecture of a paradisical city --the New Jerusalem.[25] The Book of Revelation 21, verses 11 and 19 to 21, describe the celestial city as possessing a: "...radiance like a most rare jewel, like a jasper, clear as crystal." In the heavenly city a single pearl forms each of the gates and sheets of gold, transparent as glass, pave its streets. A river runs through the centre of the City, besides which blooms the Tree of Life (Revelation 22:1). Revelation 21, verse 22 states, however, that: "...I saw no temple

in the city, for its Temple is the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb." If no temple is necessary in the New Jerusalem, why are liturgical furnishings so prominently displayed?

Kleinbauer rejects Grabar's attribution on the grounds that: "Since the liturgical furnishings are a conspicuous feature of the martyr panels, and since there is no reason for liturgical furnishings to appear in the new city that shall descend from heaven, the great frieze cannot be identified with the celestial Jerusalem."[26] The scheme makes sense, however, if the saints are, in fact, standing in front of interior church facades, a 'celestial ecclesia' rather than the 'New Jerusalem': "Both the liturgical provisions of each of the panels . . . and the pose of the saints point to this register forming a heavenly counterpart to the eucharistic rite that unfolds in the church itself. These panels accord rather to the vision of heaven unfolding in Revelation 4, which describes the worship of God and his host in heaven, than to the fully restored Heavenly Jerusalem . . ."[27]

The scholarly debate on this scheme may not appear to be relevant to an investigation of the mosaics at Damascus. It reveals, however, an interesting, if not consciously utilized parallel to the significance of the Islamic mosaics, as will be seen later. It also provides some important information about the possible significance of the mosaics at the Church of the Nativity at Bethlehem.

The dome of the Orthodox Baptistery in Ravenna (early 5th century A.D.) is ringed with mosaics depicting architectural facades enclosing thrones, crowns, domes, Gospel books, altars, trees and

greenery. Saintly figures stand poised above the facades. This scheme also bears a close resemblance to the mosaics of St. George's in Salonika.

Andre Grabar sees the architectural facades here, as portraying the Celestial Jerusalem.[28] Agreeing with Grabar, Kostof goes a step further by suggesting that the altars, open Gospels and architecture form a visual image of the Church on Earth, while the other panels of architecture and greenery depict the architecture of Heaven. The zone thus forms a link between the earthly sphere and the celestial sphere in which the Apostles stand.[29]

Columned porticoes, bulbous domes and curtained doorways amid altars, Gospel books and candlesticks are found in the Church of the Nativity at Bethlehem. The striking similarity with the imagery of St. George's and the Orthodox Baptistery would militate in favour of a Christian architectural program and against any suggestion for strong Islamic influence. These mosaics would, however, provide a readily accessible source for the architectural imagery of the Great Mosque.

Other mosaics in Palestine include the floor mosaics at the Church of St. John the Baptist (531 A.D.) at Gerasa which show the city of Alexandria (identified by name), enclosed by fortified walls. As in the Great Mosque the buildings have flat, gabled and domed roofs and are set amid trees.

Bonfioli cautions that Syriac-Palestinian mosaics are unlikely to have provided inspiration for the Umayyad mosaics. There is no evidence of continuity in the local Syriac-Palestinian schools as

late as the Umayyad period. Stylistically, the local schools lean towards dark closed lines and isolated forms rather than the unified scheme of the Islamic mosaics.[30] The Church of the Nativity would, however, fall outside these restrictions as it contains mural mosaic executed by Byzantine craftsmen rather than floor mosaics.

It is likely, given the texts stating that Byzantine workmen came to Damascus, that the mosaicists of the Great Mosque of Damascus drew upon the large repertoire of architectural imagery embodied in Graeco-Roman and Byzantine art. The visual similarity of motifs and the lack of such a tradition in Islamic art previous to the Great Mosque would support this hypothesis.

Van Berchem compares the architectural motifs at Damascus to those in Roman and Pompeiian frescoes and ancient Syrian towns composed of houses with gabled and terraced roofs, suggesting that these may have provided a source of inspiration.[31] She also discusses the difference in style of the vegetation in the Dome of the Rock from that in Damascus:

> The trunks of this astonishing row of giant trees in the Barada panel, beautifully modelled, are impressive for their strength and vigor. If, on the one hand, they resemble in colour and in composition the trees of the Dome of the Rock, yet on the other, they are differentiated by the total absence of those jewelled additions so characteristic of the floral decor of Jerusalem. Here we are in the presence of nature herself in her

> naked truth, without all the display of gems and adornments lavished on the Dome of the Rock.

She continues: "We should take into account a possibly determining factor: that there is an absence of light in the sanctuary of 'Abd al-Malik, whereas the mosaics of the Mosque of Damascus are exposed to full daylight." The paragraph ends with a conclusion about the mosaics as a whole: "These conditions may explain . . . the notable contrast between these two vast decorative ensembles . . . But this explanation is not indeed entirely satisfactory . . . the mystery of this contrast is not entirely solved."[32]

In keeping with her methodology, Van Berchem occupies herself almost exclusively with formalist-aesthetic concerns. Her approach fails to address the deeper concerns raised by this mosaic scheme.

Stern considers the question of specific motifs at Damascus. He concludes that themes from Graeco-Roman and Byzantine programs were consciously utilized in the mosaics, because al-Walid wanted to usurp the Byzantine role of 'Basileus' and to model his administration on that of the Byzantine Empire.[33] While he assigns no specific symbolism to the mosaics, he concludes that the exclusively Graeco-Roman-Byzantine character of the decoration corresponds in a general way to the political ambitions of al-Walid.

Ettinghausen and Oleg Grabar both take a socio-political approach, suggesting that the architectural motifs symbolise the material world conquered by Islam.[34] This interpretation may, in part, be based on

Muqqadasi's description of the Great Mosque decoration as depicting every 'notable town'. While some of the architectural forms at Damascus resemble similar schemes elsewhere, their strong elements of repetition and the presence of fantastical buildings would rule out any suggestion that all 'notable town[s]', or indeed, any actual city, served as their model. Grabar also suggests that the mosaics may have a purely decorative significance, their motifs chosen from existing Byzantine sources.[35]

The decorative program of the Great Mosque includes all the formal elements of that in the Dome of the Rock -- vases, cornucopias, acanthus plants and scrolls -- with the exception of the crowns, jewels and wing motifs. The Sasanian-based imagery is not repeated at Damascus. If one follows Stern's arguments, this would be due to the different political interests of Abd al-Malik and Abd al-Walid. Abd al-Malik aligned himself with Persia (e.g. the Sasanians) as well as Byzantium. This does not, however, explain the lack of crowns and jewels at Damascus, as there are numerous Byzantine mosaics containing both. If one accepts the theories of Grabar and Ettinghausen that the depiction of buildings, specifically palaces, can be understood as images of power corresponding to the symbolism of the crowns and jewels of the Dome of the Rock, it still does not explain the source for this concept, or the missing motifs.

Although there is no reason to doubt Grabar's assertions, another and equally important parallel joins the images found in the Dome of the Rock with those at Damascus. It has been previously demonstrated

that the myriad of motifs utilized at the Dome of the Rock had a specifically Islamic significance. Collectively they represent a visual interpretation of the literary descriptions of paradise in the Quran. Motifs associated with paradise imagery reappear at Damascus: lush vegetation and verdant trees. One could attribute this to the fact that these motifs had entered into the Islamic repertoire of design and were used in a mechanical fashion at Damascus, except that the program at the Great Mosque introduces new elements, rivers and architectural structures. Grabar raises the point that this imagery can be seen as relating to the concept of paradise but does not elaborate on this.[35]

Indeed, the Quran does contain many references to paradise akin to the images on the walls of the Great Mosque. Sura 9, verse 72 (Repentance) states: "Allah promiseth to the believers, men and women, Gardens underneath which rivers flow, wherein they will abide -- blessed dwellings in Gardens of Eden." Sura 29, verse 58 (The Spider), promises: "Those who believe and do good works, them verily We shall house in lofty dwellings of the Garden underneath which rivers flow. There they will dwell secure. How sweet the guerdon of the toilers". Sura 38, verses 51 to 53 (Sad) offers: "Gardens of Eden, whereof the gates are opened for them, Wherein, reclining, they call for plenteous fruit and cool drink (that is) therein." Many other verses provide essentially the same information.

The following suras amplify the descriptions given above. Sura 43, verses 69 to 73 (Ornaments of Gold), provides the following

information:

> (Ye) who believed Our revelations and
> were self-surrendered, Enter the Garden,
> ye and your wives, to be made glad.
> Therein are brought round for them trays
> of gold and goblets, and therein is all
> that souls desire and eyes find sweet.
> This is the Garden which ye are made to
> inherit because of what ye used to do.
> Therein for you is fruit in plenty
> when to eat.

Sura 47, verse 15 (Muhammad), states that Allah made: "A similitude of the Garden which those who keep their duty (to Allah) are promised: Therein are rivers of water unpolluted, and rivers of milk whereof the flavour changeth not, and rivers of wine delicious to the drinkers, and rivers of clear-run honey; therein for them is every kind of fruit . . ."

Sura 52, verses 18 to 24 (The Mount), informs us that those who kept their duty are: "Happy because of what their Lord hath given them . . . (And it is said unto them): Eat and drink in health (as a reward) for what ye used to do, Reclining on ranged couches. And We wed them unto fair ones with wide, lovely eyes . . . And We provide them with fruit and meat such as they desire. There they pass from hand to hand a cup wherein is neither vanity nor cause of sin. And there go round, waiting on them men-servants of their own, as they were hidden pearls."

Sura 55, verses 46 to 76 (The Beneficent) describes the gardens of paradise thus:

> But for him who feareth the standing
> before his Lord there are two gardens
> . . . Of spreading branches . . .
> Wherein are two fountains flowing
> . . . Wherein is every kind of fruit
> in pairs . . . Reclining upon couches
> lined with silk brocade, the fruit of
> both the gardens near to hand . . .
> Therein are those of modest gaze, whom
> neither man nor jinni will have touched
> before them . . . (In beauty) like the
> jacynth and the coral-stone . . .
> And beside them are two other gardens
> . . . Dark green with foliage . . .
> Wherein are two abundant springs
> . . . Wherein is fruit, the date-palm
> and pomegranate . . . Fair ones, close-
> guarded in pavilions . . . Reclining on
> green cushions and fair carpets.

Sura 56, verses 11 to 38 (The Event) provides more specific information:

> Those are they who can be brought
> nigh. In gardens of delight; A
> multitude of those of old And a
> few of those of later time, On
> lined couches, Reclining therein
> face to face. There wait on them
> immortal youths With bowls and ewers
> and a cup from a pure spring Wherefrom
> they get no aching of the head nor any
> madness, And fruit that they prefer
> And flesh of fowls that they desire.
> And (there are) fair ones with wide,
> lovely eyes, Like unto hidden pearls,
> Reward for what they used to do . . .
> And those on the right hand; of those
> on the right hand? Among thornless
> lote-trees And clustered plantains,
> And spreading shade, And water
> gushing, And fruit in plenty
> Neither out of reach nor yet forbidden,
> And raised couches; Lo! We have

created them a (new) creation And
made them virgins, Lovers, friends,
For those on the right hand . . .

Much the same imagery is found in the passages from sura 44 and 76, quoted in chapter two. The selections quoted above, with those in chapter two, give a clear idea of the Muslim conception of paradise.

A significant number of the elements of this paradise are represented visually in the mosaics of the Great Mosque of Damascus. The acanthus plants, scrolls and vases which comprise a major part of the decoration of the Dome of the Rock are, however, minor elements in the mosaics of the Great Mosque. They appear in various parts of the scheme, for instance, on the soffits of the west vestibule. In the interior of the mosque acanthus plants, simple vases and floral designs decorate the soffits of the east, middle and west windows. Conversely, architectural compositions which are not present at the Dome of the Rock here play a major role. Architectural structures are, as we have seen, shown in nearly all parts of the mosaic decoration. For instance, above the three entrance doors on the south side of the court, trees shade gabled houses and colonnaded porticoes. Inside the mosque the northwest pier bears a group of buildings. The mosaic panel above the main entrance door depicts a semicircular colonnade with Corinthian capitals and a foliate roof, while the panel above the main door shows a two-storeyed palace with a vaulted hypostyle hall. Veristically rendered buildings and fantastical structures with foliate roofs resembling cabbages are intermingled. There is no reason why

these buildings cannot visually represent the Quranic promise of 'blessed dwellings in the Garden of Eden'.

The specific promise of 'lofty dwellings of the Garden underneath which rivers flow' is represented most completely by the Barada panel. The river flows underneath gardens and orchards of poplar, cypress, olive, apricot, walnut, fig, plum, pear and apple trees, amid which are set villages and palaces. Terraced and gabled houses cluster next to pagoda-roofed towers. Between the sixth and seventh trees are two palaces, near these are pavilions.

Surely this scene alludes to the promise of pavilions for the 'fair ones', dwellings for the Faithful and 'spreading shade, And water gushing, And fruit in plenty'. The couches and fine furnishings suggested in the Quran are implicit in the representations of sumptuous palaces found throughout the mosque. The foliate-roofed pavilions and fantastical compositions are as suited to paradise as the composite motifs and jewelled shapes of the Dome of the Rock.

If the mosaics at Damascus are considered as a complementary scheme to that of the Dome of the Rock, a major proportion of the images associated with the Muslim conception of paradise are visually represented in the two buildings.[36]

CONCLUSION

This thesis has examined the historical, architectural and decorative importance of the two buildings containing the only extant mural mosaics executed under Umayyad patronage in the Middle East, as a prelude to determining the symbolism of the motifs selected for these schemes.

When the Umayyads captured Jerusalem, they took a city holy to all three of the scriptured religions. In 691 A.D. with the completion of the Dome of the Rock, Muslims asserted their claim to the site of Solomon's Temple with a building which served the dual purpose of commemorating miraculous events and rivalling in splendour the architectural heritage of the Jews and Christians. In plan, the Dome of the Rock is likely modelled on Christian martyria and it is decorated with mosaic, a medium associated with the Graeco-Roman-Byzantine world.

Motifs in the mosaics of the Dome of the Rock are taken from the Graeco-Roman and Byzantine traditions, with the addition of Sasanian elements. Were these motifs selected at random because Muslims had not yet developed a decorative tradition of their own, or did they have a unique program and symbolism for Islam? Van Berchem has argued that the motifs have no specifically Muslim meaning. They were taken from previous mosaic traditions and serve merely to ornament this magnificent building. Grabar offers the more convincing hypothesis that the inscriptions and mosaics emphasised the primary

purpose of the building which was to impress upon non-Muslims the might of Islam.

The second building with extant mosaics is the Great Mosque of Damascus built between 705 and 715 A.D. by Abd al-Malik's successor, al-Walid. Damascus did not have the religious importance of Jerusalem; its significance at this time was only as the capital of the Umayyad dynasty. The Great Mosque served as the major centre of prayer for the Muslim population of this large and bustling city, not as a commemorative building.

The motifs of the Great Mosque differ from those of the Dome of the Rock. While scrolls, acanthus plants, vases and cornucopias are present, they are relegated to the status of minor motifs. The Sasanian wing motifs and the crowns and jewels of the Dome of the Rock which Grabar specifically refers to as serving the function of demonstrating that Islam had defeated the previous religions are not used at the Great Mosque. New elements are introduced which form the major part of the decoration -- trees, architectural structures and a river.

Both buildings employ a medium associated with the Byzantine world. While the Dome of the Rock may well serve for non-Muslims, especially Christians, as a visible reminder of Islam's presence, it is difficult to see how the Great Mosque, by definition uniquely Islamic, would have had an impact upon the Christian population. Do the designs on the walls of the Great Mosque depict 'all notable towns' as Muqqadasi would have us believe, and by extension, the

'world transformed under Islam', as Grabar and Ettinghausen suggest? The motifs in both buildings can be understood in a general sense as images of power; the material world under the domination of the last and perfect revelation -- Islam, however, this theory does not account for the specific imagery used in these schemes or for the variation between the buildings.

In addition to the mosaic decoration of the Dome of the Rock and the Great Mosque, the Mosque of Medina in Arabia was decorated with mosaic between 707 and 709 A.D.[1] As these mosaics are no longer extant, we have to rely on literary descriptions. Ibn Rabbihi (940 A.D.) and Samhudi (1506 A.D.) provide brief descriptions of the mosaic decoration. The former reports that "The walls of the mosque are all decorated on the inside from end to end with marble and gold and mosaic work . . .". Samhudi states that "One of the workers in mosaic said: 'We have made it (the mosaic) according to what we know of the forms and trees and mansions of Paradise.'". This would suggest that mosaic was more frequently used as a decorative medium in Umayyad buildings than surviving fragments would indicate. Furthermore, the decorative scheme of the Mosque of Medina in the second most holy city of Islam, was analogous to that of the nearly contemporary Great Mosque and contained elements found at Jerusalem. At least as far as Samhudi was concerned, it had presented a visual depiction of paradise.

I have presented the hypothesis that the mosaics of the Dome of the Rock and the Great Mosque represent complementary portions of the Quranic explication of the paradise awaiting the 'True Believer'.

They depict in visual terms the revelations presented in literary terms in the Quran. The imagery in the Dome of the Rock is based on suras such as Sura 6, verse 142 (Cattle): "He it is Who produceth gardens trellised and untrellised, and the date-palm, and crops of divers flavour, and the olive and the pomegranate, like and unlike. Eat ye of the fruit . . .". The trees and fruits associated with the paradise verses are, as we have seen, sumptuously represented in the Dome of the Rock along with jewels and fantastical compositions which give the motifs an otherworldly quality. The mosaics of the Great Mosque interpret visually the imagery of verses such as Sura 19, verse 58 (The Spider): "Those who believe and do good works, them verily We shall house in lofty dwellings of the Garden underneath which rivers flow." The Barada panel depicts these paradisical attributes with its broadly flowing river and fantastical palaces and pavilions nestled amongst shady trees.

The suras quoted in the second and fourth chapters of this thesis account for all the elements present in both the schemes of the Dome of the Rock and the Mosque at Damascus with a precision that no other hypothesis so far presented can match. The available information about the Mosque at Medina serves to confirm my suggestions that the buildings have a uniquely Islamic decorative program based on paradise imagery, and that this was readily apparent to the Muslims of the day and to later Islamic historians.

NOTES TO INTRODUCTION

[1]. Other mosques have extant mosaic schemes, although not as extensive as those of the Dome of the Rock and the Great Mosque. The al-Aqsa Mosque built under the Umayyads in Jerusalem was largely destroyed by earthquakes in 746 A.D. and 771-780 A.D. It was rebuilt under the Abbasid Caliphs: al-Mansur (751-774 A.D.) and al-Mahdi (775-784 A.D.) with later additions. Its mosaic decoration, while exemplifying many of the motifs found at the Dome of the Rock, is much less lively in style and almost certainly dates from the Fatimid period; therefore it has not been considered here. For more information see Henri Stern, "Recherches sur la mosquee al-Aqsa et sur ses mosaiques" Ars Orientalis, vol. 5 (Washington: Freer Gallery of Art, 1963), pp. 27-40.

The second major building containing extant mosaic decoration is the Great Mosque of Cordoba, also built under Umayyad patronage. Begun by Abd al-Rahman I in 785 A.D., it was enlarged by Abd al-Rahman II in 848 A.D. and by al-Hakim II (961-99 A.D.) and by al-Mansur in 987 A.D. The polygonal mihrab at the end of the fifth aisle from the south side is decorated with carved marble and mosaics composed of geometric and vegetal motifs. Although the Mosque in its use of mosaic as a decorative medium makes references to the earlier mosaic schemes in the Middle East, it will not be discussed as it falls outside both the geographical and chronological parameters of this thesis.

[2]. Marguerite Van Berchem, "The Mosaics of the Dome of the Rock in Jersualem and of the Great Mosque of Damascus" in: K.A.C. Creswell, Early Muslim Architecture, vol. 1 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1969), p. 247.

[3]. Oleg Grabar, The Formation of Islamic Art (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1973), p. 67.

NOTES TO CHAPTER ONE

1. John Bright, A History of Israel (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1972), p. 202.

2. Kathleen Kenyon, Digging Up Jerusalem (London: Ernest Benn, 1974), p. 108.

3. John Bright, A History of Israel, p. 424.

4. Aelia Capitolina in honour of the family name of the Emperor and the Capitoline triad of Jupiter, Juno and Minerva.

5. J.W. Crowfoot, Early Churches in Palestine (Maryland McGrath, 1971), p. 9.

6. A.A.J. al-Baladhuri, The Origins of the Islamic State (New York: AMS Press, 1968), pp. 213-214.

7. Hijra can be translated as 'flight' or more properly, 'migration'. 622 A.D. marks the first year of the Islamic calendar, abbreviated to A.H. The Muslim year is based on a lunar cycle.

8. The Quran is divided into one hundred and fourteen chapters called suras, the verses within the chapters are called ayats. Each sura is titled after a key word or event in the section and is identified as to whether it was revealed in Mecca or Medina. There are conflicting opinions as to whether the Quran was written down in full during the lifetime of the Prophet or after his death. Cragg states that "It is well known that Muhammad did use scribes, that the Quranic utterances were recorded from his lips or after being memorized . . .". K. Cragg, The Event of the Qur'an (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1971), p. 67.

Gibb says that "The generally received account describes its first compilation a few years after his death from 'scraps of parchment and leather, tablets of stone, ribs of palm branches, camel's shoulder blades and ribs, pieces of board and breasts of men." H.A.R. Gibb, Mohammadanism (London: Oxford University Press, 1969), p. 33.

After Muhammad died, Umar ordered that the fragments recording the Prophet's words be collected. This was continued under Uthman.

9. The djizya was a poll-tax levied on non-Muslims specifically Christians and Jews. The actual form it could take was flexible, tailored to the particular circumstances of the group concerned.

The term Kharadj is also used in reference to taxation.

The conquered inhabitants of Syria and Palestine were regarded as dhimmis, non-Muslims guaranteed hospitality and protection by Muslims through the medium of an indefinitely renewable contract.

For djizya and Kharadj see B. Lewis, Ch. Pellat, ed., Encyclopedia of Islam vol 2 (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1965), p. 559.

For dhimmis see Ibid., p. 227.

10. E. Van Donzel, B. Lewis ed., Encyclopedia of Islam vol 4 (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1978), pp. 322-323.

11. Unless otherwise noted, Quranic references are taken from: Marmaduke Pickthall, The Glorious Koran (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1930).

12. Quoting Sunan Abu Du'ud, book 15, par. 33. S.D. Goitein, "The Sanctity of Jerusalem and Palestine in Early Islam", Studies in Islamic History and Institutions (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1966), p. 143.

Hadith: an account of what the Prophet said or did, or his tacit approval of something said or done in his presence. These traditions came to be considered second in authority to the Quran. For further information on hadith see H.A.R. Gibb, J.H. Kramers, ed., Shorter Encyclopedia of Islam (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1965), pp. 116-121.

13. A.J. Arberry, The Koran Interpreted vol 1 & 2 (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1955).

14. H.A.R. Gibb, J.H. Kramers, ed., Shorter Encyclopedia of Islam (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1965), pp. 381-382.

15. Priscilla Soucek, "The Temple of Solomon in Islamic Legend and Art", J. Gutmann (ed.), The Temple of Solomon (Montana: The Scholar's Press, 1976), p. 100.

16. Ibn Ishaq, was born in Medina ca 85 A.H. and died in Baghdad in 151 A.H. He is the earliest known biographer of Muhammad whose work has survived.

17. Ibn Ishaq, The Life of Muhammad (London: The Folio Society, 1964), pp. 58-59.

18. H.A.R. Gibb, J.H. Kramers, ed., Shorter Encyclopedia of Islam, pp. 381-382.

19. Priscilla Soucek, "The Temple of Solomon", p. 111.

20. Not much is known about Sophronius. Born in Damascus, Sophronius became a monk and travelled widely. He was appointed Patriarch of Jerusalem in 638 A.D., so his term coincided with Muslim interest in Jerusalem. He aided the Patriarchs in persuading the Copts to abandon monophysitism.

21. Guy le Strange, Palestine under the Moslems (Beirut: Khayats, 1890), rpt. 1965, pp. 140-141.

22. Ibid., p. 138.

23. Ibid., p. 140.

24. Ibid., p. 140.

25. K.A.C. Creswell, Early Muslim Architecture vol 1 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1969), p. 32.

26. T. Wright, ed., "The Travels of Bishop Arculf in the Holy Land", Early Travels in Palestine (New York: AMS Press, 1848), rpt. 1969, pp. 1-2.

27. K.A.C. Creswell, Early Muslim Architecture vol 1, p. 34.

28. Priscilla Soucek, "The Temple of Solomon", p. 74.

29. H.A.R. Gibb, J.H. Kramers, ed., Shorter Encyclopedia of Islam, pp. 549-551.

30. R.B. Merriman, Suleiman the Magnificent (New York: Cooper Square, 1966), pp. 31-32.

31. Priscilla Soucek, "The Temple of Solomon", p. 85.

32. Ibid., p. 87.

33. Ibid., p. 87.

34. Ibid., p. 85.

Some of the Islamic accounts of the Temple rely on Biblical descriptions and possibly also those of historians such as Josephus, a Jewish historian (A.D.37-c.101). These two sources are the basis for our knowledge of the physical structure and decoration of the temples of Solomon, Zerababbel and Herod. Josephus based his accounts on the Old Testament and the writings of Nicolaus of Damascus.

35. All Biblical references are taken from The Holy Bible revised standard version (New York: Collins, 1973).

36. A cubit is defined as a unit of length based on the length of the forearm from the elbow to the tip of the middle finger, usually equal to about 18 inches, but sometimes to 21 or more, i.e. 45.72 cm to 53.34 cm.

37. William Whiston, transl., Antiquities of the Jews, Works of Flavius Josephus (Halifax: Milner & Sowerby, 1852), p. 177.

38. Ibid., p. 179.

39. Ibid., Wars of the Jews, p. 578.

40. Priscilla Soucek, "The Temple of Solomon", p. 87.

41. Ibid., pp. 87-88.

42. K.A.C. Creswell, "The Origin of the Plan of the Dome of the Rock", (London: British School of Archaeology in Jerusalem supp papers, vol 2, 1924), p. 4.

43. Ibid., p. 5

44. Grabar cites G. le Strange who quotes an unpublished fragment of Sibt al-Jawzi to that effect in "The Umayyad Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem", Studies in Medieval Islamic Art, p. 34.

45. Guy le Strange, Palestine under the Moslems, p. 144.

46. John D. Hoag, Islamic Architecture (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1977), p. 16.

47. K.A.C. Creswell, Early Muslim Architecture vol 1, p. 65.

48. Ibid., p. 100.

49. K.A.C. Creswell, Early Muslim Architecture vol 1, p. 92.

50. Guy le Strange, Palestine under the Moslems, p. 120.

51. K.A.C. Creswell, Early Muslim Architecture vol 1, p. 96.

52. I have extrapolated the measurements for the windows and lunettes from Fig. 24, facing p. 78, K.A.C. Creswell, Early Muslim Architecture vol 1. The window measurements are taken from the base of the sill to the apex of the arch, the lunette measurements from the top of the sill to the apex of the arch.

53. Dating inscription copied by de Vogue when date 935 A.H./ 1528-29 was still visible on second window on west side, Ibid., p. 78.

54. Ibid., p. 79.

55. Guy le Strange, Palestine under the Moslems, p. 120.

56. K.A.C. Creswell, quoting from the Masalik al-Absar, 1, p. 140, 2, 7, and 11-12, Early Muslim Architecture vol 1, p. 79.

57. Measurements extrapolated from fig 20, back of page 69, K.A.C. Creswell, Early Muslim Architecture vol 1. Measurements are taken from the base of the sill to the apex of the arch.

58. K.A.C. Creswell, Early Muslim Architecture vol 1, p. 82.

59. Ibid., p. 83.

60. Ibid., p. 84.

61. Ibid., p. 85.

62. Ibid., p. 88.

63. Measurements extrapolated from fig. 20, back of page 69, K.A.C. Creswell, Early Muslim Architecture vol 1.

64. A.A.A. Dixon, The Umayyad Caliphate (London: Luzac & Co., 1971), p. 18.

65. Oleg Grabar, "Islamic Art and Byzantium", Studies in Medieval Islamic Art (London: Variorum Reprints, 1976), p. 79.

66. Marshall Hodgson, The Venture of Islam, vol 1, p. 226.

67. Ibid., p. 20.

68. A.A.A. Dixon, The Umayyad Caliphate, p. 121.

69. Ya'qubi, History ii, p. 11 transl. by G. le Strange, Palestine Under the Moslems, p. 116.

70. Oleg Grabar, "The Umayyad Dome of the Rock", p. 35.

71. S.D. Goitein, "The Sanctity of Jerusalem", p. 135.

72. Ibid., p. 135.

73. Ibid., p. 136.

74. Ibid., p. 137-138.

75. Ibid., p. 138.

76. K.A.C. Creswell, Early Muslim Architecture vol 1, p. 66.

77. Oleg Grabar, "The Umayyad Dome of the Rock", p. 36.

78. Guy le Strange, Palestine under the Moslems, pp. 117-118.

79. K.A.C. Creswell, "The Origin of the Plan", p. 3.

80. Appendix A, inscriptions taken from Oleg Grabar, "The Umayyad Dome of the Rock", pp. 52-54. He gives no edition for the Quran.

81. S.D. Goitein, "The Sanctity of Jerusalem", p. 139.

82. Ibid., p. 147.

83. Oleg Grabar, "The Umayyad Dome of the Rock", p. 36.

84. Ibid., p. 37.

85. Ibid., p. 38.

86. Ibid., p. 38.

87. Ibid., p. 39. Grabar is imprecise about the date of 'early medieval times'. He cites W.H. Roscher in Der Omphalosgedanke bei verschiedenen volkern, vol 70 (1918, Leipzig), p. 34, as his source.

88. Oleg Grabar, "The Umayyad Dome of the Rock", p. 39.

89. Ibid., p. 39.

90. Ibid., p. 41.

91. Ibid., p. 42.

92. Ibid., p. 46.

93. Ibid., p. 44.

94. R. Krautheimer, Early Christian and Byzantine Architecture, (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1965), p. 36.

95. Ibid., p. 38.

96. Ibid., p. 50.

97. Ibid., pp. 50-51. No date for this legend is given.

98. Ibid., p. 51.

99. Ibid., p. 116.

100. H.A.R. Gibb, K.H. Kramers, ed., The Shorter Encyclopedia of Islam, p. 267.

101. Oleg Grabar, "The Umayyad Dome of the Rock", p. 46.

102. K.A.C. Creswell, Early Muslim Architecture vol 1, p. 106.

103. Ibid., p. 107.

104. Ibid., pp. 107-108.

NOTES TO CHAPTER TWO

1. K.A.C. Creswell, "The Origin of the Plan of the Dome of the Rock" (London: British School of Archaelogy in Jerusalem supp. papers, vol 2, 1924). Marguerite van Berchem "The Mosaics of the Dome of the Rock at Jerusalem and of the Great Mosque of Damascus" Early Muslim Architecture vol 1. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1932).
E.T. Richmond, The Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1924).

2. K.A.C. Creswell, Early Muslim Architecture vol 1, pp. 98-99.

3. Ibid., p. 226. No information is available about the 'pavement' mosaics.

4. Masalik al-Absar, Cairo ed. 1924 I p. 140 1-8, II 12-17 quoted in Marguerite van Berchem, "The Mosaics of the Dome of the Rock at Jerusalem and of the Great Mosque of Damascus", p. 237.

5. Ibid., p. 227.

6. Aranda Verdadeio, informacio d'la tierra santa fol IXIII b.
Ibid., p. 227.

7. Panteleo d'aveiro, 1552, Itenerario da tierra santa fol 195 a.
Ibid., p. 227.

8. Fragments were collected and deposited in an Egyptian architect's office during 1964-65 restoration work, Van Berchem saw them in the spring of 1964. Ibid., p. 226.

9. Ibid., p. 79.

10. Ibid., p. 99.

11. Ibid., pp. 227-228.

12. Ibid., p. 227.

13. Ibid., p. 225.

14. Ibid., p. 226.

15. Ibid., p. 305.

16. Henri Stern, "Notes sur les mosaiques du Dome du Rocher et de la mosquee de Damas a propos d'un livre de Mme Marguerite Gautier van Berchem" Cahiers Archeologiques, vol 22, 1972, p. 201 translated by Nancy Frelick.

