

# **The Role of Architectural Representations in the Context of Islamic Decoration**

**Volume One-Text**

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## **ABSTRACT**

The role that architectural representation plays within Islamic decoration is a subject that has been neglected and requires investigation. This study aims to address the subject of the role of architectural representation in relation to the various objects of art and architecture, their context, types and significance, and to present a comprehensive interpretation of the history and meaning of examples of architectural representation. It draws attention to the artistic splendour and sacred associations of representing architectural iconographies in Muslim art. As such, it is the first study to attribute the significance of the architectural form to the function of the art object and to interpret the meaning of its architectural forms as “signatures” of their artists. It is also the first to propose the relationship between the significance of the architectural representation, the artistic techniques and methods used in its representation within the corpus of Muslim art.

The fields of examination are divided into two areas: architectural iconographies on architecture and on art objects. In volume one, the brief general introduction summarizes the present state of research, discusses the source and explains the chosen approach to the material. The three following chapters deal with the significance of architectural representation in Muslim art. Chapters one and two outline the cultural, religious, and social origins of the architectural representation on architecture and on art objects, and discuss the various interpretations of its significance. The artistic structure of the architectural forms and its contribution to the meaning and significance of the architectural representation are then examined in chapter three. In volume two, the photographic material of the thesis is assembled containing colour and black and white photographs.

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## INTRODUCTION

It should be said at the outset that this study is not a complete survey of architectural representation in Islamic art. Rather, it adopts a more thematic and discursive approach, in order to investigate the significance of various architectural representations in Islamic art. Scholars including David Rice, Oleg Grabar, Stefano Carboni, and Von Bothmer have approached this idea before. Their studies, although providing considerable and valuable information about the significance of architectural representation in Islamic art, rarely, if ever, discussed and examined the subject of architectural representations on various media of art in relation to their meaning.

This research discusses examples of architectural representation on Islamic architecture and on objects of art produced in the Western lands of Islam namely Islamic Egypt and Spain, in the Islamic Near East, including Syria with its Mediterranean and Byzantine inheritance, in Iran with its apparent Sasanian features in art and architecture, and in the Yemen. The reason for covering these areas is to highlight the difference in architectural representation in Islamic art from one area to another, and to establish a rule for understanding the exact significance of the diversity of architectural forms represented in Islamic art.

Two main areas are dealt with in this research: Islamic architecture and art objects where architectural forms are shown. This study is mainly concerned with complete architectural forms and their architectural and decorative elements. I have included a discussion of examples of different art media on which architectural representations are shown, such as manuscripts, wall paintings, metalwork, glasswork, and architecture. In certain sections, I also make use of some comparative examples of Islamic art objects and Islamic architecture. Due to the scarcity of early comparative examples, some comparative material is from later

periods, but still provides evidence to support the main argument of this research. Some other comparative examples are from pre-Islamic and contemporary non-Muslim art, and Western art, illustrating and extending the argument of the study.

The thesis is divided into three chapters. The first chapter deals with the significance of architectural iconographies on Islamic buildings. The second chapter focuses on the possible interpretations, identifying the significance and role played by architectural representations on different art objects. The third chapter looks at how from an artistic point of view the artist used artistic structural forms and elements of composition to create significance in architectural forms.

The main argument of the thesis will be demonstrated through the study of two areas. The first, which will be tackled in the first and second chapters, includes the study of the context of the architectural form represented, as study of the origin can indicate that non-Muslim sources for architectural representation provided inspiration in terms of form and significance, and were adapted in the Muslim era to illustrate pure Islamic themes. This will also include a study of the culture, religion, history, technical knowledge and other points in relation to the artist of each architectural representation shown. This will demonstrate how recognizing the significance of any architectural representation is based on a consideration of the function of the artefact or the structure where the architectural representation is displayed. It will also show how architectural representation develops a strong relationship between its significance and the function of where it is represented, whether on a structure or on a piece of art.

The second area, which will be the focus of the third chapter, is the study of the stylistic artistic features of the architectural form represented. This analysis will try to show that recognition of the significance of any architectural representation is also based on consideration of its structural features. These include, from an artistic

point of view, the structural form (imitative, imaginative, and representational), and the elements used in its composition (symbolism and the concept of space). Such artistic features pertaining to any architectural representation reveal several hidden meanings to the observer, and allow an interpretation of its significance.

The conclusion of this study, in giving an overview of the areas covered in relation to architectural representation will clarify its role within the study of Islamic decoration. In addition, the study will conclude by demonstrating the complexity of the art of architectural representation, which should be of interest to both architects and art historians. The final analysis will show that what is seen today as architectural representation in Islamic art and architecture is really the result of a complex process of interaction between Muslim and foreign inspirations.

## **CHAPTER ONE**

# **Architectural Representation on Islamic Buildings**



# 1 Islamic Buildings with Architectural Representation

Among existing decorative works of the Muslim era, architectural representations deserve special attention, for they are not only decorative, but also have various meanings. The history of architectural representation is complex, but is of fundamental importance for unveiling the meaning of Islamic decoration. Significance in Muslim art was created through various means. Of the different types of art media which developed in the Muslim era, the most familiar to the wide public is calligraphy that carries meaning and adorns Muslim buildings and art objects. Whether *indicative*, *commemorative*, *iconic* or *formal*, the significance of Muslim calligraphy is not merely decorative, and it can be said that architectural representation acquired a similar significance, as will be revealed in this study<sup>1</sup>.

While the meaning of the architectural representation and the exact significance of its form remains somewhat obscure, a careful study of the architectural figure is vital. We attempt to explore this significance by delving deeper into it as a work of art. This will be done through a description of the architectural representation, a study of its origin, an interpretation of its possible significance, and a consideration of similar non-Muslim examples that may have worked as sources of inspiration for the significance of such representation. Such study shows how architectural representations are disguised signatures of their artists, revealing their origin, religion, and artistic background. Armed with this approach, Islamic architecture and objects of art are analyzed for evidence of the association between their functions and the exact significance of their architectural

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<sup>1</sup> Grabar 2000b, p.72-75.

representations, which may clearly be considered to lead to identification of the meaning of the whole decoration.

The study will throw light on how the use of architectural representations in pre-Islamic periods was common on architecture and objects of art, and how this practice may have inspired the significance of architectural representations in the Muslim era. We can infer that the primary concern of artists under the Muslim rule was to develop these pre-Islamic representations, thus introducing specific significance.

The classification of the material in this study is based primarily on data from specific examples of architecture, which will be introduced in this chapter, and which often display architectural forms that later on became familiar on Islamic art objects<sup>2</sup>. This latter point is the focus of the second chapter, which will look at examples of relevant art objects with architectural designs. It is significant to examine and trace the meaning of these architectural forms in relation to architecture before investigating their role on objects of art. This is in order to demonstrate that influence passed from architecture to Islamic art objects, as will be explored in the discussion. However, our findings raise a question: How would the meaning and significance of architectural representations and decorations on Islamic architecture inspire their use on objects of art? We attempt to explore this complex question by acknowledging the importance of the following factor: the function of the buildings where the architectural form is exhibited.

## **1.1 The Great Mosque of Damascus**

The Great Mosque of Damascus was erected as part of the Umayyad policy to establish “imperial religious monuments”, an idea that originated in the Byzantine

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<sup>2</sup> Papadopoulos 1980, p.60.

Empire. The Abbasid Caliphs of Baghdad did not maintain such a policy in their capital cities, although they made many efforts to enlarge the Mosques of both Mecca and Medina. In the Umayyad era, the aim of erecting religious monuments was probably to replace in significance the religious shrines of Mecca and Medina with those of Jerusalem and Damascus<sup>3</sup>. Unlike the Great Mosque of Damascus, which from the beginning was designed to represent the patronage of the ruler, the Mosque of Medina was generally regarded as the residence for the Prophet Muhammad<sup>4</sup>. In 35 A.H. /655-66 A.D. when 'Uthman was murdered, the Mosque of Medina was still considered a private residence. A fundamental change happened when 'Ali transferred the seat of governorship to Kūfah in 36 A.H. /657 A.D., but the complete transformation to a Mosque was not completed before 54 A.H. /674 A.D.<sup>5</sup>. Despite the fact that the function of the Medina Mosque matched that of the Great Mosque of Damascus, in terms of being both a place of worship and a centre of spiritual, social, and political life in the Muslim community, it did not gain the same status as a symbol of the patronage of the Muslim Caliph<sup>6</sup>.

It is true that under the rule of Al-Walīd the conditions under which the Medina Mosque was rebuilt were similar to those of Damascus. In both cases, a Byzantine help was called for by the caliph for the buildings' projects of construction and decoration. However, the lavishly decorated walls of the Great Mosque of Damascus emphasize the Mosque's political role in the Umayyad Empire. Ibn Rustah referred to the aid supplied by the Byzantine emperor, stating that Al-Walīd wrote to the emperor of the Greeks saying: "We desire to have the Great Mosque of our Prophet rebuilt; do then help us in this with skilled workmen

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<sup>3</sup> Gibb 2004, p.68, 69.

<sup>4</sup> Bisheh 1979, p.118.

<sup>5</sup> Bisheh 1979, p.122.

<sup>6</sup> Bisheh 1979, p.118.

and mosaics”<sup>7</sup>. According to Creswell: “the emperor sent him back on several (camels) loads of mosaic *tesserae* and more than 20 workmen, ten of whom were equal to a hundred ordinary workers and 80,000 dinars”<sup>8</sup>.

The Great Mosque of Damascus is of paramount importance in the history of Islamic architecture, since its mosaics are based on a new decorative system of architectural representation. This first monumental Mosque to be built in a Muslim capital was constructed by the Umayyad Caliph Al-Walīd between 706 and 715 A.D.<sup>9</sup>. In this research, the architectural representation on the walls of the Mosque is examined in order to elucidate its function as a disguised signature of the artist, and to explain the unique meaning it has in terms of the development of Islamic art history. The established view that the architectural decorative scheme of the Mosque had a merely decorative purpose is rejected. With regard to the function of the Mosque, it is proposed that the entire architectural representation was intended to serve as an ideal plan for the city of Damascus under the rule of Al-Walīd. Therefore, it makes an essentially political point in reference to the patronage of the Muslim Caliph among his community, by which the loyalty of the populace towards him was strengthened. Moreover, the study also suggests that this significance relates to a strong association with the function of the Mosque and works to reinforce it. Evidence for these two covert meanings is established in the following discussion through a description of the architectural representation, an analysis of its source and artist, and an interpretation of its possible significance.

### **1.1.1 Description of the Architectural Representations**

Careful study of the mosaic decorations on the walls of the Great Mosque of Damascus shows that this decorative method is quite distinctive. The walls of the

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<sup>7</sup> Ibn Rustah 1892, VII, p.69.

<sup>8</sup> Creswell 1979, I/I, p.143, 233.

<sup>9</sup> Burckhardt 1976, p.20.

Mosque bring together (on a panel 34.50 m. long and 7.30 m. high) two distinct themes not seen in conjunction in any earlier dated architectural examples: countryside themes together with architectural designs. In the following section, I will be concentrating on the category of the architectural decorations, of which many scholars including Van Berchem, Creswell, and Oleg Grabar have provided detailed descriptions<sup>10</sup>.

A brief look at the designs of the architectural representation on the walls of the Mosque provides hints as to their significance. Among the various styles of buildings represented are houses (figs.1-4) depicted with plain walls that have short windows and gabled roofs (a roof with two inclining ends) as well as colonnades and porticoes<sup>11</sup>. Palaces are also shown in detail on the façade of the courtyard transept (fig.5), and also on the North wall of the Western vestibule of the Mosque, where groups of houses and towers are superimposed, as if piled on top of each other<sup>12</sup>. Among the colonnades and porticoes on the Barada panel, on the Northern side of the Western wall, the back wall of the West *riwāq* (portico) is a representation of an arched gateway or bridge (fig.6). It opens into a town, flanked by two tall and narrow palaces roofed with large stone slabs creating gables<sup>13</sup>. Another example includes a building that looks like a portico (fig.7) with a semi-circular ground plan. Six fluted pillars, linked by a golden balustrade, support the roof of this building, and each compartment has a door with a blue painted frame and gold painted jambs. The lintel of each door has a large suspending element, which looks very much like a pearl. The short sides of the building near the river are fortified with conical roofed square towers, which are connected to the adjacent houses with flat roofs. However, only the houses on the right side of the portico have windows. In front of that portico

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<sup>10</sup> Creswell 1979, I/I, p.331, 339.

<sup>11</sup> Brisch 1988, p.25.

<sup>12</sup> Creswell 1979, I/I, p.331, 339.

<sup>13</sup> Creswell 1979, I/I, p.331, 339.

is a spacious area which looks like a plaza, in the centre of which are groups of buildings with different types of roof. The buildings depicted have doorways on the lower floors, and windows are only to be found on their upper floors<sup>14</sup>.

Of the many palaces included in this group of architectural representations is a palace pavilion with a suspended precious stone (figs.8, 9) depicted on the outer face of the Western pier above the second pier from the South, in the Western portico of the courtyard of the Mosque<sup>15</sup>. Another example of palace representation is a highly sophisticated depiction of a small palace with two storeys on the Western wall of the Mosque. It has a hypostyle hall, the arches of which are carried on five Corinthian columns<sup>16</sup>. The same idea of multi-storeyed buildings is repeated in another example on the Western arcade, on the inner face of the spandrel of the second arch from the South. At the centre of this spandrel, there is a two-storeyed building (fig.10) with non-Classical proportions. In the lower part of the building, there are two pillars supporting an arch, behind which there is a double arch resting on three columns supporting an apse with a semi-dome. The upper storey of the building takes the form of a pavilion preceded by two arches supported by three columns, one of which is fluted<sup>17</sup>.

As shown above, these buildings display some specific features in their forms. Why do these features appear, and what do they mean? Could it be that they were merely for decoration, or do they include some deeper meaning? The answer to these questions lies in analyzing these architectural forms and studying their sources.

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<sup>14</sup> Brisch 1988, p.14.

<sup>15</sup> Shalem 1997, p.48.

<sup>16</sup> Creswell 1979, I/I, p.330.

<sup>17</sup> Brisch 1988, p.14, 15.

### 1.1.2 Source of the Architectural Representations

When examining the architectural decorations on the walls of the Great Mosque of Damascus, it becomes clear that they represent a distinct category of decoration that bears no relation to Islamic building forms. This raises two crucial questions: firstly, what is the origin of these architectural forms, and how does this relate to their meanings? And secondly, how is it that they came to be employed in the decoration of a Muslim building? Even though it seems their origin can be traced to various non-Muslim sources, these architectural representations seem to have been treated in a way peculiar to the Muslim era, for not only were they used for decorative purposes, but they also served as disguised signatures of their artists, and conveyed a specific political message concealed behind their simple forms.

As far as the various buildings depicted are concerned, distinctive Classical influences which can be clearly distinguished from other features can be noted, and seem to have inspired many of the architectural compositions represented in the decorations. It is possible to draw a parallel between these images with Classical influence and those of Byzantine art, such as the Cathedral of Saint George in Salonica<sup>18</sup> that dates to the fifth century A.D., whose colonnades have similar architectural representations (fig.11) over them. Hence, it is quite possible that such a Byzantine building could have inspired the decoration of some of the building representations in the Great Mosque of Damascus. We should of course take into account further examples of Classical influence, including the portraits of the Evangelists present in the Syriac Gospels of Florence, including the Rabbula Gospels (now in the Medicaean-Laurentian Library in Florence) dating back to 586

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<sup>18</sup> See Le Tourneau M. et Saladin H. 1918, "Les Monuments Chrétien de Salonique", *Monuments de l'Art Byzantin*, vol.IV, (Paris); Pazaras Theochares 1974, *He rotonta tou Hagiou Georgiou ste Thessalonike*, (Thessalonike).

A.D., which may also have had an impact on the decoration of the Great Mosque of Damascus<sup>19</sup>.

Some scholars have judged the decorations of the Mosque as purely Byzantine and Hellenistic in nature. For example, Eustache De Lorey discusses how the decorative style represented in the mosaics of the Great Mosque of Damascus is evidence of a Hellenistic source, and is identical to earlier similar representations from the Hellenistic period. These Hellenistic influences were transferred to the Byzantine Empire, as indicated by the bas-relief on a Greek vase<sup>20</sup> (now in Italy) of the Hadrianic period dating to the first half of the fourth century A.D., which represents an illustration of "Thésée abandoning Ariane"<sup>21</sup>. According to our analysis of the architectural forms on the walls of the Mosque, there is no doubt that these Hellenistic and Byzantine themes were related in one way or another to the Muslim art exhibited in the decoration of the Mosque.

Among the many Byzantine influences is Iconoclasm, which seems to have determined the style of decoration used in the Mosque<sup>22</sup>. Is the only reason for this that these themes, in which all human and animal forms are absent, were easily accepted by the Muslims who rejected animal and human forms of decoration and had to look for other sources of inspiration? Is it that they found favour with both aniconic Muslims and Christians of that period? In fact, the tenacity of this aniconic attitude towards animal and human images, and the ensuing fear of its potentially detrimental effect on Muslims, may have had a great deal to do with the decorative

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<sup>19</sup> Rabbula Gospels (the miniatures of the Syriac ms. Plut. 1.56) were written by a scribe called Rabbula as an Estrangela manuscript, written in the Convent of Mar John at Zagba in Northern Mesopotamia, and containing the four Gospels. Hatch 1931, p.17. For more information on these Gospels see: Diehl C. 1928, *L'Art Chrétien Primitif et L'Art Byzantin*, (Paris), pl.XXVII; Weitzmann K. 1977, *Late Antique and Early Christian Book Illumination*, (London), p.97-105; Rodley 1994, p.104-108; Cecchelli Carlo B. 1959, *The Rabbula Gospels*, (Olton); Leroy J. 1964, *Les Manuscrits Syriaques à Peintures*, (Paris), p.139.

<sup>20</sup> See Rizzo Maria A. 1988, "Un Artista Etrusco Il Suo Mondo: Il Pittore di Micalit", *Studi di Archeologia*, vol.V, (Roma).

<sup>21</sup> De Lorey 1933, p.29.

<sup>22</sup> Gero 1977, p.3-22, 126, 127; De Lorey 1933, p.22; Kitzinger 1980, p.159.



themes on the walls of the Mosque, where all images are either architectural or floral. Evidence of the aniconic tendency that may have inspired the Mosque decorations includes the fact that in the time of Byzantine Iconoclasm, Muslims categorically rejected all images, at least in the religious sphere. In religious and official contexts, they forbade all representations of living beings<sup>23</sup>. Consequently, the architectural representations in the Great Mosque of Damascus are in accordance with these religious restrictions. The tendency to use geometric and floral designs as decoration on the walls of religious buildings did not start with the introduction of Muslim rule, but rather dates to the sixth century A.D. under Byzantine rule. At that early date, human figures were only represented in an abstract form, and could not be described as portraits. This was the case in sixth century Constantinople, when narrative imagery, in which human figures lack realism, was symbolic and conceptual<sup>24</sup>. In the eighth century A.D., after an Iconoclast movement, crosses (as in the mosaics of Saint Sophia<sup>25</sup> in Istanbul) replaced the busts of human figures<sup>26</sup>.

Though history witnessed the abolition and strict prohibition of figurative representations (of both human and animal figures) in religious buildings during the Umayyad era, in secular buildings these figures continued to be depicted. The decorative scheme on the walls of the Great Mosque of Damascus clearly demonstrates the truth of this. Another example supporting this proposition is the Mashatta palace in Jordan<sup>27</sup>, where only the *Qiblah* wall was left free of animal

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<sup>23</sup> Kitzinger 1980, p.159.

<sup>24</sup> Rodley 1994, p.80, 81; Irwin 1997, p.22.

<sup>25</sup> See Cormack R. S. & Hawkins E.J. W. 1977, "The Mosaics of St. Sophia at Istanbul: The Rooms above the Southwest Vestibule and Ramp", *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, vol.XXXI,p.175-251.

<sup>26</sup> Rodley 1994, p.126.

<sup>27</sup> Details of the decoration on the walls of the palace of Mashatta, Jordan, an Umayyad structure probably 740-743 A.D. shows foliated triangles and lions, beasts and birds in vegetation, but with no birds or beasts in the *Qiblah* wall. The entrance façade is now preserved in the Staatliche Museen, Berlin. See Irwin 1997, p.88; Rice 1991, p.21.

decorations, which, however, covered the other three walls of the palace<sup>28</sup> (parts of its walls are now kept in the Staatliche Museum in Berlin)<sup>29</sup>. Similarly, the coinage system reflected the same idea since coin faces displayed figurative decorations until the reform carried out by the Umayyad Caliph 'Abd Al-Malik Ibn Marwān (685-705) in the 690s. The first coins issued under the rule of 'Abd Al-Malik Ibn Marwān were imitations of Byzantine and Sasanian examples<sup>30</sup>. The earliest gold coinage of the Caliph 'Abd Al-Malik retained a Byzantine design by representing the figure of the Caliph, until it was replaced by a more suitable design that matches both Muslim religion and community<sup>31</sup>. Consequently, limited changes were made: for example, the Byzantine costumes of the figures on the coins were replaced with Arabic garments, the cross was altered to the form of a bar ending with a knot, and the fire altar was changed into a standing figure of the Caliph<sup>32</sup>. A significant coinage reform happened when the symbols represented on coins, including the standing figure of the Caliph, were replaced with Qur'anic inscriptions on one side of the coin, and the date and invocation on the other side<sup>33</sup>. In the Great Mosque of Damascus, in accordance with the same principle, countryside scenes derived from Hellenistic and Byzantine art were used instead of the historical scenes of Saints for the Christians, and the figurative scenes for the Muslims<sup>34</sup>.

However, this aniconic principle cannot have been the only factor behind the decorations. The existence of specific Byzantine, Oriental and other non-Muslim

<sup>28</sup> See Saladin H. 1904, "Le Palais de Machitta", *Bulletin Archéologique*, (Paris), p.409-14; Berchem M.V. 1905, "Mechatta", *Journal Des Savants*, (Paris), p.472-77; Stern Henri, "Notes Sur l'Architecture des Chateaux Omeyyades", *Ars Islamica*, vol.XI-XII, p.75, 82, 83; Creswell K.A.C. 1979, *Early Muslim Architecture*, vol.I/II, (New York), p.596-603.

<sup>29</sup> (Inv. no. I. 6163).

<sup>30</sup> Blair 1992, p.64, 66; Irwin 1997, p.88. For information on early Muslim numismatics see Bates M.L. 1986, "History, Geography and Numismatics in the First Century of Islamic Coinage", *Revue Suisse de Numismatique*, vol.LXV, p.231-62.

<sup>31</sup> Gibb 2004, p.68.

<sup>32</sup> Blair 1992, p.64, 66; Irwin 1997, p.88.

<sup>33</sup> Blair 1992, p.67; also see Grierson P. 1960, "The Monetary Reforms of 'Abd Al-Malik: Their Metrological Basis and their Financial Repercussions", *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient*, vol.III, p.241-264.

<sup>34</sup> De Lorey 1933, p.31.

features in the architectural representations on the walls of the Mosque suggest further reasons behind the type of imagery used. Byzantine art not only stylized the aniconic impulse of the mosaics, but also furnished them with artistic themes and motifs. For example, the idea of depicting the countryside, complete with rivers, rocks, trees, mountains, and houses, has been demonstrated by many scholars such as Eustache De Lorey to have been of Byzantine origin<sup>35</sup>. However, upon examination of the decorative themes on the walls of the Mosque, it becomes evident that this borrowed imagery is combined with architectural representations in a new and distinctly Islamic way, thus introducing a specific significance that will be discussed later<sup>36</sup>.

The architectural decorations on the walls of the Mosque bear a resemblance to actual Byzantine structures, and so highlight the Byzantine influence, confirming the possibility of non-Muslim architectural representation in a Mosque. For example, the palaces shown on the walls of the Great Mosque of Damascus are comparable to the real buildings constructed in Constantinople. Furthermore, the frescoes (fig.12) from Boscoreale near Naples, which show early Classical representations, whose legacy were maintained in the Byzantine tradition, dating to the first century B.C. (now in the Metropolitan Museum in New York, with a few fragments in the Museo Nazionale, Naples) are similar to some of the building iconographies on the walls of the Mosque<sup>37</sup>. One example shows a Cubiculum (bedroom) from the Villa of P. Fannius Synistor. In addition, the architectural representation (fig.13) of the mosaics of the fourth and fifth centuries A.D. in the Church of Santa Maria Maggiore in Rome<sup>38</sup> are found to be parallel with the

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<sup>35</sup> See Rizzo Giulio E. 1936, *Le Pitture Della "Casa di Livia" (Palatino)*, (Roma).

<sup>36</sup> De Lorey 1933, p.25, 26.

<sup>37</sup> See Sambon Arthur 1903, *Les Fresques de Boscoreale*, (Paris).

<sup>38</sup> For more information, see Cecchelli Carlo. B. 1956, *I Mosaici Della Basilica Di S. Maria Maggiore*, (Torino); Karpp Heinrich 1966, *Die Frühchristlichen und Mittelalterlichen Mosaiken in*

architectural representations in the mosaic decorations on the walls of the Mosque<sup>39</sup>. Some architectural compositions show great similarity to authentic Byzantine architecture, and consequently were described as *Villa Rustica*. On the walls of the Mosque, there are seven buildings in the style of the *Villa Rustica* standing both on and in front of a hill. Those on the top of the hill take the form of towers, while only a few at the bottom are towers. These buildings have two different types of roof, namely gabled and flat, and all of them have windows, but only some have entrances<sup>40</sup>.

It seems that the architectural forms on the walls of the Mosque not only derive from Classical sources, but also feature some Oriental elements. The inclusion of Oriental motif in the architectural decorations on the walls of the Mosque is in theory problematic, because all other features seem to be Classical and Christian in origin. I propose that the artist added Oriental characteristics with the intention of giving a particular significance to these architectural forms (as will be discussed in detail later). This Oriental style of decoration is exemplified by a scene depicted on the Western portico of the courtyard of the Mosque. It illustrates a palace pavilion with suspended precious stones. The fact that drop-like luminous objects, probably pearls, suspended on chains are repeated elsewhere in the mosaics (on the main entrance and windows of the Mosque) implies that the artist consciously decided to make use of Oriental<sup>41</sup> features<sup>42</sup>. It has been established by Avinoam Shalem that the tradition of hanging precious stones in this way came from the Near East, since the use of precious stones seems to have been practiced by the

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*Santa Maria Maggiore Zu Rom*, (Baden-Baden: Grimm); Brenk Beat 1975, *Die Frühchristlichen Mosaiken in S. Maria Maggiore Zu Rom*, (Wiesbaden: Steiner).

<sup>39</sup> Creswell 1979, I/I, p.367.

<sup>40</sup> Brisch 1988, p.14, 15

<sup>41</sup> See Hurbert J. 1949, "(l'Escrain) dit de Charlemagne au Tresor de Saint-Denis", *Cahiers Archéologique*, vol.IV, (Paris); Lasko Peter 1975, "The Escrain de Charlemagne", *Beiträge Zur Kunst des Mittelalters Festschrift für Hans Wentzel Zum 60 Geburtstag*, (Berlin); Musée du Louvre 1991, *Exhibition Catalogue: Le Tresor de Saint-Denis*, (Paris), p.92-99, Cat. no.XIII; Shalem 1997, p.55.

<sup>42</sup> Shalem 1997, p.48.

Arabs at an early date. Shalem also refers to Uri Rubin's suggestion that the origin of the black stone of the Ka'bah in Mecca was originally a light-giving Sapphire<sup>43</sup>.

Avinoam Shalem also refers to the records of historians, where reference is made to a precious stone which was said to have been used by the Arabs, including Ibn 'Asākir and Al-'Umārī, both of whose accounts about Damascus mention a precious stone hanging in the *Mihrāb* of the Mosque. Ibn 'Asākir states: "I heard the Arabs who were visiting the Mosque and saying that there is no prayer after Al-Qā'ilah (*Al-Dorrah*). 'I said to him: Have you seen the *Qalīlah*?' 'He said: Yes, it was shining like a lantern, and that the prince favored crystals'. So he wrote to the governor of Damascus to send the *Qalīlah* to him. So he sent it to him by night. When Al-Mā'mūn killed Al-Amīn he sent the *Qalīlah* back to Damascus to accuse Al-Amīn by means of this crystal. This crystal (*Qalīlah*) was once in the *Mihrāb* of the Mosque at the time of the Companions, and when it was gone it was replaced with a glass lantern, which I saw; then that was broken and nothing else has occupied its place since then". The same story was repeated by Al-'Umārī<sup>44</sup>. Furthermore, Shalem states that Al-Qadī Al-Rāshid Ibn Al-Zubayr talked about another precious stone known as *Al-Yatīmah* which was in the possession of the Umayyads, and the Abbasids after them. According to Ibn Al-Zubayr, this precious stone was worth seventy thousands dinars: "As for the large pearl known as *Al-Yatīmah* (the Orphan), it was so called because it was unique and matchless. During the reign of Al-Rashīd Bī-Allah Muṣlīm Ibn 'Abd Allah Al-'Irāqī, one of those who pays pearl divers to search for pearls gained possession of two large pearls; one was

<sup>43</sup> Shalem 1997, p.47; Rubin 1986, p.122.

<sup>44</sup> "سمعت الأعراب وهم يزورون المسجد يقولون لا صلاة بعد القائلة (الدرة) قلت له أرايت القليلة فقال نعم كانت تضئ مثل السراج قلت من اخذها؟ قال ما سمعت المثل منصور سرق القلة وسليمان شرب المرة ذلك ان الأمير كان يحب البلور فكتب الى صاحب شرطة والى دمشق ان ينفذ اليه القليلة فصرقها ليلا ووجهها اليه فلما قتل المأمون الأمين رد القليلة الى دمشق ليشنع بذلك على الأمين وكانت هذه القليلة في محراب الصحابة فلما ذهبت جعل موضعها برنية من زجاج رأيتها ثم انكسرت بعد فلم يجعل في مكانها شئ"

Shalem 1997, p.48; Ibn 'Asākir 1995-8, II, p.278, 279; Al-'Umārī 1924, I, p.193, 194.

the *Yatimah* and the other was inferior [to it]. He took them to Al-Rashīd and sold the *Yatimah* to him for seventy thousands dinars and the small one for thirty thousand dinars”<sup>45</sup>. He also adds: “When the rule passed to the Abbasids, the Great Pearl (*durrah*) of the Umayyads was also transferred to them. People claimed that there had never been [a pearl] as enormous as this one, and there was nothing to compare with it in radiance and whiteness. When Al-Mahdī became a Caliph he gave it to his slave girl known as Ḥusnah, who cut it (*Kharat*) into two pieces (*faṣṣāyn*) for backgammon”<sup>46</sup>.

By contrast, however, Finbarr Flood claims that the motif of the pearl hanging from a chain is Jewish in origin. This opinion has been supported by the paintings of Beth Alpha Synagogue, which is traced back to the sixth century A.D. (fig.14), where a pearl hanging from a chain is depicted in the Torah shrine<sup>47</sup>. He considers that the idea of the hanging pearl shape has also been inspired from the mosaic decorations of some churches, such as the Cathedral of St. George in Salonica, which dates to the fifth century A.D., and was shown with pearls forming a decorative frieze around the exterior of its gilded pavilion<sup>48</sup>. Hanging pearls were also traditionally used as suspended jewels in Christian objects such as crowns and crosses<sup>49</sup>. In support of Flood’s argument, Geoffrey King believes that the depiction of hanging pearls found in synagogues inspired the artist of the Great Mosque of Damascus to include such pearls in the decoration of the palace representations<sup>50</sup>.

<sup>45</sup> "فأما الدرة المعروفة باليتيمة فأنها سميت باليتيمة لأنها لم يوجد لها اخت في الدنيا ولا قرينة فإن مسلم ابن عبد الله العراقي احد من يجهر الغاصصة إلى طلب اللؤلؤ في خلافة الرشيد بالله حصل بيده درتان إحداهما اليتيمة والأخرى دونها فحملها إلى الرشيد وباع عليه اليتيمة بسبعين ألف دينار والصغيرة بثلاثين ألف دينار"

Shalem 1997, p.48, 49; Ibn Al-Zubayr 1959, p.177; Ibn Al-Zubayr 1996, p.181.

<sup>46</sup> "وانتقل إلى بني العباس حين انتقل الأمر إليهم درة بنى أمية العظيمة التي زعم الناس أنهم لم يروا في عظمها ولم يكن في الضوء والبياض مثلها كذلك فلما ولي المهدي الخلافة أعطاها لحسنة جاريتها فخرطها فصين للنرد"

Ibn Al-Zubayr 1959, p.174; Ibn Al-Zubayr 1997, p.179, 180.

<sup>47</sup> Flood 2001, p.17; Wischnitzer 1955, p.136; Goldman 1966, p.140, 141.

<sup>48</sup> Flood 2001, p.18.

<sup>49</sup> Lipinsky 1960-61, plate p.36; Flood 2001, p.17.

<sup>50</sup> King 1976, p.211.

In spite of the few ambiguities we have encountered in our analysis of the origins of the architectural decoration shown on the walls of the Great Mosque of Damascus, the decorative scheme exposed therein is sufficiently detailed to allow the discovery of many architectural buildings with non-Muslim sources. It is not because he was artistically poor that the artist relied on non-Muslim models; on the contrary, he combined his influences, both Classical and Oriental, into something new that was his very own creation. It appears that in many respects, the artist deliberately used non-Muslim buildings in an Islamic decoration in order to convey certain meanings. The next crucial question to be asked is why the artist employed these non-Muslim features. The answer will unveil the possible meanings and significance of these representations.

### **1.1.3 Architectural Representations as the Work of an Artist**

It is possible that the artist would have relied on real architectural models to imitate when representing architectural forms like those on the walls of the Mosque. Moreover, it is likely that he was familiar with these architectural forms from his homeland. According to Creswell, similar examples to the architectural forms on the walls of the Mosque appeared in Hellenistic Syria before they were used in Rome. Since there are Hellenistic, Byzantine, and Oriental features, supposedly from Antioch, where all these features were found at an early date in Syria, it is plausible to suggest that the artist probably came from the areas richest in these complexities of art features, specifically Antioch or Damascus. In the case of Antioch, it is possible because the city was home to a number of ancient schools of Graeco-Syrian art, in which artists were trained to represent a mixed Hellenistic-Oriental style. This style was characterized by the use of ribbed domes and horseshoe arches in

decoration. Under the rule of Al-Walīd I, many artists already trained in these schools were employed to decorate the Great Mosque of Damascus<sup>51</sup>. Influences from architectural representations (figs.15, 16) in Antioch seem partly to have inspired the architectural representations on the walls of the Mosque by the artist.

However, it is also possible that the artist had his roots in Damascus. Eustache De Lorey has drawn attention to the fact that there were Byzantine artists and ateliers to be found in Byzantine-Syrian schools in Damascus. In either case, it seems that the mosaic decoration of the Great Mosque of Damascus, with the architectural ornamentation exhibited here, reflects the works of an artist from the Syrian school<sup>52</sup>. A further link pointing to the artist's Syrian origin may be discerned in the work of Creswell, who affirms that the representation of the architectural scenes on the walls of the Mosque closely resembles the architecture existing under the rule of the Umayyads in Syria at that time, suggesting that the decoration could be a product of a local artist. However, the idea that the non-Muslim features in these architectural decorations were of local origin does not mean that there was no outside help<sup>53</sup>. Creswell, in supporting this hypothesis, relied on the records of historians such as Istakhrī, who described Damascus as a beautiful city conforming to what is represented on the walls of its Great Mosque: "About the area of Damascus, the heart of which is Damascus and it is the most beautiful city in the whole Levant...There is a Mosque that has no parallel in any Muslim country in beauty or in the fortune spent on it. The wall and *Qiblah* over the *Mihrāb* of the Mosque by the *Maqṣūrah* was built by non-Muslims...At the time of Al-Walīd Ibn 'Abd Al-Malik the Mosque was restored, its floor made of marble, its walls faced

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<sup>51</sup> Creswell 1979, I/I, p.370, 371.

<sup>52</sup> De Lorey 1933, p.42.

<sup>53</sup> Creswell 1979, I/I, p.371; De Lorey 1933, p.42; see also Voguë Eugène-Melchior 1878, *Syrie, Palestine, Mont Athos: Voyage Aux Pays du Passé*, (Paris); Butler H.C. 1904-05, *Architecture and Other Arts*, (Princeton).



with marble, its columns made of marble with gilded capitals, and its *Mihrāb* covered with jewelled gold; the roofing running all around the Mosque and the upper walls also made with gold. It was said that he spent the tax money of the Levant on its preparation. Its outer roof is in lead and its roof is in gilded wood. Running water is available in every corner of the Mosque”<sup>54</sup>.

Furthermore, Al-‘Umārī’s description of the actual architecture of the Great Mosque of Damascus strongly recalls the scenes depicted in the mosaic decorations on the walls of the Mosque. He notes the architectural beauties of Damascus with its Mosque and describes them as follows: “In the Western wall of the Mosque there is a door called *Al-Barīd* door...with a wide entrance flanked on either side by small shops selling fruits, candles, fragrances, drinks and other types of delicious food. It also has small channels of running water, which at night reflect the golden light of the lanterns above them. The pleasant gurgling sound they make delights the attendants of the Mosque”<sup>55</sup>. We encounter another opinion on the origin of the artist. Oleg Grabar also mentions a clue towards the Syrian origin of the artist who created the work on the walls of the Mosque with obvious Byzantine features: he points out that the term of *Fannān Al-Ṣhām* (Artist of the Levant) does not necessarily mean an artist from the Byzantine territory, but also possibly a local artist, trained in the tradition of Byzantine art, in the *Bilād Al-Ṣhām* (the Levant)<sup>56</sup>.

The study of these Hellenistic and Byzantine features raises an interesting question. How did these features of art and architecture reach Syria in the Muslim

<sup>54</sup> "و اما جند دمشق فان قصبته مدينة دمشق وهي اجمل مدينة بالشام كلها...وبها مسجد ليس في الإسلام مسجد احسن ولا اكثر نفقة منه واما الجدار والقبلة التي فوق المحراب عند المقصورة فمن بناء الصابئين...فلما كان في أيام الوليد بن عبد الملك عمره فجعل ارضه رخاما مفروشا وجعل وجه جدرانها رخاما مجزعا واساطيدها رخاما موشى ومعاقد رؤوس اساطينه ذهبيا ومحاربه ذهبيا مرصعا بالجواهر و دور السقف كله ذهبيا مكبنا كما تطوف ترابيع جدار المسجد يقال انه انفق فيه وحدة خراج الشام وسطحه رصاص وسقفه خشب مذهب يدور الماء على رقعة المسجد حتى اذا فجر منه انبسط علي جميع الاركان سواء"

Istakhrī 1967, p.60, 61.

<sup>55</sup> "في الحائط الغربى باب البريد...وهو حضرة فسيحة في جانبها حوانيت للفراكه وللشمع والعطر والشراب والطايب المأكول وبها القنى من المياه الجارية توقد عليها المصابيح بالليل فيمويه الماء ذهب شعاعها وتطرب انابيهها الأسماع بلذة إيقاعها"

Al-‘Umārī 1924, I, p.194.

<sup>56</sup> Grabar 1964, p.69-88.

era? The answer to this question lies historically in the Arab conquest of Syria when it was under Hellenistic traditions that remained unchanged after Syria was subjected to the Muslim rule. The role played by the Syrian-Byzantine schools in Syria in generating a mix between Hellenistic and Oriental features was an outcome of the imagination of Syrian artists<sup>57</sup>. This mingling of influences was emphasized by Finbarr Flood, who mentioned that the mosaic decoration of the Great Mosque of Damascus was derived from the cultural exchange between pre-Islamic Syria and Byzantium<sup>58</sup>. At that early stage (Pre-Islamic Syria) Byzantine mosaicists were imported to Syria, and worked together with the local artisans<sup>59</sup> in their workshops. The case of Byzantine artisans and local artists working together in the country could also have occurred during the time of Al-Walīd, which may suggest an alternative origin (Byzantine) for the artist who produced the mosaic decorative scheme of the Mosque<sup>60</sup>.

Finbarr Flood cited a historical record by Ibn 'Asākir that may indicate Byzantine help in the production of the Damascus mosaics. Ibn 'Asākir stated: "Al-Walīd wrote to Al-Taghīyah (the Tyrant, the Byzantine emperor) 'Send me two hundred Byzantine workers, for I want to construct a Mosque the like of which has never been built in any other capital and which will have no equal after me. If you do not do this, I will invade you with my armies and will destroy the churches in your territory including the churches of Jerusalem...and all the other Byzantine monuments'. Wishing to dissuade him from constructing the Mosque, and seeking to weaken his resolve, Al-Taghīyah wrote back: 'By God if your father understood the

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<sup>57</sup> Creswell 1979, I/I, p.370, 371.

<sup>58</sup> Flood 2001, p.237.

<sup>59</sup> See Prentice William Kelly 1912, "Officials Charged with the Conduct of Public Works in Roman and Byzantine Syria", *Transactions of the American Philological Society*, vol.XLIII, p.114, 120.

<sup>60</sup> Creswell 1979, I/I, p.151-152; Flood 2001, p.24.

necessity...Nevertheless, I am sending you what you have requested'..."<sup>61</sup>. Another account of Ibn Khaldūn also confirms the use of Byzantine assistance in the construction and decoration of the Mosque. He claims in his records: "This is similar to what happened in the case of Al-Walīd Ibn 'Abd Al-Malik, when he decided to build his Mosque in Medina, Jerusalem, and in the Levant, and sent word to the King of Byzantium [*Al-Rūm*] in Constantinople asking for skilful builders. The King responded by sending him suitable competent builders for satisfactory construction of the mosques"<sup>62</sup>. The cited passages may specify that the artist was not a Muslim but a Byzantine who came to Syria during the time of Al-Walīd, and was aware of the mix between Syrian and Byzantine features in art.

Indeed, the artist has announced his origin through the insertion of Christian symbols, such as crosses on top of buildings. These symbols would have constituted acts of resistance by the artist, being an assertion of his faith, even in the holy places of his enemies<sup>63</sup>. The records of Ibn Rustah refer to such an assertion of faith in a story about a Byzantine artist who was engaged in the building of the Mosque of Medina. He states: "One day when the workers were alone in the Mosque one of them said: 'Why don't I just urinate on the tomb of their Prophet?' And he prepared to do just that, despite his comrades' opposition; but no sooner had he begun to relieve himself than he was lifted bodily off the ground and thrown back down on his head so violently that his brains splattered all over. After this incident, several of his Christian co-workers adopted Islam. Another of these Greeks had painted images

"لما اراد الوليد بن عبد الملك بناء مسجد دمشق احتاج الى صناع كثير فكتب الى الطاغية: ان وجه الى بماتني صانع من صناع الروم فاني اريد ان ابني مسجدا لم يبني من مضى قبلي ولا يكون بعدى مثله فان انت لم تفعل غزوتك بالجيش وخربت الكنائس في بلدك وكنيسة بيت المقدس وكنيسة الرها وسائر اثار الروم فاراد الطاغية ان يفضه عن بنائه ويضعف عزمه فكتب اليه: والله لنن كان ابوك فهمها فأغفل عنها انها لو صمة عليه ولئن كنت فهمتها و غيبت عن ابيك انها لو صمة عليك وانا موجه ما سألت" Ibn 'Asākir 1995-8, II, p.258; Flood 2001, p.21.

"كما وقع للوليد ابن عبد الملك حين اجمع على بناء مسجد المدينة والقدس ومسجده بالشام فبعث الى ملك الروم بالقسطنطينية في القعدة المهرة في البناء فبعث اليه منهم ما حصل له غرضه من تلك المساجد"

Ibn Khaldūn 1900, I, p.409.

<sup>63</sup> Papadopoulos 1980, p.62.

of pigs beneath the lucarnes in the *Qiblah* wall, and when 'Umar Ibn 'Abd Al-'Azīz noticed this he had the man's head chopped off"<sup>64</sup>.

Oleg Grabar referred to Arab-Byzantine relations in the Umayyad era by saying: "in the era between 661 A.D. and to about 800 A.D...considerable direct or indirect Byzantine influences can be detected...The artistic contacts existed between the world of Byzantium and the world of Arab Islam over many centuries, or at least throughout the major phases of artistic creativity in the Arab world"<sup>65</sup>. Tony Goodwin supported this view: "During the early Muslim era, relations were maintained with the Byzantines when some of the coins were issued from two mints Jerusalem and Diospolis (Arabic Ludd, modern Lod) they were the first Umayyad imperial coins which looked similar to those of the Byzantine coins which show a standing emperor and with the name of the mint added. However, in the case of the Muslim coins, the name of the town where they were minted was probably omitted". This is because, as Goodwin states: "the conquerors did not wish to allow anything that may encourage local independence"<sup>66</sup>.