17. Marguerite van Berchem, "The Mosaics of the Dome of the Rock at Jerusalem and of the Great Mosque of Damascus", p. 247.

18. Ibid., p. 250.

19. Oleg Grabar, The Formation of Islamic Art (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1973), p. 67.

20. _____ "The Umayyad Dome of the Rock", Studies in Medieval Islamic Art (London: Variorum Reprints, 1976), p. 52.

21. Appendix B and the following descriptions were collated from Marguerite van Berchem, "The Mosaics of the Dome of the Rock at Jerusalem and of the Great Mosque of Damascus", text pages: 247-312, plates 1-37. The numbering of columns and arches follows Van Berchem, and the plan provided is so labelled.

22. Descriptions taken from text pp. 300-308.

23. Ibid., p. 305.

24. Ibid., p. 305.

25. J.W. Crowfoot, Early Churches in Palestine (Maryland: McGrath, 1971), p. 111.

26. Andre Grabar, L'iconoclasme Byzantin (Paris: College de France, 1957), pp. 50, 52.

27. Henri Stern, "Les representations des conciles dans l'eglise de la Nativité à Bethlehem", Byzantion vol II, 1936, pp. 101-152.

28. Ibid., p. 143.

29. Ibid., pp. 136-137.

30. Ibid., p. 147.

31. Andre Grabar, L'iconoclasme Byzantin, p. 50.

32. Ibid., p. 54.

33. Ibid., p. 54.

34. Erica Dodd, "The Image of the Word", Berytus, vol 18, 1969, p. 49.

35. Ibid., p. 52.

36. Van Berchem assigns a date of 1169 A.D. for the mosaics of the Church of the Nativity, but provides no reasons for her conclusions.
Early Muslim Architecture vol 1, figs. 371-3.
Richard W. Hamilton quotes an inscription in Greek and Latin which provides the date of 1169 for the completion of the mosaics of the transept and choir, but points out that the Provincial Councils on the north wall have all the inscriptions in Greek and none was held later than the 4th century, and that the 7th General Council was added in the 12th century. He finds the theory that they were done after the Muslim Conquest attractive, solely because it would explain the lack of figural imagery. The Church of the Nativity Bethlehem (Jerusalem: Government of Palestine Department of Antiquities, 1947), pp. 66-67.

37. Erica Dodd, "The Image of the Word", p. 51.

38. Marguerite van Berchem, "The Mosaics of the Dome of the Rock at Jerusalem and of the Great Mosque of Damascus", pp. 249-251.

39. Ibid., p. 268.

[40]. Ibid., p. 277.

[41]. Henri Stern, "Notes sur les mosaiques du Dome du Rocher", p. 214.

[42]. Oleg Grabar, "The Umayyad Dome of the Rock", p. 54.

[43]. Ibid., p. 55.

[44]. Ibid., p. 47.

[45]. Ibid., pp. 48-49.

[46]. Ibid., p. 51.

[47]. Ibid., p. 52.

[48]. Ibid., p. 52.

[49]. Oleg Grabar, The Formation of Islamic Art (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1973), p. 67.

[50]. The role of figural imagery in Islamic art is complex and often misunderstood. On the whole it is avoided in religious settings such as the Dome of the Rock and the Great Mosque of Damascus, but is found in buildings such as the desert baths of Qusayr Amra built under Umayyad patronage, a secular setting. Paintings such as the Persian miniatures show that figurative art was developed to a very high level in the Courtly arts. Generally, however, the avoidance in the above mentioned contexts seems to be based on a desire to avoid idolatry. Although the Quran warns the Believer against worshipping idols, it is the Hadith which contain an explicit warning against figural imagery. Arnold states that: "On the subject of painting the Traditions are uncompromising in their condemnation and speak with no uncertain voice, e.g. the Prophet is reported to have said that those who will be most severely punished by God on the Day of Judgement will be the painters. On the Day of Judgement the punishment of hell will be meted out to the painter, and he will be called upon to breathe life into the forms that he has fashioned; but he cannot breathe life into anything. The reason for his damnation is this: in fashioning the form of a being that has life, the painter is usurping the creative function of the Creator and thus is attempting to assimilate himself to God;

and the futility of the painter's claim will be brought home to him, when he will be made to recognize the ineffectual character of his creative activity, through his inability to complete the work of creation by breathing into the objects of his art, which look so much like living beings, the breath of life." Sir Thomas W. Arnold, Painting in Islam (New York: Dover Publications inc, 1965 (rpt of 1928 ed.), p. 5.

51. Oleg Grabar, "The Umayyad Dome of the Rock", Studies in Medieval Islamic Art (London: Variorum Reprints, 1976), p. 47.

52. I am indebted to Mr Leslie Dawn for encouraging me to look closely at the Quran in the light of Paradise imagery.

NOTES TO CHAPTER THREE

1. see Masjid Shorter Encyclopedia of Islam (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1965), pp. 330-352.

2. op cit., chapter 1.

3. Hamilton A.R. Gibb, "Arab-Byzantine Relations Under the Umayyad Caliphate". Dumbarton Oaks Papers 12 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1958), p. 224.

Ibid., p. 224.

4. Guy le Strange, Palestine under the Moslems (Beirut: Khayats, 1890), rpt, 1965, p. 225.

5. Ibid., p. 237.

6. Ibid., p. 252.

7. Ibid., p. 242.

8. K.A.C. Creswell, Early Muslim Architecture, vol 1. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1969), pp. 156-157.

9. Chronographia pp. 344-5, Early Muslim Architecture, vol 1, p.164.

10. Ibid., p. 164.

11. Malalces does not quote this, Ibid., p. 164.

12. Guy le Strange, Palestine under the Moslems, p. 261.

13. Ibn al-Faqih quoted in Palestine under the Moslems, p. 234.

14. K.A.C. Creswell, Early Muslim Architecture, vol 1, p. 164.

15. Rene Dussaud, "Le Temple de Jupiter Damascenien". Syria vol 3 (Paris: Paul Guethner, 1922), plan 42, 2&3.

16. Ibid., p. 235.

17. K.A.C. Creswell, Early Muslim Architecture, vol 1, p.188.

18. see discussion in Early Muslim Architecture vol 1, pp.179-198.

19. Ibid., p. 182.

20. Guy le Strange, Palestine under the Moslems, p. 233.

21. Ibid., p. 233.

22. op cit., chapter 1.

23. Guy le Strange, Palestine under the Moslems, pp. 227-28.

24. Ibid., p. 229.

25. Different accounts provide alternate figures, but it is clear that al-Walid spent a considerable sum of money on the construction of the Mosque. Ibid., p. 233.

26. Damascus m.s. 1 fol. 156a, II, 19ff. Marguerite van Berchem, "The Mosaics of the Dome of the Rock at Jerusalem and of the Great Mosque of Damascus". Early Muslim Architecture vol 1 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1969), p. 234.

27. Guy le Strange, Palestine under the Moslems, p. 226.

28. Ibid., p. 241.

29. In Early Muslim Architecture vol 1, p. 245. This conclusion is flawed, we do not know that the Umayyads themselves executed the mosaics of the Dome of the Rock. They may have been commissioned by the Umayyads but executed by Syrian workers, or Byzantine workers imported from elsewhere.

30. K.A.C. Creswell, "The Legend that al-Walid asked for and obtained help from the Byzantine Emperor. A Suggested Explanation", Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society, 1956, p. 142-143.

Ibn Qutayba (d. 889) states that: "When al-Walid pulled down the Church

of Damascus, the King of the Greeks wrote to him: 'You have pulled down the church which your father thought it right to leave intact. But if that was right your father was wrong, and if that was erroneous you are in disagreement with him." Uyun-al-Akhbar, p. 240 II, 2-5 op cit, p. 143.

31. Ibid., p. 144.

32. Ibid., p. 145 quoting Tabari i, p. 935.

33. Ibid., p. 145.

34. Jean Sauvaget deals with the tradition of Byzantine help in the construction and decoration of the mosque at Medina in La Mosquee Omeyyade de Medine (Paris 1947), p. 111-112. He suggests that Rumi workmen were mentioned in an attempt to discredit al-Walid by implying that he allowed infidels to work on the Prophet's own mosque. For further discussion see Gibb, "Arab-Byzantine Relations", pp. 227 ff.

35. Ibid., p. 223 ff.

36. Ibid., p. 235.

37. K.A.C. Creswell, Early Muslim Architecture, vol 1, p. 178. Fires are reported in 1069 A.D./461 A.H., 1247/645, 1271/670, 1401/803, 1479/884, 1893.

38. all figures here and following are taken from Early Muslim Architecture, vol. 1, p. 165ff.

39. Ibid., p. 170.

40. Ibid., p. 168.

41. Van Berchem, "Notes d'archeologie arabe" pp. 420-23, quoted on p. 168 Early Muslim Architecture, vol. 1.

42. Guy le Strange, Palestine under the Moslems, p. 229.

43. K.A.C. Creswell, Early Muslim Architecture, vol 1, pp. 177-8.

NOTES TO CHAPTER FOUR

1. K.A.C. Creswell, Early Muslim Architecture vol 1 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1969), p. 328ff.

2. de Goeje's edition p. 73, II, 3-5, Ibid., p. 233.

3. Marguerite van Berchem, "The Mosaics of the Dome of the Rock at Jerusalem and of the Great Mosque of Damascus", Early Muslim Architecture vol 1, p. 367 ff.

4. op cit., p. 71.

5. It is not known when this took place.

6. Van Berchem states that: "In the parts which did not appear to have undergone restorations after the time of Al-Walid I, irregularities of execution were noticeable . . . most conspicuous parts were left to the master craftsmen, the others to pupils." Marguerite van Berchem, "The Mosaics of the Dome of the Rock at Jerusalem and of the Great Mosque of Damascus", p. 364.

7. Ibid., pp. 364-66.

8. The inscription was translated into French by Solange Ory (no date).

1) In the Name of God, mild, merciful
2) That God accords his benediction on our Lord
3) Muhammad and his family, and companions
4) Abu Bakr, 'Umar, 'Uthman
5) 'Ali, al-Hasan,
6) al-Husayn, and (...'Aysa)
7) Mother of Believers
8) Fatima
9) That God (is satisfied) with (them).

Ibid., p. 351. (translated by Elizabeth Adey).

9. Dating of these fragments is difficult, Van Berchem suggests that the inscription was inserted later and that the surrounding mosaics continue the tradition of the original Umayyad mosaics, but date to the restoration carried out by Toutouch in 1089/482, a date given by an inscription found in the back wall of the north portico. Ibid., p. 352.

10. The incomplete inscription was discovered in February 1953 and translated into French by Solange Ory, Annales Archeologiques de Syrie 101, 1961, and quoted in French by Van Berchem, Ibid., fig 413.

1) That the Blessing of God on our Lord Muhammad, on his family, his companions and caliphs . . . Abu Bakr, Umar, Uthman and Ali. (translated by Elizabeth Adey).

11. Van Berchem, Ibid., p. 352. states that the mosaic inscription dates to 'an epoch impossible to determine, but obviously very much later . . .'. Stern queries this. "The author cannot admit that between the mosaics of the Seljoukid princes and those of the Baybars from the 13th century, the technique could have weakened and fallen so low. A shaky argument which one would like to see substantiated with more solid evidence." "Notes sur les mosaiques du Dome du Rocher et de la mosquee de Damas a propos d'un livre de Mme Marguerite Gautier van Berchem", Cahiers Archeologiques vol 22, 1972, p. 203.

12. This part has now been completely redone with mosaics that do not follow Umayyad designs.

13. These fragments have been replaced by other designs.

14. This points out the problem with this sort of interpretation. I can see no reason why the so-called 'courtyard' could not be a sloping roof over the portico topped by a small lantern pierced with three windows and crowned by a dome. The flanking structures could represent the rest of the facade and the frieze of polychrome brick would be a parapet or houses behind the portico, viewed from a distance. It is difficult to make a definite statement given the lack of one point perspective characteristic of Umayyad mosaics. If it is indeed a mosque, it would be original to the Umayyads as they were hardly likely to have copied it from Byzantine sources.

15. Van Berchem attributes it on stylistic grounds to the time of Baybars, "The Mosaics of the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem and of the Great Mosque of Damascus", p. 358.

16. Van Berchem suggests that these mosaics of the interior of the transept date to the restorations of Toutouch rather than to the original decoration, Ibid., p. 358.

17. Translation into French (no name or date) quoted by van Berchem, Ibid., p. 361. (translated by Elizabeth Adey)

1) The creatures most perfect, after the Messenger of God
2) That God the Beloved accords to him safety: Abu Bakr
3) 'Uthman and 'Ali. That God is satisfied
4) with all of them.

18. Van Berchem attributes these to restorations carried out during the reign of Malik Shah, citing two inscriptions preserved in the Museum of Damascus which state that in 1082-3/475 the vizier of Prince Toutouch reconstructed the dome of the transept of the mosque, four piers, roof and maqsura cf. Souvaget. Monuments Historiques de Damas, p. 16. Fragments of two other inscriptions giving the same information were seen in the depots of the mosque in 1932 by Souvaget. Creswell states that the four dome piers are composite and were reinforced under Malik Shah in 1082-3/475. Ibid., p. 362.

19. Van Berchem mentions the 'flat and modern' appearance of these mosaics and suggests that it was 'patched up' by the Turks in the nineteenth century. Ibid., p. 330. To me, it looks consistent in style with Umayyad portions of the building.

20. Van Berchem on page 341 of "The Mosaics" refers to these as follows: "Again we see the usual mother-of-pearl pendants in the doorways." In discussion Dr Welch has suggested that these are, in fact, lamps and should be understood as references to Sura 24 vs 35-36 (Light):

"Allah is the Light of the heavens and the earth. The similitude of His light is as a niche wherein is a lamp. The lamp is in a glass. The glass is as it were a shining star. (The lamp is) kindled from a blessed tree, an olive neither of the East nor of the West, whose oil would almost glow forth (of itself) though no fire touched it. Light upon light. Allah guideth unto His light whom He will. And Allah speaketh to mankind in allegories, for Allah is knower of all things."

(This lamp is found) in houses which Allah hath allowed to be exalted and that His name shall be remembered therein. Therein do offer praise to Him at morn and evening.
(The Glorious Koran).

21. Inscription translated into French by Jean Souvaget (no date) quoted in French by Van Berchem, Ibid., p. 331.

"This has been restored under the reign of our master the Sultan al Malik az-Zahir, the scholar, he who made the holy war, he who fought at the frontier, he who God aided, the vanquisher, the victorious, Rukn ad-Dunya wad-Din Baybars, he who had ordered the reorganisation and restored the Wakfs, the associate of the Prince of Believers, conforming to his orders, obeyed. The Prince of rulers Jamal ad-Din Aqus as-Salih and al Malik az-Zahir, representatives of the Sultans (who God glorifies!) in Damascus there well guarded, he himself occupied the . . .".
(translated by Elizabeth Adey).

22. Ibid., p. 338.

23. Dating of these mosaics is problematic. A date of the late 7th C. early 8th C. has been suggested on account of characteristics appearing in these mosaics which are well-known in Byzantine art of the 7th C. and early 8th C. Jonas Nordhagan, "The mosaics of the Great Palace of the Byzantine Emperors", Byzantinische Zeitschrift, vol 56 (1963), p. 64.
He also points out similarities in style between the mosaics of the Great Palace and those of the Great Mosque of Damascus which he attributes to Byzantine artists (p. 63).
Hayes mentions that pottery found under the Great Palace mosaics dates to the late fifth and early sixth centuries with a terminal date of c. 520-540. J.W. Hayes, Late Roman Pottery (London: British School at Rome, 1972), p. 418.

24. Dating of this scheme is problematic. Weigand suggests a date ca. 515-530 A.D. Torp places them in the reign of Theodosius the Great (379-395), specifically 380-390 A.D. on grounds of technique. Kleinbauer favours the third quarter of the fifth century on stylistic and iconographic grounds. W. Eugene Kleinbauer, "The Iconography and the Date of the Mosaics of the Rotunda of Hagios Georgios, Tessaloniki", Viator vol 3 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1972), p. 68.

25. Andre Grabar, "A Propos des Mosaiques de la Coupole de Saint-Georges a Salonique", pp. 69-81.

26. W. Eugene Kleinbauer, "The Iconography and the Date of the Mosaics of the Rotunda of Hagios Georgios, Thessaloniki", Viator 3 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1972), p. 54.

27. Ibid., p. 54.

28. Spiro K. Kostof, The Orthodox Baptistery of Ravenna (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1965), p. 82.

29. Ibid., p. 83.

30. Mara Bonfioli, "Syriac-Palestinian Mosaics in Connection with the Decoration of the Mosques at Jerusalem and Damascus", East and West vol 4 (1959), pp. 57, 71.

31. Marguerite van Berchem, "The Mosaics of the Dome of the Rock at Jerusalem and of the Great Mosque of Damascus", p. 367 ff.

32. Ibid., p. 340.

33. Henri Stern, "Notes sur les mosaiques de Dome du Rocher et de la mosquee de Damas a propos d'un livre de Mme Marguerite Gautier van Berchem", Cahiers Archeologiques vol 22 (1972), p. 223.

34. Richard Ettinghausen, Arab Painting, (Cleveland: World Publishing Co, 1962), p. 28. and Oleg Grabar, The Formation of Islamic Art (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1973), p. 134.

35. Oleg Grabar, The Formation of Islamic Art, p. 133.

36. On page 47 of Les mosaiques de la Grande Mosquee de Cordoue, Henri Stern mentions that Finster suggests that the mosaics of the mosque at Damascus and those of the Dome of the Rock and Medina emphasise the sacred nature of the buildings and depict the paradise awaiting the Faithful. I received the article written by Barbara Finster after my thesis was finished. Finster discusses the Sasanian and Early Christian antecedents of the motifs of the Great Mosque at length. She does suggest that the designs are related to paradise imagery but does not quote the verses, merely cites the numbers in a footnote (note 112, page 119) and does not draw connections between the Quranic vision of paradise and specific motifs at the Great Mosque. Neither does she draw concrete connections

between the motifs of the Dome of the Rock, Damascus and Medina in the light of specific paradise imagery as quoted in the Quran. Barbara Finster, "Die Mosaiken der Umayyaden Moschee von Damaskus", Kunst des Orients vol 7 (1970-71), p. 83 ff.

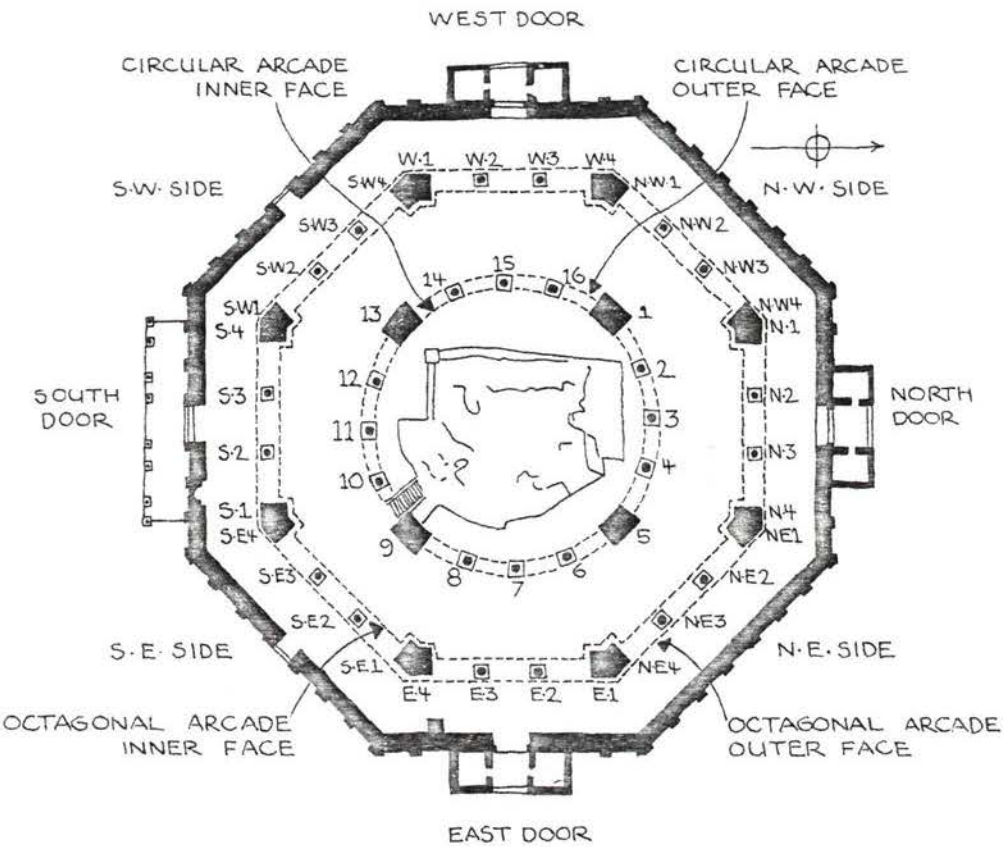
NOTES TO CONCLUSION

[1]. The Mosque at Medina was first built by Muhammad in the first year of Islam (622 A.D.). Umar in 638 A.D./17 A.H. had demolished the larger part of the earlier mosque and had enlarged the mosque. The mosque was again reconstructed in 707-9 A.D./162 A.H. A fire in 1256 A.D./654 A.H. destroyed the roof, doors and timbers. All the mosaic perished in this fire, except a few fragments.
K.A.C. Creswell, Early Muslim Architecture vol 1 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1969), pp. 27, 142, 144, 147.

These two examples provide our major information about the mosaic decoration:

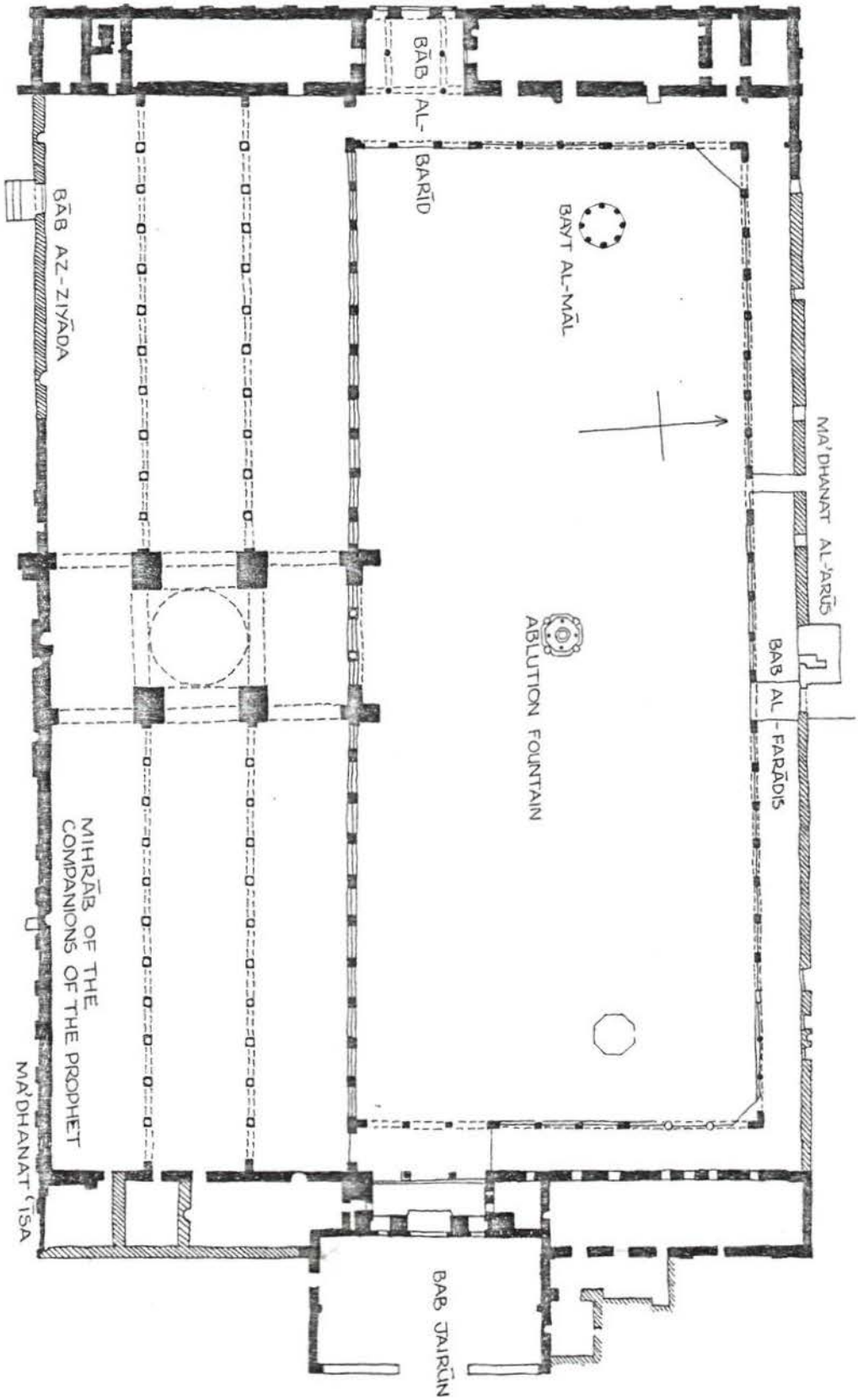
"Baladhuri and Motahbar ibn Tabir al-Maqdisi say that at this time (707-9) the Khalif al-Walid wrote to Umar ibn Abd al-Aziz, his Governor at Madina, ordering him to demolish the mosque and reconstruct it. At the same time he forwarded to him money, mosaic, marble and eighty Greek (Rumi) and Coptic artisans, inhabitants of Syria and Egypt. The supervisor of the work and expenditures was entrusted to Salih ibn Kaisar. Baladhuri says that this took place 'in 87 or, as Some say, 88'."
Futuh al-Buldan p. 6, 1. 18 p. 7, 1-4, Ibid., p. 142.

Al-Tabari (d. 923 A.D.) writes that: "Muhammad says: Musa b. Abu Bakr told me that Salih b. Kaisan said: 'We began to pull down the mosque of the Prophet in Safar 88 (i.e. January 707). Al-Walid had sent to inform the lord of the Greeks that he had ordered the demolition of the mosque of the Prophet, and that he should aid him in this work. The latter sent him 100,000 mithqals of gold, and sent also 100 workmen, and sent him 40 loads of mosaic cubes; he gave orders also to search for mosaic cubes in ruined cities and sent them to al-Walid, who sent them to (his governor in Medina) Omar b. Abd al-Aziz'"
H.A.R. Gibb "Arab-Byzantine Relations", p. 225.



Plan 1. The Dome of the Rock

Plan 2. The Great Mosque of Damascus



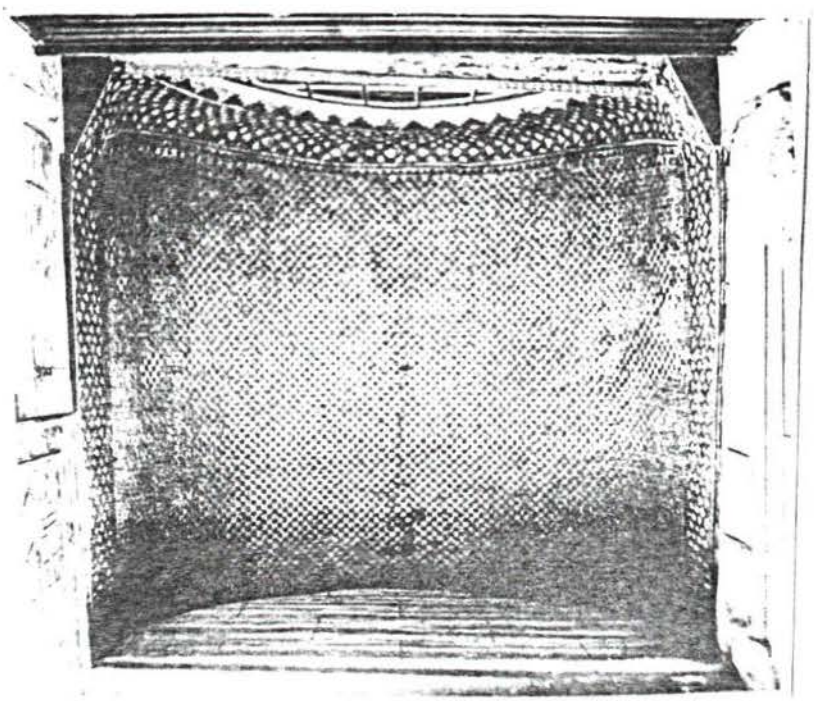


Plate 1. Dome of the Rock
Vault of the east porch

Plate 2. Dome of the Rock
Detail of arch southeast 3
Octagonal arcade, outer face