It is thus clear that Byzantine assistance was acknowledged in the mosaics, mainly, as Creswell argues, in the provision of Byzantine artisans to Al-Walīd's capital<sup>67</sup>. This suggestion is confirmed by Alexander Papadopoulos in his consideration of the source of the great number of glass cubes needed for the mosaics. Since not a single historian referred to the existence of any mosaic factory in Syria, it is possible, he argues, that these tiny glass cubes were produced in the imperial workshops of Constantinople. Papadopoulos adds: "And if such a

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"قَبِينَمَا أَوْلَئِكَ الْعَمَالُ يَعْمَلُونَ فِي الْمَسْجِدِ إِذْ خَلَا لَهُمُ الْمَسْجِدُ فَقَالَ بَعْضُهُمْ أَلَا أَبُولُ عَلَى قَبْرِ نَبِيِّهِمْ فَتَهَيَّأْ لَذَلِكَ فَذَهَاهُ أَصْحَابُهُ فَلَمَاهُمْ أَنْ يَفْعَلَ اقْتَتَلَ فَالْقَى عَلَى رَأْسِهِ فَانْتَثَرَ دِمَاغُهُ فَاسْلَمَ بَعْضُ أَوْلَئِكَ النَّصَارَى وَعَمِلَ أَحَدُ أَوْلَئِكَ الرُّومَ عَلَى رَأْسِ خَمْسِ طَلَاقَاتٍ فِي جِدَارِ الْقُبْلَةِ فِي صَحْنِ الْمَسْجِدِ صُورَةَ خَنْزِيرٍ فَظَهَرَ عَلَيْهِ عَمْرُ ابْنِ عَبْدِ الْعَزِيزِ فَأَمَرَ بِهِ فَضْرِبَتْ عُنُقُهُ"

Ibn Rustah 1967, VII, p.99.

<sup>65</sup> Grabar 2004, p.264, 265.

<sup>66</sup> Goodwin 2005, p.18.

<sup>67</sup> Creswell 1956, p.142, 143.

manufactory did exist, one can only wonder why numerous other monuments were not adorned with mosaics in the course of the following centuries". Accordingly, the scarcity of glass mosaics in Muslim art, which disappeared completely from any Umayyad monument after the construction of the Great Mosque of Damascus opens a controversy<sup>68</sup>. Al-Balādhurī gives further evidence of the scarcity of mosaics, suggesting an external supplier, when he mentioned in his accounts that: "Al-Walīd wrote to his prefect at Medina, 'Umar Ibn 'Abd Al-'Aziz, to give him the order to demolish the Mosque and reconstruct it. He sent him a sum of money, cubes of mosaic and marble and dispatched there also eighty Greek and Coptic workers, natives of Syria and Egypt"<sup>69</sup>. This statement supports the view that the appearance of various Byzantine features in the decoration of the Great Mosque of Damascus may have been in order to depict the city of Damascus as being under the influence of Syrian-Byzantine schools in Syria.

Even though the above statements refer to an appeal to the Byzantines for help in the mosaic decoration of the mosque, thereby emphasizing the Byzantine influence on the mosque decoration, it is hard to believe that Syria was entirely deprived of a local mosaic production. A number of ancient Syrian churches as well as those built during the Umayyad era attest to the widespread use of mosaics. It could be that the great number of mosaics needed for the decoration of the Great Mosque of Damascus led Al-Walīd to ask for help from the Byzantine emperor.

Among the many examples of ancient churches with mosaic decorations in Syria is the Chapel of 'Ain El-Bad, which dates to the fourth or sixth century A.D. It has a fine floor mosaic in a panel decorated with scenes of birds and spiral floral

<sup>68</sup> Papadopoulo 1980, p.61.

<sup>69</sup> "إلى ان ولى الوليد بن عبد الملك ابن مروان بعد ابيه فكتب الى عمر بن عبد العزيز وهو عامله على المدينة يأمره بهدم المسجد وبنائه وبعث اليه بمال وفسيفساء ورخام وثمانين صانعا من الروم والقبط من اهل الشام و مصر..."  
Al-Balādhurī 1957, I, p.13.

branches<sup>70</sup>. Another example is the Church of *Hors-Les-Murs* at Dibsi Faraj, dated to 429 A.D.<sup>71</sup>, which has a mosaic pavement with geometrical designs of various colours<sup>72</sup>. The Church of *Haouarté* or the Northern Church “Michaëlion”, which dates to 483-486 A.D. also has magnificent mosaic decorations with representations of Adam among animals, birds, and trees<sup>73</sup>. In addition, during the Umayyad era, Syrian churches with mosaic decorations continued to exist as in the Church of Saint Georges that dates to the eighth century A.D., where colourful mosaic decorations were abundant<sup>74</sup>.

Oleg Grabar rejected the idea that Syria was poor in mosaics and artists, and instead referred to a political reason for the Byzantine help with mosaics and workers, suggesting that such help was in fact an expression of the power of Al-Walīd. On this occasion, he said: “The complete defeat of Byzantium was impossible and as the Muslim world turned Eastward, the events of Al-Walīd’s reign became myths and the *Rūmi*, the Byzantine, became the artist *par excellence*, later to be joined by the Chinese. The myth survived because the buildings of Al-Walīd in Jerusalem, Damascus, and Medina remained central sanctuaries in the succeeding history of Islam and because the early Muslim dream lingered in later historiography and legend. Thus, an important characteristic of the Islamic attitude towards the arts, i.e., the evaluation of the Byzantine (*Rūmi*) artist, derived from the peculiar situation of Byzantine and Arab relations in the early eighth century, in this instance, it was the result of an expression of power by Al-Walīd; the Muslim vision of the defeat of

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<sup>70</sup> Donceel-Voûte 1988, p.17.

<sup>71</sup> Donceel-Voûte 1988, p.84.

<sup>72</sup> Donceel-Voûte 1988, p.79.

<sup>73</sup> Donceel-Voûte 1988, p.112, 113.

<sup>74</sup> Donceel-Voûte 1988, p.48, 53.

Byzantium led eventually to the assumption of the superiority of the Byzantine artist<sup>75</sup>.

As we have established, the artist had a non-Muslim (Byzantine) background, in terms of his origin or knowledge, and so non-Muslim features were bound to appear in the wall decorations. As to the meaning of the architectural forms in these mosaics, this will be investigated in the next section, in which I will examine the possible interpretations arising from viewing the architectural forms on the walls of the Great Mosque of Damascus.

#### **1.1.4 Significance of the Architectural Representations**

The question of what significance the architectural decorations on the walls of the Great Mosque of Damascus hold is one that still needs to be discussed. In order to demonstrate the purpose of such decorations, it is essential to outline all the possible interpretations to decide on their exact function. Although there is a level of agreement on the origin of these architectural representations and their artist, their role on the walls of the Mosque is still a matter of debate. In the past, religious and political significances have been considered as an explanation for these architectural representations. However, I would like to explore the idea that a more accurate interpretation is likely to be related to the function of the place where the architectural representations can be seen.

##### **1.1.4.1 Religious Significance**

Religious meanings play a major role in the life of Muslims, and therefore every aspect in their life can be explained by means of religious significance. Art and religion were strongly related in the Muslim era, and accordingly art was understood within a religious context<sup>76</sup>. As a result, it is plausible to consider a

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<sup>75</sup> Grabar 2004, p.277.

<sup>76</sup> Piotrovsky 2000, p.26.

religious interpretation when identifying the meanings of the architectural representations on the walls of the Great Mosque of Damascus. Various scholars including Klaus Brisch has pointed out that the architectural decoration on the walls of the mosque is a representation of how Paradise is described in the Qur'an. On this subject, Brisch emphasizes that the imagery of Paradise appears otherworldly, and recalls the buildings described in the Qur'an, which he believes provided a guide for the architecture depicted. To support his assumption, he quotes some Qur'anic verses related to Paradise, which evoke patterns and designs that could have provided inspiration for the scenes on the walls of the Mosque. The principal point for this comparison is the representation of the Barada River, which formed a distinguishing point between the world of the spectator and the world beyond his experience<sup>77</sup>. Several verses<sup>78</sup> from the Qur'an include a river in their description of Paradise. In these Qur'anic verses, Paradise is described as a garden with a river flowing underneath, and the buildings are said to be *Ghurfa* (room). Since the architectural forms on the walls of the Mosque were depicted with a river extending along the whole scene, we should consider this correlation between text and design.

Finbarr Flood and André Grabar also referred to Paradise in their examination of the architectural representations of the Great Mosque of Damascus. The basis of Finbarr Flood's interpretation of Damascus architectural representation lies in the fact that in the Byzantine Empire hanging pearls have been traditionally thought of as a reflection of heavenly Jerusalem. Therefore, Muslim representation used the same concept to reflect Paradise, as mentioned in the Qur'an<sup>79</sup>. To support his suggestion, Finbarr Flood referred to the representation of hanging pearls decorating some of the buildings represented in Byzantine mosaics, such as those of Rome and

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<sup>77</sup> Brisch 1988, p.15-18.

<sup>78</sup> (Qur'an, Sura 29, verse 58; Sura 25, verse 75).

<sup>79</sup> Flood 2001, p.28; (Qur'an Sura 22, verse 23; Sura 37, verse 49; Sura 52, verse 24).



Ravenna or those shown in the Cathedral of St. George, referring to the Paradise city<sup>80</sup>, which as he points out, are insinuations of jewellery that we may find in Paradise<sup>81</sup>. However, I do not believe that these Christian concepts provide a valid basis to understand the Islamic architectural representation, and I consider a different interpretation, one which is also confirmed by Goodenough, who suggests a different religious meaning for the hanging pearls, namely that they were used as amulets<sup>82</sup>.

Curiously, Oleg Grabar, in contrast to the arguments of others, has difficulty accepting the significance of the architectural representations in the Mosque as a depiction of Paradise. He seems to reject the validity of this interpretation because he believes that Paradise is something that Muslims aspire to reach after death, and that the architectural representations on the walls of the Mosque rather relate to the lives of Muslims<sup>83</sup>. I also believe this to be the case, for Paradise as described in the Qur'an is not just symbolized by buildings, gardens, and rivers, but by other features not appearing on the walls of the Mosque, including streams of milk, honey, and wine that does not make people drunk<sup>84</sup>. In some cases, the gates of Paradise form another essential detail that should have been shown if the scenes were in fact dealing with Paradise. Among the many other aspects that should be present in a description of Paradise are the different types of silk offered to Muslims in that eternal place, and soft beds or tents piled with cushions. Since none of these features is represented, although they are repeated in many Qur'anic verses, I consider it is not an illustration of Paradise, my assumption being further confirmed by the lack of the traditional comparison between Paradise and Hell. Conversely, the jewellery that

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<sup>80</sup> Flood 2001, p.26; Grabar 1967, p.69, 75.

<sup>81</sup> Flood 2001, p.25.

<sup>82</sup> Goodenough 1953, p.252.

<sup>83</sup> Grabar 1992, p.191

<sup>84</sup> Piotrovsky 2000, p.62.

appears widely within the architectural iconographies represented on the walls of the Mosque, and which we may find in descriptions of Paradise, are only mentioned in a few instances of the verses that describe Paradise in the Qur'an. Therefore, it is not possible to generalise this instance as a reference to Paradise, since there are a number of discrepancies in such an interpretation.

Taken as a whole, there is evidence for attributing these architectural representations to the Muslims life on earth rather than in Paradise. However, this does not completely assuage the confusion regarding the significance of these architectural forms. There are still many different ways in which these architectural forms may refer to life on earth. Many religious concepts espoused by Muslims combine with our attempts to draw a meaning from the architectural representations in the Mosque based on a religious implication, and require, therefore, some attention. It should be noted that the Qur'an repeatedly urges and reminds Muslims to choose religion as the focus of life in a challenge that constitutes one of the distinctive Islamic principles. Accordingly, Muslims who devote most of their time to worship and prayers rather than amusement, are promised Paradise rather than Hell. This is clear from many verses<sup>85</sup> of the Qur'an and *Ḥadīths* of the Prophet Muḥammad. One of the main functions of the Qur'an as a Holy Book is to warn Muslims against Judgement Day, and many Qur'anic verses<sup>86</sup> describe the end of the world and the horrors of Hell. This is always accompanied by some verses instructing Muslims on how to prepare for that day and avoid such trials<sup>87</sup>. The decorations on the walls of the Great Mosque of Damascus are closely related to this message, the challenge of religion in life. Personally, I think this could be an illustration of the challenge referred to in the Qur'an posed by the choice between

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<sup>85</sup> (Quran, Sura 69, verses 13-37; Sura 81, verses 1-14; Sura 88, verses 1-16; Sura 99, verses 1-8; Sura 101, verses 1-11).

<sup>86</sup> (Quran, Sura 77, verses 1-50).

<sup>87</sup> Piotrovsky 2000, p.57.

either enjoying life on earth with all its beauties, magnificent buildings, and rivers (similar to those depicted on the walls of the Mosque) or prayers and worship (the acts done in the Mosque). For that reason, the architectural decorations in question are a reflection of this concept of contrast, and perhaps this clarifies why they include beautiful buildings from all parts of the world, which explains their non-Muslim features.

A further possible religious significance may be attributed to another Islamic concept, the appreciation of and gratitude for God's gifts. I think that these architectural decorations are to remind Muslims of all the great gifts that God has offered human beings on earth, materialized in the form of buildings, trees and rivers. Such an interpretation enables us to see Muslims praying in front of all the gifts shown in the scenes on the walls of the Mosque as a way of showing gratitude to God. Therefore, the non-Muslim building forms that appear on the walls of the Mosque represent the gifts of God in different parts of the world.

In the light of the discussion of the possible religious connotations of the architectural decorations shown on the walls of the Mosque, rejecting their relation to Paradise, artists may have used these architectural representations as religious reference to some Islamic concepts. The majority of the religious meanings are related to the verses of the Qur'an that Muslims have to consider and try to fulfil during their lifetime, confirming that these architectural iconographies refer to life on earth.

#### **1.1.4.2 Political Significance**

Nevertheless, since they appear on the walls of the Great Mosque of Damascus, the architectural representations may contain a political significance that should be taken into consideration. Certainly, these architectural representations were meant to express the commemoration of the victory achieved by the ruler over

conquered enemies, as the conquered nations are represented by the capture of their architectural buildings. In fact, there is a clear indication that such representations actually show it was proper for artists to show the captured buildings and architectural forms of defeated nations, in order to indicate the supremacy of the ruler. Since these building forms belong to the homelands of the conquered enemies, now under the supremacy of the ruler, the diversity of their Classical, Hellenistic, Byzantine, and Oriental features is justified<sup>88</sup>. Following the same political connotation of the architectural representations, we consider the opinion suggested by Finbarr Flood in this regard. As he points out, these architectural representations on the walls of the Great Mosque could have been used to strengthen Muslim claims to the Byzantine Empire, since the Mosque of Al-Walīd was near completion when a Muslim army was preparing for an attack on the Byzantine capital. According to Flood's analysis, these architectural iconographies were shown with Byzantine features on the walls of the most important Mosque in the capital of the Umayyads in order to work as an apology to the Byzantine Empire. This is probably true, if we consider that in the eighth century A.D. the Muslim Empire had already expanded to include all the provinces that had been under Byzantine supremacy in the Near East and North Africa<sup>89</sup>. I do not totally agree with Flood on this point, however Muslim decorations or iconographies have never had the function of such an apology. Having established this, it may be the case that to interpret the style of decoration for a great, central, and congregational Mosque in the Umayyad capital as an apology is a little far-fetched. It is hardly surprising that at the time of establishing the political role of the Muslim Caliph through the decorations of the mosque there was a view that this decorative scheme could be an eternal witness and reminder of their mistakes towards the Byzantines. Since the Great Mosque of Damascus has religious

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<sup>88</sup> De Lorey 1933, p.32.

<sup>89</sup> Flood 2001, p.12, 13.

and political importance, it is highly unlikely that Muslims would have decided to show these wall decorations as a public and permanent apology visible to the Muslims from all over the world.

Another political explanation of the architectural representations is that they may also be a reflection of the diplomatic relations and exchanges between the Byzantine Empire and Al-Walīd, which are attested by the many Byzantine features in the mosaic decorations of the Mosque. Under the rule of Al-Walīd, the new capital was designed to be “*Other* than all cities and *New* in its form”, as emphasized by Oleg Grabar. Finbarr Flood, on another occasion, supported this idea and stated that by being a big political city with Byzantine envoys, and native Christians, Damascus should address a mix of Syrian-Christian, and Syrian-Jewish to appeal to these non-Muslim cultures<sup>90</sup>. It should be noted that, in the early eighth century A.D., the Great Mosque of Damascus served as the most significant focus of the city, and when an artist draws architectural representations with various non-Muslim features, they may very well be read as a reflection of the ethnic mixture of society and the resulting multicultural character of the modern city<sup>91</sup>. There is evidence to support Flood’s assertion if we consider the records of Al-Maqdisī, which describe the cosmopolitan society in Syria under the rule of Al-Walīd, accentuating the obvious non-Muslim features on the walls of the Mosque: “Al-Walīd was absolutely right... he saw that Syria was a country with Christian native Pre-Arab Syrians , and noted there their churches so handsome with their enchanting decorations...such as the Church of the Holy Sepulchre...So he undertook for the Muslims the building of

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<sup>90</sup> Flood 2001, p.214, 215.

<sup>91</sup> Flood 2001, p.13.

a Mosque that would divert their attention from the churches and make it one of the wonders of the world”<sup>92</sup>.

The previous discussion illustrates that reliable identification of the significance of the architectural representations on the walls of the Mosque is far more difficult than has been appreciated in the past, and requires an understanding of both the religious and political implications of the decorations. However, if the function of the Great Mosque of Damascus is appreciated, it is possible to question whether there is any association between the significance of the architectural representations on the walls of the Great Mosque of Damascus, and the function of the Mosque itself. The study will show that architectural representations not only suited the function of the Mosque as the most prominent political accomplishment of the ruler, and as the place where various political activities were pursued, but they also served this function and worked within its boundaries.

A number of studies have taken place in the past with the main aim of providing a more comprehensive explanation for the function of the Mosque. It has been observed that the Great Mosque of Damascus was not just a religious structure, but also an institution in which religious instruction was given and where social ceremonies, such as marriages, were performed. Most of these functions relate to the architectural representations as a personification of a city on the walls of the Mosque<sup>93</sup>. Ghazi Bisheh and Robert Irwin point out that the Mosque was also a political arena used as a meeting area for discussions of the various affairs and problems of the community. This is in addition to being the place where

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" قلت يوما لعمى يا عم لم يحسن الوليد حيث انفق اموال المسلمين على جامع دمشق ولو اصراف ذلك في عمارة الطرق والمصانع ورم الحصون لكان اصوب وافضل قال لا تفعل يا بنى ان الوليد وفق وكشف له عن امر جليل وذلك انه رأى الشام بلد النصرارى ورأى لهم فيها بيعة حسنة قد افتن زخارفها وانتشر ذكرها كالقيام والبيعة والرها فاتخذ للمسلمين مسجدا ا شغلهم به عنهن وجعله احد عجائب الدنيا الا ترى ان عبد الملك لما رأى عظم قبة القيامة وهبتها خشى ان تعظم فى قلوب المسلمين فنصب على الصخرة قبة على ما ترى"

Al-Maqdisi 1965, III, p.159.

<sup>93</sup> Chebel 1997, p.66.

administrative announcements were made, and political allegiances were sworn<sup>94</sup>. Finbarr Flood further emphasizes the political function of the mosque: "The building of Damascus in the Umayyad era is viewed as a shrine to Umayyad political ambitions reveals more about the nature of modern socio-political realities than Caliphal concerns"<sup>95</sup>. He adds: "The construction of a lavishly embellished shrine in Damascus provided a place of prayer capable of catering the needs of the Muslim community in a manner determined by the Umayyad political aspirations"<sup>96</sup>. Hence, its political function makes it the most important structure in the city, where extravagant decorations would be in full view, and the patron's personality and accomplishments would be reflected. As a consequence, a political significance for the architectural representations on the walls of the Mosque is proposed as the exact meaning of the decorations, reflecting the reworked city that Damascus will be under the rule of Al-Walīd, and acting as physical evidence of the patronage of the ruler.

Ever since its early, as well as its later phases, the Great Mosque of Damascus was seen by ancient historians such as Ibn Al-Ṭīqtāqā in the thirteenth century, and before him Al-Ṭabarī in the tenth century A.D., as a reflection of the building's political role, which the Caliph wanted the Syrians to witness. Ibn Al-Ṭīqtāqā noted: "The Syrians thought Al-Walīd one of the best of their Caliphs (with exemplary conduct). He built Mosques, that of Damascus, that of Medina-blessing be upon him who lives there-and the Masjid Al-'Aqsā. He made grants to the lepers, and stopped them from public begging. To every cripple he gave a servant...In his Caliphate he made great conquests, including Spain...He was intensely interested in structures and buildings (Al-'imārāt wa Al-Abnīyah), making monuments and estates. In his

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<sup>94</sup> Bisheh 1979, p.118; Irwin 1997, p.59.

<sup>95</sup> Flood 2001, p.239.

<sup>96</sup> Flood 2001, p.240.

time, when people met, they would ask each other about monuments and buildings<sup>97</sup>.

The evidence that the mosque had a political function, clearly suggests that its decoration may have had a political significance. The growth and development of the idea of patronage in the Muslim era may be taken as the basis for dictating the meaning and significance of the Mosque decorative system. Patronage in architecture in the Muslim period started at the hands of 'Abd Al-Malik Ibn Marwān (685-705 A.D.) when he built the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem<sup>98</sup>. However, it was in his son's reign that architectural projects proliferated, and a new tendency of turning existing religious buildings into imperial Mosques began. New constructions were also built including the most important religious sites of the Muslim world such as the Great Mosque of Damascus, the rebuilt Mosque at Medina, and Al-'Aqsā Mosque in Jerusalem<sup>99</sup>. Of paramount importance to a Muslim ruler, such as Al-Walīd, was the erection of a building of patronage in the capital city of the Muslim Empire. This desire of the ruler may have marked the determination to decorate the walls of the Mosque with monumental buildings reflecting such patronage<sup>100</sup>.

In this early Islamic period, the patronage building projects, as in the case of the Great Mosque of Damascus, were considered a reflection of the generosity of the ruler. Therefore, being a lavishly decorated Mosque, the Great Mosque of Damascus is such a patronage building, which attributed the construction and decoration of the building to its patron. Whether the decorative scheme was an order from the patron

<sup>97</sup> "وكان الوليد من افضل خلفائهم سيرة عند اهل الشام بنى الجوامع: جامع دمشق وجامع المدينة» على ساكنها افضل السلام»، و اعطى المجذومين ومنعهم من سؤال الناس واعطى كل مقعد خادما وكل ضرير قائدا و فتح في خلافته فتوحا عظاما منها الاندلس وكاشغر و الهند وكان شديد الكلف بالعمارات و الابنية واتخاذ المصانع والضيايح و كان الناس يلتقون في زمانه فيسأل بعضهم بعضا عن الابنية والعمارات"

Ibn Al-Ṭiqṭāqā 1927, p.92, 93; Ibn Al-Ṭiqṭāqā 1947, p.123; Hinds 1990, XXIII, p.221.