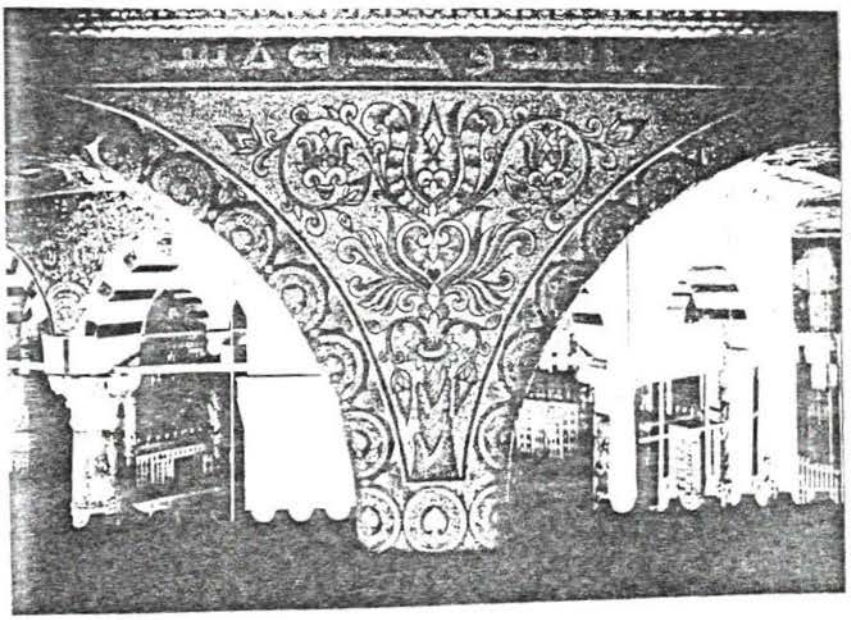


Plate 3. Dome of the Rock
Spandrel southwest 2
Octagonal arcade, outer face

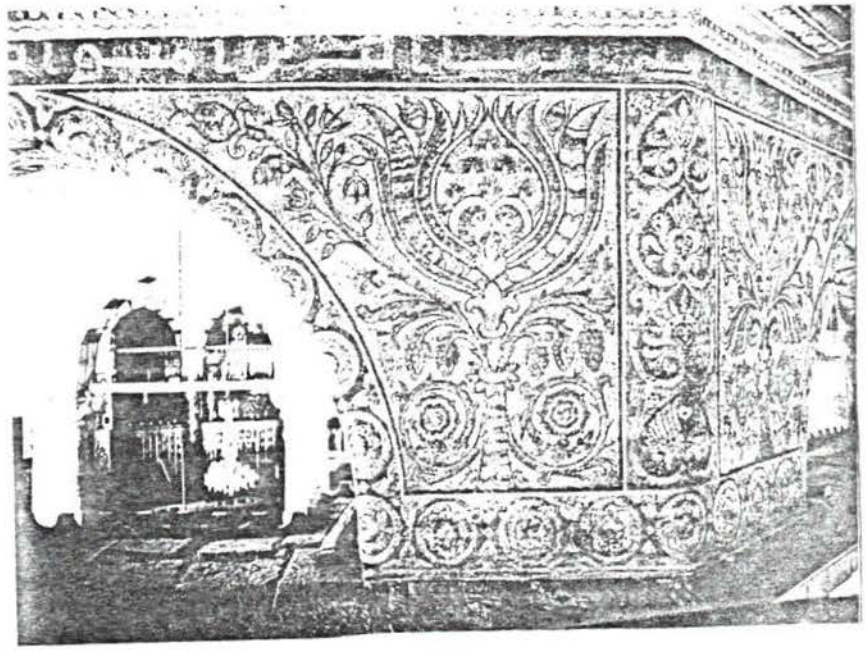


Plate 4. Dome of the Rock
Spandrel west 1
Octagonal arcade, outer face

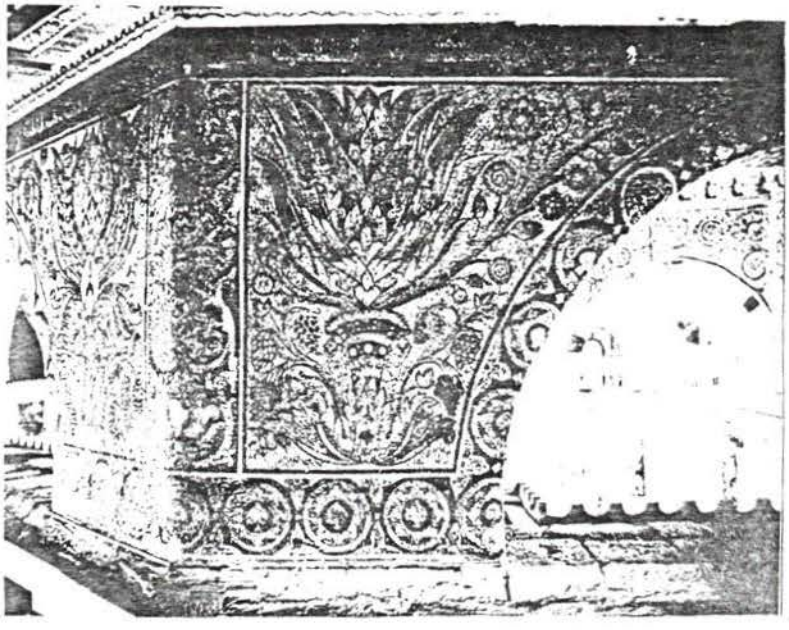


Plate 5. Dome of the Rock
Spandrel northwest 4
Octagonal arcade, outer face

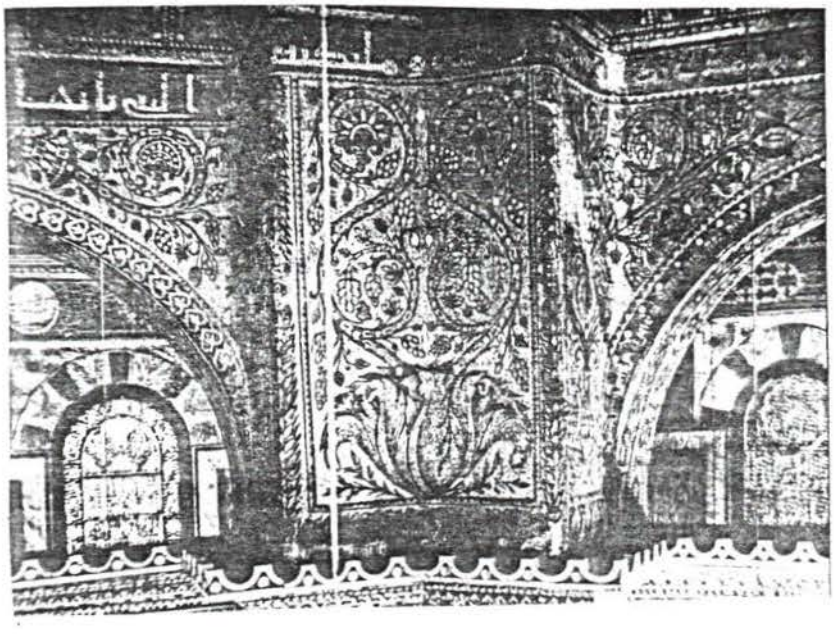


Plate 6. Dome of the Rock
Pier 1, south side
Octagonal arcade, inner face

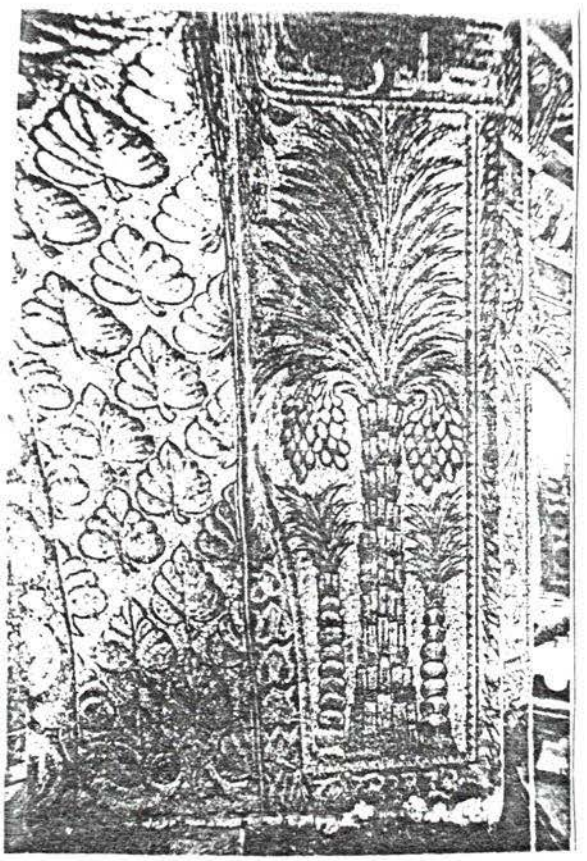


Plate 7. Dome of the Rock
Pier 1, south side, left flank
Octagonal arcade, inner face

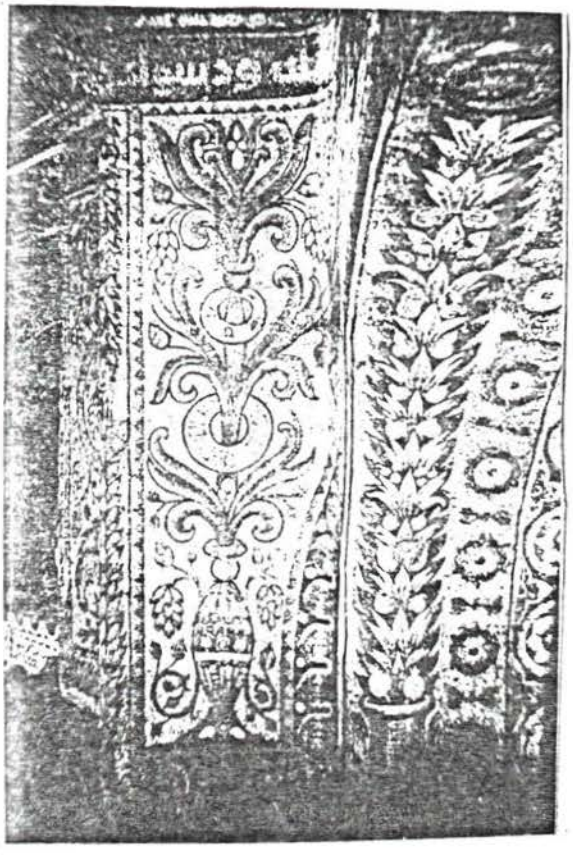


Plate 8. Dome of the Rock
Pier 1, south side, right flank
Octagonal arcade, inner face

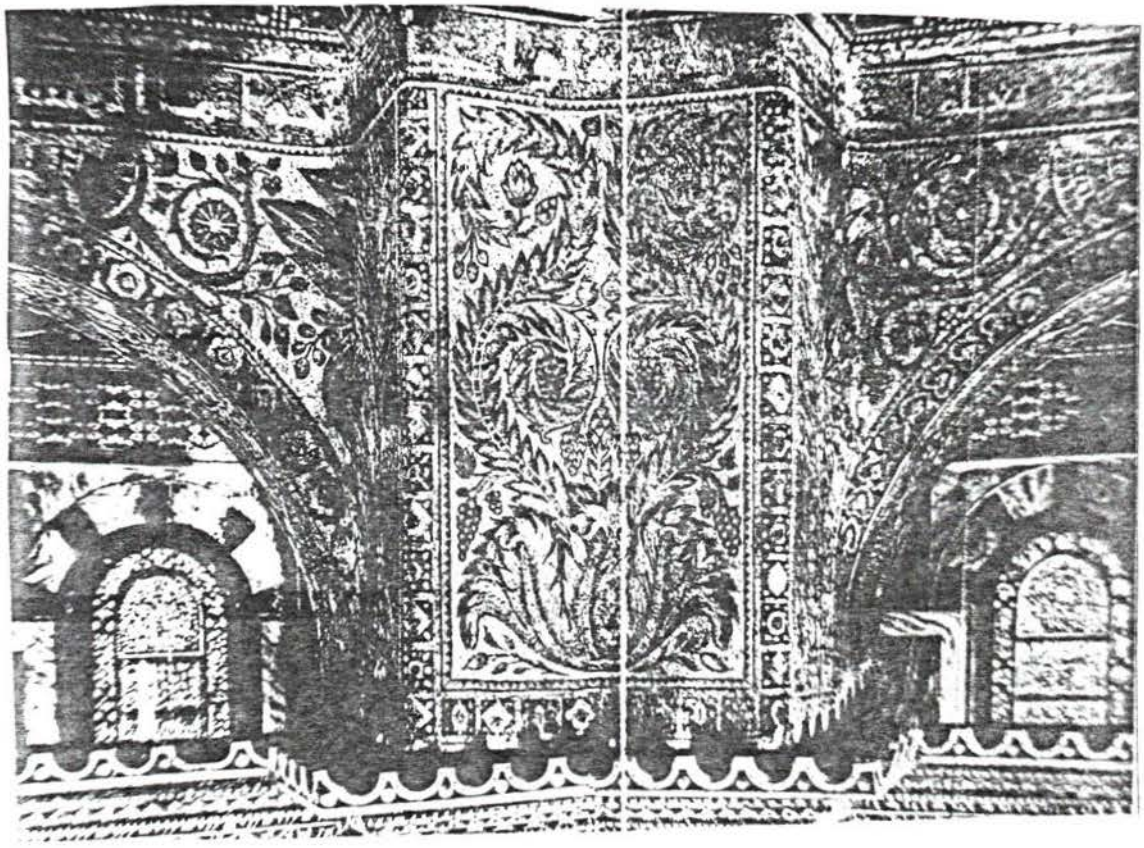


Plate 9. Dome of the Rock
Pier 2, southeast side
Octagonal arcade, inner face

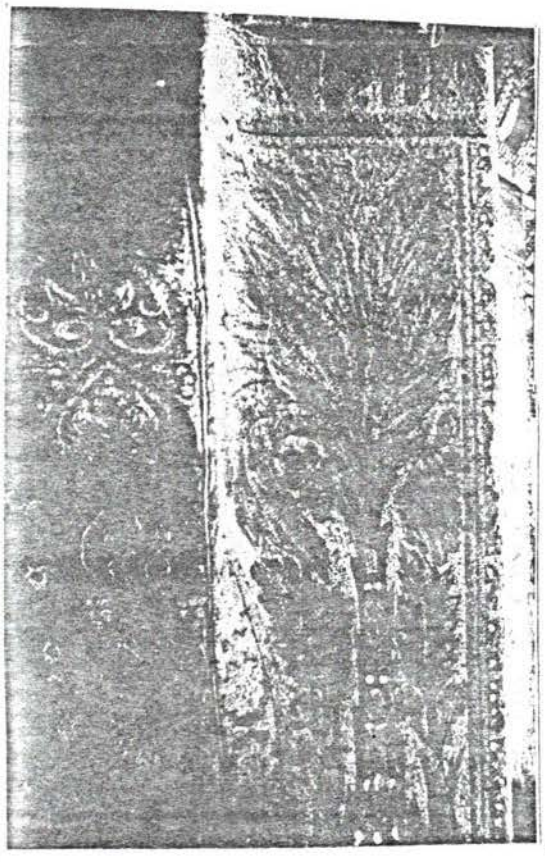


Plate 10. Dome of the Rock
Pier 2, southeast side, left flank
Octagonal arcade, inner face

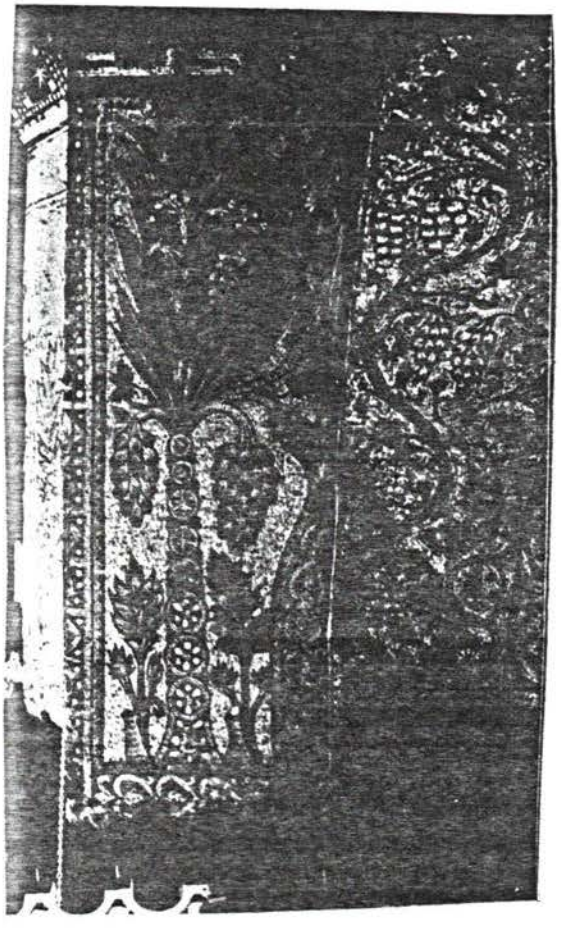


Plate 11. Dome of the Rock
Pier 2, southeast side, right flank
Octagonal arcade, inner face

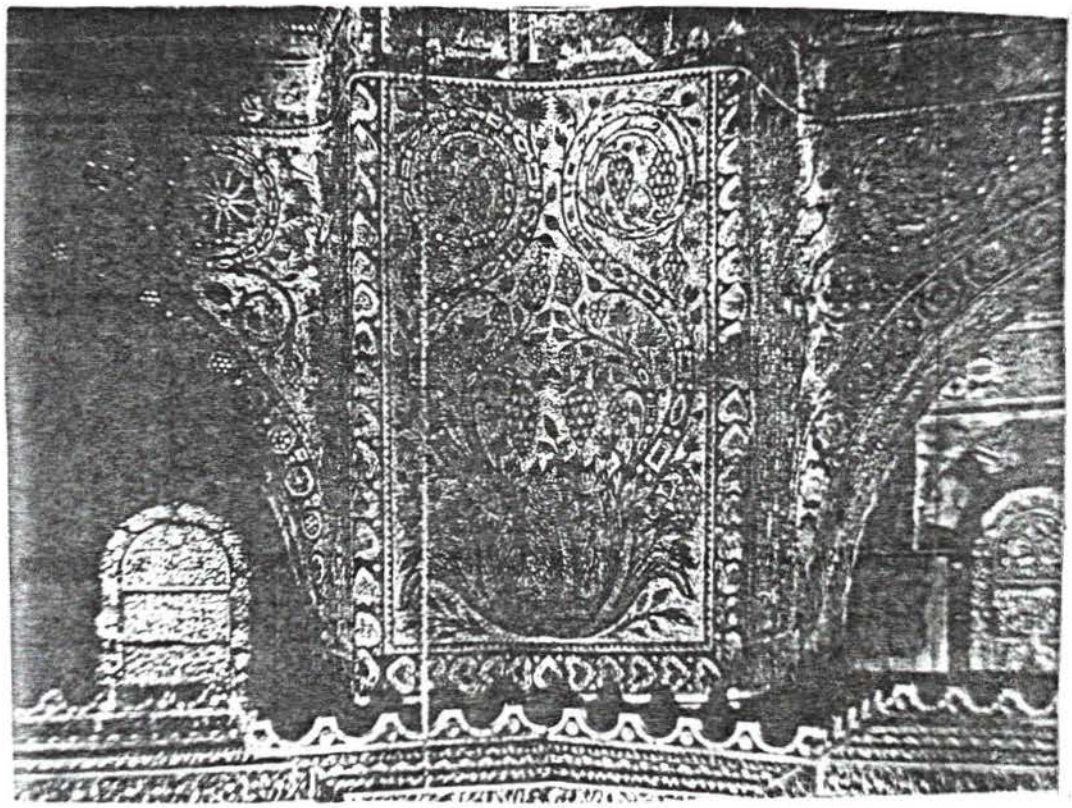


Plate 12. Dome of the Rock
Pier 3, east side
Octagonal arcade, inner face

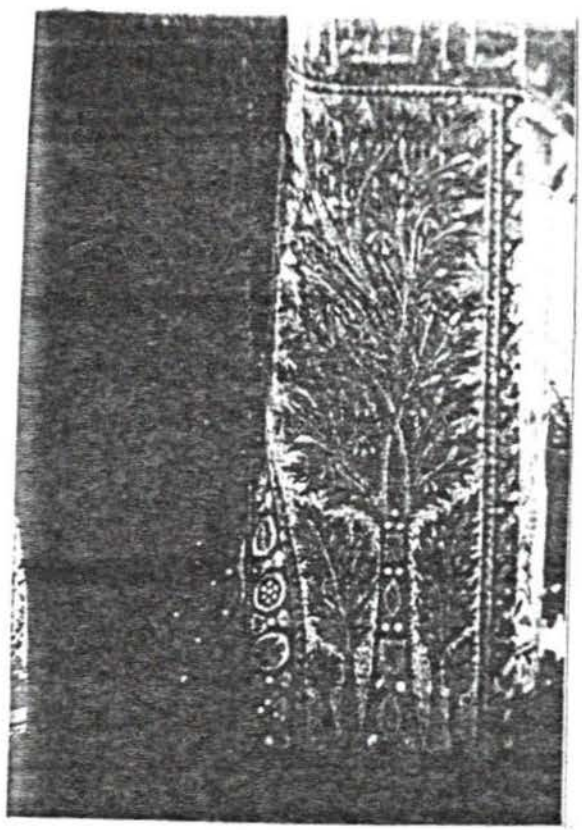


Plate 13. Dome of the Rock
Pier 3, east side, left flank
Octagonal arcade, inner face

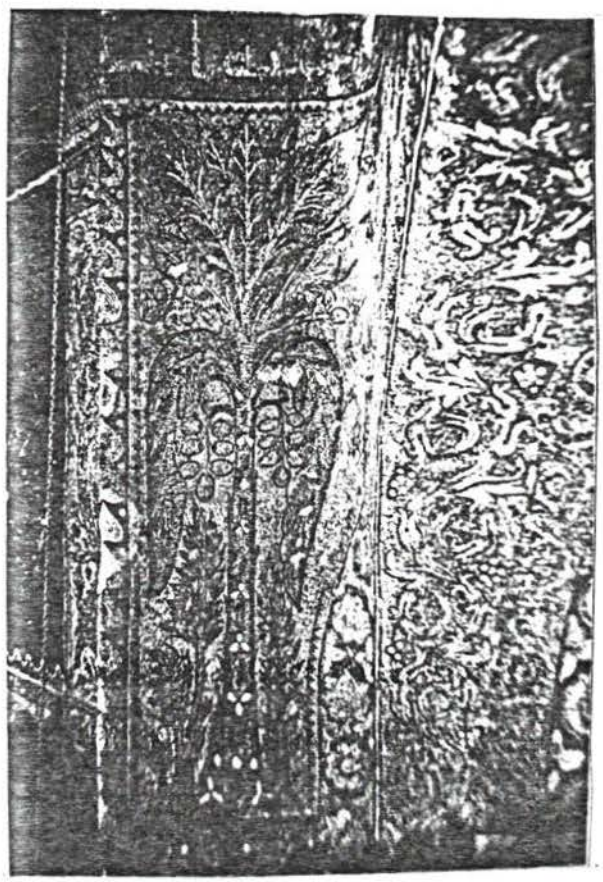


Plate 14. Dome of the Rock
Pier 3, east side, right flank
Octagonal arcade, inner face

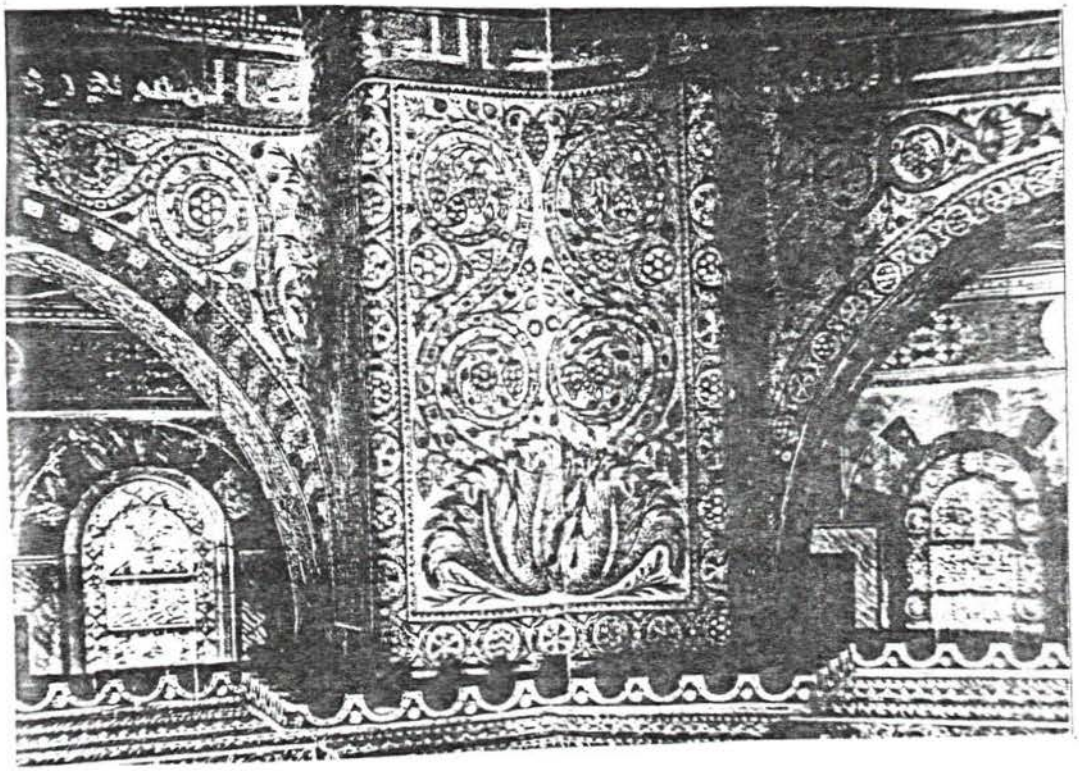


Plate 15. Dome of the Rock
Pier 4, northeast side
Octagonal arcade, inner face

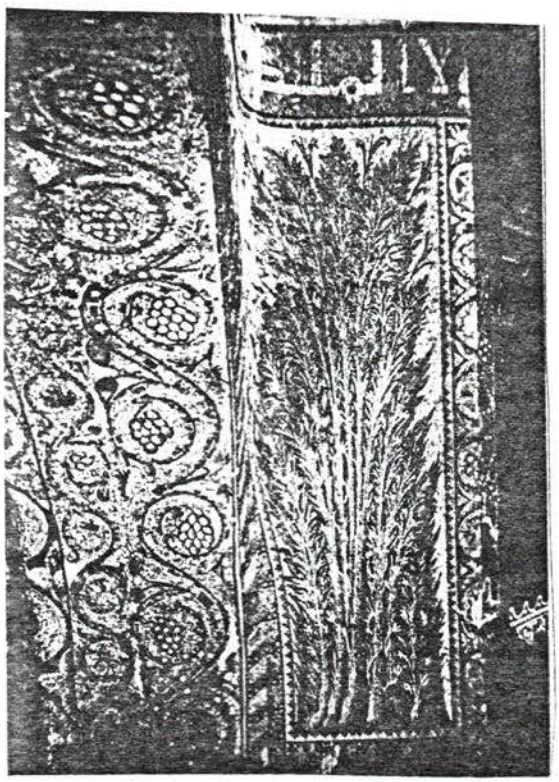


Plate 16. Dome of the Rock
Pier 4, northeast side, left flank
Octagonal arcade, inner face

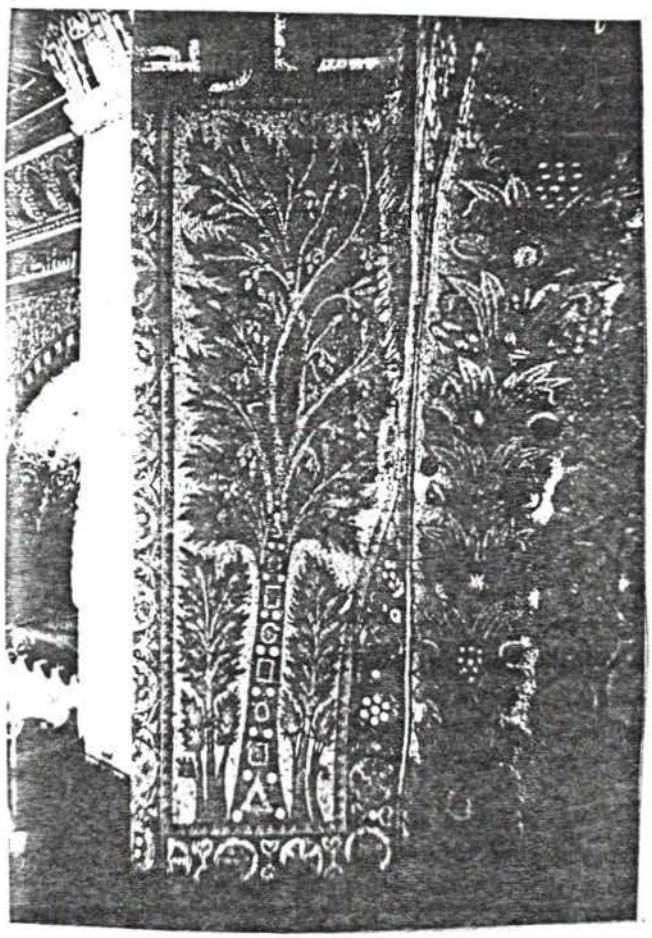


Plate 17. Dome of the Rock
Pier 4, northeast side, right flank
Octagonal arcade, inner face

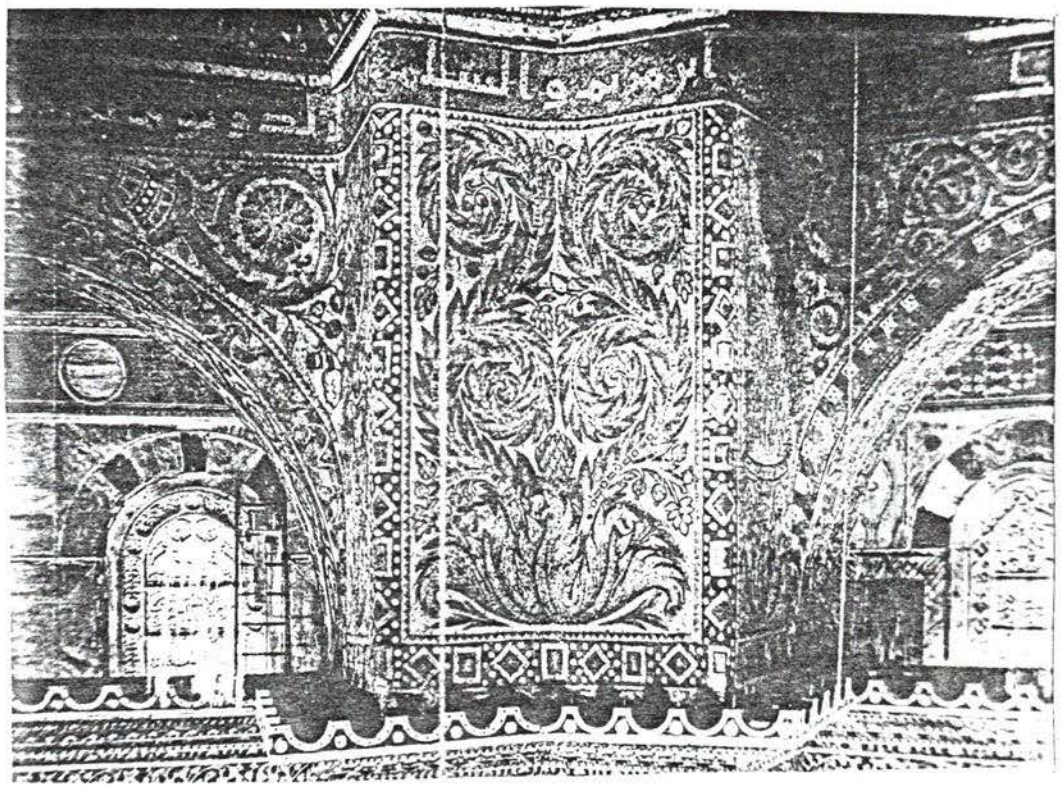


Plate 18. Dome of the Rock
Pier 5, north side
Octagonal arcade, inner face

Plate 19. Dome of the Rock
Pier 5, north side, left flank
Octagonal arcade, inner face

Plate 20. Dome of the Rock
Pier 5, north side, right flank
Octagonal arcade, inner face

Plate 21. Dome of the Rock
Pier 6, northwest side
Octagonal arcade, inner face

Plate 22. Dome of the Rock
Pier 6, northwest side, left flank
Octagonal arcade, inner face

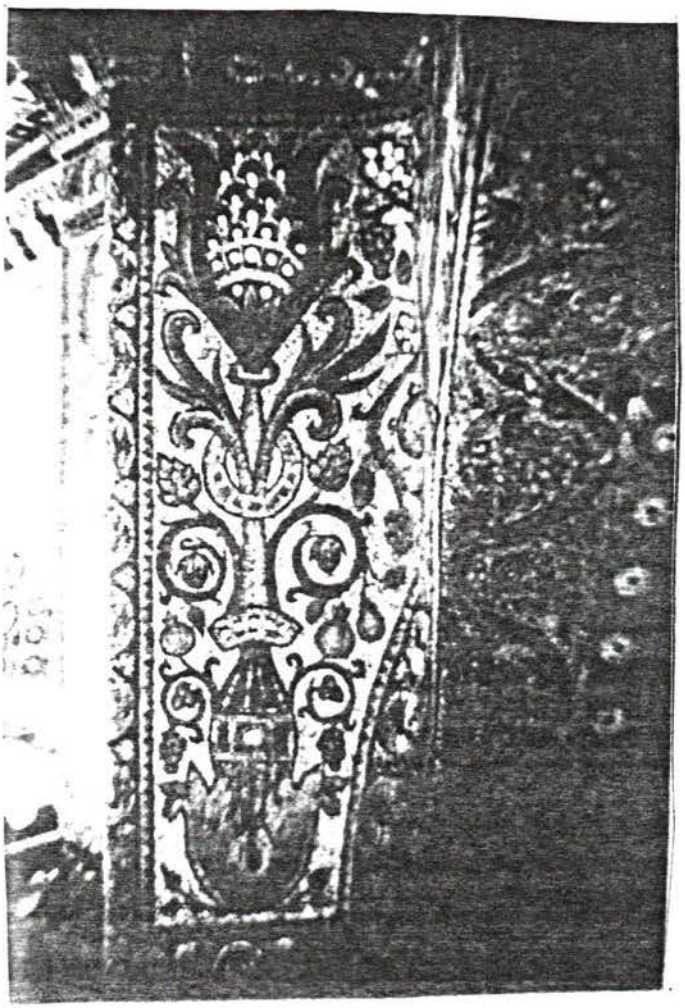


Plate 23. Dome of the Rock
Pier 6, northwest side, right flank
Octagonal arcade, inner face