<sup>98</sup> See Grabar O. 1959, "The Umayyad Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem", *Ars Orientalis*, vol.III, p.33-62; Blair Sheila 1992, "What is the Date of the Dome of the Rock?", *Bayt Al-Maqdis.Pt.1*, 'Abd Al-Malik's Jerusalem, *Oxford Studies in Islamic Art*, vol.IX, (Oxford); Nuseibeh S.& Grabar O. 1996, *The Dome of the Rock*, (London).

<sup>99</sup> Irwin 1997, p.72.

<sup>100</sup> Flood 2001, p.9, 10,13.



to the artist or was left to the artist's discretion is obscure due to the lack of contracts and documents that could explain the extent of the artist's remit<sup>101</sup>. Therefore, Muslim rulers preferred to build Mosques in their names, rather than restore the works of a previous ruler. Consequently, the decorations of the Great Mosque of Damascus reflect the idea of a patron of urbanization that became well established in the Islamic era, specifically in the Mamluk period by rulers such as Al-Nāṣir Muḥammad<sup>102</sup> and Al-Ashraf Qāitbāy. The principal theme of the patron of urbanization originated at an earlier date in the Umayyad period, when Al-Walīd decided to incorporate this idea in his building of a great Mosque in the city of Damascus, and by his depiction of the urbanized city under his rule on the walls<sup>103</sup>.

If we place the architectural representations on the walls of the Mosque within the context of a patron of urbanization, or the patronage of the ruler, then these decorations mirror the city of Damascus as the ruler wished it to be under his rule. In this configuration, in order for the wall decorations to be a visual representation of a city, the details of the decoration work to validate such an assumption. It is interesting to note that some signs of city representation have been recognized on the Mosque wall decorations. Firstly, the architectural forms show not only houses and palaces, but also religious buildings of both Muslim and Christian style. Secondly, some Christian buildings (fig.15) represented among the scenes show a cross on top of their roofs. This combination of both building types indicates the representation of a city where two religions were practised, and this certainly applied to the city of Damascus. One building (fig.16), found above the first pier to the South, has two domes and a tower with a window and arrow slits designed in the form of a cross to identify the building as Christian. The next example is a representation of another

<sup>101</sup> Irwin 1997, p.71.

<sup>102</sup> About Al-Nāṣir's reign see Shuja'ī Shams Al-Dīn 1977-85, *Ta'rikh Al-Malik Al-Nāṣir Muḥammad Ibn Qalā'ūn Al-Ṣāliḥ wa-Awladihī*, vols.I,II, (Wiesbaden).

<sup>103</sup> Rabbat 1996, p.267.

building (fig.17a) identifiable as a Mosque since it has a domed roof and probably the base of a minaret. Other architectural examples (figs.17-19) recall architectural features of a Muslim nature, as seen on the North wall of the transept and on the South face of the Northern wall of the prayer hall. The presence of the Mosque featuring here together with churches indicates another characteristic ascribed to a city representation, the religious conciliation between the two religions in the one place where the architectural representations appear. From this, we can state that the presence of these different types of religious structures inferred a realistic representation that mirrors the types of buildings existing in the city of Damascus at the time, given that Damascus was a place where splendid examples of Christian churches had existed long before Muslim rule<sup>104</sup>.

Further support for the idea that the representation of the building representation on the walls of the Great Mosque of Damascus refers to a city is the fact that this was an art tradition long before the Muslim era. Here we have to refer back to the many examples that survive, showing that the idea of a city representation existed long before the Muslim era and was inherited and adapted during the Muslim period. For example, in the Ancient Egyptian era, there was a decorative system of city representation. Scenes from the wall paintings<sup>105</sup> that used to decorate the tomb of Horemheb at Memphis of 1570-1070 B.C., perhaps the earliest known city representations, show a magnificent scene of the houses (fig.20) of the ancient city of Memphis. These houses, separated by lanes, have entrances and simple flat roofs, and are filled with furniture such as boxes and pottery containers set on stands<sup>106</sup>.

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<sup>104</sup> Burckhardt 1976, p.20.

<sup>105</sup> See Martin Geoffrey 1991, *The Hidden Tombs of Memphis*, (London).

<sup>106</sup> Wilson 1997, p.122.

As in the Ancient Egyptian era, city representation continued to account for the majority of decorations in the Classical era, which is considered the direct source of inspiration for Muslim art. One Classical example is the sixth century A.D. Ma'daba map<sup>107</sup> (figs.21-23) in the Church of Saint George in Jordan in which many cities have been outlined with their buildings and identified by inscriptions, such as the cities of Jerusalem, those of the Holy Land, and those around the Dead Sea area. The map, which is considered to be the earliest proper representation of a city, seems to have originally occupied the Eastern half of the church and to have measured approximately 16m. by 6m.<sup>108</sup>. Another Classical example of a city representation is the mosaics of Umm Al-Rassas<sup>109</sup> in 750 A.D. (fig.24) in Jordan, in which another map portraying different cities, although not accompanied by their names, appears. Extraordinary similarities exist between the Ma'daba map city representation and that of the Great Mosque in Damascus (fig.25), for example in the common representation of a river and a sailing boat. Oleg Grabar is of the opinion that this similarity may imply one of two meanings: the first concerns the type of the building itself, which could be the same in both cases; and the second is the place or a monument<sup>110</sup>. As the idea of city representation appeared in the Ma'daba map before it did on the walls of the Mosque, a third interpretation may be taken into consideration, the adoption of this idea into the Muslim era. With further alterations, the idea of city representation was treated in a peculiar way in Muslim art to reflect the function of the Mosque from the political point of view. It refers to Damascus itself as the place where the Mosque exists.

<sup>107</sup> For further information see Levi D. 1947, *Antioch Mosaic Pavements*, (Princeton); Irving Lavin 1963, "The Hunting Mosaics", *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, vol.XVII.

<sup>108</sup> Avi-Yonah 1959, pl.7; Ling 1998, p.99.

<sup>109</sup> See Piccirillo M. 1987, "Le Iscrizioni di Um er-Rasas", *Liber Annuus*, vol.XXXVII; 1988, "The Mosaics at Um er-Rasas", *Biblical Archaeologist*, vol.LI; Ognibene Susanna 2002, *Umm al-Rasas: La Chiesa di Santo Stefano ed il 'Problema I Conofobico'*, (Roma).

<sup>110</sup> Grabar 1992, p.185.

It is significant that later on (before the end of the Fatimid era) city representation scenes prevailed and developed in Muslim art on various occasions. One of the examples recording a city representation in Islamic art, an Islamic manuscript fragment, dated not later than the Fatimid era, (now kept in the Metropolitan Museum of Art)<sup>111</sup>, comes from Fustāṭ in Egypt. This manuscript includes an illustration (fig.26) of many houses arranged in horizontal rows. The need to depict buildings, in this example, played a key role in the development of city representation, as it became the earliest portrayal of groups of buildings on Islamic art objects<sup>112</sup>. Although the buildings lack realism in terms of representation, I believe that they gave a clear idea about the development of city scenes compared to their predecessors. The scene shows an upper row of very similar houses arranged near each other with gabled roofs, no entrances, and with one window in each house. Below this, there is a representation of a large central two-storeyed house. The third row down shows two buildings of which the lower has two windows and a central door, while the upper has a large window with two opened shutters. On the right lies a house with a large central door and a multi-storeyed roof rich with geometrical decoration. To the left of this upper building, there is another small building with a central door. A second example of a city representation dealing with historical and geographical subjects from the manuscript of "The Order of the World and its Wonders" or (*Qānūn Al-Dunyā wā 'aja'ibihā*) of 970 A.H. /1563 A.D., Egypt, is the illustration (fol.64v) of a map of Cairo and the Rhoda (Rūdah) island. This manuscript, where variety of buildings is shown, was composed by Aḥmad Ibn 'Alī Ibn Al-Marḥūm Al-Sa'ūdī, and is now kept in the Library of the Topkapi Saray Museum at Istanbul<sup>113</sup>. Another illustration (fol.30r) from the same manuscript

<sup>111</sup> (Inv. No. Acc. No.1971.237.5).

<sup>112</sup> Grube 1995, p.73.

<sup>113</sup> (Revan 1638). Haldane 1978, p.11,56.

represents some arrangements of buildings (fig.27) surrounded with arcades and foliage<sup>114</sup>.

Following the same theme outlined in our analysis, namely the interpretation of the significance of any architectural representation in relation to the function of the building where it is represented, we can consider another example. Inspired by the decorations on the walls of the Great Mosque of Damascus is another building of a much later date 1277-1281 A.D., the Mausoleum of Baybars<sup>115</sup> in Damascus. The walls of the mausoleum are decorated with a frieze of golden mosaics representing architectural iconographies (fig.28) accompanied with vegetal ornaments, such as trees<sup>116</sup>. When the function of the building where the same architectural representations are found changes, their significance occasionally differs. When this approach is taken in the analysis of the significance of the architectural representations on the walls of the mausoleum, it becomes clear that they assume a different significance, Paradise as described in the Qur'an, unlike that on the walls of the Great Mosque of Damascus.

The next example, the Mamluk Mosque Madrasa of Sultan Ḥasan in Cairo, supports our findings of the specific significance of architectural decorations on Islamic architecture.

## 1.2 The Mosque Madrasa of Sultan Ḥasan

A clearer example of what Muslim architecture that displays figures of architectural forms in sculpture may have looked like can be gained from a study of the Mosque Madrasa of Sultan Ḥasan, built by Sultan Al-Nāṣir Ḥasan Ibn Qalā'ūn

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<sup>114</sup> Haldane 1978, p.11,56.

<sup>115</sup> Baybars was the only Mamluk ruler to be buried in Damascus while all other Sultans were buried in Egypt. His mausoleum was constructed for him by his son after his death. The architectural design of this mausoleum was understood to copy that of the Madrasa Al-'Ādiliyyah (1223/24 A.D.) which is located opposite to the mausoleum in Syria. See Meinecke M. 1992, *Die Mamlukische Architektur in Ägypten und Syrien (648/1250 bis 923/1517)*, (Glückstadt); Meinecke-Berg 2000, p.192.

<sup>116</sup> Meinecke-Berg 2000, p.192.

and dated to 1356-1360 A.D., in Cairo<sup>117</sup>. It seems that the architectural representations on the portal of the Mosque Madrasa are not just decorative. Their representations, beside working as disguised signatures of their artist, announce the glory of the Mosque Madrasa of Sultan Ḥasan in relation to other great buildings, which are well known for their religious and teaching heritage. This becomes clear if we consider the function of the Mosque Madrasa, where the architectural forms are shown, as a key educational and religious centre where students from different parts of the Muslim world gathered to witness such heritage and glory.

One of the purposes of showing extravagance in the construction of this Madrasa with its architectural sculptures was to follow in the tradition of great predecessors, and to compare the Madrasa to similar earlier constructions. This explains the representation of some architectural figures at the portal of the Madrasa and identifies their significance in reflecting these meanings. Ibn Iyās notes this, when talking about the return of Sultan Ḥasan to his kingdom: "The construction of this Madrasa of Sultan Ḥasan highlights his activities and status among other Egyptian Kings, as was expressed by Ibn Abbī Ḥijlah, who said on the occasion of the construction of the Madrasa: 'We are unlike other venerated predecessors who relied on their ancestors, for we build just as much as our predecessors and even surpass them'"<sup>118</sup>. Ibn Iyās is clearly describing the function of the Mosque Madrasa, from which its architectural representations drew their significance. I will support my hypothesis by studying the form of the architectural representations, and analyzing their origins, which will provide information about the artist and thus give a better understanding of the interpretations of these architectural forms.

<sup>117</sup> Rogers 1970-71, p.43.

<sup>118</sup> "ان بناء مدرسة السلطان حسن دال على افعاله وعلى علو قدر همته بين الملوك المصرية وقد قال فيه ابن ابي حجلة: لسنا وان كرمتم او ائللنا-يوما على الانساب نتكل- نبني كما كانت اوائلنا- نبني ونفعل فوق ما فعلوا"

Ibn Iyās 1893-1896, I, p.204.

### 1.2.1 Description of the Architectural Representations

Close study of the exterior decoration of the Northern façade of the Mosque revealed a piece of sculpture (fig.29) with three relief architectural buildings on top of each other in a vertical panel on the Western wing of the façade's entrance, near a finely carved disc. The third building (fig.30) shown at the bottom of this vertical band is small with two floors covered by a pyramidal roof, and is flanked on both sides by high buildings. Doris Behrens-Abouseif considered this domed structure with a gabled roof a representation of a Gothic portal of Western, or more probably Byzantine, origin. The second building from the bottom (fig.31) is a domed structure resting on a conical shaped base that was also interpreted by Behrens-Abouseif as a manifestation of the Dome of the Rock<sup>119</sup>. Unfortunately, the top building representation (fig.32) in this panel is damaged. Max Herz, referred to the buildings shown by the portal of the Mosque Madrasa as six buildings: three large buildings alternating with three small ones, all executed in relief carving. Each of the large buildings is shown with a pointed arch (fig.33) resting on columns as part of an arcade. Turning to the small buildings, the third one at the bottom of the panel (fig.30) is a two-storeyed building flanked by two elevated structures, near which another building is visible with its many windows and door. The second building from the bottom (fig.31) is a church, which is elevated by an arcade over which stands another floor, which serves as the base of the cylindrical neck of the dome, which in turn features many windows and is covered with a dome<sup>120</sup>.

Interpretation of the sculpture is problematic because it was not employed in any earlier architecture of the Muslim era. This is confirmed by what the Moroccan historian Al-Wārthīlānī notes in his records when he visited Egypt in the eighteenth

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<sup>119</sup> Behrens-Abouseif 1989, p.125.

<sup>120</sup> Herz 1899, p.24.

century A.D.: "In one of its doors there is a nice marble panel said to have been attributed to the *Iwān* of Khusraw, and it has strange sculptures"<sup>121</sup>. Here we may presume that Al-Wārthilānī is referring to buildings that are not of purely Islamic source. This raises a number of questions regarding the reason for their presence on the portal of the Mosque Madrasa. By looking more closely at the source of their design, we may uncover further details about their nature, and the choice of their specific forms.

### 1.2.2 Source of the Architectural Representations

The origin of the architectural examples sculpted on the façade of the Mosque Madrasa has been an issue of debate. Michael Rogers traced their origin to the Seljuks, and explained how the Seljuk style started to influence Muslim art and architecture, particularly evident during the Mamluk period. A possible reason for this emerges from the events of 1220-1280 A.D. when Seljuk architecture reached its peak, especially in Anatolia. Towards the end of the thirteenth century, numerous Seljuk artists migrated from Anatolia across the Muslim Empire, escaping from the uneasy life in Anatolia, and fleeing the interest of the Mongols in the Anatolian lands. Cairo was one of the destinations chosen by many of these Seljuk migrants, and there is evidence of a link between Egypt and Anatolia owing to the trade routes running from the North of Syria to Egypt across Anatolia. It has been established that Mamluks were interested in Anatolia from the rule of the Mamluk Sultan Baybars onwards, a link that was easily maintained due to the availability of trade connections with Crimea, and thanks to the commercial relations between Alexandria and the Cilician port of Ayas. Such trade routes between Egypt and Anatolia seem to have paved the way for the Seljuks, of whom some were artists, to

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"في أحد ابوابه سارية رخامية لطيفة يقال انها من ابوان كسرى, وفيها نقوش عجيبة"  
Al-Wārthilānī 1908, p.265; 'Abd Al-Wahhāb 1946, p.166, 167.



dissolve within the Muslim community, and this contributed to the appearance of Seljuk features in the art and architecture of the Muslim era<sup>122</sup>.

### 1.2.3 Architectural Representations as the Work of an Artist

The architectural forms on the portal of the Mosque Madrasa of Sultan Ḥasan also show not to have been only decorative, but also to form a disguised signature of the artist who produced them. The three buildings sculptured at the portal of the Mosque Madrasa indicate the origin of the artist as probably a Byzantine who may have had the opportunity to study Islamic designs in one of the Seljuk schools. This is possibly owing to the strong relations between the Byzantines and the Seljuks during the Mamluk period, and is signified by the representation of some Byzantine features, such as Byzantine churches, in the carvings of the architectural forms at the portal of the Mosque<sup>123</sup>.

In the records of the historian Ghars Al-Dīn Khalīl Ibn Shāhīn, who died in 873 A.H. /1468 A.D., there is a reference to the non-Muslim origin of the artist who produced the architectural decorative scheme on the side of the portal of the Mosque Madrasa. Ibn Shāhīn stated: "It is unique, it was said that King Al-Nāṣir Ḥasan, called for architects from all over the world to construct his Madrasa, whose height was never equalled by any other building"<sup>124</sup>. Max Herz considered that the artist who produced that work was a Byzantine Christian and that these buildings might have worked as the first subjective manifestation of the artist in a disguised way<sup>125</sup>.

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<sup>122</sup> Rogers 1970-71, p.43.

<sup>123</sup> Rogers 1970-71, p.43.

<sup>124</sup> "ليس لها نظير في الدنيا، فقد حكى ان الملك الناصر حسن لما امر بعمارته طلب مهندسين من اقطار الارض وامرهم بعمارة مدرسته — ولم يعمر اعلی منها"

Ibn Shāhīn 1894, p.31; 'Abd Al-Wahhāb 1946, p.166.

<sup>125</sup> Herz 1899, p.25.

Of the Byzantine features in the sculptured architectural representations by the portal of the Mosque Madrasa, the similarity is between the third building at the bottom of the panel, and the images of Byzantine churches as they appear in the mosaic decorations of ancient Byzantine churches in Jordan and Palestine. The mosaic floors of many of these ancient churches that are dated to the fifth, sixth and seventh centuries A.D. represent scenes of cities, or of the sites which were used for pilgrimage where different types of Byzantine churches existed. The formula of representation in these examples, which is the general polygonal form, the point of view from which they are seen, the form and placing of the towers, and the colonnades in the gate ways are purely Byzantine and recall the frescoes of the Fall of Icarus at Pompeii, and also on the Peutinger Table manuscript as well as other manuscripts. This formula shows similarity to the building represented at the bottom of the panel<sup>126</sup>.

Among the many examples of these church mosaic decorations a few are worthy of particular mention. The mosaics<sup>127</sup> in the Church of the Holy Martyrs Lot and Procopius that was built at the time of Bishop John of Ma'daba in the middle of the sixth century A.D. (557 A.D.) show a scene of a building iconography. It has been identified by Michele Piccirillo as a representation of a church (fig.34a) in a Nilotic motif between a fisherman and a boatman<sup>128</sup>. The church is depicted as a two-storeyed building, with gabled roof flanked by two high buildings and a third structure, in a composition similar to the third building representation that is shown at the bottom of the panel in the Mosque Madrasa of Sultan Ḥasan<sup>129</sup>. Another example at Khirbat Mukhayyat (the Village of Nebo), is the Church of the Acropolis

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<sup>126</sup> Crowfoot 1941, p.130.

<sup>127</sup> The church was identified in 1913, and in 1935 Br. Jerome Mihaic of the Franciscans started excavations in the area.

<sup>128</sup> Piccirillo 1993, p.164-165.

<sup>129</sup> Piccirillo 1993, p.160, 161.

or Ma'in which has many mosaics (fig.34b,c) with architectural representations<sup>130</sup> that look similar to Sultan Ḥasan's building representation, with gabled roof and flanking buildings at the bottom of the panel<sup>131</sup>. Max Herz's interpretation of the second building from the bottom in Sultan Ḥasan's Madrasa as being a Byzantine church, as mentioned previously, is due to its similarity to the design of domed churches that appear in the mosaics of Ma'in Church<sup>132</sup>. The churches at Umm Al-Rassas (fig.35b) support the idea of the Byzantine origin of the building forms represented by the portal of the Mosque Madrasa. In the Church of the Bishop Sergius at Umm Al-Rassas that dates to 587-88 A.D., there is another representation of a church with gabled roof and flanked with a similar form of building as that at the bottom of the panel in Sultan Ḥasan's<sup>133</sup>. Similarly, in the Church of the Lions at Umm Al-Rassas that dates to the eighth century A.D. another representation of a church (fig.35a) recalls the building at the bottom of the panel<sup>134</sup>.

The Church of Saint John the Baptist at Gerasa that dates to 531 A.D. shows on its Northern side a floor mosaic (fig.35c) with a picture of the city of Alexandria accompanied with an inscription indicating its name. Various church designs are incorporated in the mosaics (fig.36a, b) and some are similar to the building representation by the portal of the Mosque Madrasa<sup>135</sup>. In the Church of Saint Peter and Saint Paul at Gerasa, there are pictures on a smaller scale, if compared with those in the previous church, referring to the two cities of Alexandria and Memphis. In these city representations, again different designs of churches are represented,

<sup>130</sup> Discovered in 1934 by Mufaddi Ibn Musa Haddadin while he was building a house.

<sup>131</sup> Piccirillo 1993, p.164, 165.

<sup>132</sup> Piccirillo 1993, figs.299, 308, 310.

<sup>133</sup> Piccirillo 1993, p.210.

<sup>134</sup> Piccirillo 1993, p.222.

<sup>135</sup> Crowfoot 1941, p.129

including the church form at the Mosque Madrasa, and are all examples to Byzantine churches<sup>136</sup>.

The dissimilarity between the architectural representations by the portal of the Mosque Madrasa of Sultan Hasan and those depicted in the manuscripts produced for the Crusaders in Jerusalem (dated between the eleventh and thirteenth centuries A.D.) is another indication of the Byzantine influence on the former. These manuscripts have distinctive features and identity of their own because they derived from a place where various styles of art and multiple cultures are mingled. In these places, the art of illumination and illustration was maintained at the highest level of perfection, which made it difficult to compare with other similar art productions of the time. For instance, the Psalter of Queen Melisende of Jerusalem (1131-1160 A.D.), which is now kept in the British Museum, has various architectural representations with features that follow two different traditions: Byzantine style including a number of non-Byzantine features; and Western style, but with many Byzantine elements<sup>137</sup>. This shows that miniature painting in the Crusader kingdom was not a "Colonial art", but has a distinctive style of its own. This style derived from many sources also because of the act of copying illuminations from Byzantine and Western manuscripts, this is in addition to developing certain features of such models to create other distinctive features exclusive to these manuscripts<sup>138</sup>.

Examples of these exclusive features can be noticed by considering the illustration of "The Entry into Jerusalem" in the same Psalter, which has a close parallel to the Byzantine mosaic themes of decoration, especially those mosaics of Daphni. However, this decoration was treated in a very unusual way compared to Byzantine traditions in which the palm branches in the hands of the human figures

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<sup>136</sup> Crowfoot 1941, p.130.

<sup>137</sup> Buchthal 1986, p.xxvii.

<sup>138</sup> Buchthal 1986, p.xxxii.

greeting the entry of Jesus to Jerusalem are missing. Another illustration in the same Psalter shows "The Raising of Lazarus" in which the tomb depicted disagrees with the traditional Byzantine way that was used for such a representation; that is to say the tomb is not carved out of the rock, but rather creates the arched entrance to an ordinary building. This is in addition to the tombstone being held in a slanting position, not by only one man as it used to appear in Gospel illustrations, but by two men. Furthermore, even though they appear to carry it, the two men are moving in two different directions, an imagery that does not agree with comparable Byzantine scenes<sup>139</sup>.

Of the Latin Western features in the Crusader miniatures that derive them away from being an example of pure Byzantine source for comparison with the Mosque Madrasa of Sultan Ḥasan, are many elements among which is the way how the human figures are represented, especially in the illustrations of the Crucifixion and the Ascension. These are shown not to be standing upright, but with their heads bent as if suspended from ropes<sup>140</sup>. Among the exclusive features that are the inventions of the manuscript are the architectural settings in the miniatures of the "Last Supper", and "The Washing of the Feet" in the same Psalter. The two symmetrical tower-like buildings are of the artist's (Basilius's) own imagination, and are added only for an artistic purpose, namely to support the action and give balance to the illustration, again moving it away from any Byzantine source<sup>141</sup>.

Two facts discourage consideration of these Crusader manuscripts as having a Byzantine source, and establish the Byzantine influences on the architectural forms of the Mosque Madrasa. The first is that in the second half of the twelfth century A.D. the influence of the Crusader illumination was very strong, and there was a

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<sup>139</sup> Buchthal 1986, p.5.

<sup>140</sup> Buchthal 1986, p.8.

<sup>141</sup> Buchthal 1986, p.8.

higher level of Western elements of representation than ever before, especially in the details of the illustrations of these manuscript, whose main source of influence was Norman Sicily. The second is that in the thirteenth century A.D., in these Crusader manuscripts produced in Acre, the illumination of the cycles of the *Histoire Universalle*, and of the *History of the Outremer of William of Tyre* was declining in standard. This was for multiple reasons: the general lack of interest due to the growing apathy of Latin Christianity towards Syria and Palestine, as well as military disasters; the Latin developments by the works of Aristotle in which Byzantine art started to take new forms; and the nature of the multi-racial society in Acre, which led to the rise of multi-racial features in its manuscript production<sup>142</sup>.

Similar to the Crusaders manuscripts, the study of the manuscripts produced in the monastery of Saint Catherine in Sinai, although bearing many Byzantine features in their architectural representations, are not pure Byzantine sources to compare with the architectural representations of the Mosque Madrasa of Sultan Hasan. In the first three centuries after the Arab occupation to Egypt, Sinai was cut off from Byzantine civilization and its flooding influence. Instead, it was open to influences from all orthodox countries, and this led to Sinai being the meeting place of manuscripts from various origins and sources, not only the Byzantine. The nearest destination to Sinai from which many influences would have transferred to its art is Jerusalem, whose manuscripts, as the study has previously shown, have many Western and Byzantine features. Included in the Byzantine features in Sinai manuscripts are some ornaments and colours similar to those used in Constantinople. These features appear in some of the ninth century A.D. dated manuscripts, such as the one containing the canons, which cannot definitely be attributed to Constantinople because, unlike the Constantinople ornamentations, these were

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<sup>142</sup> Buchthal 1986, p.103-105.

meager ornaments, probably reflecting the condition of each monastery. Only two Gospel Books, Cod.188, and Cod.155 in Sinai can be attributed to Palestine with certainty. However, because these two manuscripts have no architectural representations, it was not possible to consider them in a comparative study with those of the Mosque Madrasa<sup>143</sup>.

Among tenth century Sinai manuscripts, several have ornamentations recalling those from Constantinople, such as the fretsaw pattern, but still cannot be proved with certainty to have been produced there. All of these tenth century manuscripts had no architectural representations, only floral ornaments. From the eleventh century A.D., twelve out of twenty-three manuscripts are attributed to Constantinople. However, they still preserve many features of Western art, and are not good examples of pure Byzantine art. For example, the Gospel Lectionary (Cod. 205) of the eleventh century A.D. was probably from Constantinople and reached Sinai from an area where Western influence was highly dominant and strongly practiced. The architectural representations in this manuscript, such as in the illustration of Saint John (fol.2) and in that of Saint Luke (fol.113v) have roofs that belong to a Western tradition rather than Byzantine art. The only eleventh century manuscript attributed to Sinai is Cod.1186 which has some architectural representations (fol.28r) showing "The Ptolemaic Throne", and (fol.74v) showing "The Smiting of the Rock". However, these architectural images although preserving some Byzantine features in their decoration, are simple and primitive in form, incomparable with the more sophisticated architectural representations in the Mosque Madrasa of Sultan Hasan<sup>144</sup>.

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<sup>143</sup> Kurt 1990, I, p.6-10.

<sup>144</sup> Kurt 1990, I, p.6-10.

Furthermore, the thirteenth century Sinai manuscripts cannot fall into the category of pure Byzantine art. Therefore, it is not possible to consider any of them as sources of inspiration for the architectural decorations in the Mosque Madrasa. These thirteenth century examples have a degree of non-Byzantine features; for example, the manuscript of John Chrysostom. Although it was kept in the Mangana monastery at Constantinople in the thirteenth century A.D., its Constantinopolitan origin is not definite due to its dissimilarity to the style of miniature paintings of eleventh century Constantinople in both colour and design. Alternatively, the style of its decoration found parallels to the manuscripts of Cyprus. The only explanation to this feature is most probably that this is a Constantinople manuscript that was illustrated by a Cypriot painter<sup>145</sup>.

Since the architectural forms in the mosque Madrasa of Sultan Hasan have shown to include non-Muslim (Byzantine) architectural elements, particularly in the building at the bottom of the decorative vertical band, this suggests an artistic pronouncement of some architectural features of the artist's homeland. Hence, two opinions were proposed as to the origin of the artist: the first suggested a Byzantine background, while the second suggested a Syrian. According to Herz, most likely the artist was Byzantine of Oriental origins, as the type of church represented matches the plans of Byzantine churches. This implies that the artist was a Christian Byzantine. The other building represented in the sculpture, which shows a resemblance to Seljuk architecture, suggests that Muslim art occupied a great part of the education of the artist. This is probably because after the Muslim conquest, the Islamic community spread widely in the Byzantine Empire, including the Seljuks

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<sup>145</sup> Kurt 1990, I, p.6-10.



and the Turks of Asia Minor, who had relations with the rest of the Muslim Empire, especially in the period from the twelfth to the fourteenth century A.D.<sup>146</sup>.

There is no concrete evidence to provide us with any information about the artist of the Mosque Madrasa, except on one occasion. In 1944, a text containing the name of an architect was discovered inside the Mosque Madrasa. The script starts with a *Basmalah* followed by some Qur'anic verses, and a statement reading: "God, the eternal, whose gifts are uncountable, May you maintain glory, victory, and power by giving long life to him through whom you supported Islam and Muslims and...Ḥasan son of our lord Sultan...as you have granted him may you continue to grant his descendants, may you keep the writer's country safe, and the builder of this Muḥammad Ibn Baylīk Al-Muḥsinī"<sup>147</sup>. The artist whose name was found in the Mosque Madrasa is a member of the Ibn Baylīk family, who originate from the time of the Mamluk Sultan Al-Manṣūr Qalā'ūn, grandfather of Al-Nāṣir Ḥasan. During the time of Sultan Ḥasan, Muḥammad Ibn Baylīk was an Emir who supported the Sultan against his rival Yalbughā. Since his name is mentioned close to that of the Sultan, in the same inscribed text in the Mosque Madrasa, the artist was probably one of the key architects charged with the construction of the building<sup>148</sup>. Yet, Muḥammad Ibn Baylīk was not the only architect to whom we may ascribe the architectural representations by the portal of the Madrasa<sup>149</sup>. This is because Ibn Taghrī Bardī, in his records, referred to not only one but also many architects and supervisors who were involved in the construction of the Mosque Madrasa rather

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<sup>146</sup> Herz 1899, p.25.

<sup>147</sup> "بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم ان المتقين في جنات وعيون ادخلوها بسلام امنين ونزعنا ما في صدورهم — الى قوله تعالى: وما هم منها بمخرجين. اللهم يا دائم لا يفنا يا من نعمه لا تحصى ادم العز والتمكين والنصر والفتح المبين بقاء من ايدت به الإسلام والمسلمين واحييت...حسن ابن مولانا السلطان...عنه على ما وليته وخلده في ذريته كتبه تحموا دولته وشاد عمارته محمد ابن بيليك المحسن"

'Abd Al-Wahhāb 1946, p.179.

<sup>148</sup> 'Abd Al-Wahhāb 1946, p.179.

<sup>149</sup> 'Abd Al-Wahhāb 1946, p.179.

than just one<sup>150</sup>. In addition, the two mistakes in the spelling of two Arabic words<sup>151</sup> inscribed in the text, which were noticed by Ḥasan 'Abd Al-Wahhāb, might refer to the involvement of other architects and supervisors whose native language was not Arabic<sup>152</sup>.

As we have established, the source of the architectural representations and their origin uncover the identity of the artist in terms of origin, religion and artistic background. However, these findings specified neither the meaning hidden behind their representations, nor their relation with the place and function of the building where they are to be found, in the context of Islamic decoration. These are points that will be explored in the following section.

## **1.2.4 Significance of the Architectural Representations**

### **1.2.4.1 Political Significance**

One political interpretation of the architectural forms is the idea that they are commemorating and extolling the virtues of the ruler or the patron of the building. Even though this idea existed long before the Mamluk rule, it is certainly true that by 699 A.H. /1300 A.D. (in the Mamluk period) a new style of architectural planning and decoration had evolved. The rulers of that time believed themselves to be heirs to the great heritage of the world, and the patrons seem to have encouraged the introduction of various non-Muslim influences as an announcement to the people of their supremacy over the world<sup>153</sup>. Many features appear in the structure of the Mosque Madrasa of Sultan Ḥasan as proof of such a theory. For example, the monumental building of the Madrasa with its vertical setting of windows in the façade, giving a dramatic effect to the height of the building, is one of the

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<sup>150</sup> Ibn Taghrī Bardī 1929-1938, V/I, p.150.

<sup>151</sup> (يفنا) instead of (يفنى) and (تحمو) instead of (تحمى).

<sup>152</sup> Abd Al-Wahhāb 1946, p.179.

<sup>153</sup> Humphreys 1972, p.97.

characteristics of Mamluk architecture in Egypt and Syria. It emphasizes that the building is one of the possessions of the Muslim Caliph, as a ruler of the world. Another feature, reflecting the same political meaning, is the protruding entrance that appears in the Mosque Madrasa as well as in many other Mamluk buildings<sup>154</sup>. A third feature includes the use of stone covered with stucco decoration in the Mosque Madrasa as well as in other Mamluk constructions<sup>155</sup>. We can infer that the manifestation of some features such as Seljuk, Mongol, and others in the Mosque Madrasa, and again in other Mamluk architecture in Cairo, was to convey a political message from the founder as the ruler of the world.

It is plausible to think that the Mamluks also gave their attention to representing the metaphorical symbolism of palaces in their monuments. Thus, the three carved architectural elements on the side of the portal of the Mosque may be explained as standing symbolically for three great buildings in the Muslim world: the Dome of the Rock, the Ka'bah in Mecca, and a church or Gothic portal<sup>156</sup>. Baldwin Smith, when discussing the city gate portal, and the towered façades' origin and significance in the pre-Islamic era, pointed out that Muslims adopted these ideas of this symbolism in their own monuments. He writes: "The castrum portal surmounted by either sculptural baldachins or flanking towers crowned with royal cupolas, had become by the time of Diocletian a universally recognized symbol of the Sacrum Palatium, and as such exemplified the government, the virtues, and God-like distinction"<sup>157</sup>. It is possible that the Mamluks followed such a style to encourage comparison between their own buildings, such as the Mosque Madrasa of

<sup>154</sup> Examples include the Madrasa of Shadbakht at Aleppo that dates to the twelfth century A.D., Mashhad Al-Ḥusṣaīn at Aleppo that dates to the thirteenth century A. D., and Madrasat Al-Zāhirīyyah at Firdaus outside Aleppo dated to the thirteenth century A.D. See Creswell K.A.C. 1978, *The Muslim Architecture of Egypt*, vol. II, (New York), p.146, 147.

<sup>155</sup> Humphreys 1972, p.98.

<sup>156</sup> Smith 1956, p.186-188; Humphreys 1972, p.80.

<sup>157</sup> Smith 1956, p.186.

Sultan Ḥasan, and other great buildings existing in the world, to demonstrate that their buildings are equally important. This, in a way, emphasizes the religious and cultural roles of the Mosque Madrasa, and explains the reason why non-Muslim architectural features are exposed.

Presuming that the buildings represented in the Madrasa refer to three structures of a known religious heritage, the study proposes that these architectural representations may also commemorate the good deeds of the works the patron carried out in these religious buildings. For example, one of the three buildings represents a domed building interpreted as being the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem, and it is known that the ruler did restoration works to enrich the Dome of the Rock by offering gifts of various sorts<sup>158</sup>. During the Mamluk period, many Mamluk Sultans were involved with religious sites, such as Mecca, and Jerusalem, as well as Mosques. The main purpose of these activities was probably to commemorate the pious works of the ruler in supporting venerated religious structures. This was sometimes done through either the system of *Waqfs*<sup>159</sup> (or endowments) developed in the Muslim era, through which many grants were awarded to important religious buildings. On other occasions, this was achieved either by presenting holy places with gifts such as Mosque lamps and candlesticks, or by restoring the routes leading to these holy places. One example of such a gift is a candlestick (fig.37), of the Mamluk period 696 A.H. /1297 A.D., which is now kept in the Islamic Museum at Cairo. On its neck is a Naskhi inscription which names Shādī Ibn Shirkūh, who has probably been a ruler in the time of Sultan Lājīn as the benefactor, donating this

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<sup>158</sup> Piotrovsky 2000, p.45.

<sup>159</sup> "The *Waqf*, an institution common in all Muslim countries (Known in the Maghreb as *habus*) is a perpetual endowment. Revenues of land or real estates are legally bound to finance the administration and upkeep of costly institutions...In order to secure a source of income for their Mosques or their madrasas founders (waqifs) need to alienate agricultural land or commercial structures". See Denoix 2000, p.191; Al-Maqrīzī 1972, *Kitāb Al-Sūlūk Li Ma'rīfat Duwal Al-Mulūk*, vol.IV, (Cairo), p.765; Behrens-Abouseif D. 1994, *Egypt's Adjustment to Ottoman Rule- Institutions, Waqf, and Architecture in Cairo (16<sup>th</sup> & 17<sup>th</sup> Centuries)*, (Leiden & New York).

candlestick to the Mosque of Ibn Ṭūlūn. The inscription reads: "Made for the Mosque which deserves prosperity, by the long life of the King of the Kings of the Muslims, our Lord, the Sultan, the King Al-Manṣūr Ḥusām Al-Dunyā wa Al-Dīn Abū 'Abd Allah Lājīn who came close to God by the restoration he ordered (for the Mosque), known under the name of Ibn Ṭūlūn. May God accept his work, reward him in life and after death, and add it to his good deeds. The poor slave Shādī Ibn Shirikūh, May God reward him, who approaches God by placing this candlestick as a *Waqf* in the *Mihrāb* of the Mosque of Ibn Ṭūlūn"<sup>160</sup>. Another example is a candlestick (now in the Islamic Museum, Cairo) dating to 887 A.H. /1482 A.D., made during the rule of the Mamluk ruler Al-Ashraf Qāitbāy who offered it to the Mosque of the Prophet Muḥammad in Medina. An inscribed band on the socket of this candlestick reads: "It is given in *Waqf* to the chamber of the Prophet by our Lord, the Sultan, the King Al-Ashraf Abū Al-Naṣr Qāitbāy dated 887"<sup>161</sup>.

I would also like to refer to another possible factor in understanding the political connotations of these architectural forms, which is the idea that the patron or the sponsor of the work wanted the design to include some elements of his homeland. The military class, which was the only category of society that could afford to spend large amounts of money on the construction of a monument in the Mamluk era, used to sponsor monuments in Cairo, the capital of the Mamluks. The fact that many of these Mamluk sponsors were not of Egyptian origin played a role in the emergence of various non-Muslim elements and features in the construction of these monuments. Moreover, they may even have called builders and artisans from their homelands to come to Cairo to carry out their great architectural and decorative

<sup>160</sup> "مما عمل برسم الجامع المعمور ببقاء سيد ملوك المسلمين مولانا السلطان الملك المنصور حسام الدنيا والدين ابي عبد الله لاجين الذي تقرب الى الله بعمارته المعروف بابن طولون تقبل الله منه ذلك واحسن اليه في الدنيا والآخرة وجعله في صحائف حسناته تقرب بوقفه على جامع ابن طولون في المحراب العبد الفقير الى الله شاذي بن شيركوه اثنابه الله الكبير"

Wiet 1932, no.128, p.7.

<sup>161</sup> "هذا ما اوقف على الحجرة النبوية مولانا السلطان الملك الأشرف ابو النصر قايتباي بتاريخ سنة سبع وثمانين وثمانمائة"

Wiet 1932, no.4072, p.107, 108.

schemes. In this case, the artist's role in settling on an architectural or decorative plan was clearly minor, in the great scheme of things, while the patron's role was the most important, implying that the architect only supervises the style of architecture the patron wanted to sponsor, and was therefore committed to following the orders of the sponsor. Owing to the Seljuk influence on the architectural forms by the portal of the Madrasa, it may be true that they can be referenced to great Seljuk structures. Madrasa building in the Seljuk period was mainly an indication of official patronage, a function that is similar to that attributed to the Mosque Madrasa<sup>162</sup>. We should consider that the Seljuk period witnessed a flood of activity in Madrasa construction standing mainly as rivals to the Shi'i Fatimid Madrasas such as Al-Azhar in Cairo. However, as the early Seljuk Madrasas, such as the Madrasa of Al-Rayy dating back to the mid-eleventh century A.D. as well as those built by Nizām Al-Mulk, did not survive, it is difficult to state for sure whether these buildings on the portal of the Madrasa Mosque of Sultan Ḥasan are in fact any of these<sup>163</sup>.

The idea that the representations on the façade of the Mosque Madrasa of Sultan Ḥasan are not simply decorative has been established. However, in order to throw light on further meanings of these architectural forms, a study of the function of the Mosque Madrasa, where the architectural representations are found, needs to be undertaken. This will confirm whether there is a strong association between the function of the Mosque Madrasa, and the significance of its architectural representations. The Madrasa is a building that has both religious and domestic features, as it was a place for both education and worship. At the outset, the Mosque was used as a place for praying and instruction. However, later, the two functions of the Mosque started to merge to create another form of establishment, known as the

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<sup>162</sup> Hillenbrand 1994, p.174.

<sup>163</sup> Hillenbrand 1994, p.177, 178.

Mosque Madrasa, where teaching usually takes place in its *Iwans*<sup>164</sup>. The religious structural features of this type of institution, a Mosque Madrasa, are recognized in its sanctuary, which has a prayer *Mihrāb* and *Minbar*, a place where prayers could be performed. It also comprised a domestic function interpreted through the many living units it had for the students who came to learn there<sup>165</sup>. Madrasas were opened for Friday prayers as an indication of their important religious role in Muslim society, compared with other non-religious buildings<sup>166</sup>.

In his records, 'Ali Mubārak Pasha, confirmed the role of the Mosque Madrasa as a religious and teaching institution during the time of Sultan Ḥasan. He refers to the fact that: "Sultan Ḥasan appointed to these Madrasas some teachers and supervisors, and gave them salaries. He appointed to each of the four Sects a *Shaykh* and a hundred students and of each group twenty-five instructors and three assistants. He also appointed a teacher to translate the Qur'an and appointed with him thirty students, some of them entrusted with supervisory activities. He appointed a teacher for teaching the *Hadīths* of the Prophet Muḥammad and one to recite or read them...He appointed a teacher who knew the Qur'an by heart...and appointed two supervisors for taking attendance and absence, one working by day and the other by night..."<sup>167</sup>. Subsequently, the Mosque Madrasa of Sultan Ḥasan had the status of a state-sponsored institution, responsible for providing food and shelter to the students there. These Madrasas had a high turnover rate, as students came to study a subject under instructors who would provide them with the *'Ijāzah* (the certification of their knowledge) at the end of their course. Then, the student had to leave the

<sup>164</sup> Dickie 1978, p.24.

<sup>165</sup> Behrens-Abouseif 1985, p.73.

<sup>166</sup> Behrens-Abouseif 1985, p.81.

<sup>167</sup> "وقد قرر السلطان حسن لهذه المدارس مدرسين ومراقبين وعين لهم مرتبات نشبها فيما يلي: قرر لكل مذهب من المذاهب الأربعة شيخا ومائة طالب, من كل فرقة خمسة وعشرون متقدمون وثلاثة معيدون وعين مدرسا لتفسير القرآن وعين معه ثلاثين طالبا عهد الى بعضهم ان يقوموا بعمل الملاحظة وعين مدرسا للحديث النبوي ومقرنا لقراءة الحديث...وعين مدرسا حافظا لكتاب الله...ثم عين اثنين لمراقبة الحضور والغياب احدهما بالليل والاخر بالنهار..."

'Ali Mubārak 1886-1889, IV, p.84, 85.

Madrassa either to continue studying or to work. This suggests that the number of students who learned at the Madrassa was great, and that they came from different parts of the world, a fact that may have encouraged the artist to represent such famous architectural representations by the gate of the Mosque Madrassa of Sultan Hasan<sup>168</sup>.