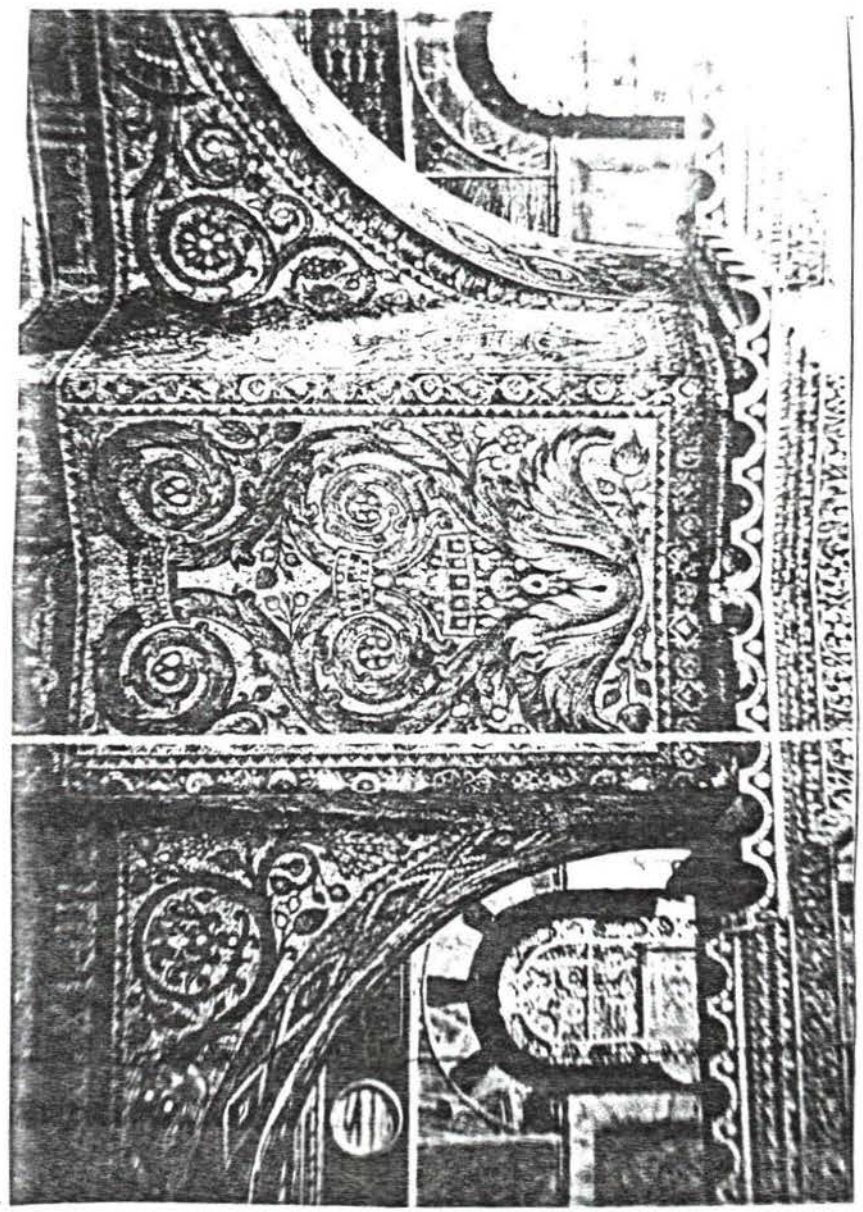


Plate 24. Dome of the Rock
Pier 7, west side
Octagonal arcade, inner face

Plate 25. Dome of the Rock
Pier 7, west side, left flank
Octagonal arcade, inner face

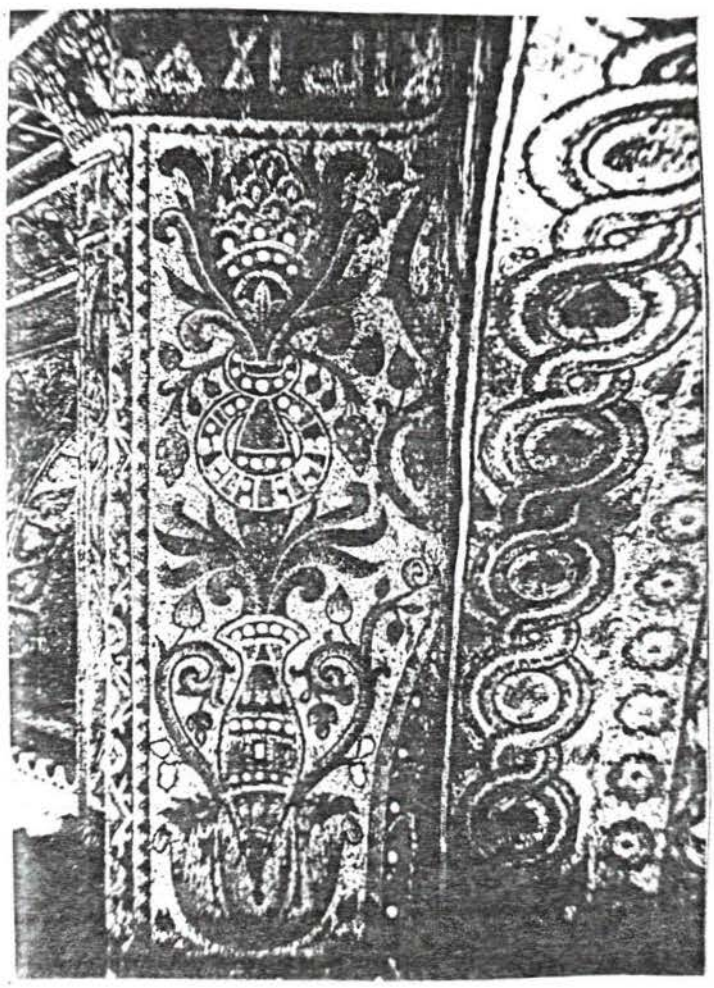


Plate 26. Dome of the Rock
Pier 7, right flank
Octagonal arcade, inner face

Plate 27. Dome of the Rock
Pier 8, south side
Octagonal arcade, inner face

Plate 28. Dome of the Rock
Pier 8, south side, left flank
Octagonal arcade, inner face

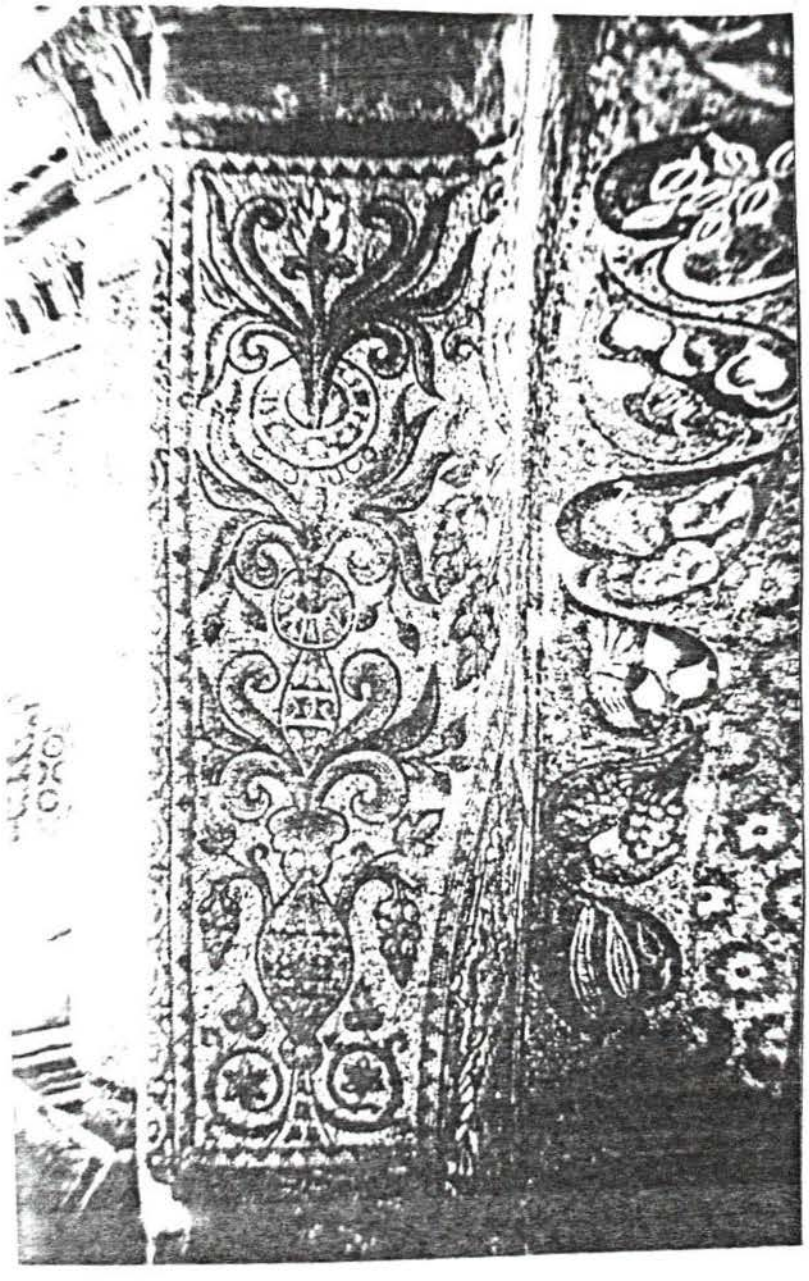


Plate 29. Dome of the Rock
Pier 8, south side, right flank
Octagonal arcade, inner face

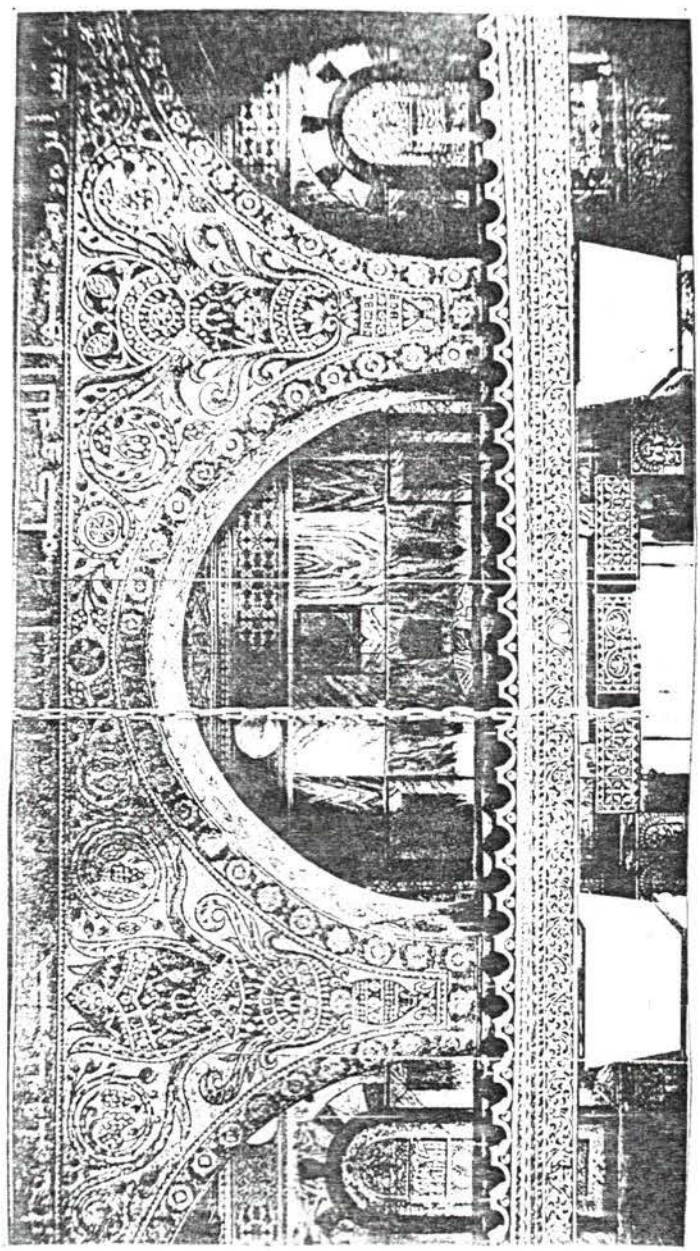


Plate 30. Dome of the Rock
Central arches, east side
Octagonal arcade, inner face

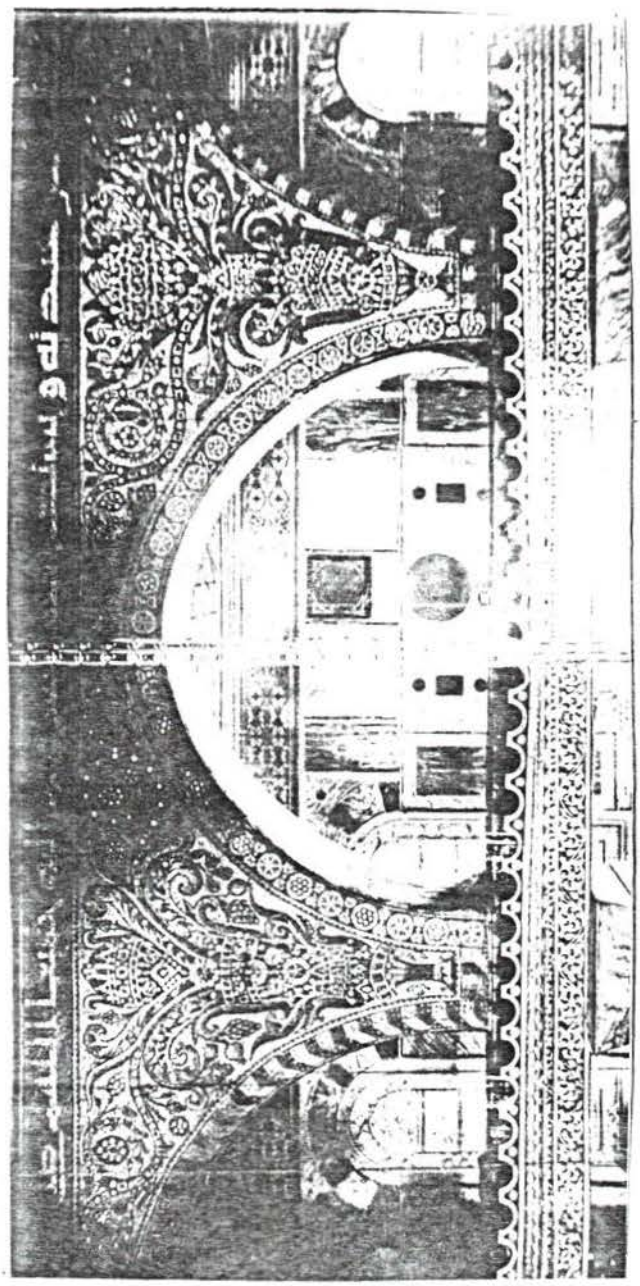


Plate 31. Dome of the Rock
Central arches, north side
Octagonal arcade, inner face

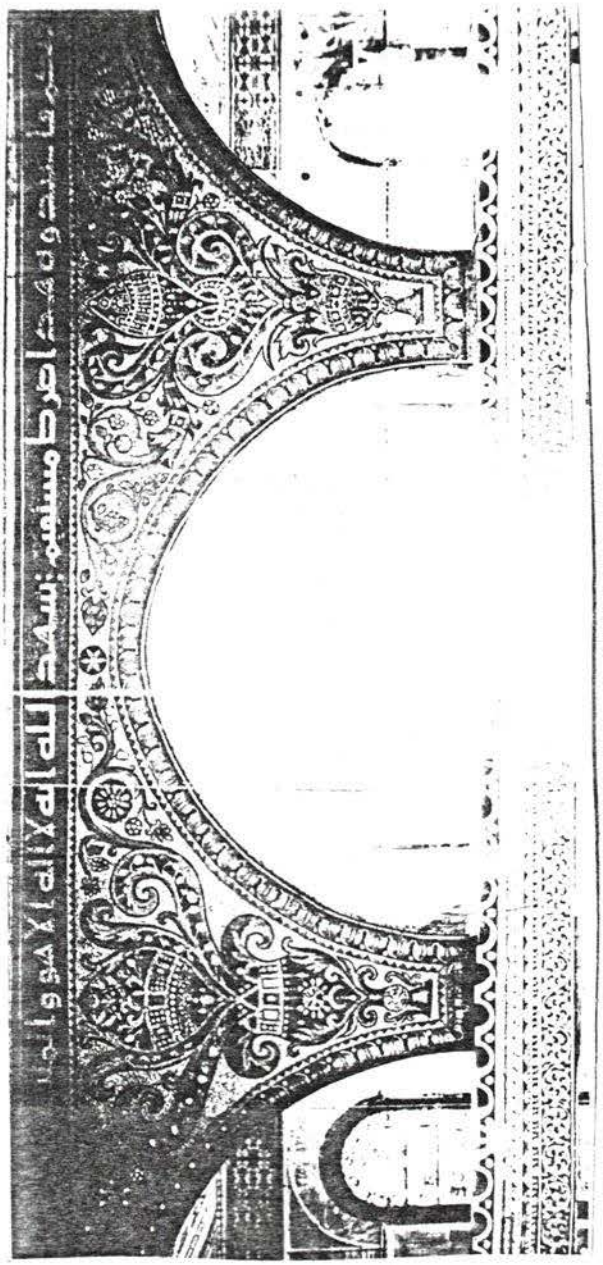


Plate 32. Dome of the Rock
Central arches, west side
Octagonal arcade, inner face

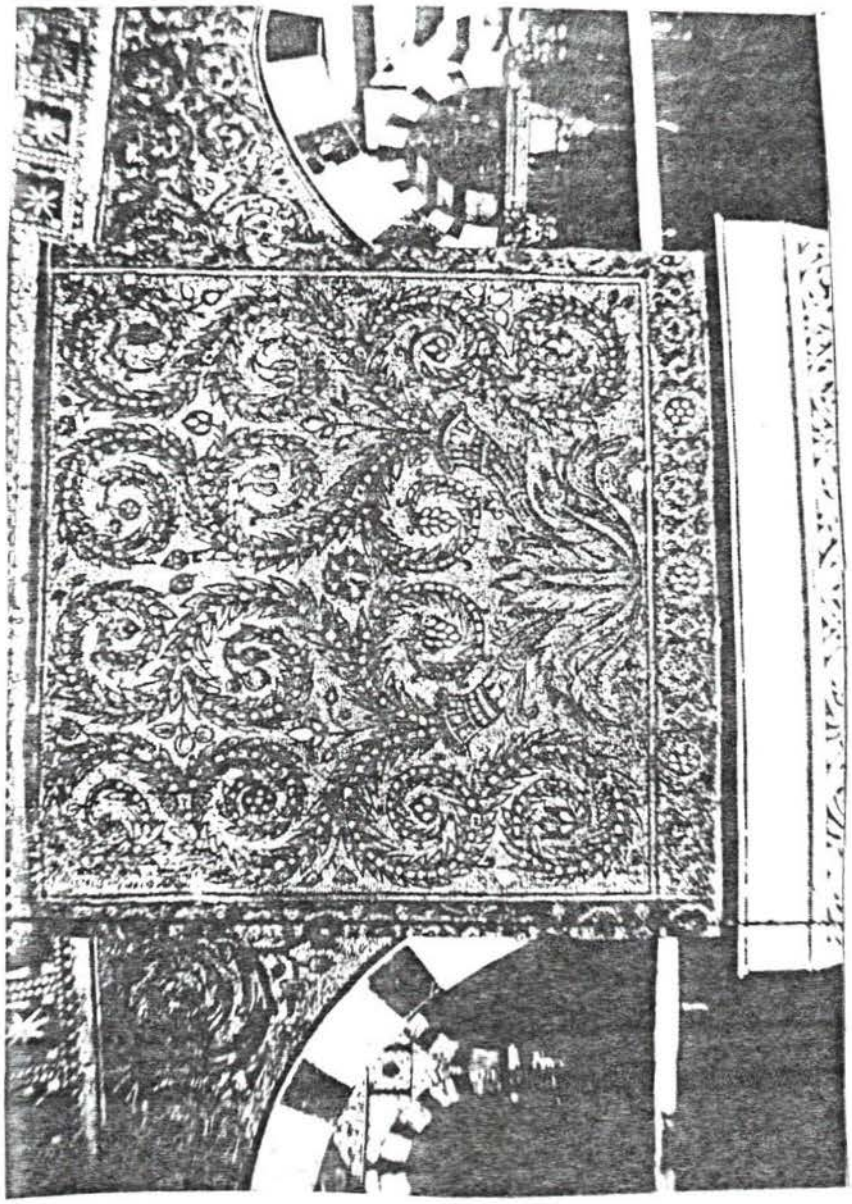


Plate 33. Dome of the Rock
Northwest pier, master pier of dome

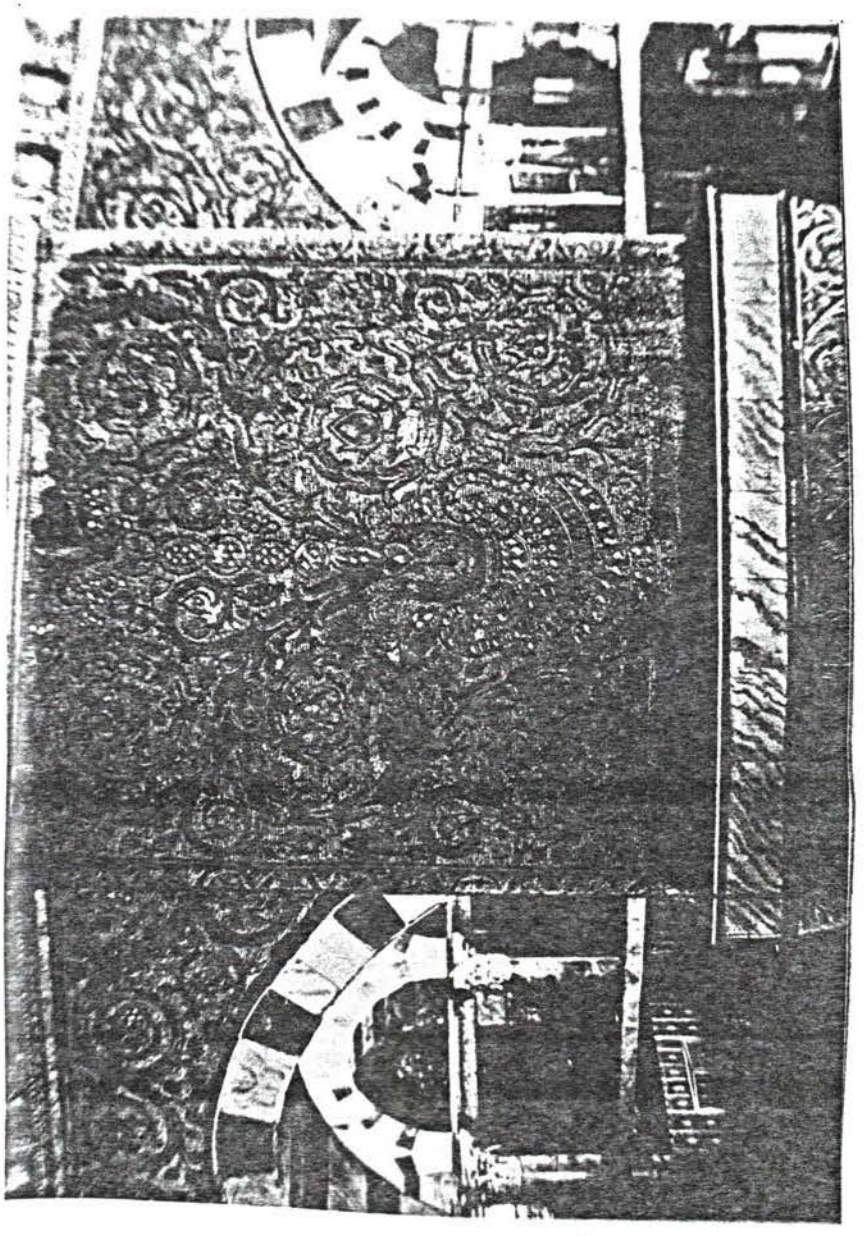


Plate 34. Dome of the Rock
Southwest pier, master pier of dome

Plate 35. Southeast pier, master pier of dome

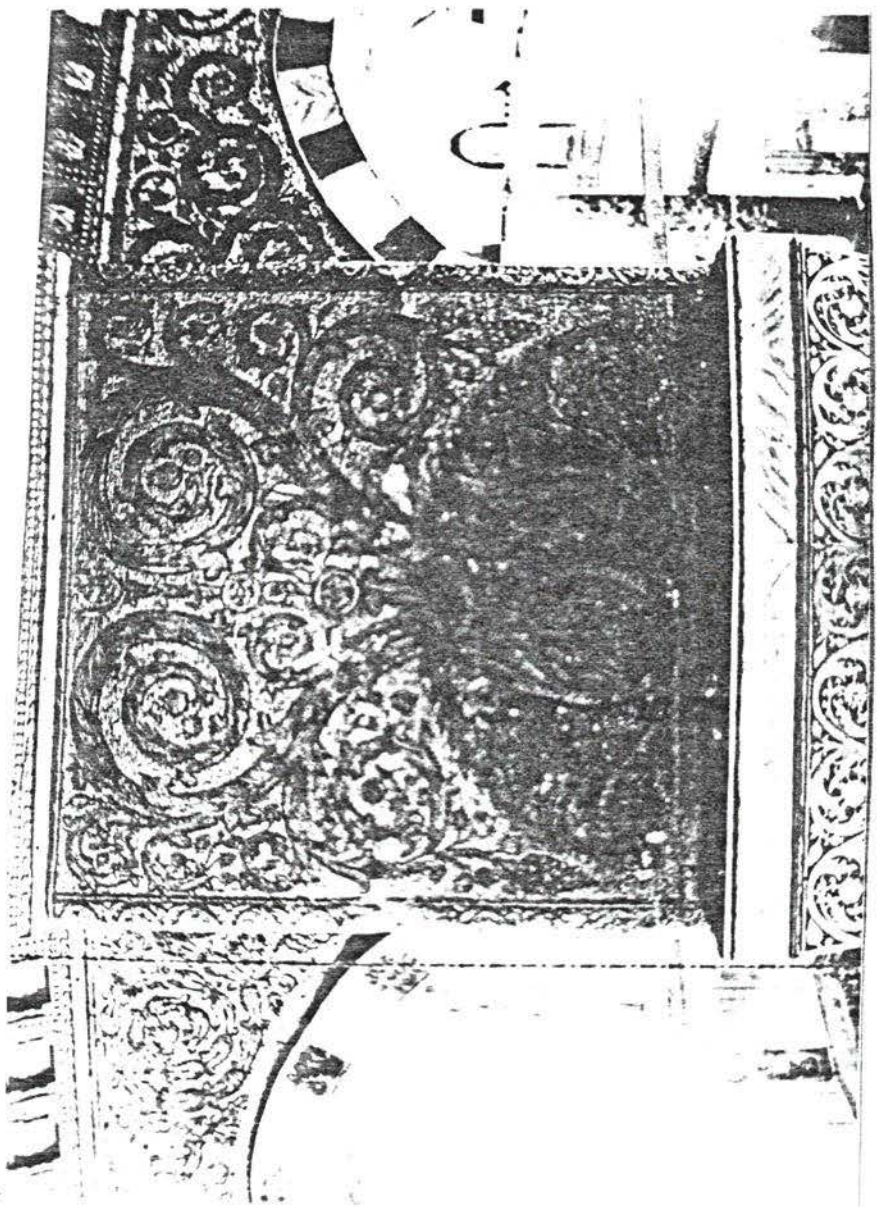


Plate 36. Dome of the Rock
Northeast pier, master pier of dome

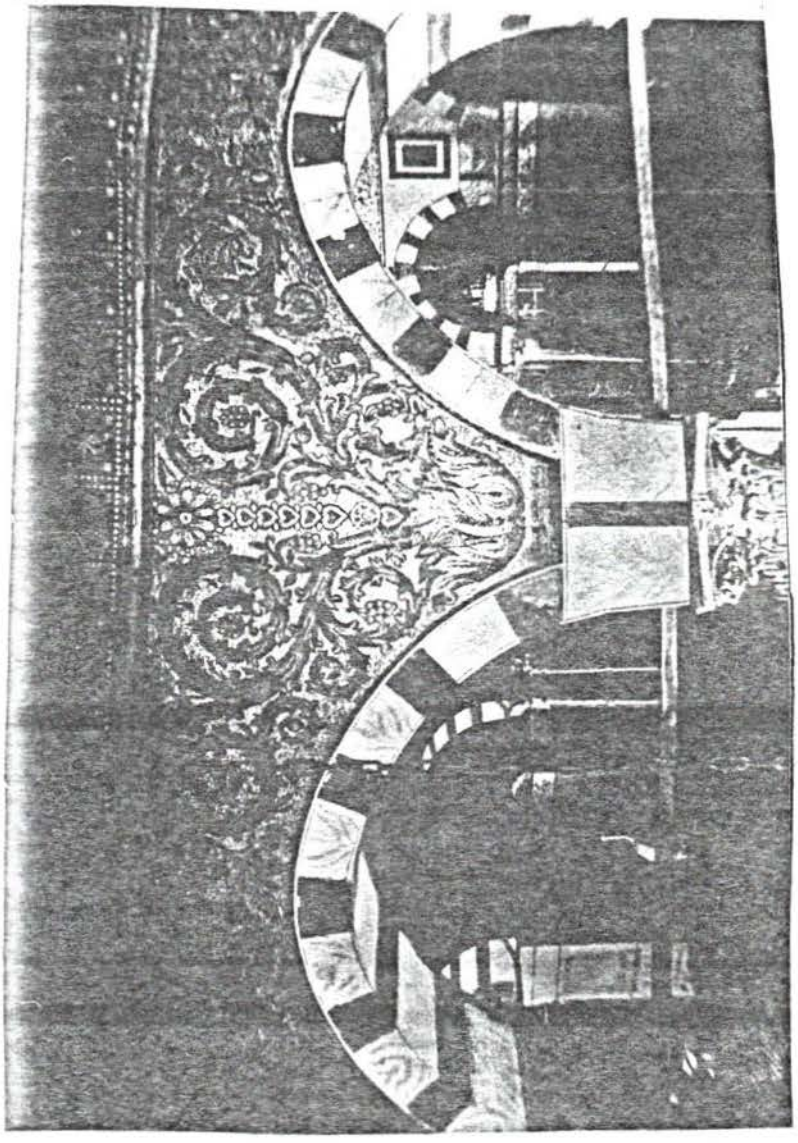


Plate 37. Dome of the Rock
East side, 2nd column to right of southeast pier

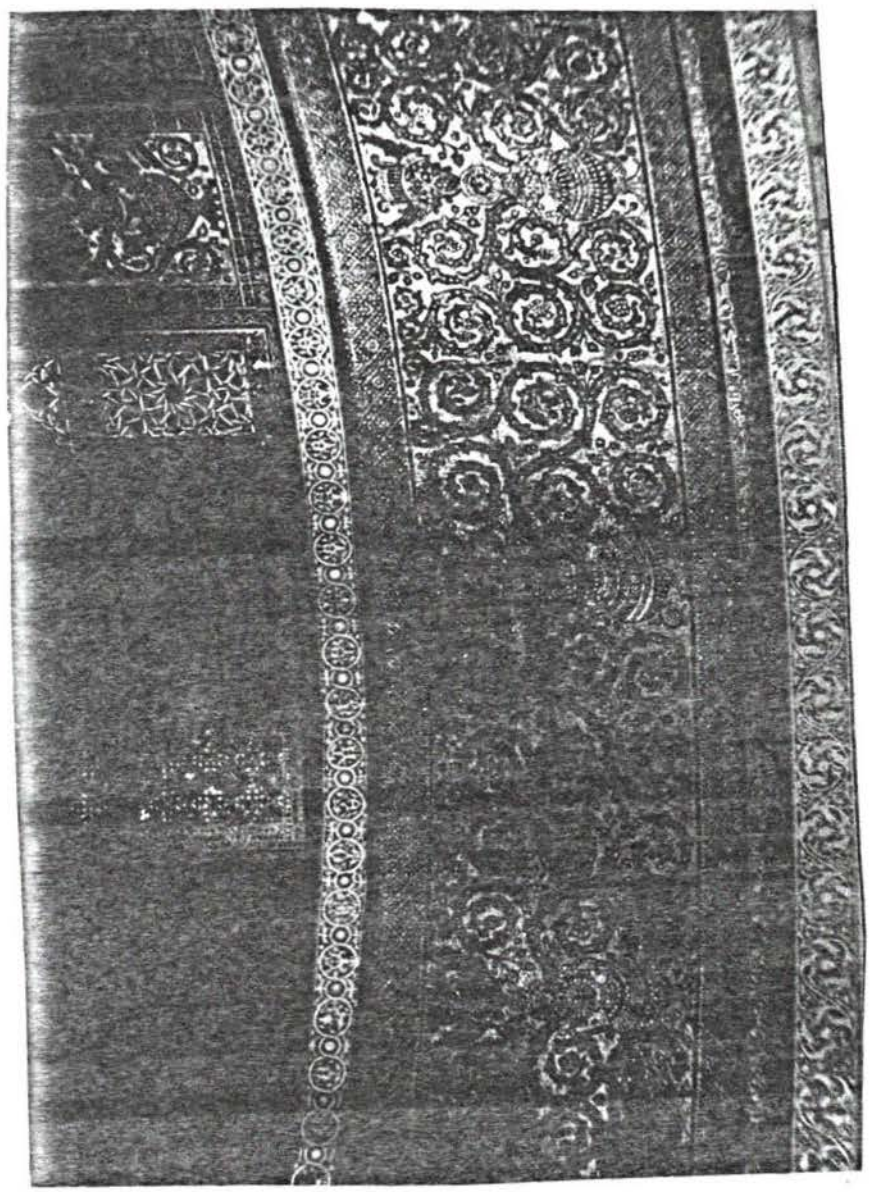


Plate 38. Dome of the Rock
Drum over northeast pier

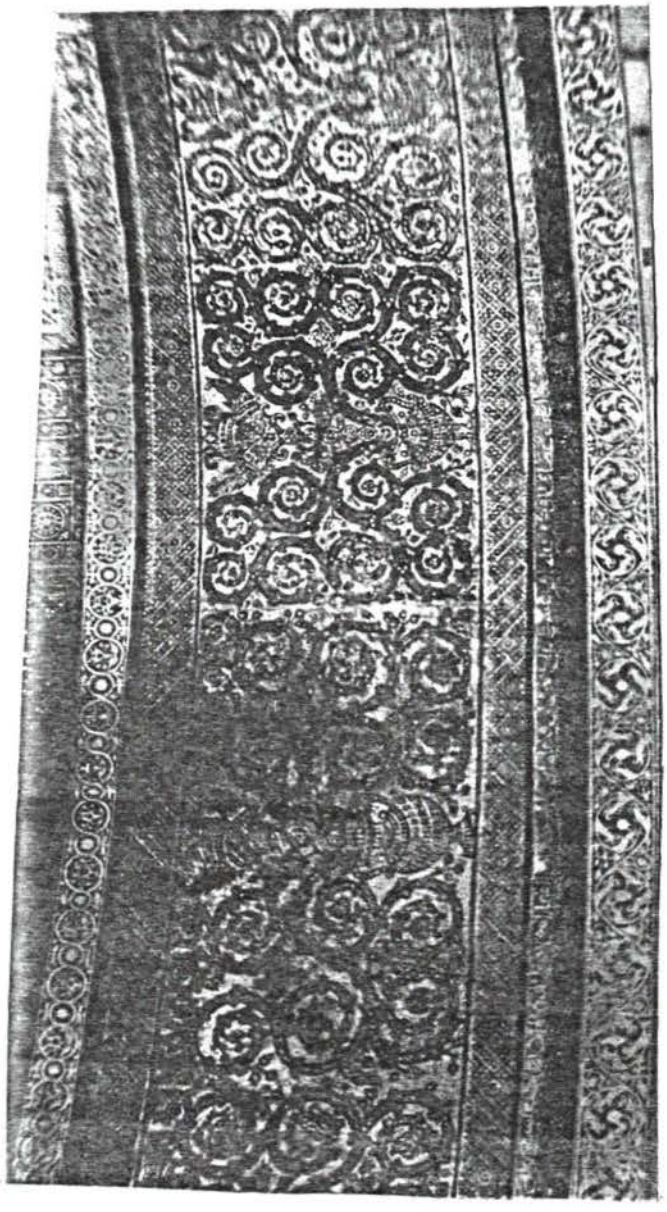


Plate 39. Dome of the Rock
Drum over southeast pier

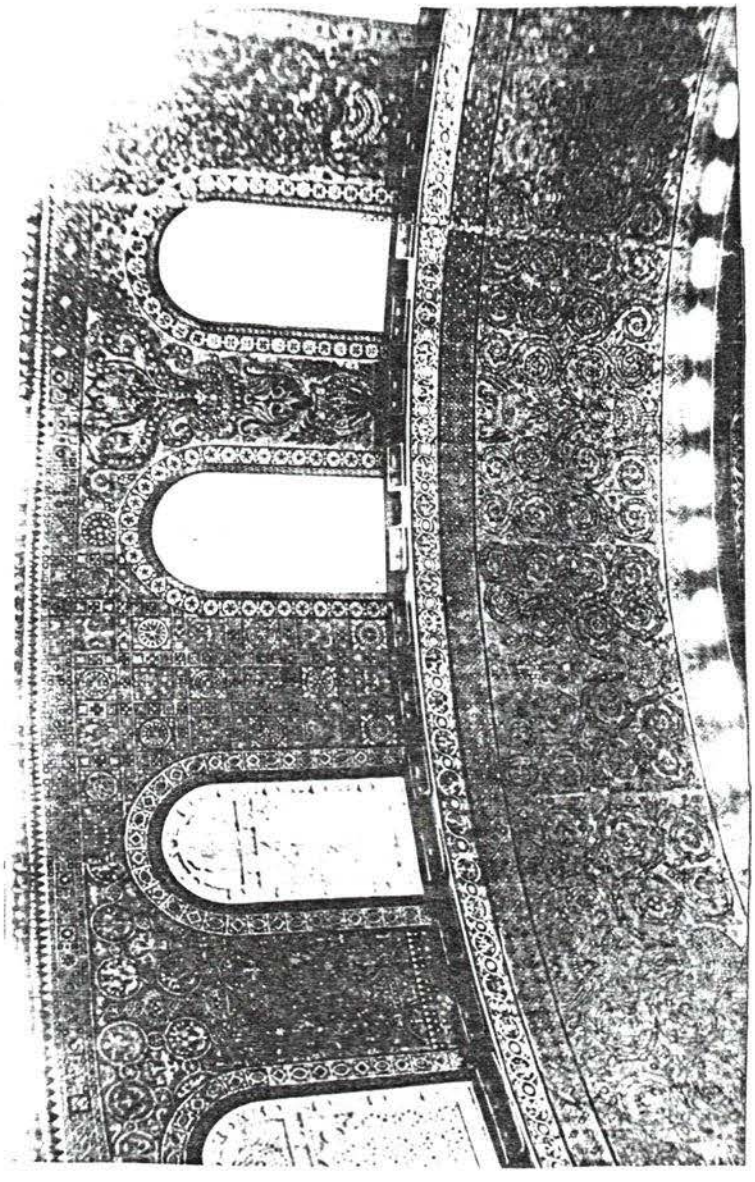


Plate 40. Dome of the Rock
Panels 10, 11 and 12, upper register of drum

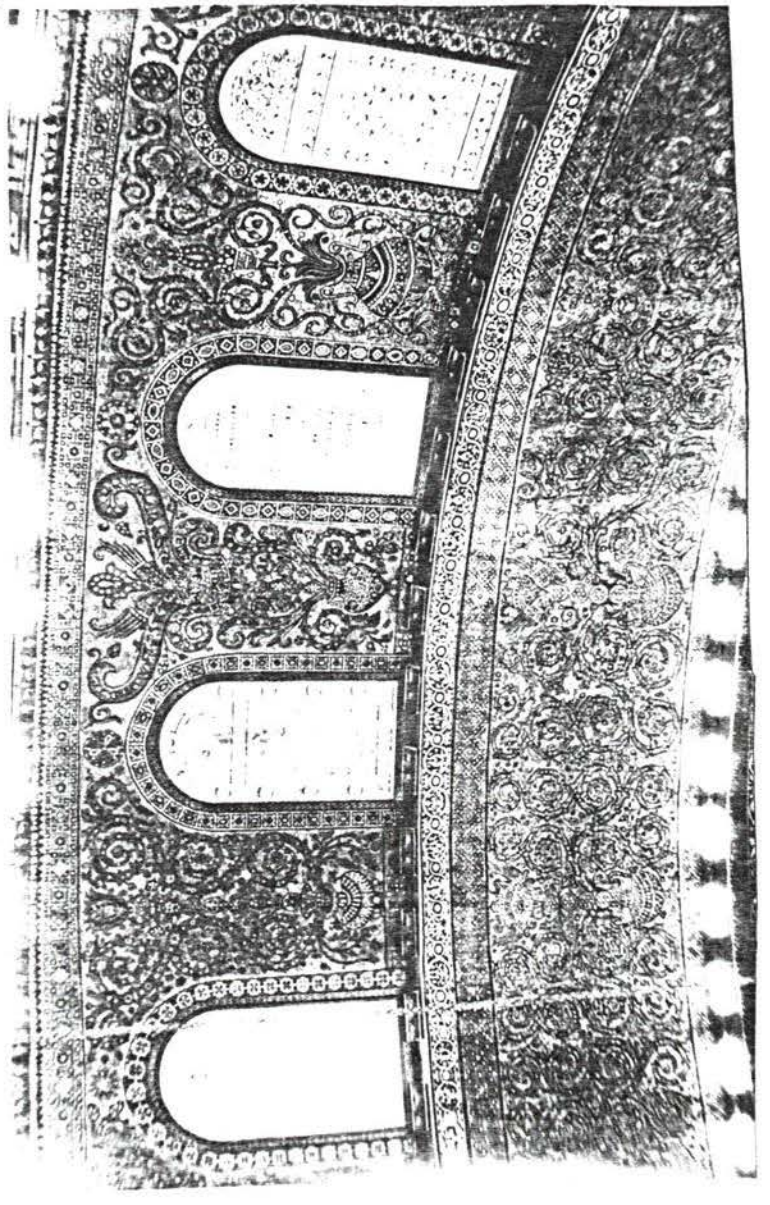


Plate 41. Dome of the Rock
Panels 13 and 14, upper register of drum

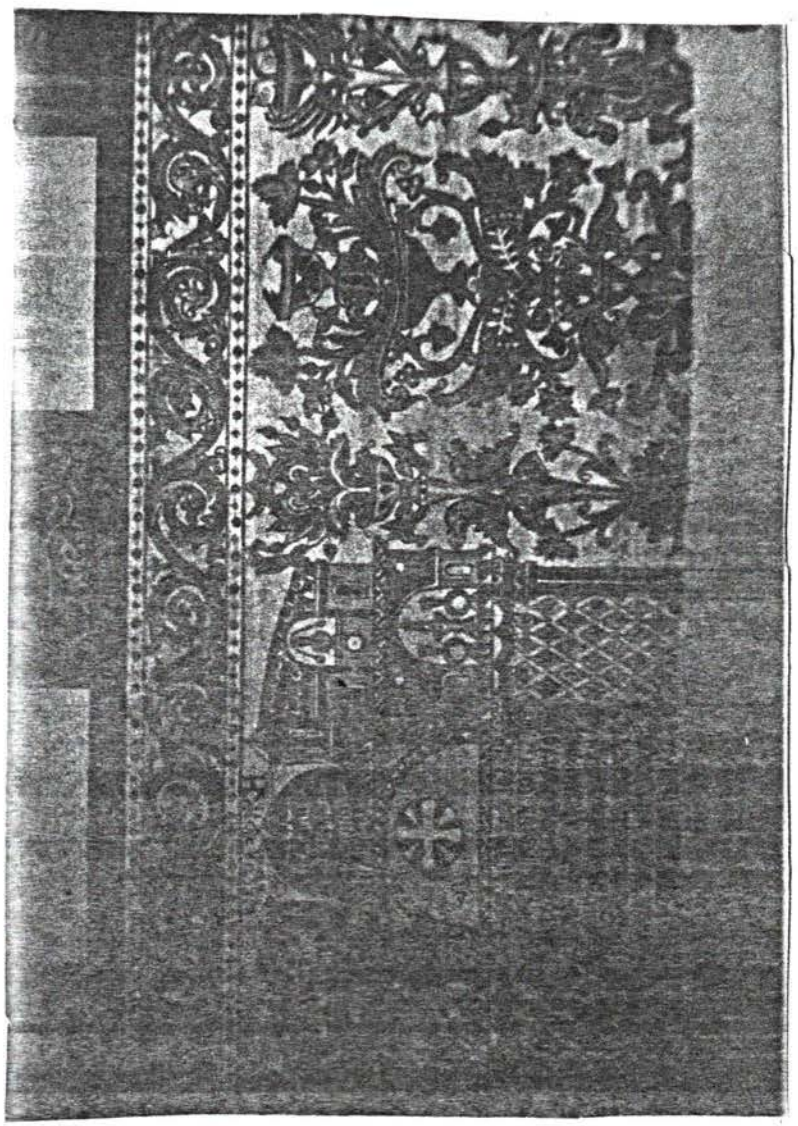


Plate 42. Dome of the Rock
Church of the Nativity, Provincial Council of Antioch

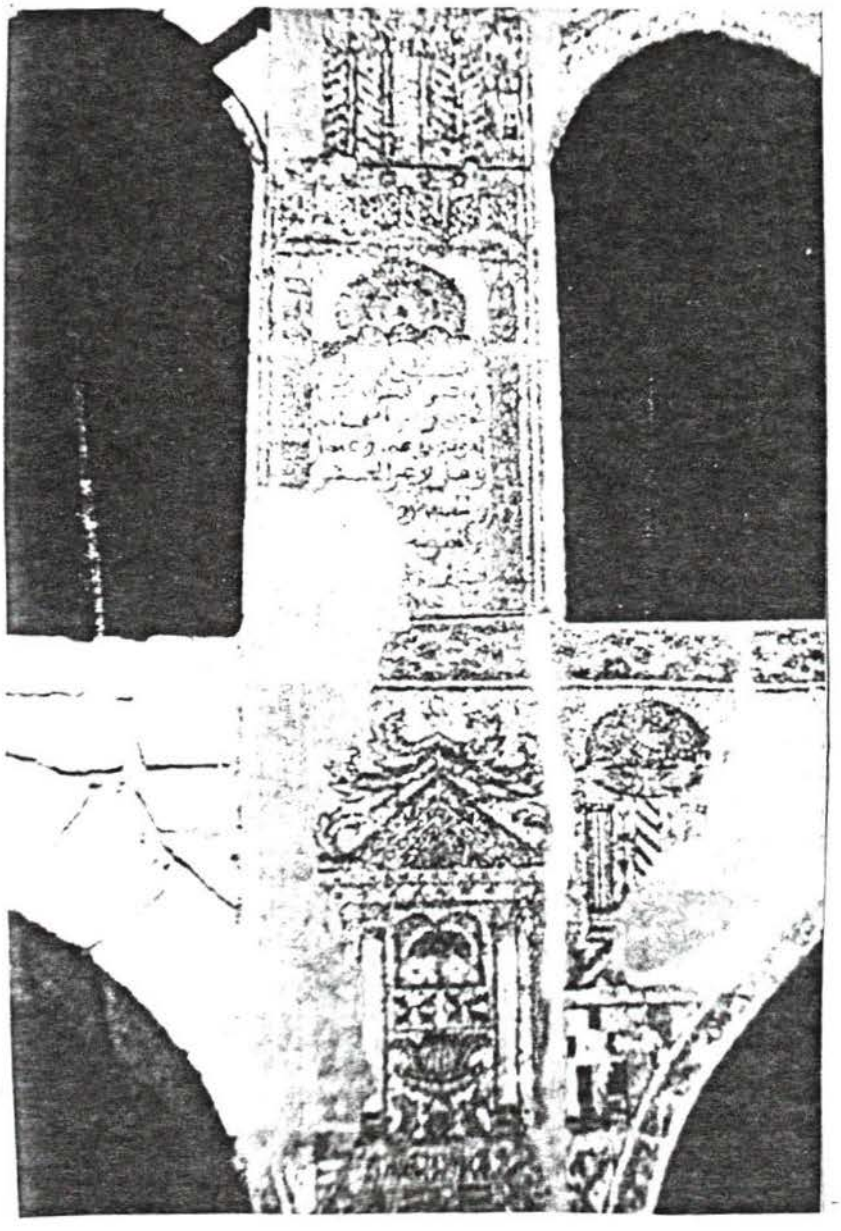


Plate 43. Great Mosque of Damascus
Pier on eastern facade of the north portico

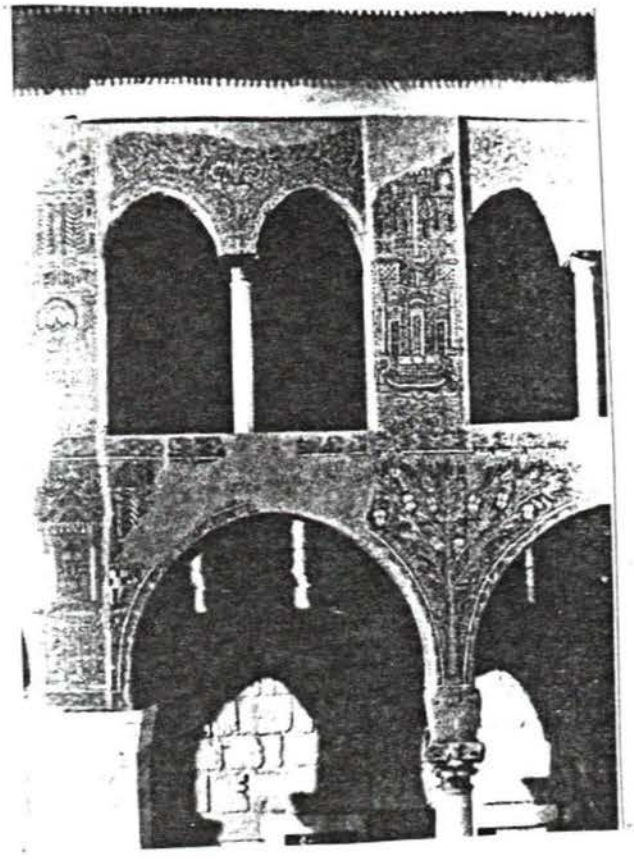


Plate 44. Great Mosque of Damascus
First column to the right, eastern facade
of the north portico

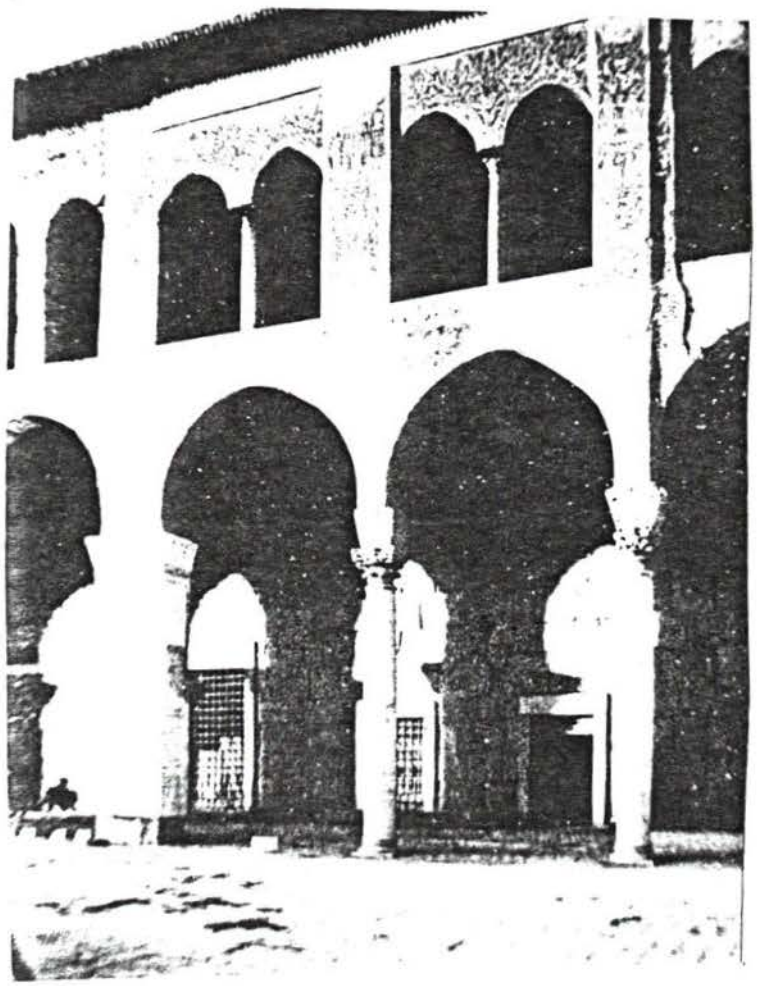


Plate 45. Great Mosque of Damascus
Pier and two columns, eastern facade
of the north portico

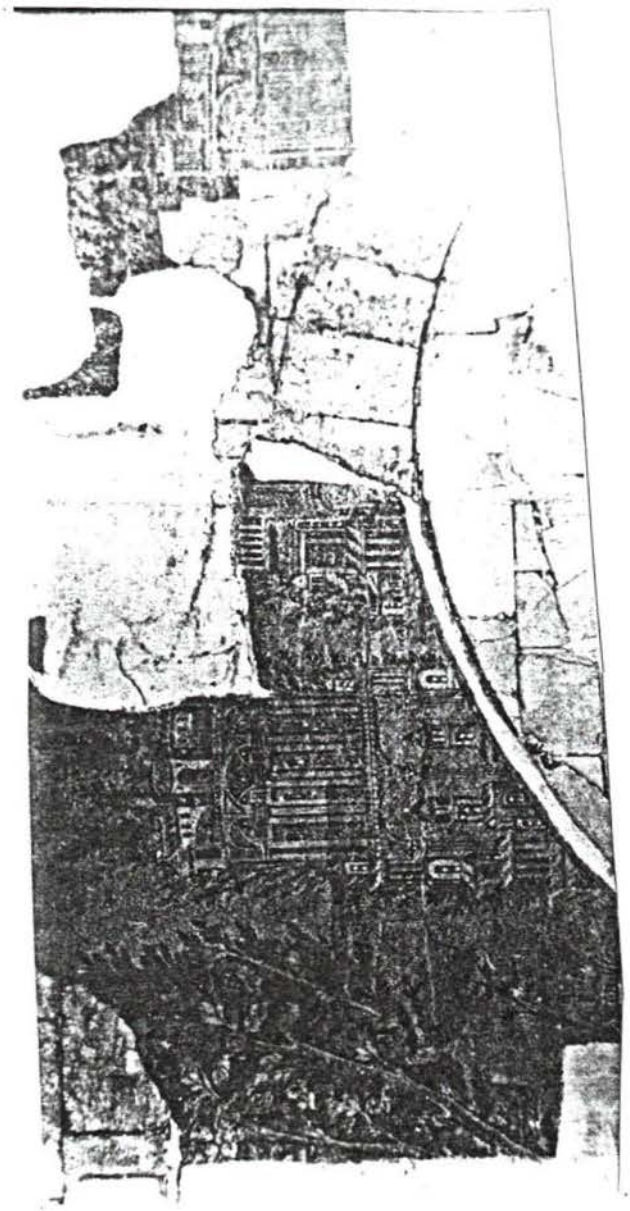


Plate 46. Great Mosque of Damascus
Outer facade of prayer hall
above the entrance doors

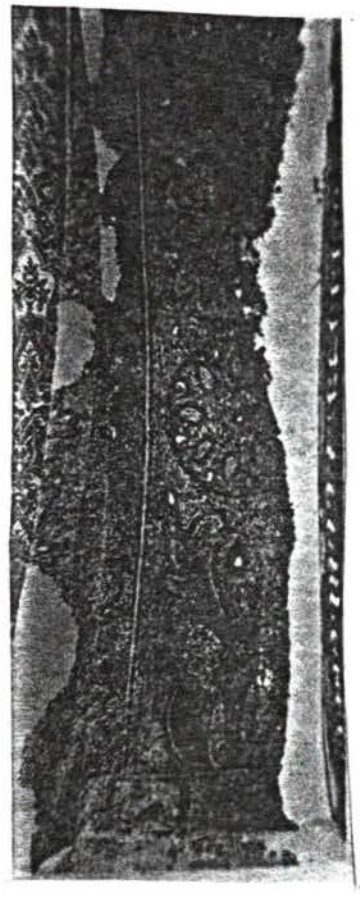


Plate 47. Great Mosque of Damascus
Soffit above east window of prayer hall entrance

Plate 48. Great Mosque of Damascus
Soffit above middle window of prayer hall entrance

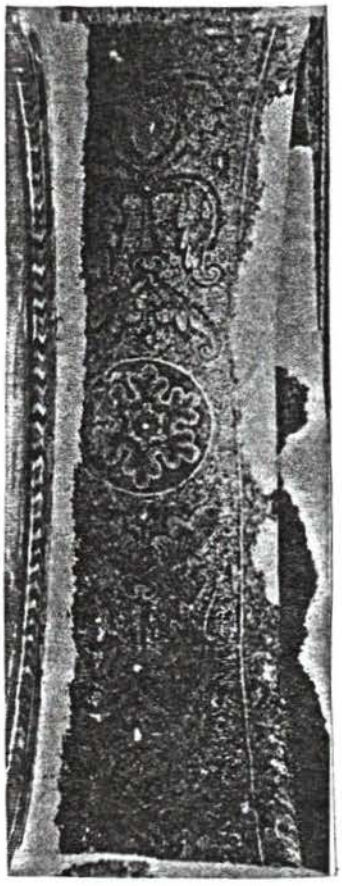


Plate 49. Great Mosque of Damascus
Soffit above west window of prayer hall entrance