Considering this explanation of the function of the Mosque Madrassa, and noting that a variety of subjects were taught (including astronomy, physics, and mathematics), it is fairly easy to establish that the representation of the three buildings at the side of the Mosque Madrassa could refer to places where such subjects are taught around the world. I would therefore suggest that the architectural buildings shown on the side of the portal relate either to educational buildings in Seljuk countries, with similar educational and religious functions, or to general buildings of religious fame. It is also possible that the representations of the buildings by the portal indicate that the Madrassa was open to students from all teaching institutions of the world, such as those represented by the portal. The fact that the living accommodation (units) of the students occupied the façades of the building indicates the importance of the exterior part of the building, and its relation to students from different parts of the world, and this is may be why the artist chose to show such representations at the portal of the Mosque Madrassa. This may then be used to demonstrate to these students, who have seen the real buildings shown on the portal, that they were staying in a building of similar importance<sup>169</sup>.

At the same time, the Mosque Madrassa of Sultan Hasan had another function during the Mamluk period as it was also a centre for teaching the four rites of the Sunni Islamic law<sup>170</sup>. Based on this function, and in an attempt to interpret the

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<sup>168</sup> Behrens-Abouseif 1985, p.74.

<sup>169</sup> Behrens-Abouseif 1985, p.78.

<sup>170</sup> Behrens-Abouseif 1989, p.123.



meaning of the architectural forms, the buildings represented could correspond to the buildings related to the events in the religious life of the Prophet Muḥammad. This takes into account the possibility that two of the buildings may represent the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem, referring to Jerusalem as the first *Qiblah* destination for the Muslims, as was referred to in one of the Qur'anic verses<sup>171</sup>, and the Ka'bah as the final *Qiblah* for all the faithful. However, this ignores the form of the third building, which appears to be a church. Thus, this interpretation is limited and open to dispute.

Alternatively, the significance of the architectural representations in the Mosque Madrasa of Sultan Ḥasan may be explained from another perspective. Being the first Madrasa to be used as a congregational Mosque, the Madrasa of Sultan Ḥasan displays a unique religious character for that time. Consequently, the mosque aimed to give practical expression to the religious spirit of the Madrasa, one aspect of which was showing architectural iconographies of a religious nature. Such religious intention can be noted in the choice of representing building iconographies with a religious heritage such as the Dome of the Rock, and the church at the bottom of the vertical band<sup>172</sup>.

To sum up, the study of the origin and form of the architectural representation, in conjunction with the function of the Mosque Madrasa, suggests a new interpretation of these representations. The significance of the architectural representations on the portal of the Mosque Madrasa of Sultan Ḥasan is communicative, and is a disguised signature of the artist reflecting the function of the Madrasa as a teaching centre.

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<sup>171</sup> (Qur'ān, Sura 2, verses 137-139; 143,144). The change in the *Qiblah* happened when the Prophet Muḥammad was in the Muṣallā with the Companions in the second year of Hijra (624 A.D.) and had just made the second prostration towards Jerusalem when he received inspiration to pray in future towards Mecca. Creswell 1979, I/I, p.12.

<sup>172</sup> Behrens-Abouseif 1985, p.78.

I should like to briefly mention one example that forms a later development of the main argument of this thesis, namely the fifteenth century Timurid shrine of Gazur Gah in Herat in Afghanistan. It supports the argument of this study in that it bears some architectural representation, not for purposes of decoration, but rather to include meanings, throwing light on an association between the significance of its architectural forms and the function of the place where they are represented. The shrine of Gazur Gah is a building around a large rectangular court in which the mausoleum of Gazur Gah lies in front of an *Iwan*<sup>173</sup>. Considering the different types of building representation at the shrine, and the building's function, it is possible to interpret the architectural representations as referring to a biography of the Prophet Muḥammad, and the final reward of Paradise.

The walls of its *dihlīz* are divided into three zones. The uppermost is decorated with two categories of architectural representations: the first category (fig.38a) includes a representation of holy cities like Mecca, Medina, and Uḥud mountain with the tomb of Ḥamzah, while the second category (fig.38b, c) displays a representation of palaces and kiosks. The function of the shrine is a clue to understanding the significance of its architectural representation. Before being a mausoleum, the shrine of Gazur Gah was a centre of Sufi rite, which has a direct relation to the Prophet Muḥammad<sup>174</sup>.

By studying the function of the shrine, we can suppose that the architectural representations are there to reflect the biography of the Prophet's life through the representation of its events by means of architectural representation. These architectural decorations also reflect the meaning of Paradise as the final resting place of the Prophet Muḥammad, and of his followers, who keep on preaching for

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<sup>173</sup> Golombek 1988, vol.I, no.71A, p.308.

<sup>174</sup> Golombek 1968, p.15.

the Sufi rite, and of the person buried inside the shrine of Gazur Gah. Accordingly, the architectural representations in the shrine communicate meanings, but within the boundaries of the function of the shrine.

In conclusion, we have seen how architectural representation reveals significance in the decoration of Islamic architecture in different periods of Muslim rule. It seems most likely that architectural representations on Muslim architecture were not just used to fill spaces for decoration; in contrast, they conveyed ideas and meanings. In the light of these considerations, the analysis of architectural forms, from the historical and cultural context, confirm their role in representing religious and political significance. It is likely that architectural representation provided indications of the origin, religion, and artistic background of the artist. The studies of these various signs of artists suggest that one of the underlying meanings of architectural iconographies on Muslim architecture is to serve as hidden signatures of their artists. We have seen this in the study of the Great Mosque of Damascus and the Mosque Madrasa of Sultan Ḥasan in Cairo. The study has also shown how the function of the building can suggest the significance of its architectural representations. This suggests that the decorations on the walls of the Great Mosque of Damascus are not a representation of Paradise, and are more likely to have a political meaning. It will also be remembered that since the Mosque Madrasa of Sultan Ḥasan in Cairo has a religious and cultural heritage the meanings of its architectural representations refer to its glory in this context.

The main argument of the thesis has been demonstrated by reference to examples of Muslim architecture; however, it is not yet clear whether this was the case with architectural representation on Islamic art pieces. We should consider the fact that there was an influence from Islamic architecture on Islamic art objects throughout the period of Muslim rule. This vital role led to the emergence of the idea

of unity in Islamic art and architecture, out of which many ideas, themes, and forms were evolved from the exchange between art and architecture. Unity in Islamic art has been recognized and acknowledged on many occasions. Of these many examples, some will be mentioned. The series of geometrical figures contained in a circle, or series of polyhedrons contained in a sphere, are elements of unity. *Minbars* in Mamluk paintings include various geometrical patterns similar to those found in the decoration of Islamic costumes. These geometrical patterns are also similar to those enhancing the title or 'Unwān of Sura in Qur'anic manuscripts<sup>175</sup>. Furthermore, in Islamic art, the bricks of building forms that were arranged in geometrical patterns in different colours, can be related to the reality of Islamic architecture<sup>176</sup>. In addition, it has been realized that architecture has had an influence on the design of some pieces of furniture in Islamic art such as *Minbars*. For example, in the *Minbar* of Altanbughā Al-Māridānī, dated 740 A.H. /1340 A.D., the canopy is covered with a dome resting on an octagonal neck, decorated in a similar way to the domes of the mausoleums in Aswan cemetery dated 492-503 A.H. /1100-1110 A.D. The dome of the canopy of the same *Minbar*, which is built with eight fluted sides, recalls the dome over the minaret of the Mosque Madrasa of Al-Nāṣir Muḥammad Ibn Qalā'un in the citadel dated 718-735 A.H. /1318-1335 A.D.<sup>177</sup>. In addition, the star pattern decoration that is recognized in the decoration of some dome and minaret surfaces is similar in its composition to those covering Islamic wooden furniture pieces such as *Minbars*, *Dikkas*, and tables<sup>178</sup>.

In the following chapter, I will argue that architectural representations on objects of art have similar significance to those previously examined on architecture, and I will focus on the architectural representations of different pieces of art to

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<sup>175</sup> Haldane 1978, p.37.

<sup>176</sup> Haldane 1978, p.38.

<sup>177</sup> Karnouk 1977, p.72.

<sup>178</sup> Keene 1971, p.174.

illustrate the main argument of the study. This will be achieved by considering numerous examples on different art media from various parts of the Muslim world. Consideration will also be given to how pre-Islamic art influenced many of the ideas of the Muslim period, and to how these ideas developed under the Muslim rule to indicate meanings. I will include an explanation of the relationship between the meaning of architectural representation, and the function of the object of art that displays it. For each object of art, I will start with a description of its architectural representation, include a survey of its architectural origin, and provide information about its artist, before finally reflecting upon its significance.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

# **Architectural Representation on Islamic Art Objects**

## 2 Islamic Art Objects with Architectural Representation

In the previous chapter, we have seen how architectural representation in Islamic architecture was not just decorative, but also indicated meanings and significances. In this chapter, however, the study will show how it entered the world of Islamic art objects. The study will attempt to clarify the role of architectural representation on artefacts in indicating meaning in Islamic decoration. The wide diversity of these architectural forms on art objects of various media from different periods of Muslim rule, with possible non-Muslim influences, needs detailed investigation. The research reveals how architectural representation on Islamic art objects is not just decorative, but also has various underlying meanings. As in Islamic architecture, the type and origin of the architectural forms represented on Islamic art objects may be seen to throw light on the origins of their artists. We will see how these architectural forms can also be seen to have hidden meanings that may be uncovered by considering the strong relationship with the function of the artefact bearing them. A number of possible non-Muslim influences have been considered, their main aim being to provide a source of inspiration for Muslims in giving significance to these architectural representations.

In this section, I will discuss and analyze architectural iconographies on a specific group of objects of Islamic art that are key to understanding the meaning of architectural representations. This will include metalwork, glasswork, and manuscripts.

## 2.1 Architectural Representation on Metalwork

Islamic lands inherited a long tradition of metalworking. Bronze and copper, decorated with gold and silver, were among the most important metals worked throughout the region for many centuries. Metal was frequently used for vessels, such as dishes, bowls, beakers, and trays, with the function of holding food or drink for use by the owner on a variety of occasions. In reference to their function as containers of liquid, some of the metal bowls were decorated with fishponds inside which may lead us to think that they display only decorations of food and beverages<sup>179</sup>. However, the surviving examples of metal bowls with architectural representation as well as other decorative images not related to food or beverages (as will be discussed in the course of the study) constitute a debatable issue. It is probable that the two types of decoration, fishponds and architectural representations, have little if any relation to each other, and that the latter represents another characteristic and persistent kind of decoration on metalwork. The use of architectural representations to convey significance is an important feature of Islamic decoration, and the production of metalwork with architectural figures continued to be characteristic of Islamic art objects throughout the Muslim era.

The survival of more than one example of a metal object with architectural figures is useful in terms of identifying the significance of architectural representation in Muslim art. Surviving examples include a ninth century metal bowl, a twelfth century metal plate, a thirteenth or fourteenth century magical bowl, and a fifteenth century bowl<sup>180</sup>. In each case, the various forms of these architectural representations are cause for controversy among scholars. Since a detailed

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<sup>179</sup> Baer 1968, p.14-27; Baer 1986, p.279-282.

<sup>180</sup> (Now in the National Museum of Florence). For more information about this bowl, see Rice D.S.1953, "Studies in Islamic Metalwork IV", *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, vol.III, pp.489-503.



discussion of the whole question of architectural representation on metalwork would require at least another dissertation to fully do it justice, we will focus on, and examine in detail, just one example, the ninth century (Umayyad) metal bowl, with a brief reference to other metalwork with architectural representations. To understand the meaning of these architectural forms, we will examine first whether they were purely decorative or had other significances that can be discerned. It seems that the decoration of these metal objects with architectural representations transformed them into major artistic vehicles of great significance. We will develop this statement by investigating and analyzing an Umayyad bowl with Sasanian influence.

## **2.1.1 Umayyad Metal Bowl with Sasanian Influence**

### **2.1.1.1 Description of the Architectural Representation**

The bowl (fig.39) (now is in the Staatliche Museum of Berlin)<sup>181</sup> is made out of bronze, and is decorated with an engraved architectural depiction of a fire temple, thus conveying a symbolic meaning of giving blessings and offerings to its owner. The centre of the metal bowl (fig.39) is decorated with a rounded medallion adorned with a pavilion, or domed structure, in the midst of a garden of floral ornaments. The building resembles a structure (fig.40a, b) which is square with five domes, one in the centre, and four at the corners. Only three of these bulbous domes are clearly visible in their complete form on the roof of the building: two lateral domes, which seem to be covered with some kind of tilework, and a third large central dome, which seems to be covered with hitch-stucco decoration. The illustrated building, which has porches along part of its sidewalls, widening the structure across the façade, is oblong with its longer side clearly depicted. Over the first course (fig.41), there is a blind arcade with ten panels formed of semi-circular stilted arches

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<sup>181</sup> (Inv. No. I.5624).

supported by engaged columns. It is decorated with a frieze of large round bead-like decorative elements, whose function is unclear. At the side of the building, there are two columns made out of either wood or stone, which extend up to the top storey, ending in an ambiguous parapet that appears to be turned both upwards and outwards, and which runs around the lower part of the dome. The entrance portal of the building is surmounted by a stilted pointed arch, and opens into an area with a column of a wide base and capital that is possibly a representation of an altar. Radiating from this rounded medallion in the centre of the metal bowl is an arcade of twenty-two arches, all of which are horseshoe (fig.42) except for two (fig.43) which are pointed. All the arches are supported by columns, and their niches and spandrels are filled with foliate decoration<sup>182</sup>.

Determining the precise role of this architectural decoration is extremely complex; therefore, it is essential to look in depth at the details of the origins and date of the type of structure depicted, which will reveal some information about the artist who produced this bowl.

#### **2.1.1.2 Source of the Architectural Representation**

An area of discussion among scholars such as Josef Strzygowski and Lars-Ivar Ringbom was how to identify the type and origin of the architectural form represented on the metal bowl. While Strzygowski stated that this building plan is a reflection of a political incident, the latter scholar saw its plan as a religious layout.

On the one hand, Strzygowski claimed that the origin of the plan of the building shown on the bowl could be a reflection of the political fight between orthodox architecture and the Hellenistic Byzantine Basilicas. The former style, with its naves and domed structures of Eastern Europe, was believed by him to have been inspired by the round temples and niche-fire temples of Iran. According to his

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<sup>182</sup> Pope 1933, p.79-82; Sauvaget 1940-41, p.19, 21; Stern 1976, p.25.

theory, this building form, which appears on the metal bowl, and which he called *Nordish*, was invented to keep together the architectural features of both the basilicas and the domed orthodox architecture of Eastern Europe, the Byzantines in Anatolia, and the Levant<sup>183</sup>.

On the other hand, Ringbom noted a resemblance between the plan of the building form shown on the metal bowl and that of the Ka'bah in Mecca, which he demonstrated by drawing the former in plan view (from a vertical diagram). This resulted in a centralized building with arcades forming a surrounding circular structure like that seen in the plan drawings of the Ka'bah in Mecca. Accordingly, the twenty-two arcades that are represented on the metal bowl are understood as niches. This is similar to the arcades in Mecca prayer niches spread all round the Ka'bah with only one dome dominating in size all other ones. Another point of similarity between the plan of the building representation on the bowl and the Ka'bah in Mecca is that, in both cases, the centralized building form is square rather than round<sup>184</sup>.

The two theories are still controversial, but in order to be able to identify the type and date of the building represented accurately, it is worth considering some more architectural details. Dating the architectural decoration of this metal bowl is problematic because it carries both Sasanian and Islamic features. Although a Sasanian origin has been suggested for dating this piece of art, a proposed Islamic source also needs to be considered.

#### **2.1.1.2.1 Sasanian Source**

It has been suggested that the building type represented on the metal bowl be attributed to another period, the fourth or the fifth century A.D., and that it was

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<sup>183</sup> Ringbom 1951, p.51.

<sup>184</sup> Ringbom 1951, p.53.

produced in Persia or Turkistan. The shape of the architectural decoration represented in the centre of the bowl, which could correspond to pavilions in the middle of gardens, a traditionally known feature of fourth or fifth century A.D. Persia or Turkistan, supports this<sup>185</sup>. The identification of the building as a fire temple relates to the existence of a central court with arcades surrounding an open area, which is similar in plan to the buildings that were inspired from the architectural form of a fire temple. One example is a thirteenth century Seljuk Tercan *turbe* built by an architect from a model of an Armenian church which has the design of a fire temple. This Seljuk Tercan *turbe* is similar to the building representation on the bowl in that it stands in the middle of a court, it has an arched entrance, and its inner walls have many arched niches<sup>186</sup>. Since there is a possibility that the fire temple plan had reached Anatolia and inspired the plan of this Seljuk *turbe*, the similarities between this *turbe* and the building representation shown on the bowl may identify it as a Sasanian fire temple<sup>187</sup>.

Indeed, the architectural representation on the metal bowl can clearly be related to architecture dating from the end of the Sasanian era, particularly from 590-628 A.D., the reign of Khusraw II<sup>188</sup>. The most notable Sasanian architectural features on the bowl have similarities to the main elements of the crown of Khusraw; for example, the wings with circular cut-outs at the base of the structure, the cross bars, the overturned tips, and the crescent and crenellations at the top of the building all appear to be Sasanian in origin<sup>189</sup>. The Sasanian origin is also indicated by the presence of the blind arcade of ten bays formed of semi-circular arches supported by engaged columns as seen on the façade of the building, which probably symbolizes

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<sup>185</sup> Sauvaget 1940-41, p.20.

<sup>186</sup> Erdmann 1967, p.3045.

<sup>187</sup> Erdmann 1967, p.3045-3048.

<sup>188</sup> Pope 1933, p.21, 24.

<sup>189</sup> Sauvaget 1940-41, p.21, 24; Pope 1933, p.85.

that of Taq-i-Kesra at Ctesiphon<sup>190</sup>. One area of similarity with another Sasanian example of architecture, Taq-i-Bustan, is in the flanking by tree motifs of the ogee arched door of the building representation<sup>191</sup>. Like the trees depicted on the pillars of the main *Iwan* of Taq-i-Bustan, the niches of the building shown on the metal bowl have their back walls decorated in stucco with similar images of trees<sup>192</sup>.

One of the few distinctive clues to dating the metal bowl is the examination of its floral decorations (figs.42, 43), which may place the bowl in the late Sasanian era, or perhaps in the ninth or tenth century A.D.<sup>193</sup>. The symmetrical palmette with five lobes, the central one being elongated, which appears in two of the trees that decorate the arches of the radial arcade surrounding the building representation is Sasanian in form. The adoption of this floral ornament is found in many Syrian textiles of the sixth and seventh centuries A.D. Similar designs were also in use in the early Muslim era elsewhere, for instance in Sāmarrā<sup>194</sup>. In another example, these floral decorations were found over wooden panels of the Tulunid period in Sāmarrā<sup>195</sup>. They can also be seen in monuments of the tenth century A.D., such as the Oburdan of Matsha at Turkistan. On one of its columns<sup>196</sup> which was once part of a Mosque (now in the Museum of Tashkent), similar floral decorations appear<sup>197</sup>. Due to the simplicity of the floral decorations on the metal bowl, it is unlikely to date from a period later than the tenth century A.D., as these floral ornaments became more complex in the eleventh and twelfth centuries A.D.<sup>198</sup>.

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<sup>190</sup> Pope 1933, p.79.

<sup>191</sup> Reuther 1977, p.530, 531.

<sup>192</sup> Erdmann 1967, p.3049.

<sup>193</sup> Pope 1935, p.76, 78.

<sup>194</sup> Pope 1935, p.75.

<sup>195</sup> Denike 1935-36, p.70; see Sarre Freidrich 1925, *Die Keramik Von Samarra*, (Berlin), texttafel C4.

<sup>196</sup> For more information see Andreieff M.S. 1925, "La Colonne en Bois à Matsha", *Le Bulletin de L'Académie de l'Histoire de la Culture Matérielle*, vol.IV, (Léningrad).

<sup>197</sup> Denike 1935-36, p.69.

<sup>198</sup> Pope 1935, p.76, 78.

### 2.1.1.2.2 Islamic Source

This metal bowl, once thought to be Sasanian, is now described as Islamic with architectural decorations carrying Sasanian features. Presumably, as in this example, Muslims inherited earlier traditions of Sasanian art, which found their way into Islamic art<sup>199</sup>. A close examination of the architectural decoration of the bowl, and a comparison with other metal objects of the Muslim era indicates that Sasanian features on Islamic metalwork were plentiful. Indeed, the Sasanians, native Persians, who were defeated by the Arabs in 20 A.H. /642 A.D., were working side by side with Muslim artists and were therefore responsible for the production of some Islamic metalwork. As a result, their themes of decoration, such as mysterious animals and hunting scenes, as well as their techniques of encrusting, incising, carving and engraving were often used<sup>200</sup>.

Among the many examples of Islamic metalwork which demonstrate Sasanian influences is the Umayyad metal ewer of Marwān II<sup>201</sup> (figs.44, 45a) (now kept in the Islamic Museum, Cairo), which was discovered in an area south of Cairo in the village of Abū Šīr in the district of Al-Fayyūm, where Marwān II was killed in 132 A.H. /750 A.D. It has a round bulbous body with a cylindrical neck, decorated through incising and open-work techniques<sup>202</sup>. Even though it bears some architectural elements that recall Sasanian-style arcades, it is still attributed to a Muslim source. Representations of such arcades can be found on earlier, Sasanian, metalwork, including a bronze tray (now kept in the Hermitage Museum) decorated with a frieze running around its rim, with similar arches and columns to those on the

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<sup>199</sup> Irwin 1997, p.17.

<sup>200</sup> Barrett 1949, p.v.

<sup>201</sup> See Sarre F. 1934, "Die Bronzekanne des Kalifen Marwān II in Arabischen Museum in Kairo", *Ars Islamica*, vol.I, p.10-15.

<sup>202</sup> Brend 2001, p.36.

ewer<sup>203</sup>. On the central disc of this Sasanian tray, there are some architectural elements recalling those found on the bowl of this study and Marwān's ewer<sup>204</sup>. In Marwān's ewer, the artist has shown an interest in representing only elements of an architectural form instead of representing the architectural form itself. This may lead us to think that the artist was rejecting the representation of architectural form at this stage for some reason<sup>205</sup>. However, because the ewer of Marwān II that carries this type of Sasanian decoration is attributed to the Muslim era, it is possible that the metal bowl also belongs to the same era. In fact, it probably dates to a period after the Umayyad ewer, as it has a rather developed form of architecture.