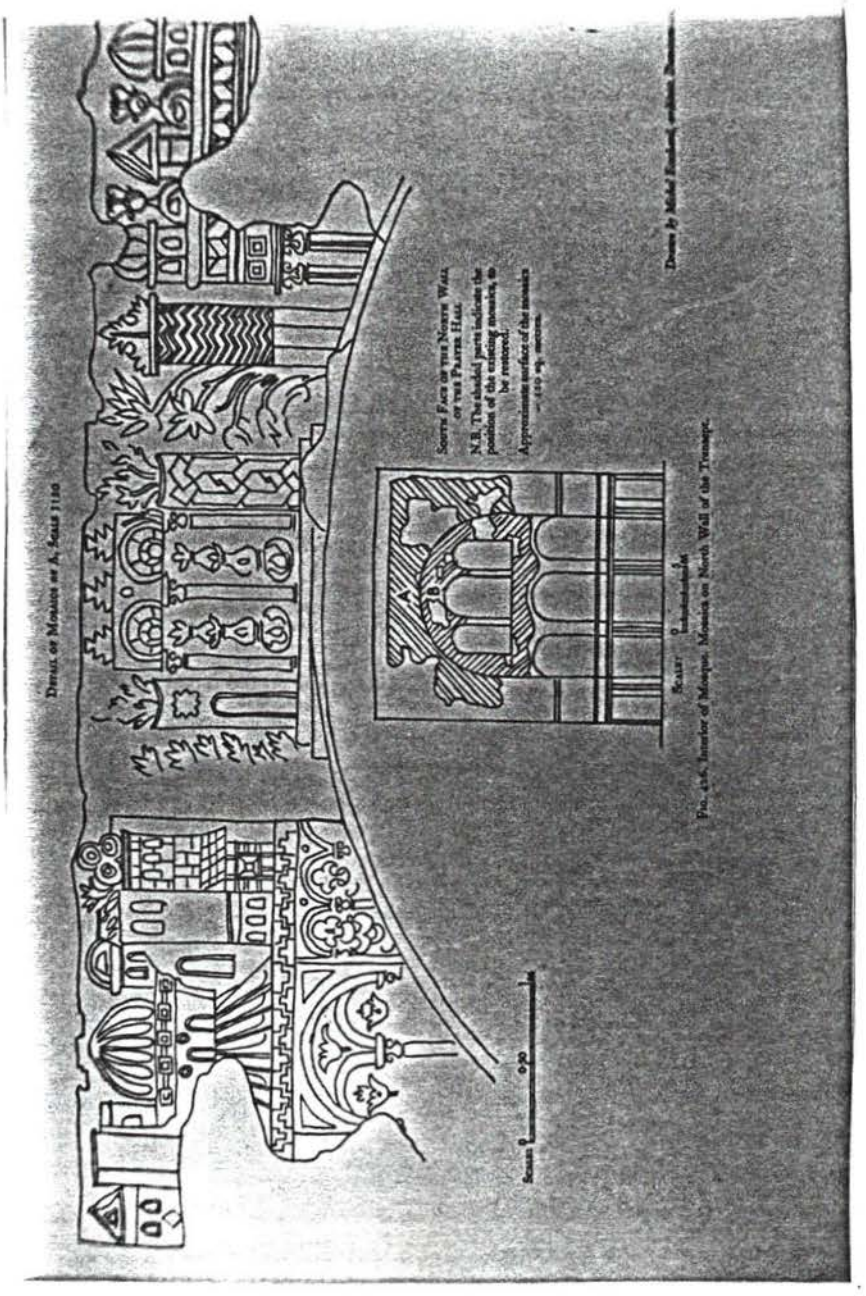


Plate 50. Great Mosque of Damascus
North wall of prayer hall

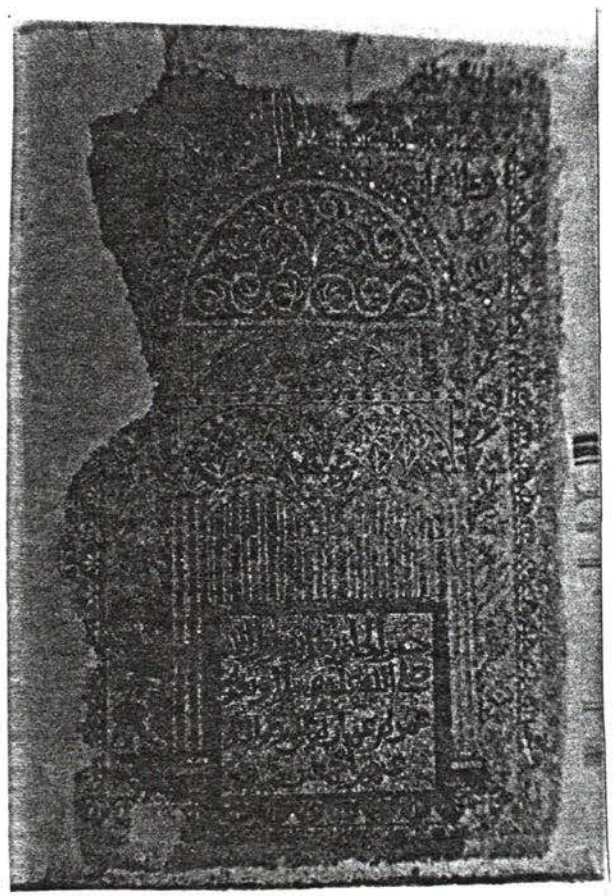


Plate 51. Great Mosque of Damascus
Northeast dome pier, prayer hall

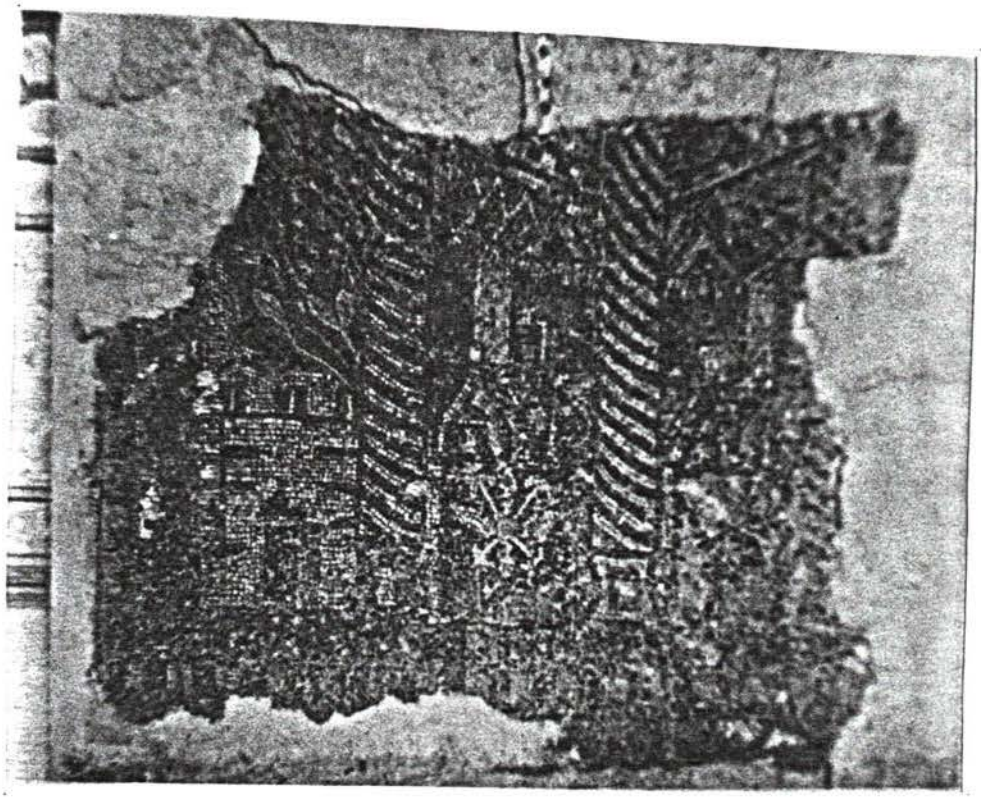


Plate 52. Northwest dome pier, prayer hall

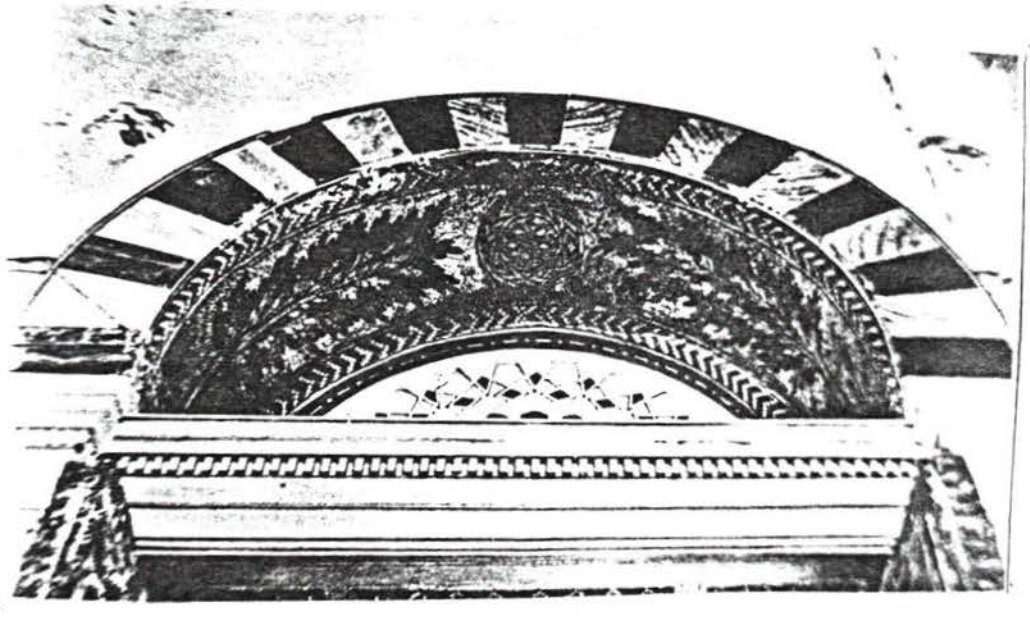


Plate 53. Great Mosque of Damascus
Soffit above central doorway, west entrance

Plate 54. Great Mosque of Damascus
Soffit above central doorway, west entrance

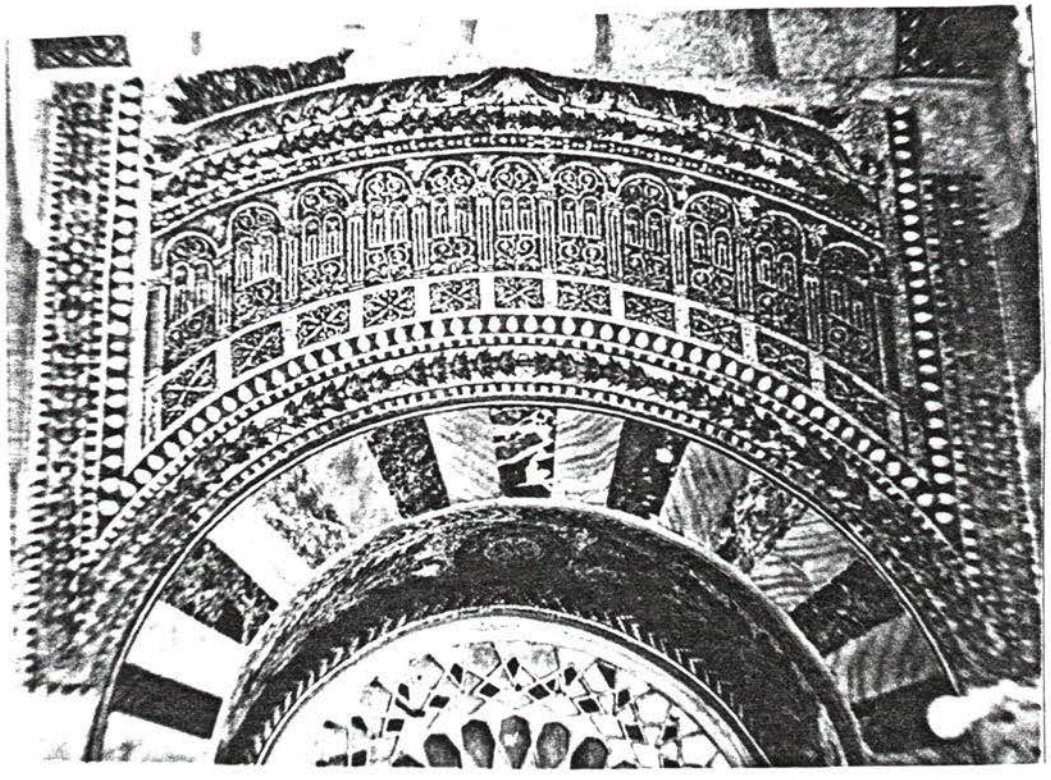


Plate 55. Above central doorway of west entrance

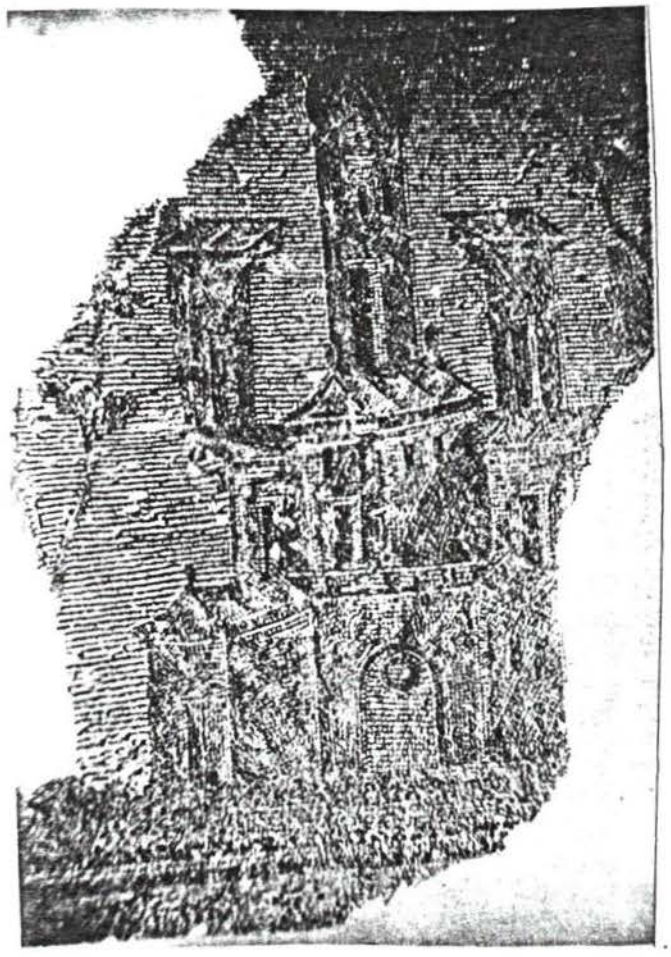


Plate 56. Great Mosque of Damascus
North wall of west side

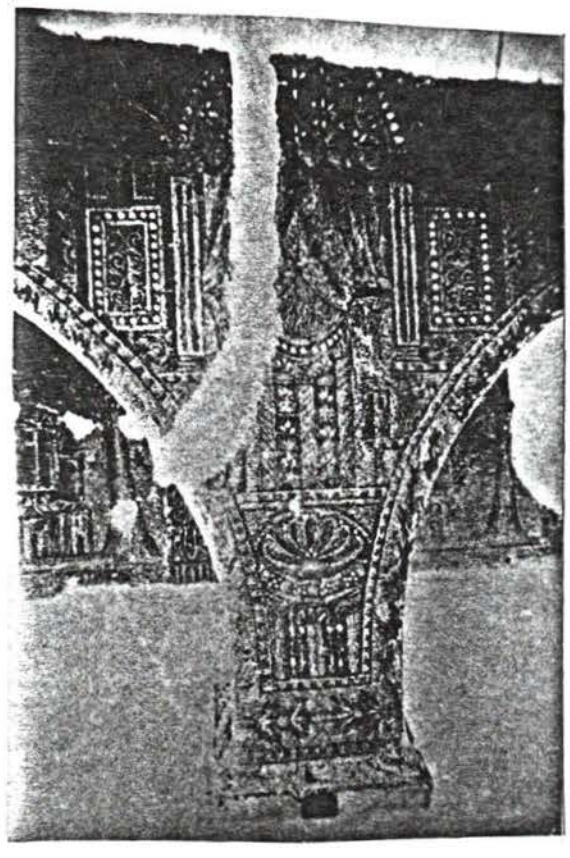


Plate 57. Great Mosque of Damascus
Above central column, south side, west entrance

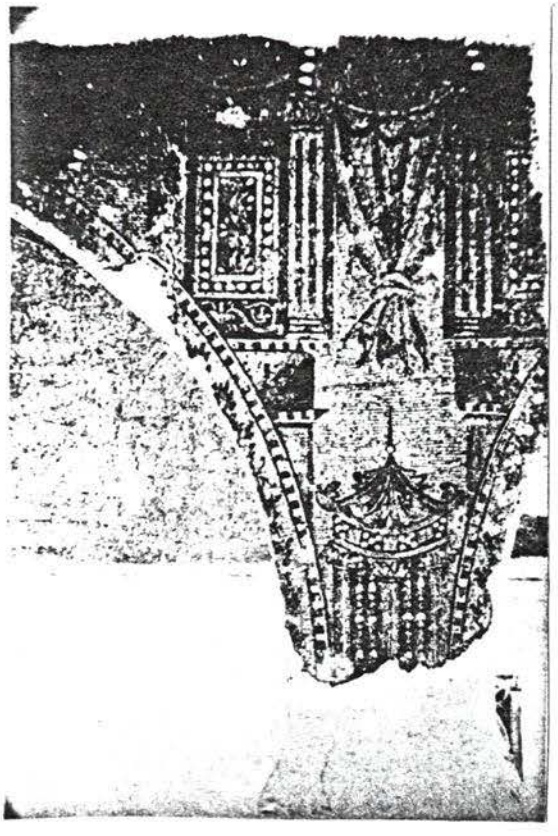


Plate 58. Great Mosque of Damascus
Above central column, north side, west entrance

Plate 59. Great Mosque of Damascus
Above 2nd pier from the south, west side

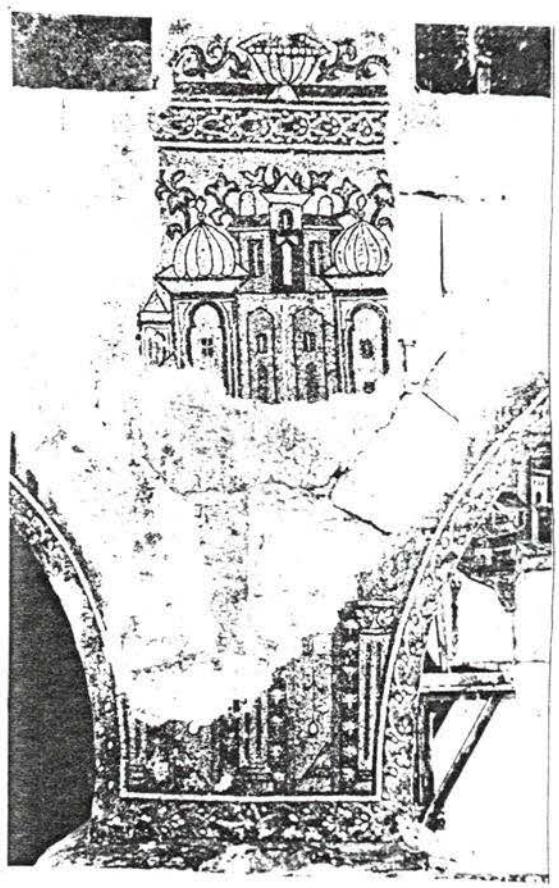


Plate 60. Great Mosque of Damascus
Above 1st pier from the south, west side

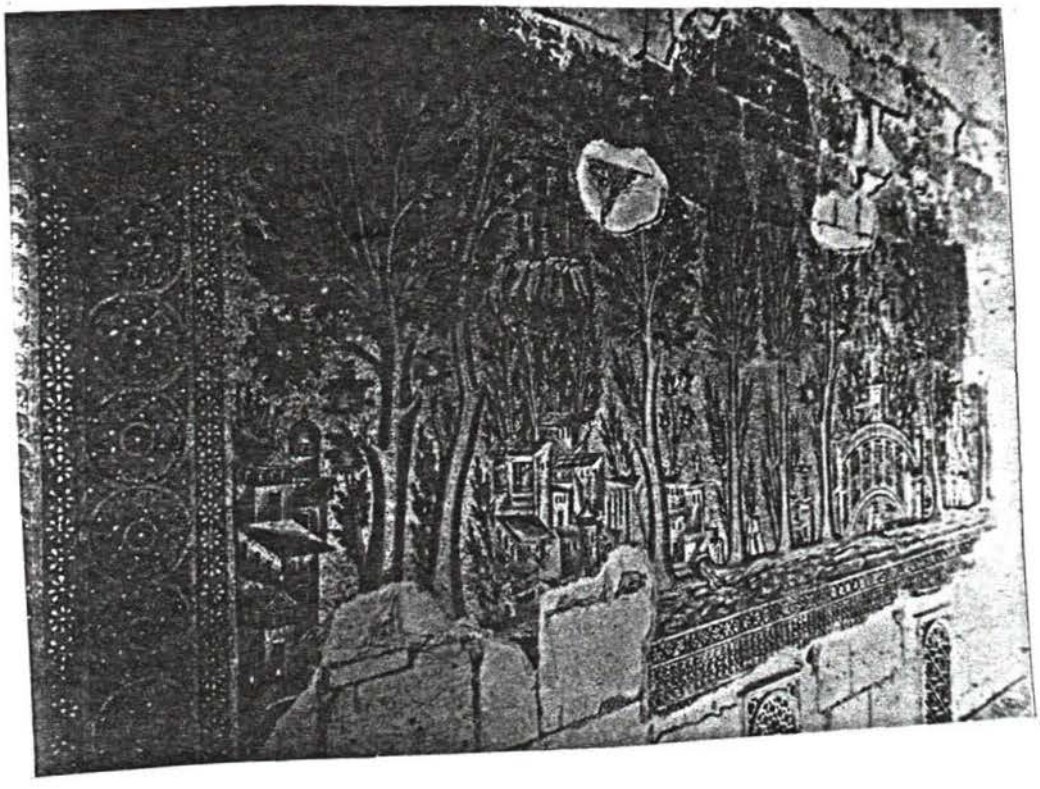


Plate 61. Great Mosque of Damascus
South end of the Barada panel, west side

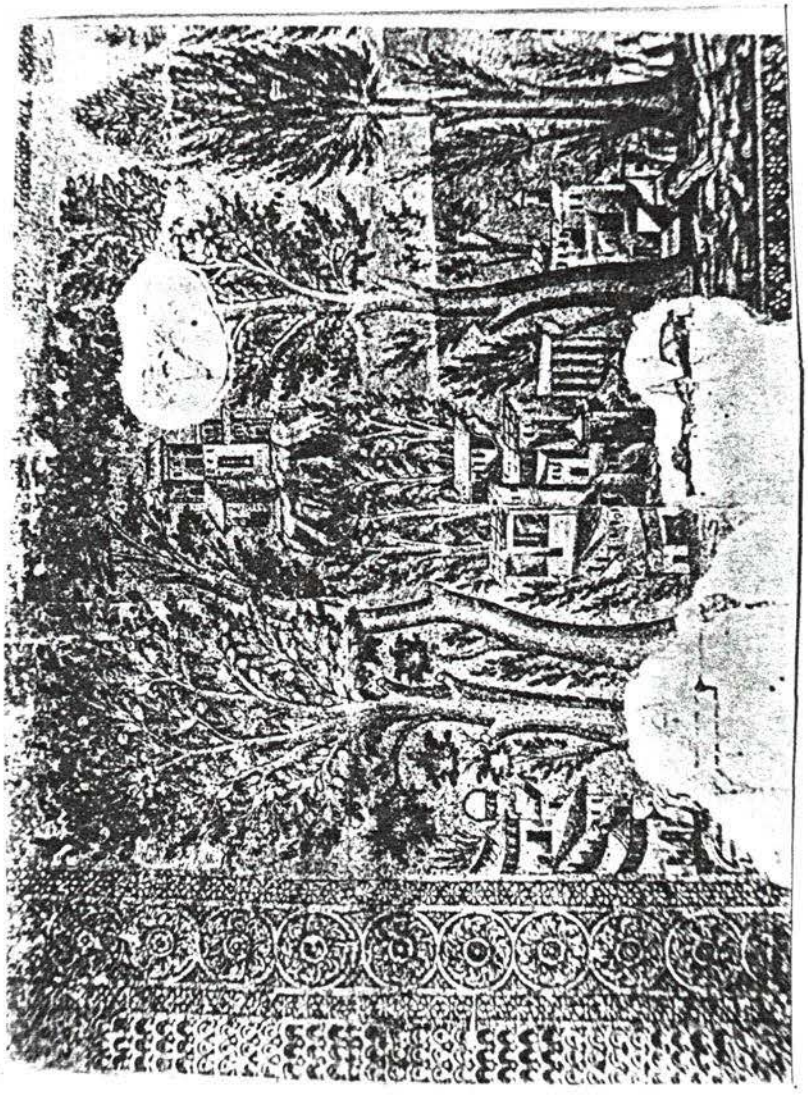


Plate 62. Great Mosque of Damascus
South end of the Barada panel, west side

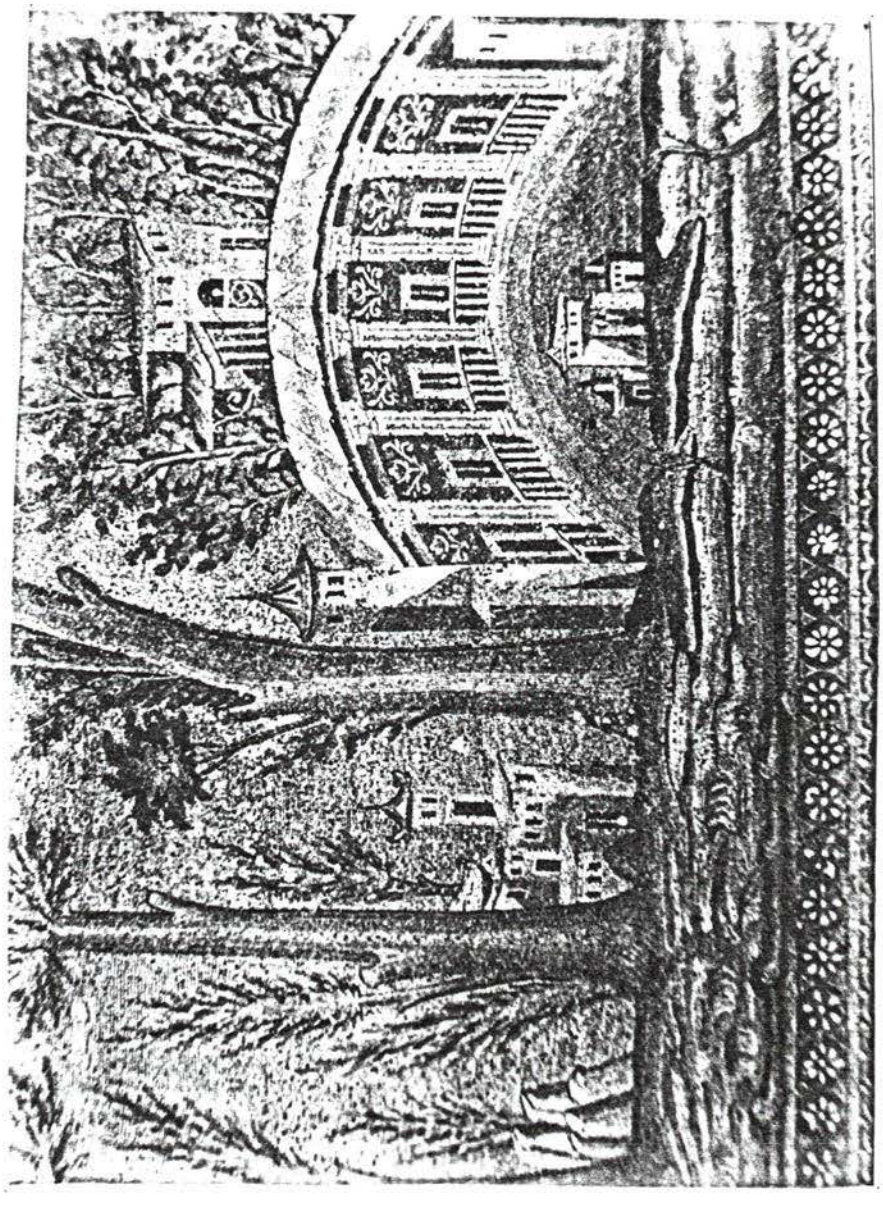


Plate 63. Great Mosque of Damascus
Middle of the Barada panel, west side

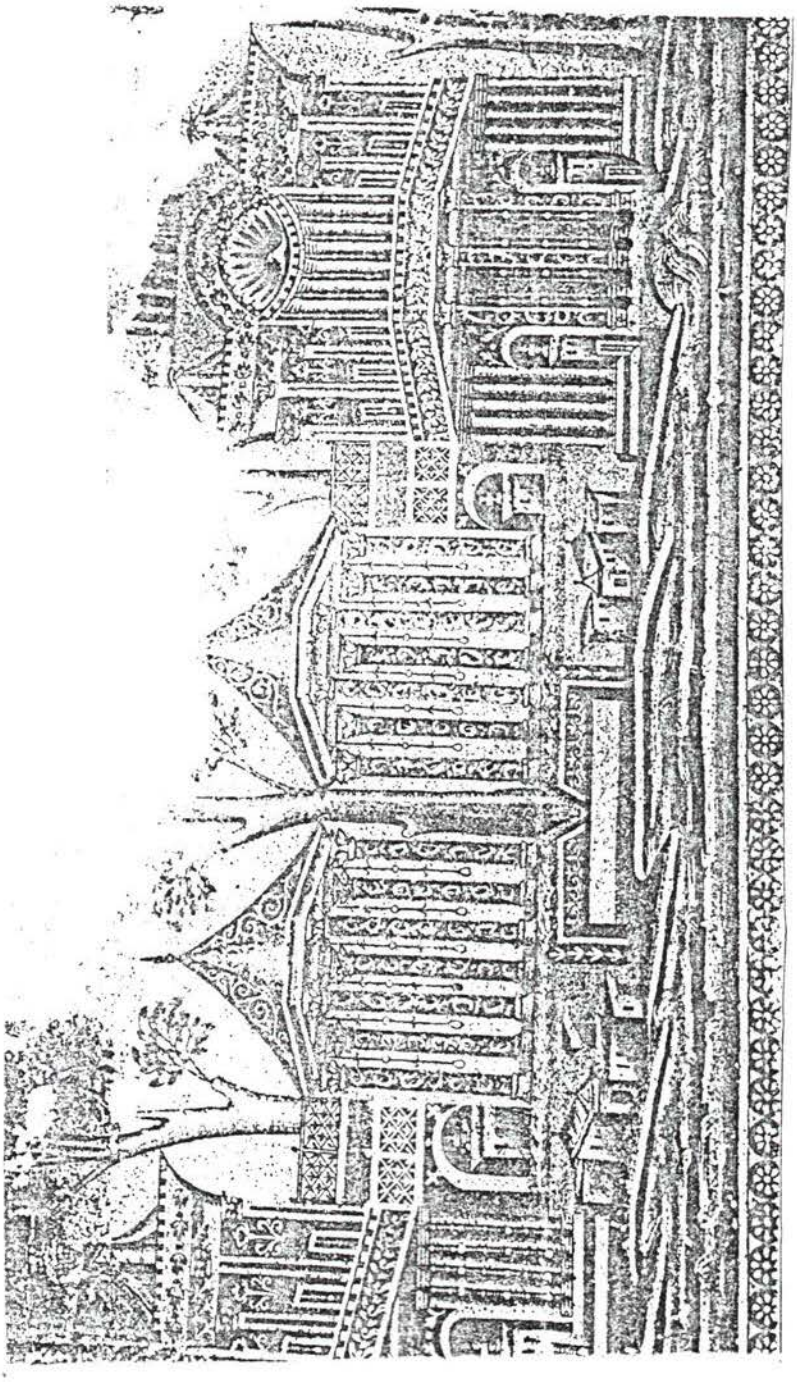


Plate 64. Great Mosque of Damascus
To the north end of the Barada panel, west side

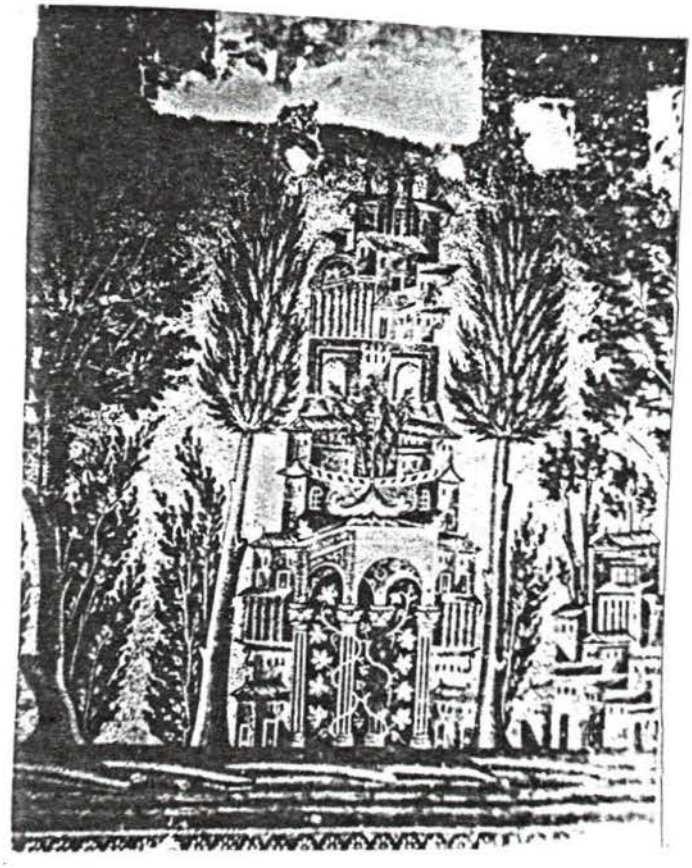


Plate 65. Great Mosque of Damascus
To the north end of the Barada panel, west side

BIBLIOGRAPHY

al-Baladhuri, A.J. The Origins of the Islamic State. Trans. P.K. Hitti. 1916; rpt. New York: AMS Press, 1968.

Arberry, A.J. The Koran Interpreted. 2 vols. London: George Allen and Unwin, 1955.

Arnold, Sir Thomas W. Painting in Islam. 1928; rpt. New York: Dover, 1965.

Avi-Yonah, Michael. ed. A History of the Holy Land. Trans. Charles Weiss and Pamela Fitton. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1969.

_____. Israel: Ancient Mosaics. Greenwich: UNESCO in association with New York Graphic Society, 1960.

_____. "Oriental Elements in the Art of Palestine in the Roman and Byzantine Periods". Quarterly Journal of the Department of Antiquities in Palestine, 10 (1942), 105ff.

Barnard, L.W. The Graeco-Roman and Oriental Background of the Iconoclastic Controversy. Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1974.

Beckwith, John. Early Christian and Byzantine Art. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1970.

_____. The Art of Constantinople. London: Phaidon Press, 1961.

van Berchem, Max. "Notes Archeologiques sur la Mosquee des Omeyyades". Bulletin d etudes Orientales, 7-8 (1937-38), 39ff.

Blunt, W. Splendours of Islam. London: Angus and Robertson, 1976.

Bonfioli, Mara. "Syriac-Palestinian Mosaics in Connection with the Decoration of the Mosque at Jerusalem and Damascus". East and West, 4 (1959), 57ff.

Bovini, Guiseppe. Ravenna Mosaics. Trans. Gustina Scaglia. Greenwich: New York Graphic Society, 1956.

Bright, John. A History of Israel. 2nd. ed. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1972.

Brockelmann, Carl. History of the Islamic Peoples. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1959.

Burckhardt, Titus. Art of Islam. Trans. J. Peter Hobson. World of Islam Festival Publishing Co., 1976.

Butler, H.C. Early Churches in Syria. Amsterdam: Adolf M. Hakkert, 1969.

Canaan, A.T. "Mohammedan Saints and Sanctuaries in Palestine". Journal of the Palestine Oriental Society, 4 (1927) 11ff.

Castle, Wilfred. Syrian Pageant. London: Hutchinson, n.d.

Cetto, A.M. Mosaiken von Ravenna. Bern: Hallwag, 1960.

Comay, Joan. The Temple of Jerusalem. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1975.

Couasnon, Charles. The Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem. Trans. J.-P.B. and Claude Ross. London: Oxford University Press, 1974.

Cragg, Kenneth. The Dome and the Rock. London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1964.

_____. The Event of the Qur'an. London: George Allen and Unwin, 1971.

Creswell, K.A.C. Early Muslim Architecture. Vol. 1. 2nd. ed. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1969.

_____. "The Lawfulness of Painting in Early Islam". Ars Islamica, 11-12 (1946), 159ff.

_____. "The legend that al-Walid asked for and obtained help from the Byzantine Emperor, a suggested explanation". Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society, (1956), 142ff.

_____. "The Origin of the Plan of the Dome of the Rock". Supplementary Papers: British School of Archeology, (1924), 1ff.

Crowfoot, J.W. Early Churches in Palestine. 1941; rpt. Maryland: McGrath, 1971.

Demus, Otto. Byzantine Mosaic Decoration. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1948.

Diez, Ernst. "The Mosaics of the Dome of the Rock at Jerusalem". Ars Islamica, 1 (1934), 235ff.

Dixon, A.A.A. The Umayyad Caliphate. London: Luzac, 1971.

Dodd, C.H. The Parables of the Kingdom. Glasgow: Collins, 1978.

Dodd, Erica Cruikshank. "The Image of the Word". Berytus, 18 (1969), 35ff.

Donner, Fred McGraw. The Early Islamic Conquests. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981.

van Donzel, E., B. Lewis and Ch. Pellat. eds. The Encyclopaedia of Islam. Vol. 4. Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1978.

Dunbabin, Katherine M.D. The Mosaics of Roman North Africa. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1978.

Dussaud, Rene. "Le Temple de Jupiter Damascenien et ses Transformation aux Epoques Chretienne et Musulmane". Syria, 3 (1922), 219ff.

Ecochard, Michel. "A Propos du Dome du Rocher et d'un Article de m. Oleg Grabar". Bulletin d'etudes Orientales, 25 (1972), 37ff.

Encyclopaedia Judaica. Vol 9. Jerusalem: Keter, 1971.

Ettinghausen, Richard. Arab Painting. Cleveland: World Publishing, 1962.

_____. From Byzantium to Sasanian Iran and the Islamic World. Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1972.

Finegan, Jack. The Archeology of the New Testament. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1969.

Finster, Barbara. "Die Mosaiken der Umayyaden moschee von Damaskus". Kunst des Orients, 7 (1970-71), 83ff.

Germain, Suzanne. Les Mosaiques de Timgad. Paris: Editions du Centre national de la recherche scientifique, 1969.

Gibb, H.A.R. "Arab-Byzantine Relations Under the Umayyad Caliphate". Dumbarton Oaks Papers, 12 (1958)

_____. Mohammadanism. London: Oxford University Press, 1969.

_____, J.H. Kramers. eds. Shorter Encyclopaedia of Islam. Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1965.

_____, J.H. Kramers, E. Levi-Provencal and J. Schacht. eds. The Encyclopaedia of Islam. Vol 1. Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1960.