The hypothesis of attributing the metal bowl to the Muslim era was alluded to by Jean Sauvaget, who dismissed the idea of attributing the bowl to any Sasanian source. Owing to the non-existence of any actual building of the Sasanian era that could work as a model for the architectural form found on the bowl, he argues that this architectural representation is unlikely to be a Sasanian fire temple. In particular, no pavilion like that shown on the top of the building of the bowl has been found to exist in the architectural design of a Sasanian fire temple<sup>206</sup>. Rather, they are related to Sasanian palace architecture such as the palaces at Damghan, Kish, and Ctesiphon, where the small-engaged columns of the arcade are deeply cut with spirals and zigzags<sup>207</sup>. Sauvaget demonstrated how this building representation with its pavilion resembles the monuments of the Muslim era<sup>208</sup>. He pointed out that such a pavilion representation can be traced to the art of the Muslim Caliphs of Baghdad and Sāmarrā' in Iraq<sup>209</sup>. Arthur Pope supported this opinion by explaining that the

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<sup>203</sup> King 1980, p.27.

<sup>204</sup> King 1980, p.27.

<sup>205</sup> King 1980, p.28.

<sup>206</sup> Sauvaget 1940-41, p.33.

<sup>207</sup> Pope 1933, p.83, 84.

<sup>208</sup> Sauvaget 1940-41, p.22.

<sup>209</sup> Sauvaget 1940-41, p.33.

Mosques of Kūfah and Baṣrah in Iraq have the same kind of columned porches and columns as those represented in the building iconography of the bowl<sup>210</sup>. He also pointed out that the stucco patterns of the central dome as represented on the metal bowl are designed in the same large style that was found in Sāmarrā' in the ninth century A.D.<sup>211</sup>.

Because of the Islamic decorative features that appear in the architectural form of the bowl, Henri Stern suggests that it is of a purely Islamic source, and dates it back to the beginning of the tenth century A.D.<sup>212</sup>. Examples of these features include the decorative scheme that runs under the arcade on the façade of the building, on either side of its portal. It resembles the decorations in the mosaics of the Umayyad Mosque in Damascus, those in the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem (fig.45b), and on some Islamic wooden pieces in Sāmarrā'<sup>213</sup>. The treatment of the floral decorations in the arcade around the building also indicates that the bowl can be attributed to an Islamic origin. One example includes all the horseshoe-arched niches filled with foliate branches and floral elements, and distributed on both sides of the vertical axes. This treatment of the floral and vegetal ornaments may be attributed to a specific era of Islamic art that existed before the evolution of the classical type of arabesque<sup>214</sup>, and dated to the tenth or the eleventh century A.D.<sup>215</sup>.

Perhaps the most notable features of Islamic origin are the two floral decorations (fig.42), each of which terminates with a tri-lobed profile, flanking the entrance of the building form on the metal bowl<sup>216</sup>. As these forms of tri-lobed flowers, which were known in Muslim art of the East in the Middle Ages, are

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<sup>210</sup> Pope 1933, p.83.

<sup>211</sup> Pope 1933, p.76.

<sup>212</sup> Stern 1976, p.25.

<sup>213</sup> Sauvaget 1940-41, p.22.

<sup>214</sup> Sauvaget 1940-41, p.31.

<sup>215</sup> Sauvaget 1940-41, p.31, 32.

<sup>216</sup> Sauvaget 1940-41, p.31, 32.



comparable to those used abundantly in the floral decorations on the monuments of Sāmarrā', the metal bowl may be evidence of a Muslim origin for this motif<sup>217</sup>. The stucco paintings<sup>218</sup> from Sāmarrā' which represent the second Samarranean style of carving (now in Berlin Museum of Islamic Art) show similar trefoils<sup>219</sup>. In addition, the trefoils on a wooden panel (now exhibited in the Metropolitan Museum of Art)<sup>220</sup> of the eighth-ninth century A.D. Tulunid era from Egypt or Syria or perhaps Iraq attest to the attribution of these floral decorations on the metal bowl to a Muslim source<sup>221</sup>. A further form comparable to this trefoil comes from other examples found in the decorations of the *Mihrāb* of the Mosque of Ibn Ṭūlūn in Cairo<sup>222</sup>, discovered in the excavations of Fuṣṭāṭ in Egypt (now kept in the Islamic Museum, Cairo), and on the wooden *Minbar* of Qaīrawān<sup>223</sup>. In other panels of the arcade on the metal bowl, the floral decorations resemble those dating back to the Islamic Middle Ages, when the floral lobes and their forms were first used<sup>224</sup>.

In terms of its architecture, the building represented on the bowl parallels the architectural models of the mausoleum of Isma'īl the Samanid in Bukhara (fig.46). Being a cubic building surmounted by five domes, one in the centre and four at the corners, the mausoleum corresponds to the architectural decoration on the bowl. They are similar in that both building designs share the same type of motif used in the decoration on the top of the architectural form of the bowl, the style of the colonnades of the lateral porticoes, and the capitals and vase-like bases of the columns<sup>225</sup>.

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<sup>217</sup> Sauvaget 1940-41, p.31.

<sup>218</sup> Discovered in room no.16 of house no.3 in Sāmarrā'.

<sup>219</sup> Blair 2000b, p.107.

<sup>220</sup> (MMA 30.112.8.).

<sup>221</sup> Abdel Wahab 1970, p.24.

<sup>222</sup> Abdel Wahab 1970, p.203.

<sup>223</sup> Shafi'i 1954, fig.24, p.81.

<sup>224</sup> Sauvaget 1940-41, p.31, 32.

<sup>225</sup> Sauvaget 1940-41, p.31, 32.

Given these two different options, Sasanian or Islamic, for the origin of the architectural decoration of the bowl, I consider that the bowl belongs to the Muslim period, as its decorative elements suggest. However, the building representation is probably a simplified form of a Sasanian fire temple that was adapted to the style of Muslim art by adding some features of an Islamic nature. It is difficult, though, to surmise why the artist represented a Sasanian religious building on an Islamic piece of art in the first place. This question will be addressed in the discussion on the origin of the artist, which may, in turn, have influenced the type of architectural form he chose to show in reference to his origin.

### **2.1.1.3 Architectural Representation as the Work of an Artist**

It is not easy to determine the provenance of the artist and of the metal bowl that is his work of art. The architectural elements previously discussed were well known in Mesopotamia in the tenth century A.D. However, it is not possible to clearly ascertain the provenance of this metal piece in terms of production, or decide for whom it was made. This is because from the early stages of the Muslim period until the Ayyubid era, that is, between the seventh and the thirteenth centuries A.D., the metalwork industry was flourishing in Egypt and Syria. Hence, it is unlikely that artefacts such as this bowl were produced elsewhere and exported to the Muslim Empire, since at that time Egypt and Syria were the heart of this very industry<sup>226</sup>.

A reasonable explanation for the existence of both Sasanian and Muslim features in the representation of the architectural form on the bowl under consideration may point towards the non-Muslim origin or artistic background of the artist. In fact, we could claim a Sasanian background for the artist and suggest that he showed a religious building with which he was quite familiar, the Sasanian fire temple. If this is the case, it would seem that the artist was either a Zoroastrian or

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<sup>226</sup> Allan 1986, p.55-59.

influenced by Sasanian architectural models. However, this would then lead us to question why there are Islamic features in this architectural decoration. Perhaps as the bowl was produced in a Muslim society, the artist aimed to represent some elements of a Muslim origin by Islamizing the architectural form.

What could be the meaning of the whole decoration? Could there be any relation between the architectural form shown and the functional use of the bowl? I will discuss these issues in detail through an interpretation of the possible significance of the architectural form in view of the functional purpose of the metal bowl.

#### **2.1.1.4 Significance of the Architectural Representation**

Through an investigation into the possible interpretations of the architectural form, I will highlight the fact that this architectural form is far from being merely decorative, and will try to show that it carries religious implications for the owner of the bowl related to the ideas of infinite holy light, kingship, the garden of Paradise, and religious blessing. I will also consider the association between the significance of the architectural form represented and the function of the metal bowl.

##### **2.1.1.4.1 Religious Significance**

If we consider the architectural form shown in the centre of the bowl to be a reflection of a fire temple architectural plan, it is plausible to interpret the meaning of the represented building as being religious, or as reflecting some aspect of the Sasanian religion (Zoroastrianism)<sup>227</sup>. Arthur Pope explained the meaning of the building on the bowl as a representation of Sasanian Paradise, in the midst of which stands a palace. In this regard, the whole scene on the bowl may be interpreted as a symbol of divine abundance, which is a sign of the infinite source of life. Accordingly, the garden was represented in the form of radiating lines of floral

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<sup>227</sup> Sauvaget 1940-41, p.21

decoration to symbolize the sun as the source of life<sup>228</sup>. Similar religious significance has been interpreted on other Islamic metal objects with Sasanian influence, such as the ewer of Marwān II (fig.44). Besides displaying some architectural elements with Sasanian features such as its decorative arches and columns as previously mentioned, the ewer has a representation of a cockerel on the top of its spout, symbolising the moon God in Zoroastrian religious thought<sup>229</sup>. Arthur Pope proposed that the architectural form represented on the Umayyad metal bowl conveys the religious meaning of the sacred light according to Buddhist belief. This was achieved through the combination of Buddhist and Sasanian features in the decoration of the bowl. This is a plausible argument if we consider that Sasanian Persia had sustained strong relations with Buddhism in Afghanistan for roughly three centuries. This relationship started in Parthian times, when this art first came into use, and was called Irano or Sasano-Buddhist art<sup>230</sup>.

Arthur Pope explained that Buddhist influence appears on the form of the door of the architectural representation on the metal bowl, which has an elucidated pointed edge at its top as inspired by Buddhist architecture, and that this conveys a religious significance. At the same time, Sasanian features are apparent in the column represented at the door of the building, which is a reference to the fire altar in a Sasanian fire temple<sup>231</sup>. Firstly, with regard to the Buddhist features, the function of this type of architecture with a pointed arch may be understood in Buddhism as a sacred representation of Buddha himself or a symbol of the image of Buddha, thus addressing the idea of kingship. In India, a similar shape of pointed arch was used to mark the entrance to great rock-cut cave temples and city gates,

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<sup>228</sup> Pope 1933, p.83.

<sup>229</sup> King 1980, p.27, 28.

<sup>230</sup> Pope 1933, p.81; Sauvaget 1940-41, p.21. For more information on Iranian art see Grousset René 1932, *L'Iran Extérieur, Son Art*. Publications de la Société des Études Iraniennes, No.II, (Paris).

<sup>231</sup> Pope 1933, p.81; Sauvaget 1940-41, p.21.

both Hindu and Buddhist. It was also used from an early date with the halo and niches of Buddha. In fact, the earliest form of these pointed arches appeared in 257 B.C. in the Chaitya cave façades, of which the Lomas cave was the oldest<sup>232</sup>. Secondly, regarding the Sasanian features, as the Sasanians later adopted the architectural form of the door with its pointed edge in representing portals to their fire temples, the door on the metal bowl can be interpreted as the divine presence of infinite light<sup>233</sup>.

The presence of the fire temple in the garden of the bowl shows that the building represented is religious and is symbolically associated with kingship and the holy flame<sup>234</sup>. This assumption is convincing if we consider the origin of the two horseshoe arches, discussed in detail earlier, which appear in the arcade around the building representation on the metal bowl. These confirm that the architectural form does bear Buddhist artistic influences. Reuther Oscar described them as keel or ogee arches such as those used as symbolic ornaments in Indian art. Their function was to frame the aedicule, where the figure of Buddha is placed. Perhaps this idea of referring to divinity by the use of an arch was later adopted in the Muslim era when the *Mihrāb* was shown as a pointed arch with a lamp in its niche. The artist who produced the architectural form on the bowl in the early Muslim era could perhaps have misinterpreted this idea, and considered the portal and altar of the fire temple as a *Mihrāb* and its lamp<sup>235</sup>. While recognising the religious significance of the architectural form on the Islamic bowl, this study will also consider another possible interpretation of its architectural form, one related to its possible political significance.

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<sup>232</sup> Pope 1933, p.81, 82.

<sup>233</sup> Pope 1933, p.82.

<sup>234</sup> Pope 1933, p.82.

<sup>235</sup> Reuther 1977, p.513, 514.

#### **2.1.1.4.2 Political Significance**

An alternative interpretation of the architectural form on the bowl could be as a means of transmitting a political message, referring to a historical event that occurred during the time of the ruler. Commemorating the victories of the ruler is one of the themes that found favour among the Muslims, and therefore there are many scenes in art alluding to such events, including architectural decorations. In view of the fact that the Sasanians were among the enemies of Muslims, and were defeated by them, it can be argued that the architectural decoration on the metal bowl, which refers to the Sasanians by appropriating their fire temple, was intended to venerate the Muslim ruler by remembering his victory over the Sasanians. I do not agree with this assumption, because if it really were the case, then all architectural representations showing non-Muslim features could be included in this category, which I do not believe to be a plausible theory.

In light of the above discussion, I am convinced that the architectural representation on the bowl serves religious rather than political purposes. Therefore, I will now consider how this religious significance relates to the Islamic community and culture in the Muslim lands. Having demonstrated the religious implications of the architectural forms in relation to the owner of the bowl, in particular the ideas of infinite holy light, kingship, and the garden of Paradise, the function of the bowl will now be considered. In the following section, we will see how the function of the bowl as a vessel, whose main use was related to offering food or drink to the owner unveils the religious function of the architectural representation in offering blessings to the owner. This will also be clarified through an analysis of other examples of metalwork where the religious function of the architectural representation would be related to the function of the metal bowl itself.

In the early Islamic era, metal plates, bowls, basins, and ewers were among the vessels used by rulers or people of high rank, so their use was very private and limited. According to Esin Atil, it was around the start of the fourteenth century that the art of metalwork reached its peak, with pieces decorated with gold and silver inlays being made for ceremonial functions. This highlighted the fact that metal objects served a variety of functions<sup>236</sup>. It has been observed that in the period between 1250 and 1390 A.D., metal vessel production fell into three categories: imperial, ceremonial, and personal<sup>237</sup>. However, the wares were mainly made with the intent of wishing and offering blessings at the precise moment food and fruits were offered to the owner. This can be recognized from the fact that inscriptions of blessings and good wishes to an anonymous owner were the most frequently used decorations on bowls and other metal wares<sup>238</sup>. They usually contain phrases related to the act of eating and drinking in addition to phrases wishing good health and contentment. Even though other examples of Islamic art contain blessings to the owner, it has been observed that those on vessels differ in that the wishes tend to relate to health<sup>239</sup>.

Unfortunately, very limited examples from the early Islamic era survive, which may indicate that only a few plates with inscribed wishes were produced. Esin Atil has highlighted the fact that early examples of vessels, like those dating back to the Abbasid period, were usually decorated with phrases wishing good health and status to the owner of the object<sup>240</sup>. However, in the later Mamluk period, between 1467 and 1517 A.D., metal vessels decorated with blessings were extensively

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<sup>236</sup> Atil 1981, p.50.

<sup>237</sup> Atil 1981, p.51, 52.

<sup>238</sup> Blair 1998, p.108.

<sup>239</sup> Blair 1998, p.149.

<sup>240</sup> Atil 1985, p.16.

manufactured, and few examples of these survive<sup>241</sup>. Among the few surviving examples of Muslim metalwork with blessings is a piece from ninth or tenth century A.D. Abbasid Iraq, decorated with a central band of aniconic calligraphic inscriptions that reads: "Blessing. Made for Salih"<sup>242</sup>. It is an opaque white glazed metal bowl (fig.47) (now in the Khalili Collection). Another example includes a ninth century bowl (fig.48) (now exhibited in Staatliche Museum Für Volkerkunde, Munich), also attributed to Iraq, which carries a similar blessing that reads: "Blessing is to its owner. Made by Muḥammad Al-Ṣāliḥ"<sup>243</sup>. Furthermore, on another metal bowl (now in the Coptic Museum, Cairo), similar benedictory phrases can be found. Its flat rim has a Kufic inscription that, although not in very good condition, reveals words such as "Complete blessing"<sup>244</sup> repeated many times over the surface of the bowl. Around the bottom of the bowl on the inside, there is a narrow band with another Kufic inscription that reads: "Perfect blessing, perpetual favour, peace"<sup>245</sup>. This is also seen in another bowl (now exhibited in the Hermitage Collection)<sup>246</sup>, with a band of Kufic inscription reading: "Complete blessing, joy and happiness"<sup>247</sup> running around its interior surface.

The idea of benedictory phrases on vessels was not only evident on metal objects, but also on objects of a similar function but in a different material: ceramics. This indicates the popularity of this idea across a range of vessels. Ceramic plates that date back to the Abbasid and Tulunid periods are among the earliest remaining examples of vessels that carry blessings, a great number of which are now kept in

<sup>241</sup> Blair 1998, p.108.

<sup>242</sup> Irwin 1997, p.83.

<sup>243</sup> Blair 2000a, p.121.

<sup>244</sup>

<sup>245</sup> <sup>246</sup> (It measures about 6.8 cm. high and 12.5 cm. in diameter).

<sup>247</sup> Allan 1985, p.128.

"بركة. عمل لصالح"

"بركة لصاحبها. عمل محمد الصالح"

"بركة كاملة"

"بركة كاملة. نعمة دائمة. سلا (امة)"

"بركة تامة و سرور (و) سعادة"



the Islamic Museum in Egypt. On their surface, we may read a short sentence that wishes good health and contentment to the owner. In addition, a tenth century glazed earthenware dish from Iran, or Transoxiana, (fig.49) (now in the Louvre Museum) displays benedictory phrases. It has black painted inscriptions that read: "Knowledge is bitter to the taste at first but sweeter than honey at the end blessing (to the owner)"<sup>248</sup>. Another tenth century bowl (now in the Freer Gallery of Art) is decorated with similar inscriptions with the phrase reading "Blessing to the owner"<sup>249</sup>.

With developments in the styles and categories of metal vessels in the middle Islamic era, other types of inscriptions and benedictory formulae were used such as *Al-Yumn* (good fortune) and 'izz wa 'Iqbāl (glory and prosperity)<sup>250</sup>. A much later example of metalwork from a series of dishes dating from 1467-1517 A.D. and produced in Syria or Egypt exemplifies this theme. One of the dishes, in the Ashmolean Museum<sup>251</sup>, has inscriptions on the sides which read: "You have reached the highest rank as regards greatness, and good fortune has associated with you on every side; may you not cease to be in demand and to stretch forth your right hand in the world by obtaining your wishes"<sup>252</sup>. James Allan explained that these were traditional blessing phrases also found on metalwork vessels<sup>253</sup>.

Studying these early and later dated inscriptions, which include a wider range of blessings, confirms the diversity of metal vessels in the late Islamic era and emphasizes the fact that metalwork often carried blessings related to health. The

<sup>248</sup> Blair 2000a, p.121.

<sup>249</sup>

Blair 1998, p.7, 8.

<sup>250</sup>

Blair 1998, p.108.

<sup>251</sup> Department of Eastern Art (no.1959.30). See Allan 1969, p.39, 43.

<sup>252</sup> "بلغت من العلياء اعلا المراتب... و قارئك التوفيق من كل جانب... ولازلت مرغوبا اليك وبا سطا... يمينك في الدنيا بنيل المطالب"

Allan 1969, p.39.

<sup>253</sup> Allan 1969, p.39.

"بركة لصاحبه"

"اليمن", "عز و اقبال"

concept of involving wishings and blessings for the owner through the vessel decorations was originally inherited from pre-Islamic Byzantine traditions of the fourth and fifth centuries A.D. The study shows how the same idea was adopted in the Muslim era, but was adapted to fit Islamic theology and culture, so that, for example, under Muslim rule, blessings were applied to all types of metalwork, unlike the Byzantine tradition of applying good wishes only to silver vessels<sup>254</sup>. The study also shows how inscriptions on art objects, especially vessels, may contain the message of blessing. Architectural forms and other types of floral and geometric ornaments could also have a similar meaning, as this study will demonstrate. Since architectonic, floral, and calligraphic decorations were previously suggested to have significance in the case of architecture, it is likely that the same applies to objects of art, including the metal bowl.

The representation of arches and panels framing floral or geometrical decorations, such as those displayed on the metal bowl, is a common feature in Islamic art<sup>255</sup>. Geoffrey King's theory suggests that these architectural elements do not carry any symbolic meanings, but rather are simply a type of decoration inherited from the Sasanian tradition<sup>256</sup>. However, Eva Baer argues against this, and points out that the adoption of the idea of the arcade as a style of decoration by Muslims relates to the meaning of blessings. Its association with the idea of blessing is due to its resemblance in shape (an arched niche) to the *Qiblah* or *Mihrāb*. This statement is wide reaching because it means that the decorations on these bowls are mainly related to the religious blessings offered to the owner<sup>257</sup>.

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<sup>254</sup> Baer 1983, p.209.

<sup>255</sup> The study referred to this point earlier in dating the metal bowl. However, now the same assumption is useful for uncovering the significance of its architectural representation.

<sup>256</sup> King 1980, p.27.

<sup>257</sup> Baer 1998, p.95.

The origin of this idea- the arcade signifying a religious blessing- dates to the late antique architectural niches which passed on to Islamic art. In Byzantine and early-Christian art, decorative frames and panels were used to frame religious figures such as Saints, as well as scenes from the Old and New Testament<sup>258</sup>. Probably, the earliest example of that type of decoration in the Muslim era is the two marble friezes (fig.45b) that run above the marble panelling of the inner walls of the Dome of the Rock<sup>259</sup>. A twelfth century bowl (fig.50), attributed to Iran or Afghanistan, decorated on the outside with an arcade running around the body of the vessel may be taken as another example. The central part contains an interlaced group of geometrical lines forming the shape of a rosette. It also features a band of inscription on the exterior surface of the bowl reading: "Perpetual glory, secure prosperity, rising luck and great good fortune"<sup>260</sup>. Representations of arcades appear in an Ayyubid basin of 637 A.H. /1240 A.D. (now in the Freer Gallery of Art), attributed to Syria or Egypt. Its inner surface is decorated with figures of Saints or other Christian figures (fig.51) standing in an arcade, showing one of the most popular types of decoration with Christian influence in use under Muslim rule<sup>261</sup>.

It should be added that the representation of vegetation in the decoration of a metal object, as is the case with the metal bowl, is another symbol of religious blessings when adopted by Muslims, as it is related to the idea of welfare in life, or in the other world<sup>262</sup>. In supporting this idea, we may consider a fourteenth century bowl (fig.52) of 1300-1340 A.D., attributed to Egypt or Syria. Its exterior body is decorated with floral designs and rosettes, and in the centre of its base is a floral medallion with a rosette in its centre from which radiate some inscriptions

<sup>258</sup> Baer 1998, p.76.

<sup>259</sup> Baer 1998, p.78, 79.

<sup>260</sup>

"العز الدائم، والإقبال السالم والجد الصاعد واليمن العالِي)"

Allan 1986, p.124.