Glubb, John Bagot. Syria, Lebanon, Jordan. London: Thames and Hudson, 1967.

Goitein, S.D. Studies in Islamic History and Institutions. Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1966.

_____. "The Historical Background of the Erection of the Dome of the Rock". Journal of the American Oriental Society, 70 (1950), 104ff.

Grabar, Andre. "A Propos des Mosaiques de la Coupole de Saint-Georges, a Salonique". Cahiers Archeologiques, 17 (1967), 59ff.

_____. Byzantine Painting. Trans. Stuart Gibbert. Geneva: Skira, 1953.

_____. L'iconoclasme Byzantin. Paris: College de France, 1957.

Grabar, Oleg. "Islamic Art and Byzantium". Dumbarton Oaks Papers, 18 (1964), 69ff.

_____. "Islam and Iconoclasm". Ninth Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies. (March 1975). Birmingham: Centre for Byzantine Studies, 1977. 45ff.

_____. "The Earliest Islamic Commemorative Structures, Notes and Documents". Ars Orientalis, 6 (1966), 7ff.

_____. The Formation of Islamic Art. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1973.

_____. "The Umayyad Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem". Ars Orientalis, 3 (1959), 33ff.

Gray, John. A History of Jerusalem. London: Robert Hale, 1969.

von Grunebaum, G.E. Classical Islam: A History. Trans. Katherine Watson. London: George Allen and Unwin, 1970.

Gwatkin, H.M., J.P. Whitney. eds. The Cambridge Medieval History. 2nd. ed. Vol. 2. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1967.

Hamilton, John A. Byzantine Architecture and its Decoration. 1933; rpt. Freeport: Books for libraries Press, 1972.

Hamilton, Richard W. The Church of the Nativity Bethlehem. Jerusalem: Government of Palestine Department of Antiquities, 1947.

_____. The Structural History of the Aqsa Mosque. London: Oxford University Press, 1949.

Harvey, William. Structural Survey of the Church of the Nativity Bethlehem. London: Oxford University Press, 1935.

Hayes, J.W. Late Roman Pottery. London: British School at Rome, 1972.

Hayward, H.D. "Suggestive Symbolism in Islamic Art and Architecture". Muslim World, 32 (1942), 154ff.

Herzfeld, Ernst. "Damascus: Studies in Architecture I". Ars Islamica, 9 (1942), 1ff.

_____. "Damascus: Studies in Architecture IV". Ars Islamica, 13-14 (1948), 118ff.

Hetherington, P.B. Mosaics. London: Hamlyn, 1967.

Hitti, Philip Khuri. Capital Cities of Arab Islam. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1973.

_____. History of Syria. 2nd. ed. London: Macmillan, 1957.

_____. History of the Arabs. 10th. ed. London: Macmillan, 1970.

Hoag, John D. Islamic Architecture. New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1977.

Hodgson, Marshall. The Venture of Islam. 3 vols. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1974.

Holt, P.M., A. Lambton and B. Lewis. eds. The Cambridge History of Islam. Vol 1. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970.

Inalcik, Halil. The Ottoman Empire. Trans. Norman Itzkowitz and Colin Imber. Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1973.

Ishaq, Ibn. The Life of Muhammad. ed. Michael Edwardes. London: The Folio Society, 1964.

Kahler, Heinz. Hagia Sophia. Trans. Ellyn Childs. New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1967.

Kenyon, Kathleen. Digging up Jerusalem. London: Ernest Benn, 1974.

Kessler, Christel. "Above the Ceiling of the Outer Ambulatory in the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem". Journal of of the Royal Asiatic Society, (1964), 83ff.

Kitzinger, Ernst. Israeli Mosaics of the Byzantine Period. London: Collins in association with UNESCO, 1965.

_____. The Art of Byzantium and the Medieval West. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1976.

Klein, Mina C., H. Arthur Klein. Temple Beyond Time. New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1970.

Kleinbauer, W. Eugene. "The Iconography and the Date of the Mosaics of the Rotunda of Hagios Georgios, Thessaloniki". Viator, 3 (1972), 27ff.

Kostof, Spiro K. The Orthodox Baptistery of Ravenna. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1965.

Krautheimer, Richard. Early Christian and Byzantine Architecture. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1965.

Kuhnel, Ernst. "Die Mosaiken der Omayaden Moschee in Damaskus". Cicerone, 21 part 22 (November 1929), 633ff.

Lehrman, Jonas Benzion. Earthly Paradise. London: Thames and Hudson, 1980.

Le Strange, Guy. Palestine Under the Moslems. 1890; rpt. Beirut: Khayats, 1965.

_____. The Lands of the Eastern Caliphate. 1890; rpt. New York: Barnes and Noble, 1966.

Lewis, Bernard. ed. Islam. 2 vols. New York: Harper and Row, 1974.

_____. Istanbul and the Civilization of the Ottoman Empire. 1st. ed. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1963.

_____. Ch. Pellat and J. Schacht. eds. The Encyclopaedia of Islam. Vol. 2. Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1965.

_____. V.L. Menage, Ch. Pellat and J. Schacht. eds. The Encyclopaedia of Islam. Vol. 3. Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1971.

_____. ed. The World of Islam. London: Thames and Hudson, 1976.

de Lorey, Eustache. "Les Mosaiques de la Mosquee des Omayyades a Damas". Syria, 12 (1931), 326ff.

Lybyer, Albert H. The Ottoman Empire in the Time of Suleiman. New York: Russell and Russell, 1966.

Mango, Cyril. Materials for the Study of the Mosaics of St. Sophia at Istanbul. Washington: The Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 1962.

_____. The Art of the Byzantine Empire 312-1453. Sources and Documents. Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1972.

Martin, E.J. A History of the Iconoclastic Controversy. London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, n.d.

Mathews, Thomas F. The Byzantine Churches of Istanbul, A Photographic Survey. University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1976.

Mayer, L.A. "A Medieval Arabic Description of the Haram of Jerusalem". Quarterly Journal of the Department of Antiquities in Palestine. n.d. 44ff.

Merriman, R.B. Suleiman the Magnificent. New York: Cooper Square, 1966.

Michell, George. ed. Architecture of the Islamic World. London: Thames and Hudson, 1978.

von Millingen, Alexander. Byzantine Churches in Constantinople. 1912; rpt. London: Variorum Reprints, 1974.

Mundell, Marlia. "Monophysite Church Decoration". Ninth Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies. (March 1975). Birmingham: Centre for Byzantine Studies, 1977. 59ff.

Neumayer, Heinrich. Byzantine Mosaics. Trans. Margaret Shenfield. London: Methuen, 1964.

Nordhagen, Jonas. "The Mosaics of the Great Palace of the Byzantine Emperors". Byzantinische Zeitschrift, 56 (1963), 53ff.

Olmstead, A.T. History of Palestine and Syria. Westport: Greenwood Press, 1931.

Ostrogorsky, George. History of the Byzantine State. Trans. Joan Hussey. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1968.

Ouellette, Jean. "The Basic Structure of Solomon's Temple and Archeological Research". The Temple of Solomon. Joseph Gutmann, ed. Missoula: Scholar's Press, 1976, 1ff.

Papadopoulo, Alexandre. Islam and Muslim Art. Trans. Robert Erich Wolff. New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1979.

Petran, Tabitha. Syria. London: Ernest Benn, 1972.

Pfeiffer, Robert H. History of New Testament Times. Westport: Greenwood Press, 1949.

Pickthall, Marmaduke. The Glorious Koran. London: George Allen and Unwin, 1930.

Rice, David Talbot. Byzantine Art and its Influences. London: Variorum Reprints. 1973.

_____. Islamic Art. London: Thames and Hudson, 1965.

_____. The Byzantines. London: Thames and Hudson, 1962.

Rosenau, Helen. Vision of the Temple. London: Oresko Books, 1979.

Rosenthal, Franz. A History of Muslim Historiography. 2nd. rev. ed. Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1968.

Saunders, J.J. A History of Medieval Islam. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1965.

Sauvaget, Jean. La Mosquee Omeyyade de Medine. Paris: Vanoest, 1947.

Sear, Frank B. Roman Wall and Vault Mosaics. Heidelberg: F.H. Kerle, 1977.

Shaban, M.A. Islamic History A.D. 600-750. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1971.

Soucek, Priscilla. "The Temple of Solomon in Islamic Legend and Art". The Temple of Solomon. Joseph Gutmann, ed. Missoula: Scholar's Press, 1976. 73ff.

Stern, Henri. Les Mosaiques de la Grande Mosquee de Cordoue. Berlin: Walter de Guyter, 1976.

_____. "Les Representations des Conciles dans l'eglise de la Nativite a Bethlehem". Byzantion, 11 (1936), 101ff.

_____. "Notes sur les mosaiques du Dome du Rocher et de la Mosquee de Damas a propos d'un livre de Mme Marguerite Gautier van Berchem". Cahiers Archeologiques, 22 (1972), 202ff.

_____. "Recherches sur la mosquee al-Aqsa et sur ses mosaiques". Ars Orientalis, 5 (1963), 27ff.

Stratos, Andreas N. Byzantium in the Seventh Century. Trans. Marc Ogilvie-Grant. Amsterdam: Adolf M. Hakkert, 1968.

The Holy Bible. (Revised standard version). New York: Collins, 1973.

Uehli, Ernst. Die Mosaiken von Ravenna. Stuttgart: Mellinger, 1970.

Waterman, Anthony Edgar. A History of Mosaics. 1935; rpt. New York: Hacker Art Books, 1969.

Watt, W. Montgomery. The Majesty that was Islam. London: Sidgwick Jackson, 1974.

Welch, Anthony. "Epigraphs as Icons: The Role of the Written Word in Islamic Art". The Image and the Word. Joseph Gutmann, ed. Missoula: Scholar's Press, 1977, 63ff.

Whiston, William, trans. The Works of Flavius Josephus. Halifax: Milner and Sowerby, 1852.

Wilkinson, John. Jerusalem Pilgrims. Warminster: Aris and Phillips, 1977.

Williams, John Alden. ed. Themes of Islamic Civilization. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1971.

Wright, T. ed. "The Travels of Bishop Arculf in the Holy Land". Early Travels in Palestine. 1848; rpt. New York: AMS Press, 1969.

APPENDIX A

The Dome of the Rock

Inscriptions: mosaic

1) Dating inscription quoted in text

2) Sura 112: "Say: He is God, the One; God the Eternal; He has not begotten nor was He begotten; and there is none comparable to Him"

3) Sura 33:54: "Verily God and His angels bless the Prophet; O ye who believe, bless him and salute him with a worthy salutation"

4) Sura 17:111: "And say: praise be to God, Who has not taken unto Himself a son, and Who has no partner in Sovereignty, nor has He any protector on account of weakness"

5) Sura 64:1 & 57:2: "All in heaven and on earth glorify God; to Him is the Kingdom; to Him is praise; He has power over all things"

6) 64:1, 67:2, 33:54 are repeated
followed by 4:169-171: "O ye People of the Book, overstep not bounds in your religion; and of God speak only truth. The Messiah, Jesus, son of Mary, is only an apostle of God, and His Word which he conveyed into Mary, and a Spirit proceeding from Him. Believe therefore in God and his apostles, and say not 'Three.' It will be far better for you. God is only one God. Far be it from His Glory that He should have a son. His is whatever is in the heavens, and whatever is on the earth. And God is a sufficient Guardian. The Messiah does not disdain being a servant of God, nor do the Angels who are near Him. And all who disdain His service and are filled with pride, God will gather them all to Himself."

non-Quranic: "Pray for your Prophet and your servant, Jesus, son of Mary"
followed by: sura 19:34-37: "And the peace of God was on me (Mary) the day I was born, and will be the day I shall die, and the day I shall be raised to life. This is Jesus, the son of Mary; this is a statement of the truth concerning which they doubt. It beseems not God to BEGET A SON. Glory be to Him. When he decrees a thing, He only says to it 'Be', and it is. And verily God is my Lord and your Lord; Adore Him then. This is the right way."

There are inscriptions over the gates which are not in mosaic. These are suras 2:256; 2:111; 24:35, 112; 3:25; 6:12; 7:155 (east gate) & prayer for the Prophet and his people.
9:33 (or 61:9); 2:130 (or part of 3:78) and an enumeration of the Prophets (north gate).

APPENDIX B: Mosaic Decoration in the Dome of the Rock

MOTIF: Acanthus Plant

Location	Description
piers of octagonal arcade	Composition same for all piers, plants varied by size, number of leaves or predominant colour
pier 1, inner face: south side	
pier 2, inner face: south-east side	
pier 3, inner face: east side	some leaves green heightened with gold; blue with silver, blue with green
pier 4, inner face: north-east side	
pier 5, inner face: north side	
pier 5, left flank	cubes of gold and silver set on incline plane, gold background cubes set flat [two acanthus plants superimposed]
pier 5, right flank	
pier 6, inner face: north-west side	
pier 6, right flank	
pier 7, inner face: west side	
pier 7, right flank	
pier 8, inner face: south side	
piers of circular arcade; master piers of dome	
master pier: north-west	
master pier: south-east	
master pier: north-east	
arches beneath drum	
to right of south-west pier over 1st. & 2nd. columns to right of south-east pier	
numerous on spandrels of circular arcade and soffits	no illustrations: smaller and less finished in technique

MOTIF: Supports

General description: Various types spring from acanthus plant or vase, rise vertically in axis of composition most frequently separating two groups of scrolls
Some are naturalistic palmettes topped by flower buds inlaid with gems, or fruits, rosettes, artichoke motifs
Some are studded with disks, eggs of gems and mother-of-pearl
Some topped by 'winged motifs'
Foliage or acanthus plant sometimes interposed between vase and support
Support sometimes passes through necklace

Location	Description
Octagonal Arcade	
pier 8, inner face: south side	support composed of calices passing through two jewelled rings, springing from acanthus
Circular Arcade	
north side over 2nd. column to right of north-east pier	support composed of palmette shaped motifs topped by artichoke-like motifs, springing from gem-studded vase
2nd. column to right of south-east pier	support composed of hearts and a rosette topped by blossom, springing from acanthus
1st. column to right of south-west pier	support composed of rosettes topped by artichoke-like motif, base of support encircled by gem-studded necklace, springing from acanthus plant

MOTIF: Scrolls

General description: Most important and frequently repeated motif fitted into available spaces. Often decorated with gems and mother-of-pearl.
They appear on octagonal arcade: piers, arches and soffits. Circular arcade: piers and arches and on the drum

Location	Description
Octagonal Arcade: Inner Face	
pier 1, south side	smooth branched scroll inset with gems and mother-of-pearl. Bunches of grapes and fan-wise flower. Springs from acanthus plant
pier 1, arch to left: south side	smooth branched scroll inset with gems and mother-of-pearl. Bunches of grapes, fruit and conventionalized flowers and a fan-wise flower. Springs from cornucopia at summit
pier 1, arch to right: south side	smooth branched scroll with bunches of grapes, tulip-like flowers. Springs from composite vase and encircled by jewelled collar
pier 2, south-east side	laurel-leaf scroll with stem inset with gems and mother-of-pearl. Bunches of grapes, conventionalized fruit and flowers. Springs from acanthus plant
pier 2, arch to left: south-east side	smooth branched scroll with leaves and corolla flower. Springs from cornucopia at summit
pier 2, arch to right: south-east side	smooth branched scroll with gems and mother-of-pearl, conventionalized flowers and bunches of grapes. Springs from cornucopia at summit

MOTIF: Scrolls

pier 3, east side	smooth branched scroll inset with gems: blue, red, mauve, gold and mother-of-pearl. Bunches of grapes, ornamental leaves. Springs from acanthus plant
pier 3, arch to left: east side	smooth branched scroll inset with gems and mother-of-pearl. Bunches of grapes and a corolla flower. Springs from cornucopia at apex of arch
pier 4, north-east side	smooth branched scroll with gems and mother-of-pearl in blue, red, mauve, gold. Conventionalized fruit and flowers. Springs from acanthus plant
pier 4, arch to left: north-east side	smooth branched scroll inset with gems and mother-of-pearl. Bunches of fruit and flowers. Appears from behind tuft of reeds
pier 4, arch to right: north-east side	smooth branched scroll with bunches of grapes. Springs from cornucopia at summit
pier 5, north side	laurel-leaf scroll inset with gems and mother-of-pearl. Conventionalized flowers. Springs from acanthus plant
pier 5, arch to left: north side	acanthus scroll with flower corolla. Springs from cornucopia at apex
pier 5, arch to right: north side	acanthus scroll with bunches of grapes. Appears from behind bowl of foliage
pier 6, north-west side	scroll of calices. Conventionalized floral elements. Inset with mother-of-pearl. Jewelled crown encircles scroll. Springs from double acanthus plant

MOTIF: Scrolls

pier 6, arch to left: north-west side	smooth branched scroll with bunches of grapes and floral elements inset with mother-of-pearl. Springs from cornucopia at summit
pier 6, arch to right: north-west side	smooth branched scroll. Bunches of grapes, conventionalized flowers. Inset with mother-of-pearl. Springs from composite jewelled motif
pier 7, west side	acanthus scroll, blue sheath, serrated lobes bordered with silver. Conventionalized flowers. Scroll encircled by jewelled crowns. Springs from acanthus plant
pier 7, arch to left: west side	acanthus scroll with conventionalized fruit and floral motifs. Inset with mother-of-pearl. Springs from cornucopia at summit
pier 7, arch to right: west side	acanthus scroll with conventionalized fruit and floral motifs. Inset with mother-of-pearl. Springs from cornucopia at summit
pier 8, south side	green calice scroll. Bunches of grapes. Scroll encircled with jewelled bands. Springs from acanthus plant
pier 8, arch to left: south side	scroll with flowers. Springs from composite motif
pier 8, arch to right: south side	scroll with leaves. Springs from cornucopia at summit
central arch to left: north side	smooth branched scroll. Conventionalized flowers, bunches of grapes. Inset gems and mother-of-pearl. Springs from jewelled composite motif

MOTIF: Scrolls

central arch, to right: north side	smooth branched scroll. Conventionalized flowers. Inset with gems and mother-of-pearl. Springs from jewelled composite motif
central arch, to left: west side	smooth branched scroll. Bunches of grapes. Conventionalized flowers. Inset with mother-of-pearl. Springs from composite jewelled motif
central arch, to right: west side	smooth branched scroll. Bunches of grapes, conventionalized flowers. Inset with mother-of-pearl. Springs from cornucopia of a composite jewelled motif

Octagonal Arcade: Soffits of Arches

south-east 3	scroll, bunches of grapes, leaves. Springs from acanthus plant
east 3	calice scroll with conventionalized fruit and flowers. Inset with mother-of-pearl. Small smooth branched scroll at side. Serrated leaves of turquoise blue interspersed with green calices
north-east 1	smooth branched scroll. Bunches of grapes. Inset with gems and mother-of-pearl. Small scroll to right
north 1	smooth branched scroll. Bunches of grapes. Inset with gems and mother-of-pearl. Small scroll at left

MOTIF: Scrolls

Circular Arcade

over 1st., 2nd. columns to right of south-west pier	caliced scrolls. Conventionalized support. Springs from jewelled motif and acanthus plant base
over 1st. column to right of south-east pier	caliced scroll. Bunches of grapes, leaves. Conventionalized support. Springs from cornucopia in acanthus plant
over 2nd. column to right of south-east pier	caliced scroll with bunches of grapes. Springs from acanthus plant
over 2nd. column to right of north-east pier	caliced scroll with bunches of grapes and fruit. Palmette support. Springs from vase
master pier: south-west	calice scroll. Flowers and fruit. Conventionalized support. Springs from vase
master pier, left flank: south-west	green caliced scroll. Conventionalized flowers. Springs from vase
master pier: south-east	acanthus scroll. Blue sheath with serrated lobes bordered with silver. Palmette support. Springs from acanthus plant
master pier, right flank: south-east	caliced scroll. Conventionalized flower. Springs from vase
master pier: north-east	acanthus scroll with tulip-like flowers. Bunches of grapes. Support of acanthus and conventionalized ornaments. Springs from acanthus plant

MOTIF: Scrolls

Drum

General description: Similar acanthus scrolls with bunches of grapes and conventionalized flowers. Inset with mother-of-pearl. Spring from vases of the drum

MOTIF: Supports

north-west pier, right flank	support composed of rosettes and ovoids topped by gem-studded artichoke-like motif. Springs from gem-studded vase
west side over column 2	support composed of gem-studded palmette, rosette motifs topped by artichoke-like motif. Springs from vase
master pier: north-east	support composed of rosettes, calices. Ovoid motifs topped by rosette. Springs from acanthus plant

Drum

over north-east pier: central panel	support composed of conventionalized motifs topped by ovoid shape, gem-studded. Springs from vase
over north-east pier: left panel	support composed of rosettes topped by 'wing motif', gem-studded. Springs from gem-studded vase
over north-east pier: right panel	support composed of rosettes topped by 'wing motif', gem-studded. Springs from gem-studded vase

MOTIF: Supports

over south-east pier: central panel	support composed of rosettes topped by 'wing motif', gem-studded. Springs from gem-studded vase
over south-east pier: panel over 1st. column to right	support composed of ovoids topped by 'wing motif', gem-studded. Springs from gem-studded vase
over south-east pier: panel over 2nd. column to right	support composed of rosettes and ovoids topped by 'wing motif', gem-studded. Springs from gem-studded vase

MOTIF: Trees and Tuft of Reeds

General description: On flanks of piers of octagon. All different: palms, olives, almonds, bearing fruit. Leaves green shaded with indigo. Small fruits: gold and silver. Trunks studded with gems.

Location	Description
Octagonal Arcade: Inner Face	
pier 1, left flank: south side	palm tree, unornamented trunk, fronds, bunches of dates
pier 2, left flank: south-east side	palm tree, gem-studded trunk, fronds, bunches of dates
pier 2, right flank: south-east side	palm tree, rosette studded trunk, fronds, bunches of dates
pier 3, left flank: east side	olive or almond tree, gem-studded trunk, long tight branches

MOTIF: Trees and Tuft of Reeds

pier 3, right flank: east side	palm tree, gem-studded trunk, fronds, bunches of dates
pier 4, left flank: north-east side	tuft of reeds
pier 4, right flank: north-east side	olive or almond tree, gem-studded trunk, long tight branches

MOTIF: Garlands

General description: Garlands composed of fruit set in foliage of graduated tints spring from each side of soffit, sometimes from blue basket with silver, sometimes from plant of acanthus. Dark indigo background of foliage with green leaves of several shades. Fruits in yellow, red, blue, green, gray, rose, mauve: pomegranates, grapes, apples, figs, olives, pears, dates, marrows, limes

Octagonal Arcade

arch south 1, soffit	garland passes through three rings, of blue and silver, leaves studded with fruit. Springs from vase
arch south 3, soffit	acanthus plants studded with fruit. Spring from vase
arch south-west 2, soffit arch south-west 2, apex of soffit	acanthus plant, foliage and fruit. Springs from vase. Meet at apex -- apex motif circle with crescent and stars

MOTIF: Garlands

arch south-east 3, soffit	acanthus plant base with column of acanthus plants studded with fruit
arch north-west 2, soffit	acanthus plants set upon each other, studded with fruit
arch south-west 2, soffit	acanthus plants studded with fruit emanating from base

MOTIF: Leaves

[Too numerous to catalogue completely. Examples taken from figures 218-231.]

General description: Vine, fig, ivy, acanthus, laurel, conventionalized ivy, two shades of blue and green

Location	Description
Octagonal Arcade	
soffits 1, 3: south-west side	spade shaped, conventionalized ivy, fruit spread on leaf
soffit 1: south-east side	band of conventionalized ivy: contours marked by dark blue, golden rib, 3 tones of green
Circular Arcade	
master pier: north-west	fig leaf, fruit spread on leaf

MOTIF: Fruit and Grain

[Partial catalogue]

General description: Found throughout decoration, most evident on soffits. Spread out on leaves and garlands as well as trees: cherries, cucumber-like fruit, dates, grapes, lemons, olives, pears, pomegranates, prunes, quinces, figs

Location	Description
Octagonal Arcade	
soffit 1: south-west side	pomegranates on leaf. Modelled in 2-3 tones of green or gray with green ribs, or red. Seen in various stages of maturity
soffit 1: south-west side	olives on leaves. Several shades of gray or green, tough of red at extremity of fruit
soffit 1: south-west side	cherries on leaf. Modelled in 3 shades of gray. Others found in garlands sparse
soffit 3: south-west side	cucumber family: gourd or marrow and melon. Usually green with gray ribs, or gray with green ribs. Sometimes a dark cube at top. Some seeds
soffit 1: south side soffit 1: south-west side soffit 2: north-west side	citrus family: cedrat. Green, sometimes yellow. Double swelling, modelled in concentric shades

MOTIF: Fruit and Grain

soffit 3: south-west side	corn: sheafs tied with gray or red ribbons, placed on leaf; also grain motif repeated 4 times. Points of ears, gray cubes
soffit 3: south-west side	red or brown grains of cactus or almonds, green figs, pears, apples, prunes, quinces. Spread on leaves
soffit 2: south-west side	grapes predominate: white and blue. Vary in size, form, colour and execution
soffit 1: north side soffit 2: north-west side soffit 3: south-east side	hang from branches of scrolls on piers and inner spandrels of octagon. Green heightened with gold. Blue heightened with silver. When bunches paired, one green and gold. Other blue and silver. Round grapes modelled in various ways: sometimes small white or gray cubes surrounded by red or green or blue. Sometimes surrounded by dark blue, mauve or black outline. Sometimes upper part of grape indigo, lower part light blue; sometimes reversed. Also conventionalized grapes decorated with mother-of-pearl

Octagonal Arcade: Inner Face

pier 1, left flank: south side pier 2, left flank: south-east side pier 2, right flank: south-east side	dates: suspended from branches of palm trees in clusters. Several tones of green heightened with gold or red and framed in indigo. Elsewhere, fruit made up of large oval piece of mother-of-pearl framed in indigo. Few single dates scattered among garlands

MOTIF: Cornucopias

General description: Numerous and varied, throughout spandrels of octagon, piers of circular arcade, on soffits and so forth

Location	Description
Octagonal Arcade	
detail of octagonal arcade [south-west side inner face]	red horn, zig-zag white band. Blue band studded with red, red strip. Lip blue with white. Blue-green streamers
left of pier 1, inner face: south side left & right arches pier 3, inner face: east side left & right arches pier 6, inner face: north-west side arch to right of pier 8, inner face: south side	classical cornucopia as in above description
arch to right of pier 4, inner face: north-east side	cornucopia; neck with turned over edge, stiff, very plain
soffit 2: north side	cornucopia stiff, bent neck somewhat ornamented
soffit 2: north-east side soffit 2: west side	cornucopias resemble mushrooms with banded stem and wide cap. May be later restoration.
soffit 2: west side	double cornucopia, crossed. Very plain. May be later restoration.
	Some of horns, especially on inner spandrel of octagon, blue and silver gadroons, mother-of-pearl rings, necks decorated with gems and precious stones

MOTIF: Cornucopias

	no cornucopias on outer spandrels of octagon
soffit 2: west side	double cornucopia, crossed, shell above. Repeated 4 times

Circular Arcade

master pier: north-west side	classical cornucopia

MOTIF: Shell

Octagonal Arcade: soffit west 2	classical shell above cornucopias motif repeated 4 times

MOTIF: Vases

General description: Great range from classical types to fantastic vases which are classified under composite motifs. Types range from full-bodied with slender necks and S-shaped handles to shallow bowls. Vases mounted on a foot, bent claws or tripod. Studded with gems, mother-of-pearl pendants

MOTIF: Vases

Location	Description
Circular Arcade	
master pier: south-east side (more probably south-west)	vase, full body, short neck with rolled rim. Clef-shaped handles. Light and dark blue, outlined with indigo bands of red, gold studded with red. Red against several shades of green. Mother-of-pearl. Handles alternate blue squares inset with mother-of-pearl, and gold inset with red and blue gems
master pier: listed as both south-east and south-west	
master pier: north side	bowl resting on pin-wheel. Circular flared lip heavily inset with mother-of-pearl and gem-studded squares and scallops
over column 2: west side	vase on small foot. Full flaring body, long neck, rolled lip, clef-shaped handles. Mother-of-pearl, squares and scallops inset with gems
master pier, right flank: south-east side	bowl supported by S-shaped supports. Zig-zag bands, scallops and triangular shapes. Inset with mother-of-pearl and gems
over column 3: north side	bowl resting on foot, flaring rim. Mother-of-pearl pendants, scallops inset with gems
over column 3: west side	bowl set on foot, flaring rim. Gadroons, band of mother-of-pearl, gems

MOTIF: Vases

over second column to right of north-east pier	vase set on 3 claw feet, clef-shaped handles, short neck with rolled rim. Mother-of-pearl and gems inset into alternate light and dark squares
master pier, right flank: south-west	vase set on 3 claw feet, short neck, rolled rim, clef-shaped handles. Mother-of-pearl and gems. Leaf motif, zig-zag motif. Alternate light and dark squares
master pier, left flank: south-west	elongated bowl set on tripod, scalloped lip. Gadroons, bands, scallops dark on light ground. Mother-of-pearl inset
master pier, right flank: north-west	vase set on curved foot, wide neck, rolled rim, gadroons, inset with mother-of-pearl and gems
Octagonal Arcade	
soffit 2: north side	vase as part of border, set on foot, bulging body. Long neck, circular rim. Clef-shaped handles. Gadroons, gems inset on alternate light and dark areas

MOTIF: Vase Combined with Acanthus

Location	Description
Octagonal Arcade	
pier 4, outer face: north-west side	vase, narrow with flared lip. Bands of mother-of-pearl and gem on alternate light and dark grounds. 2 gems suspended from lip. Emerges from acanthus plant
Circular Arcade	
1st. column to right of south-east pier	vase, curved top. Gadroons, bands, inset gems and mother-of-pearl. Acanthus plant parted to show vase
over column 3: south side	vase, full-bodied, flared rolled rim. Bands of gems on alternately light and dark, mother-of-pearl inset. Emerges from acanthus plant

MOTIF: Baskets

Location	Description
Octagonal Arcade	
soffit 2, apex: south-east side	tall basket, esparto grass, splayed at top, filled with 3 green, 3 red pomegranates. Gold and silver wicker, decorated with red, blue and silver borders

MOTIF: Baskets

soffit 2, apex: north side	basket, bowl shaped on tripod. Woven green and gold on mauve ground. Blue and silver grapes, 2 green figs
soffit 3: north-east side	bulging basket, woven of gold, silver, red and blue. Sheaf of flowers, roses or tulips green calices, red petals. Only example of naturalistic flowers in scheme

MOTIF: Bowls of Fruit

Location	Description
Octagonal Arcade	
soffit 2: north-east side	six bowls of fruit set on mushroom-shaped cornucopias Unclear, photograph impossible to determine type of fruit
Circular Arcade	
over column 3: south side	cup with fruit. Gadroons and pearls. 6 egg-shaped fruit

MOTIF: Crescents and Stars

Location	Description
Octagonal Arcade	
soffit 2: south-west side	at apex: crescent surrounded by 8 stars, crescent and stars painted in cream colour. Few tesserae of gold and silver remain on blue ground. Restoration
soffit 3: south side	silver crescent, 6 painted gold stars on blue background, concentric rings

MOTIF: Jewellery

General description: Jewellery as large pieces, collars, necklaces, shield shapes

Location	Description
Octagonal Arcade Inner Face	
left: south-east side	shield: indigo ground festooned with chains of silver and gold, mother-of-pearl pendants. Squares bordered with light tesserae inset with mother-of-pearl. Triangular collar. Rosette disk in centre
right: south-east side	shield, or breastplate. Triangles, circles, squares with inset gems, mother-of-pearl insets and pendant

MOTIF: Jewellery

central arch: east side	crown-like panel, ovoid shape with trapezoid at base. Squares, band with inset gems, mother-of-pearl pendants, crescent shapes. Disk and streamers of silver at top
pier 6: north-west side	crown with rectangular band, 3 scallops at top. Surmounted by pendant. Squares with inset mother-of pearl. At base, 2 mother-of-pearl clusters
pier 6, left flank: north-west side	collar around support. Brooch at centre front of collar, gem surrounded by mother-of-pearl. Light borders, squares inset with mother-of-pearl
pier 6, left flank: north-west side	ovoid shaped panel. Light gems on dark ground, scallops, squares, triangle, crescent. Mother-of-pearl pendants
pier 7: west side	diamond shaped plate topped by 2 crowns. Dark squares with light borders, alternate light and dark squares. Mother-of-pearl insets and pendants and crescent
pier 7, left flank: west side	collar around support. Studded with gems and mother-of-pearl, 2 gems suspended from bottom
pier 8: south side	collar around support. Squares with light borders. Inset jewelled disks, mother-of-pearl, mother-of-pearl suspended from bottom

MOTIF: Wing Motifs

General description: 'Wing motif' with blue and green feathers outlined with gold, tips sometimes turned up, sometimes down

Location	Description
Octagonal Arcade	
central arch, inner face: west side	wing motif on indigo ground, topped by crescent. Part of jewellery decoration
west 1, outer face	border: wing motif at bottom of column of palmettes, upturned wings, jewelled
Drum	
over master pier, 1st. -- 2nd. columns: southeast	three wing motifs, wings upturned, elaborately decorated crown with horns terminates motif. Each pair of wings tops a jewelled support and vase

MOTIF: Borders

Location	Description
Octagon: Outer Face	
1 west	4 palmettes one above other, point upwards. Indigo background, outline & palmettes gold on green or blue ground. Inner part varied
south-west 2, south-west 3, west 1, west 2, west 3, west 4, north-west 4, east 3	wide band along edge of octagonal arcade. Indigo ground, disks with star, gold and blue. In centre, gold ivy leaf on green field or silver on blue. Facing each other between disks, halves of 4-lobed flowers

MOTIF: Composite Motifs

General description: Group A	conventionalized floral elements. Plants with bunches and stalks loaded with fruit and flowers: at summit, floral element. Jewelled ornaments mixed with floral elements
Group B:	fantastic flowers, palm fronds, necklaces, jewels and mother-of-pearl, vase or swollen stems, jewelled trunks. Branches with jewels, mother-of-pearl, fruit. Conventionalized flowers and fruit inlaid with mother-of-pearl. Palm fronds decorated with gold fruit or mother-of-pearl against background shaded in tones of indigo blue to dark green

MOTIF: Composite Motifs

Group C: flowers set on supports of disks, ovoids, hearts and necklaces. Conical trunks. Scrolls, corollas with heart-shaped ornaments on red or blue field bordered and decorated with gold. Palmettes or petals sometimes decorated in festoons or chevrons of green, blue, gold and silver. Branches bearing buds, conventionalized and naturalistic fruits: smooth palms, green and blue. Mother-of-pearl used sparingly

Van Berchem divides the composite motifs into three groups:
group A occupies flanks of piers of octagon in one-half of building,
group B occupies spandrels of inner face of octagon,
group C occupies spandrels of outer face of octagon.
In the interests of uniformity, we will work from the outer face of the octagon to the inner face. [C-A]

Location	Description
Octagon: Outer Face	
south-west 2	conical trunk with ridges of bark, stem - palm, fronds, palmette. Floral motif at top. Palm fronds with palmette motif, scrolls encircling conventionalized floral motif. No jewels, no mother-of-pearl
south-west 3	conical trunk supporting stem of flowers, hearts, buds, terminating in bulbous floral motif with suggestion of pine cone markings and some mother-of-pearl. Palm fronds and scrolls bearing floral motifs

Composite Motifs:

west 1	conical ridged trunk, encircled by corollas, terminating in fleuron supporting palmette and bulbous floral motif with suggestion of pine cone markings. Flanked by scrolls bearing grapes, conventionalized ornaments, chevron striped palm fronds
west 2	ridged conical trunk, encircled by corollas, stem of fleurons supporting palmette crowned by palm fronds with chevron pattern and scrolls bearing conventionalized flowers and bunches of grapes
west 3	conical ridged trunk with chevrons, studded by clusters of hearts. Terminating in fleuron developing into palmette supporting bud motif flanked by palm fronds with chevrons bearing naturalistic tulip-like flowers and conventionalized flowers. Occasional mother-of-pearl
west 4	conical ridged trunk with hearts, leading to bulbous motif with pine cone markings terminated by palmette. Palm fronds, naturalistic flower in corollas, bunches of grapes, tulip-like flowers. Occasional mother-of-pearl
north-west 4	acanthus supporting gem and mother-of-pearl studded vase, bearing bud motifs and palm fronds flanked by scrolls bearing bunches of grapes and conventionalized flowers, studded with mother-of-pearl

MOTIF: Composite Motifs

east 3	conical trunk with chevrons of green, blue, gold crowned by heart shapes and bulbous motif with pine cone markings of green, blue and gold. Flanked by palm fronds of green, blue, gold. Chevrons, scrolls encircling conventionalized flowers, bunches of grapes
Octagon: Inner Spandrels	
central arch: east side	vase-like motif studded with gems and mother-of-pearl developing into elaborate plate studded with gems and mother-of-pearl, crowned by bulbous motif studded with jewels, mother-of-pearl pendants and pinwheels. Flanked by palm fronds, scrolls studded with mother-of-pearl, gems, fruit and flowers
central arch: east side	vase-like motif studded with gems and mother-of-pearl developing into plate, studded with gems and mother-of-pearl flanked by scrolls studded with gems and mother-of-pearl. With conventionalized floral, vegetal motifs, fruit, palm fronds and pinwheels
central arch: north side	conical trunk developing into elaborate plate studded with gems and mother-of-pearl. Scrolls and palm fronds with grapes, pomegranates and other conventionalized fruit. Bulbous motif at top studded with gems and mother-of-pearl

MOTIF: Composite Motifs

central arch: north side	vase with gadroons, jewelled rim, developing into elaborate plate studded with gems and mother-of-pearl terminating in bulbous motif studded with gems and mother-of-pearl. Flanked by palm fronds and scrolls bearing fruit and studded with gems, mother-of-pearl. Conventionalized fruit and floral motifs
central arch: west side	conical trunk inset with gems and disk studded with mother-of-pearl, developing into jewelled plate with mother-of-pearl pendants terminating in bulbous motif studded with mother-of-pearl and gems, acanthus leaves, conventionalized acanthus leaves studded with mother-of-pearl and scrolls with conventionalized fruit and flowers
central arch: west side	conical trunk developing into plate studded with gems, mother-of-pearl, stem encircled with necklace with gems and mother-of-pearl pendants, terminating in ovoid jewelled motif studded with mother-of-pearl. Acanthus leaves, palm fronds and scrolls with fruit and conventionalized flowers
central arch: south side	jewelled stem developing into jewelled plate studded with mother-of-pearl terminating in vegetal motif encircled by jewelled collar. Acanthus fronds studded with mother-of-pearl. Scrolls laden with fruit and conventionalized fruit or flowers

MOTIF: Composite Motifs

central arch: south side	conical trunk, gem and mother-of-pearl emerging from foliage. Encircled by gem and mother-of-pearl studded necklace terminating in ovoid motif studded with gems and mother-of-pearl, flanked by palm fronds with fruit and conventionalized flowers, acanthus fronds studded with mother-of-pearl
Octagon: Flanks of Piers	
pier 1, right flank: south side	vase studded with gems and mother-of-pearl. Stem studded with mother-of-pearl, encircled by 2 collars with palm fronds on either side. Bunches of grapes or dates, stylized floral motif at top
pier 5, left flank: north side	vase emerging from acanthus plant. Vegetal stem with scrolls tipped with fruit, encircled by jewelled collar and necklace with mother-of-pearl pendants. Terminated by bulbous floral motif, blue or green bordered with gold with 3 lobed silver fleuron
pier 5, right flank: north side	clump of reeds emerging from bowl and plant. Scroll on either side of base, large scroll at top, green. No gold, no mother-of-pearl
pier 6, left flank: north-west side	vase studded with gems and mother-of-pearl set on base of foliage. Support encircled by necklace studded with mother-of-pearl, palm fronds with bunches of grapes. Bulbous floral motif at top decorated with imbrication like pine cone, blue or green bordered with gold

MOTIF: Composite Motifs

pier 6, right flank: north-west side	vase studded with mother-of-pearl emerging from acanthus plant, stem encircled by 2 collars studded with gems and mother-of-pearl. Palm fronds and scrolls laden with grapes and pomegranates. Bulbous floral motif set with mother-of-pearl, pine cone markings at top
pier 7, left flank: west side	conical trunk studded with mother-of-pearl passing through two collars set with gems and mother-of-pearl, vase-like swellings, palm fronds and scrolls laden with grapes and other fruit. Wing-like foliage at summit
pier 7, right flank: west side	vase studded with gems and mother-of-pearl emerging from acanthus plant. Scrolls with fruit on either side and palm fronds. Swollen jewelled stem passes through two collars studded with gems and mother-of-pearl. Bulbous floral motif studded with mother-of-pearl, pine cone markings at top
pier 8, left flank: south side	conical trunk studded with gems and mother-of-pearl. Composite stem -- vegetal, swollen gem and mother-of-pearl studded, passes through gem and mother-of-pearl studded collar. Palm fronds at top with small mother-of-pearl set floral motif, grapes and other fruit
pier 8, right flank: south side	conical trunk with swollen vase-like elements studded with jewels and mother-of-pearl passing through 2 jewelled and mother-of-pearl studded collars. Palm fronds and vegetal stems with grapes and dates terminating in small floral element

MOTIF: Conventionalized Ornaments

MOTIF: Flowers

Location	Description
Outer Octagon	
south-west 2	tulip-shaped flower
south-west 3	fan-shaped green and blue flower
west 4	corolla with mother-of-pearl centre
Inner Octagon	
pier 1, inner face: south side	fan-shaped flower decorated with jewels and mother-of-pearl. Green and gold fleuron
pier 3, inner face: east side	corolla, green and blue petals, edged with gold and mother-of-pearl hearts
pier 7, inner face: west side	tulip-shaped flower, green and blue with occasional mother-of-pearl. Corolla green petals alternating with petals of mother-of-pearl

MOTIF: Rosettes: Numerous rosettes found on soffits of arches of octagonal arcade. Small rosettes with red centre, blue and green petals. Large rosettes: gold centre, red and mauve corolla edged with gold. Blue and green petals edged with indigo. Rosettes with gold palmette on blue field, gold and green lobes and so forth

MOTIF: Conventionalized Ornament

MOTIF: Twists

west 1: soffit of octagonal arcade	blue, green, gold, silver relief effect. Cubes set on their corners. 2 tones green, 2 tones blue, indigo outline. Large loop, background gold, small loop silver -- chain like

MOTIF: Palmettes

east 1: soffit octagonal arcade west 1: soffit octagonal arcade	sometimes palmette green and gold on background of indigo. Sometimes 4 shades of blue and silver on mauve field. Sometimes background red, inner fleuron blue and green

MOTIF: Borders

Octagonal Arcade: Inner Face

central arch: east side	rosettes, stars and half flowers in gold and blue
central arch: north side	dentils or dice, green and blue, 3 dimensional effect
central arch: west side	ogees, green and blue alternate
pier 1: south side	garland of red and green laurel leaves
pier 1: south side pier 2: south-east side	succession of palmettes, blue edged with gold, point upwards
pier 3: east side	hearts, point upwards. Blue and green edged with gold, separated by gold dots

MOTIF: Conventionalized Ornament

MOTIF: Borders

pier 4: north-east side	row of disks, gold and blue dotted with mother-of-pearl or barred with gold rays on green or red field. Gold palms between disks
pier 5: north side	squares or rectangles. Alternate red, green, blue edged with gold, bordered by dots of mother-of-pearl
pier 5: north side pier 6: north-west side	meandering ribbons: 3 shades each of green and blue, gold and silver, gold leaves scattered about
pier 7: west side	geometrical lozenges -- green tones

Circular Arcade

master pier: north-west	rosettes with silver petals decorated in centre with red hearts; alternating with gold stars, dotted with mother-of-pearl. Red lozenges with small gold palmettes separate them from each other, or pairs of hearts

Drum

over master pier: north-east over master pier: south-east	Quincunx: border dotted with mother-of-pearl

APPENDIX C: Mosaic Decoration of the Great Mosque of Damascus

Mosaics Visible in 1927

Location	Description
West Vestibule	
mosaic on soffit over central entrance	trees, with grasses, almond or olive. Roundel with chevron border containing fruit at apex. One tree at each end soffit
soffit on northern arch of vestibule	acanthus plant with calices
soffit on northern arches of vestibule	acanthus plant, scrolls, vase. Roundel containing fruit at apex
above northeast column of west vestibule south face	acanthus plant, scroll, conventionalized flowers
above northeast column, west vestibule north face	acanthus plant, scrolls, fruit (not clear, poor condition)
above south column of transverse arcade (before restoration)	several almond or olive trees

West Facade: Portico of Court

above 1st. column from south (before restoration)	tree in centre. Traces of buildings, top edge both sides. Above buildings: acanthus scrolls, bunches of grapes. Conventionalized fruit and flowers. Poor condition
above 2nd. column from south	trees, branches with fruit. Shaded trunk and leaves. Foliage sprays behind trunk
above 1st. pier from south	buildings, decorated with mother-of-pearl. Entrance ways, domes, flora. Above: buildings, decorative band and vase
above 3rd. column from south: outer face	trees with variety of foliage and shaded trunks

North Facade: Portico of Court

pier	12th cent. naskhi inscription: Below this cupola with 2 columns, peaked roof with foliage, enclosing winged crown. Above this foliage, chevron borders (indistinct)
arch above 1st. column	on arch; tree: above this architectural facade of 3 doors, 2 levels, small domes. May be inset with mother-of-pearl. Arches to left and right with acanthus scrolls

South Facade: Portico of Court,
Outer Facade of Transept

tree on left. Buildings.
3 arches enclose small buildings with high domes. Chains of mother-of-pearl. Above arches; facade with mother-of-pearl on chain.
3 shell domes. Above this: rectangular building on either side of central rotunda. Apex of arch; foliage and 3 storey building.
Right: facade with arches, extensively decorated

Interior of Mosque

north facade: of transept

left bottom, arch with central column. Foliate decoration.
3 arches with smaller columns.
Above this: building with peaked roof. Building with domed roof and windows. 2 square buildings.
Facades: capped and peaked roofs.
Centre; facade with three columns, 2 short wings. Foliage sprays on each side. Decorated in various ways. Arches over columns:
right side; remains of square fronted facade with columns.
Domed and peaked roofs.

east window soffit

acanthus plant, simple vase.
At apex; roundel with leaves

middle window soffit

acanthus plants, simple vase.
At apex; roundel with floral design

west window soffit

acanthus plant, foliate centre.
Foliage, simple vase. At apex;
roundel with foliate design

northwest dome pier	left, house with doorway and windows, large striped pillars, small house. 3rd. house on right (indistinct)
northeast dome pier	foliate bands surround large arch -- enclosing panel with script -- 2 small arches; top. Scroll designs

Mosaics Uncovered in 1929

Location	Description
West Vestibule	
central doorway: soffits	2 trees, smooth trunks and foliage, 2 tones indigo, 4 green on gold background. Apex; medallion of pears or figs with chevron border
above central doorway	semicircular colonnade, with foliate roof on background of gold, columns blue, fluted with silver, fillet of silver borders semicircular arches. Twin windows open out onto each facade. Framed with golden vines. Golden grilles along base of building. Framed with mother-of-pearl ovoid and garland of green leaves
west wall above 2 lateral doors	2 badly damaged mosaic panels. Right panel; small palace, 2 storeys, upper storey hypostyle hall, vaults supported on 5 columns with Corinthian capitals. 3 round columns in foreground green, decorated with designs in imitation of viewed marble. 2 background columns, blue, fluted with silver. 2 semicircular arches of entrance hall red and white chequered border.

wall at back pierced by 4 openings through which are visible 3 steps of stairway. Each of the doorways has mother-of-pearl pendant suspended from chain. Foliated roof resting on broad architrave decorated with mother-of-pearl. Lower part: fragmentary, golden openwork balustrade forming hemicycle, encrusted with mother-of-pearl

north wall: west vestibule

fragment; houses and towers. Bottom; arched gateway opens onto interior of town. From summit of arch, lantern. Gateway top, row of crenellations. Flanked by 2 tall narrow houses, roofed with large stone slabs. Each house has entrance and windows on 1st. floor. Above; large house, with houses on each side: facade of house on left vanished. Round tower at top, capped by bulb-shaped blue and silver dome, flanked by 2 lower towers with terraced roofs supported on wrought-iron consoles. Doors of towers, high, narrow. 3 windows 1st. floor central tower. Houses and towers, mauve and gray tones, sharp shadows. On right: tall tree

south wall: west vestibule

centre; large mosaic inscription inserted by Sultan Baybars, 13th. cent. Left, (restoration) tree, small houses

panel above central column: south side	bottom; columned facade, topped by mother-of-pearl decorated band. Shell dome. Centre, facade with long windows, mother-of-pearl band. Enclosed in vault with columns gold with green fluting Corinthian capitals. Hangings; 3 tones of green, gold. Vault: ceiling decorated with gold palmettes and stars inset in lozenges. Mother-of-pearl border. 2 smaller vaults flank this, enclosing rectangular motif bordered with mother-of-pearl
panel above central column: north side	bottom; small pillared rotunda. Decorative band. Foliage and leaf roof. Between pediments and columns. Topped by vaulted ceiling. Knotted curtain in centre. Smaller vaults on each side with rectangular motif bordered with mother-of-pearl
second arch north side	clustered houses, with double sloped roofs and gables. Round tower with pointed roof all against background of foliage
north side arcade	fortified entrance of small town, wide gateway pierced in high crenellated wall. 2 houses flank gateway. At top of arch, wide apse with semicircular arch supported on fluted columns, reached by wide staircase flanked by two tiered balustrades. At head of staircase, open door, with gold chain and mother-of-pearl pendant. On either side of central motif, tall houses
other facades of arcade -- against light	acanthus scrolls on yellow background (not gold)

Transversel Arches of West Vestibule

pl. 51a above south column	groups of trees
pl. 51b above north column	group of trees and foliage
Soffits of Lateral and Transversel Arches of West Vestibule	acanthus scrolls and plants
pl. 50d Lateral Arches	acanthus plant, green calices, 2 acanthus leaves between. Green shades, touchs of red at tips of leaves. Border, chequered green, red, silver. Garland of leaves along edge of soffit
southern arch vestibule	acanthus plant, calices and acanthus leaves alternated, dotted with mother-of-pearl. Chequered border, green, red, silver. Garland of leaves along edge of soffit

Transversel Arches

pl. 58c soffits of west portico	acanthus plant from which emanate trumpets entwined in acanthus calices and leaves studded with mother-of-pearl
pl. 58d soffits of west portico	acanthus plant from which emanate trumpets entwined in acanthus calices and leaves

pl. 58e soffit of 6th. arcade from south	acanthus plant from which emanates trumpet supporting gadrooned full-bellied vase supporting more trumpets, acanthus calices and leaves
West Portico of Court, inner face	acanthus scrolls, acanthus plants
53d above second pier from south: inner face	centre: 2 storeyed palace; lower storey large apse with vault of gold-edged shell. Wide frieze of acanthus leaves at base of vault. On either side, 2 fluted piers with Corinthian capitals, enclose 2 arches supported on three green columns with designs imitating marble veining. Within arches, golden scrolls spring from green acanthus plant. On blue background. Gold palmettes at corners of pediment. Upper storey; openwork balustrade studded with mother-of-pearl. Pillared hall, vaults supported on 5 fluted columns with Corinthian capitals. 4 open doors with gold chains and mother-of-pearl pendants. Leafy roof with upturned corners. Flanking; 2 clusters of buildings. Left: square tower capped by dome, blue and silver. High 2 storeyed house with gabled gray-slab roof. Entrance on ground floor, semi-circular arch with gold chains and mother-of-pearl pendants. Steps of staircase under vault. 2nd. floor, high, narrow door with gold and mother-of-pearl pendant. Wrought-iron balcony. Background, tree. All on gold ground. Right: 4-faced portico, rectangular, no roof.

Semicircular arches rest on green columns covered with imitation marble veinings, alternated with fluted columns. Above, wide architrave with acanthus frieze, edged at base and summit with chequered border of red and silver. Smaller buildings interspersed. Extreme right: tall, narrow house with gabled roof, and colonnade

remaining facade of west portico

acanthus plants and scrolls, alternating with vases or cornucopias

West Portico of Court:
Outer Face

pl. 53b
above 2nd. pier from south, outer face

interior of double-storeyed palace seen from front. At base 5 thick, round columns with Corinthian capitals placed in semi-circle. Green shafts, gold stalks with vine leaves. 2nd. storey: large barrel-vaulted hall, supported by bluey and silver columns with Doric capitals. Enclosing two doors. Balcony with lattice work and gold chains with mother-of-pearl pendant. Vault ceiling gold lobed palmettes on blue background. At top, balustrade with foliage behind. Flanked by porticoes with blue and silver columns, Doric capitals, and green and gold hangings. Top of panel, 2 houses flanked by trees

pl. 52a above 1st. column from south: outer face	3 tree-trunks, fig. Building in corners
pl. 52c above 2nd. column from south: outer face	tree with trunk. Foliage, various shades of green on indigo ground. Pears
pl. 53a above 3rd. column from south: outer face	2 trunks and foliage
above 4th. column from south: outer face	fragment of border of 3 lobed fleurons inset with mother-of-pearl
pl. 53c above 5th. column from south: outer face	almond or olive tree, apple tree with fruit. Pear tree with fruit. Fig-tree. Green shades.
above 6th. column from south	two trunks of trees
above 1st. pier from south	fragments. Bulbous ribbed domes. Facades with trefoil arches. Yellow, blue and white. (Fairly recently executed under Turkish domination)
upper gallery of portico: outer face	isolated remains, acanthus scrolls

BARADA PANEL: 34.50 m. length, 7.30 m. width
Wall of the west portico facing court

Foreground, Base: River: with waves, passes under single arched bridge, becomes broad stream. Wears shore away in places

Trees: at water's edge. 20 trees: poplar, cypress, olive, apricot, walnut, fig, plum, pear, apple. Reach to top of panel -- shades of green on background of indigo and aquamarine. In background, small trees, bushes, woods

Landscapes, Villages, and Palaces

-- series of small villages, porticoes, belfries, minarets, palaces

pl. 54b
Left: group of 4 houses, rising above one another. Dominated by round tower capped with slightly bulbous cupola. Cupola rests on green tinted drum, pierced with windows. Mother-of-pearl pendants in doorways

Second village: compact group of varied buildings. On edge of river, little house, gabled roof ornamented with mother-of-pearl. On right, large round tower with pointed roof from which springs foliage. To right -- portico with 5 thick, round columns with Doric capitals, columns green and gold

Behind: orchard with trees and fruit. Above this on mountain indicated by rocks, 3 buildings

Third village: between third and fourth trees. Houses, tall square tower with bell turret. Stream passes under circular bridge. Truncated cones, on right of bridge and front tree indicate mountain. Small round tower at entrance

Right of 5th. tree: building with pagoda shaped roof. Semi-circular colonnade with square towers at either end. Six blue columns with silver fluting and Corinthian capitals support roof covered with blue and gray flagstones trimmed with silver. Gold openwork balustrade at base of columns. Two square towers, windows and pagoda roofs. Attached to tower on right, two tall, narrow houses with terraced roofs. Six doors with golden frames on blue and silver background, mother-of-pearl and gold pendants. Each door surmounted by rose and gold motif. In front of hippodrome at edge of river, group of miniature houses. Directly above hippodrome, in middle of thicket, large house with flat roof and arched entrance closed by golden gate formed of scrolls. Windows of 1st. storey, set in rose coloured wall. Colonnaded portico with roof projects on left side of house. Behind this rising behind crevasses indicating mountains; 2 high towers, one with ground level entrance with mother-of-pearl pendant, three windows in upper storey and spirally fluted dome (may be later addition)

Between 7th. and 8th. tree: village, lower part at water's edge, rests on jagged mountain slope with reddish-brown sides and gray rocks. Houses on steep slope one above other. Gabled and terraced roofs. Houses painted gray, rose, mauve, with touches of gold and silver

To right, <u>palaces</u>: two storeys decorated with columns. Storeys separated by 3 sided balcony decorated with frieze of acanthus leaves with chequered border, blue and silver, or blue and gray. 3 columns support front of balcony. Golden chains and mother-of-pearl ornament separates them from two other columns set back in shade. Under balcony to left and right, 2 vaulted corridors openings of which are visible. 2 storeyed house. 5 smooth, blue and silver columns on either side complete lower storey. 2nd. storey covered gallery, in centre supported by 6 green and gold columns, semi-domed apse with shell vault. Ceiling rests on double row of fluted columns in blue and silver topped

with Corinthian capitals. Wall at back in semi-arch, pierced with 6 doors, above which large floral motifs on brick coloured ground. Wide cornice with acanthus leaves at start of roof, bordered by marble cubes alternating with polychrome bricks. 2 blue and silver columns from which hang draperies directly under gable roof. Vaulted passage leads to two pavilions with hexagonal domed roofs supported by 7 columns, those of the foreground in green, background blue. Edges of roofs gold and green in front, blue and green in background. Corinthian capitals, gold and silver chains suspended between columns. Trunk of tree between two pavilions. Palace identical to one just described on right. Embedded in wharf on river frontage, covered with ornaments which may imitate mosaic pavement. On either side of this, groups of miniature houses.

Right of this: 2 groups of houses, one group at water's edge. Other group on hill above. Framed by trees. Lower group, 2 round towers with pagoda roofs, houses, portico with narrow and very high arcades leads to topmost group, dominated by tower with flat, square roof. Houses blue and gray roofs, mauve or brick coloured walls, doorways with pendants

To right: framed in rigid cypress trees, architectural composition. 2 sets of buildings; upper group on mountain shown by rocks in centre of group; lower group: palace, composite perspective. Centre, three-quarter view of pillared canopy, four green and gold columns fluted with Corinthian capitals in blue and silver, golden vines curling around, support of vault decorated on outside with green and gold vines, inside with lozenges on gold background. 2 tiered roof of leaves flanked on either side by tiers of small houses, alternating with porticoes.

Above: semicircular brick coloured wall with 2 latticed windows, ending in 2 round towers with pagoda roofs in blue and silver, appears to lead to interior court with group of trees growing opposite straight wall. This backs on to two symetrical blocks of houses.

Upper group: high entrance wall with crenellated towers. 2 arched doorways with pendants leads to three-quarter view of columned facade with semicircular pediment. Blue and silver columns on black background. Houses at back; round tower with pagoda roof at top.

To right: village, on river bank, houses terraced and gabled roofs to right -- restoration

Northern end Barada panel: original mosaic preserved;

3 houses, 2 with gable roofs, third terraced porch. Tall tower above houses. At edge of river, structure with columns and flat roof. Gabled roofs in blue, terraced roofs in green, walls of houses mauve, brick-red, rose, gray, touches of green and gold, blue and silver. Trees surround village

*

Location	Description
pl. 60a Outer Facade of Transept (south side of court)	left fragment: foreground, branches with fruit. Foliage in shades of green on background of 2 or 3 shades of indigo. Below in background, slender tree, cluster of buildings, colonnaded porticoes; houses, small, square. 2 storeyed belfry with windows and pointed roof. Foreground: 2 storeyed palace, entrance two high semicircular arches with fluted columns and Corinthian capitals. Tympana decorated with green scrolls on darker green background. 2 buildings with high domed cupolas seen through arches. Above porticoes interior of hexagonal hall. Shell shaped vaults supported by pillars and columns with Doric capitals. Wall at back visible between columns. Bottom half decorated with scrolls, upper half, windows with pendants.

Above palace; 2 houses with gable roofs and small circular building with 2 windows, arched doorway and low ribbed dome. On either side of porches colonnaded buildings topped by small, square towers. To right: fragment, houses with porticoes. In centre, tall building with single sloping roof, covered with flagstones; square grill visible through entrance. On right, high arched doorway.

fragment on right: palace corresponding to one on left. Above, large apse decorated with scrolls. Flanked by two spiral columns. Two symmetrical wings with colonnade, border of scrolls topped by double-sloped gabled roof. At back of apse, square pedestal

North Portico of Court

above each of 2 columns, tree (citrus, palm), foliage following curve of arches. Tympana of 2 bays, scrolls emanate from vase or cornucopia. Piers: varied architectural elements. Right: scrolls and acanthus plants, cornucopias and vases

architectural elements; 2 storeys, separated by openwork balustrade. Central pavilion semicircle, round columns and 3 arched doors. Summit architectural structure standing on columns. Flanked by two towers or minarets capped with bulb-shaped cupolas. Boat in water at base of this composition. Above pier and below inscription, interior of double-storeyed palace. Columns on ground level, portico on 1st. storey. Roof foliate

spring of arch to right of pier [prob. dates to Malik shah]	small columned canopy with blue cupola decorated with silver palmette in centre of gold volutes, stands on 3 columns. 2 side columns green with black and white flutes. Centre striped red and white
above pier inscription on pier [may have been inserted later; pos. 482 A.H./1089 A.D.]	portico, 5 striped columns in green. Centre column in gold. Gabled roof with foliage behind. Openwork lattices forming 3 rounded balconies in front of portico

East Portico of Court

Inscription: northern end, above second arch from north	inscription in naskhi script. Cubes, black on gold. 33mm height 2 lines, Naraddin, 554H./1159 [pos. re-done at later date] surrounds inscription vase and acanthus leaves (completely different style)
eastern entrance vestibule, right of central door	appears to date to Al-Walid. Acanthus scrolls, tree, architectural motif. Wide border of scrolls on left side, framed in red and white chequered border

Mosaics of the Dome of the Treasury

	difficult to date -- inferior to Umayyad mosaics
south face	vertical band acanthus and cornucopias issuing from gadrooned bowl. Heavy dark outline
north side, left	2 green scrolls. Stem emerging from vase with jewelled band -- blue and silver calice supporting acanthus plant scrolls spring from cornucopias. Mother-of-pearl and conventionalized flowers
north side, right	symmetrical cluster of houses, gateways, gables, towers separated by conventionalized palm tree with 2 branches of dates. At foot of composition rocks and blue river. Framed by band; bottom acanthus plants and scrolls. Sides, cornucopia and acanthus

Mosaics of Interior of Mosque

North Facade of Transept

summit of arch above central window	portico of 3 columns with Corinthian capitals, 2 horseshoe vaults, brick and stone courses imitated. 3 merlons on summit. 2 semicircular towers flank this, crowned with merlons. Geometrical decorations on arch to right, branches on roof, left high, narrow doorway, lobe shaped window opening between 2 arches and floral elements. Flanked by trees and columned structure
to left of summit	portico in centre of semicircular arch divided in middle by column supporting 2 smaller arches. Floral motifs on openings of 2 arches, vault above. Portico extends to right through 3 small, semicircular arcades supported on columns decorated with trefoils. Frieze of geometric laid polychrome bricks. Left, destroyed, fragments of feet of columns resting on base above portico: mosque-like building with bulbshaped dome, ribbed and pointed. Facade pierced by 3 semicircular doors over which runs parapet with geometric designs

VITA

Surname: Adey Given Names: Elizabeth June

Place of Birth: Nuneaton, Eng. Date of Brith: April 3, 1956

Educational Institutions Attended, with Dates of Entering and Leaving:

University of Victoria, Victoria	1975 to 1978
University of Victoria, Victoria	1979 to 1983
	___ to ___
	___ to ___

Degrees, Diplomas, Etc., Awarded, with Dates and Names of Institutions:

B.A.	1980	University of Victoria

Honors and Awards:

University of Victoria Scholarship, 1980-81

University of Victoria Fellowship, 1981-82

Academic Teaching Assistant (University of Victoria), 1980-82

Publications:

Art Fibres of the West. Maltwood Art Museum and Gallery

PARTIAL COPYRIGHT LICENSE

I hereby grant the right to lend my thesis or dissertation (the title of which is shown below) to users of the University of Victoria Library, and to make single copies only for such users or in response to a request from the library of any other university, or similar institution, on its behalf or for one of its users. I further agree that permission for extensive copying of this thesis for scholarly purposes may be granted by me or a member of the University designated by me. It is understood that copying or publication of this thesis for financial gain shall not be allowed without my written permission.

Title of Thesis

The Mosaics of the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem and the Great Mosque in Damascus: a Muslim Symbolism

Author [redacted]
Signature

Elizabeth June Adey

July 20, 1983.
Date