<sup>261</sup> Baer 1983, p.104; Baer 1989, p.8.

<sup>262</sup> Baer 1998, p.90.

containing blessings and good wishes and reading: "The lofty, Authority, the Lordly, the Learned, the Defender, (officer of Al-Malik) Al-Nāṣir"<sup>263</sup>. In addition, on the sides of the bowl the inscriptions read: "The Lofty Authority, the Great Emir, the Fortified by God, the Learned, the Defender, the Helper, the Conqueror, (officer of) Al-Malik Al-Nāṣir"<sup>264</sup>.

The previous examples confirm the main purpose of the decorations of these metal vessels, just as in the case of the metal bowl, as one of transmitting blessings to the owner whilst he was being offered food. These findings raise a question regarding the meaning of other decorations that may appear on metal vessels, apart from architectural forms, elements, and vegetation: what do the other decorations mean, and how can they be related to the function of the vessels? It is true that there is a wide range of decorative themes on metal vessels including scenes of hunters, musicians, and dancers. However, even in these cases, I believe such scenes offer an interpretation that is still related to the function of the objects. For example, in the case of art objects showing scenes of entertainment, the decoration could be understood as wishing for and ensuring the entertainment and pleasure of the owner, a significance that is related to the functional use of these metal objects as offering vessels. Such entertainment scenes, which are believed to have been inspired from the Near East, were traditionally displayed on a variety of metal vessels. In the early Islamic era, they were used in the decoration of the central part of the inside of such metal vessels as bowls or dishes, while from the middle of the twelfth century onwards, pleasure scenes spread across all types of Islamic metalwork<sup>265</sup>.

<sup>263</sup>

"المقر العالي المولوى العالمى المر/ (ابط) الناصرى"

Allan 1986, p.86.

<sup>264</sup>

"المقر العالي المولوى الاميرى الكبيرى المؤيد/ى العالي المر/ (ابط) الظهيرى الغازى الملكى الناصرى"

Allan 1986, p.86.

<sup>265</sup> Baer 1983, p.119, 120.

In other cases, metal vessels were decorated with scenes that may have been intended to convey the idea of seasons and months of the year, as will be emphasized in the course of this study when dealing with the glass bottle and beakers. These correspond to the times when the food and drink offered in the vessels may have been produced, again relating the significance of the scenes to the functional use of the objects that display them as offering vessels.

Further evidence of the relationship between the functional use of the vessel and the significance of its scenes is given by other examples of vessels studied, where messages of invocation can be traced. For example, wishing for and offering wealth to the owner of the bowl may be the meaning behind fishpond ornaments represented on the interior surface of certain bowls. According to Eva Baer, in Islamic medieval literature, the sea is used as a symbol of wealth. Consequently, representations of fishponds and water creatures such as fishes, tortoises, fishtailed bovines, ducks, snakelike reptiles, and human headed birds are signs of wealth, offered to the owner through depiction on the metal bowl<sup>266</sup>. Some examples illustrating this theory may be cited. It seems that in these examples, the making of a wish is implied by the decoration with the artist perhaps wanting to refer to the legend of foreign seas<sup>267</sup> which says: "he who dreams of drinking water out of the sea, will obtain wealth from the King and if he drinks all of it, he will get the whole of the King's wealth"<sup>268</sup>. For example, a metal bowl (fig.53) of 747 A.H. /1346-7 A.D. attributed to Egypt or Syria is decorated on its interior base with a fishpond<sup>269</sup>. A further example is the fourteenth century Modena bowl (fig.54a, b) (now in the Galleria Estense in Modena, Italy)<sup>270</sup>, dating back to 705 A.H. /1305 A.D., which

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<sup>266</sup> Baer 1968, p.26; Allan 1982, p.98.

<sup>267</sup> This could be understood by studying the literature of Damiri (*Faras al-Bahr*).

<sup>268</sup> Baer 1968, p.26.

<sup>269</sup> Allan 1982, p.98.

<sup>270</sup> (Inv.no.8082).

has an interior sun motif surrounded by a circle of fishes swimming in different directions, in addition to birds with human heads, and other forms of water creature<sup>271</sup>. The same idea of a fishpond representation is used to decorate the interior base (fig.55) of another fourteenth century vessel (fig.56a, b) (now in the Louvre Museum in Paris)<sup>272</sup>, the basin of Saint Louis (Baptistère de Saint Louis)<sup>273</sup>. The motif could also be a reference to another concept of wishing for good-fortune, as it was believed that: "...if he (a man) dreams that he has with him a fish in the appearance of a man or bird, it indicates making acquaintance with merchants travelling vastly on land and sea....or having pleasing qualities..."<sup>274</sup>.

In examining fishpond representations, we should recognize the contributions that Robert Hillenbrand has made in identifying their significance on Islamic vessels as offering wishes. He has stated that swimming fish decoration is directly related to cosmology through the ancient theme of the association between fish, and air and sea, and was possibly used to accompany a princely figure as a sign of kingship and authority. The earliest example to demonstrate this idea is the early eighth century A.D. representation of a Nilotic scene with swimming fish, shown below the enthroned figures at Quṣāyr 'Amrah<sup>275</sup>. Robert Irwin made reference to the same idea when he stated that it was in the Mongol and Timurid eras that fishpond representations were used as a reference to authority and patronage<sup>276</sup>.

This brings us to the question of how the wishes and blessings related to the decorations of the bowl, both on the exterior and interior, were thought to have been transferred to the owner. I suggest that this is connected to the idea of magical bowls and their functions, which were used long before and during the Muslim era,

<sup>271</sup> Baer 1968, p.16, 17.

<sup>272</sup> (Inv.no.L.P.16). For more information, see Ettinghausen 1954, p.245-249; Rice 1950, p.367-380.

<sup>273</sup> Baer 1968, p.21.

<sup>274</sup> Allan 1982, p.98; Baer 1968, p.27.

<sup>275</sup> Hillenbrand 1995, p.171, 187.

<sup>276</sup> Irwin 1997, p.91, 92.

especially in Iraq and Western Iran. In this case, it is the power of the magical shapes and inscriptions, as well as the reference to architectural forms, which realized the wishes for the benefit of the owner. Similarly, the architectural form on the metal bowl acts as a vehicle that casts blessings to the owner through his consumption of the vessel's contents. I consider there to be strong evidence to support the idea that the role of the exterior decoration of the bowl, where a building of religious connotation is represented, was borrowed from the function that magical bowls performed. In the case of the metal bowl, the architectural representation invokes for the owner of the bowl the blessings of both the architectural religious structure and the fruits of its surrounding garden. This occurs when the symbolic meanings of these decorations dissolve in the contents of the bowl. The exteriors of the magic bowls were also decorated with similar inscriptions and figures, which had the same purpose of transferring a wish to the owner of the bowl. This also explains how the idea of wealth, represented by fishponds as interior decoration on other examples of bowls, could be actively transmitted to the owner through the vessel.

Magical bowls were small concave vessels made out of bronze, copper, or ceramic, used to contain water or milk that was left out overnight. The bowl was left for this length of time to ensure the amalgamation between the magical and religious formulae written or inscribed on it and its liquid content. This process had to be repeated several times, until the patient who consumed the liquid was healed. *Ṭāsah*, *Ṣaḥn*, *Mir'at*, and *Ṭaliṣmat* are some of the many names used to refer to these bowls which contained magical figures and inscriptions, with engravings on both their interior and exterior surfaces. The main purpose of these bowls was to treat various health problems through their magic inscriptions and signs, including scorpion

stings, snake venom, the bite of a mad dog, difficult childbirth, and nosebleed<sup>277</sup>. It was believed that the symbolic value of the inscriptions and figures on both the interior and exterior of the vessel dissolved into the liquid that was poured into it and was then absorbed by its owner or user<sup>278</sup>.

The type of inscription and decoration found on these objects sometimes takes the form of a group of lines that resemble numbers, and these have special magical and astronomical meanings<sup>279</sup>. Their text always starts with a blessing for the glory and peace of the ruling King. They mention different names of diseases and some Arabic letters in *Abjad* as astronomical symbols related to the magical use of the bowl. They also include Qur'anic texts. Among the many examples of these magical bowls is one which is dated 535 A.H. /1141 A.D. (now in the Islamic Museum, Cairo). It was made by the order of Imām Al-Ḥākim Bī Āmr Allah Muḥammad Ibn Al-Mā'mūn Ibn Al-Raṣhīd. It deals with different types of illness of which the names are inscribed on its sides<sup>280</sup>. Another example (fig.57) dates from 580 A.H. /1185 A.D. and its inscriptions mention that it was mainly used to deal with poisons, as stated in the phrase reading: "These blessing formulae deal with poisons..." A long list of diseases is mentioned on the bowl<sup>281</sup>. A third example includes a bowl that carries the name of the owner Quṭb Al-Dīn and, according to its inscription, dates to 738 A.H. /1338 A.D. It is again decorated with a list of the traditionally known diseases similar to those on the other examples<sup>282</sup>.

Magical bowls were made throughout the Muslim realm, particularly in Syria, where a number of examples was discovered. One twelfth century Syrian healing bowl (fig.58) (now in the Khalili Collection) can be traced back either to 1147-74

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<sup>277</sup> Irwin 1997, p.210.

<sup>278</sup> Wiet 1932, p.54-58.

<sup>279</sup> Allan 1982, p.108.

<sup>280</sup> Wiet 1932, p.101.

<sup>281</sup> Wiet 1932, p.121.

<sup>282</sup> Wiet 1932, p. 94.



A.D.<sup>283</sup> or 565 A.H. /1170 A.D.<sup>284</sup> and was made for Maḥmud Ibn Zankī, or the son of Zankī, known as Nūr Al-Dīn, the ruler of Damascus. Its sides are decorated with some Arabic letters with magical powers<sup>285</sup>. Again, its inscriptions indicate that it was used for treating poisons and other health problems. Another magical bowl, also from Syria, of the thirteenth century A.D. 621 A.H. /1224 A.D. (now in Museum Für Islamische Kunst in Berlin) was made for a judge called Zayn Al-Dīn. The body of the bowl is decorated with inscriptions, six medallions with seated human figures, and figures of the twelve signs of the Zodiac<sup>286</sup>.

Given the similarity between these magical metal bowls and other metal bowls, I suggest in this thesis that the former explain how the wishes on the bowl under consideration were meant to be transferred to the owners. One area of similarity lies in the nature of their decorative elements. Firstly, both their exterior and interior surfaces are adorned with wishes and blessings. Secondly, both are media for the representation of architectural forms. In Syria, a bronze magical bowl (fig.59) that dates to the thirteenth or fourteenth century A.D. has, on one of its faces, a multi lobed medallion containing an abstract representation of the Ka'bah. Surrounding this central medallion are three concentric bands, each of which has a series of arches inscribed with Arabic letters and astrological symbols. The exterior face of the bowl is decorated with writing and trapezoid shapes. The idea is that the power of the magical shapes, the inscriptions, and the architectural form of the Ka'bah will turn the inscribed wishes into reality for the benefit of the ruler<sup>287</sup>. Thirdly, both portray planetary and zodiacal circles around a princely figure. Taking the example of a late thirteenth or early fourteenth century metal bowl (fig.60) (now

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<sup>283</sup> Irwin 1997, p.210.

<sup>284</sup> Micheau 2001, p.211.

<sup>285</sup> Irwin 1997, p.210.

<sup>286</sup> Micheau 2001, p.211.

<sup>287</sup> Allan 1986, p.108.

in the Museo Nazionale del Bargello 364c., Firenze), the decoration on the exterior shows medallions of celestial figures surrounding a sun motif. Astrological signs are used to transmit the blessings of the bowl to the owner by means of magic based on astrology. Again, this shows similarity with the role of magical bowls, with astrological figures shown on the vessels' interior and exterior sides for magical reasons<sup>288</sup>. They are also alike in that the blessings were not limited to the interior of the vessels, as their exterior surfaces also displayed similar significant decorations, a feature that was in use throughout the Muslim Empire. As for the exterior surfaces, early examples of Islamic bowls sometimes depicted simple decorations such as floral, geometrical, and architectural elements that contain meanings. An example is a white bronze bowl<sup>289</sup> (fig.61) whose exterior is decorated with geometrical and architectural ornaments including an arcade that goes all around the body of the vessel<sup>290</sup>. Another area of similarity concerning possible significance is that the metal bowls, in the same way as the magical ones, were used to contain drinks<sup>291</sup>.

Despite the fact that magical bowls are generally categorized as a distinct type of medical vessel operating through the power of religious magic, I would argue that their role is not significantly different from that of the metal bowl in terms of transferring good wishes and offerings to the owner. This suggests itself when we consider the religious nature of the building represented on the metal bowl, which might carry a religious significance similar to the role of the representation of the Ka'bah on the magical bowl.

A study of further examples from an earlier date, the Ancient Egyptian era, reveals the origin of the concept of offering the owner a wish symbolically through decorations. According to Ancient Egyptian mythology, the deceased was believed

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<sup>288</sup> Baer 1983, p.259.

<sup>289</sup> Courtesy L. A. Mayer Memorial, Jerusalem, (Inv. No. LAMM, M 178-71).

<sup>290</sup> Baer 1983, p.104.

<sup>291</sup> Blair 2000b, p.107.

to benefit from all the scenes of offerings depicted on the walls of his tomb. These offerings and drawings in many cases include representations of buildings for the deceased to enjoy in the afterlife. By the power of the religious formulae written on these walls, the drawings were transformed into reality in the afterlife<sup>292</sup>. I believe that this idea could have survived and developed into the Muslim period, when it was modified to suit the religious functions of society, and was related to both religious and secular aspects of the Muslim community.

Thus, the architectural representation on the metal bowl can be shown to be not merely decorative, but also to convey noteworthy meanings. As I have argued, the significance of the architectural representation is religious, casting the blessings of the represented religious building to the owner of the bowl, and offering Paradise, with its food and fruit, to the ruler. These symbolic meanings were transmitted through their symbolic amalgamation with the contents of the bowl, be it food, fruits, or beverages. This imitates the idea of the magical bowl in which the words, figures, and inscriptions on its interior and exterior surfaces symbolically dissolve in the contents. The strong association between the significance of the architectural form and the function of the bowl is thereby confirmed. As the artist was likely a non-Muslim, or had a non-Muslim background, he represented this by using the architectural form of a Sasanian fire temple and reflecting through it the theme of Sasanian Paradise or infinite light, a concept with which he was familiar. Taking into consideration the proposed early date of the bowl and the non-Muslim origin or artistic background of the artist, it is possible that he resorted to a pictorial scene, rather than inscriptions and words, in order to represent the meaning that was intended to be transferred to the owner of the vessel. This is further confirmed if we refer to a later example from the tenth century A.D., a bowl made of glazed

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<sup>292</sup> Taylor 2001, p.55; Bryan 2002, p.58.

earthenware from Nishapur in Iran (now in the Khalili Collection), in which an offer of Paradise was formulated in words rather than architectural forms, which demonstrates that the two styles are interchangeable. This further example suggests that the custom of representing Paradise and its fruits as a wish for the owner of the vessel was common in the Muslim era. However, the way in which this meaning is rendered differs from one occasion to another<sup>293</sup>.

Another example in this connection is a twelfth century metal plate with a political message commemorating the victory, sovereignty, safety, and power of the owner of the vessel, which is formulated on the artefact through architectural representation. In relation to the functional use of this plate as an offering device, the architectural representation serves to transmit a blessing of everlasting victory to the owner in his lifetime. The centre of the plate (figs.62-65) (now exhibited in the Hermitage Museum, Leningrad), is adorned with a representation of a domed building<sup>294</sup>, probably a castle. The castle (figs.62, 65) has three storeys: the first, lower, storey has at its centre a door surmounted by a rectangular panel decorated with a seated human figure whose hands extend backwards, while the second storey contains a large rectangular panel decorated with eight figures wearing long costumes. An interesting figure among this group is the one shown wearing a type of coffer over his head. On the third storey, and above this large panel, there is a representation of three soldiers and two horsemen. On each side of the second and third storeys of the castle lie terraces from which two people, probably females, are looking down, a reference to the royal *Ḥarīm* and the royal palace. Flanking the

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<sup>293</sup> Irwin 1997, p.167.

<sup>294</sup> For more information about the Sasanian features of this domed building representation on the metal plate see: Stöcklein Hans 1964-1967, "Arms and Armour", *A Survey of Persian Art from Pre-Historic times to the Present*, vol.VI, (London and New York), pp.2555-2585; Marschak 1986, fig.212-(8,9); Reuther 1977, p.510, 511, 524, 530; Sarre 1922, p.64; Sauvaget 1940-41, p.35; Herzfeld Ernst 1924, *Paikuli: Monument and Inscription of the Early History of the Sasanian Empire*, I, (Berlin), p.5. For more information about other Seljuk features see: Sauvaget 1940-41, p.37-38; Sarre 1936, p.7-11; Sauvaget 1951, p.129-132.

palace on either side are five horsemen wearing military garments, and armed with weapons<sup>295</sup>.

Jean Sauvaget related this scene to the Seljuk Sultan Sandjar in Merv in 1154 A.D. This is based mainly on study of the figure represented wearing a crown and with hair locks outlining his face and falling over his shoulders, who is most probably Sandjar himself<sup>296</sup>. In fact, Sauvaget suggests the building is a palace rather than a castle since it includes a loggia, called *tarima*, which traditionally exists only on civil buildings founded by order of the ruler. It was here that the ruler and his followers would appear to celebrate important events in full view of his subjects<sup>297</sup>. Therefore, the scene may be celebrating the execution of two enemies who attempted an unsuccessful assassination of Sultan Sandjar in Merv in 548 A.H. /1154 A.D. The scene thus celebrates the survival and safety of the ruler while simultaneously commemorating the punishment of the enemies over whom he has prevailed. The two people thrown on top of the decorated parapet of the palace appear to be the two assassins who were sentenced to death as punishment for their crime<sup>298</sup>.

It is also possible to consider the decoration of the plate as a commemoration of the ruler's victory over the Crusaders. The scene is highly characteristic of a depiction of the siege and fall of a castle at the hands of Muslim conquerors, and the defeat of their enemies. This type of scene, which has roots in the Ancient Egyptian era<sup>299</sup>, appeared for the first time, in the Muslim era, on a *dinar* ascribed to the

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<sup>295</sup> Sarre 1923, p.33-35; Sarre 1922, p.64.

<sup>296</sup> Sauvaget 1951, p.131, 132.

<sup>297</sup> Sauvaget 1940-41, p.45; Sauvaget 1951, p.131. Jean Sauvaget has pointed out the similarity of this assumption to an event in the history when Nūr Al-Dīn Ibn Zenkī appeared in the Tarima of the citadel of Aleppo to address his population and to show them that he was not injured or killed during the war against the Crusaders in 1159 A.D. For more details see Kamāl Al-Dīn 1900, *Histoire d'Alep*, trad. E. Blochet, (Paris), p.24; Cahen C. 1935, "Une Chronique Chiite Du Temps Des Croisades", *Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres, Comptes-rendus Des Séances*, p.267.

<sup>298</sup> Sauvaget 1951, p.132.

<sup>299</sup> See Groenewegen-Frankfort 1951, p.133.

Muslim Caliph Al-Muqtadir<sup>300</sup>, and on medals of the ninth and tenth centuries A.D. In addition, it can be seen on some art objects in Nishapur, from which the architectural form, as well as the meaning of the scene on the metal plate, was directly inspired<sup>301</sup>. In the decoration on the metal plate, the ruler is held in a palanquin (*Tarima*) surmounted with a dome. Upraised flags carry the headdresses (*Tugh*) of the defeated dead soldiers, supposedly Crusaders, as a sign of their defeat before the Muslims, in a traditional victory march<sup>302</sup>. This type of headdress called *Tugh* was later developed to create a new form of headdress called *Sandjak*<sup>303</sup>. After the capture of Baniyas by Nūr Al-Dīn Ibn Zenkī in 551 A.H. /1157 A.D., the Frankish prisoners were brought to Damascus riding camels and horses, and carrying flags. These prisoners were identified as Crusaders by their pendant hair locks hidden by the *Tugh*, in its developed form as a *Sandjak* (headdress) that was ascribed to them only. These headdresses are like those shown on the metal plate, which suggests that the enemies depicted were Crusaders<sup>304</sup>. As for the artist of this plate, Boris Marschak argued that he was a Christian Nestorian, and that the scene on the plate is related to Gospel scenes<sup>305</sup>. Accordingly, the artist with his Christian background decided to Islamize the scene he depicted in order to refer to an event in Muslim history.

<sup>300</sup> Marschak 1986, p.322; for more details see Hauser W. & Wilkinson K. 1942, "The Museum's Excavations at Nishāpūr", *Bulletin of the Metropolitan Museum of Art*, vol.XXXVII, N.4, fig.45, p.116, 118.

<sup>301</sup> Marschak 1986, p.322; for more details see Bahrami M.A.1952, "Gold Medal in the Freer Gallery of Art", *Archaeologica Orientalia in Memoriam of Ernst Herzfeld*, (NewYork).

<sup>302</sup> Sauvaget 1951, p.128.

<sup>303</sup> In literary sources, Al-Qalqashandī, when talking about the royal insignia of the ruler, mentioned flags (Al-A'lām) called *Sandjak*, stating: "Flags, there are numerous types of flags...some of which are small yellow flags called *Sandjak*...Sultan 'Imād Al-Dīn ruler of Ḥamāh at the time said: the first king to have worn the *Sandjak* on his head was Ghāzī Ibn Zenkī, brother of Nūr Al-Dīn Maḥmūd Ibn Zenkī, ruler of the Levant...".

"(الأعلام) وهي عدة رايات...ورايات صفر صدغار تسمى السناجق...قال السلطان عماد الدين صاحب حماه في تاريخه: وأول من حمل السناجق على رأسه من الملوك في ركوبه غازي ابن زنكي وهو اخو السلطان نور الدين محمود ابن زنكي صاحب الشام..."

Al-Qalqashandī 1914, IV, p.8.

<sup>304</sup> Sauvaget 1951, p.128, 129.

<sup>305</sup> Marschak 1986, p.321, 322.

The last example to discuss is a fourteenth century basin with an elaborate military scene, the basin of Saint Louis, which is a good example of a relatively complex representation designed as a wish for victory and health to the owner of the metal vessel. These wishes are conveyed to the owner of the vessel through a representation of a victorious battle scene in which the ruler is shown defeating and destroying his enemies. On the exterior are other scenes similar to those found on various objects of Islamic art including hunting, dancing, and sports. As Doris Behrens-Abouseif has noted, the battle scene represented in the interior of the basin is not a general scene, but rather refers to a specific historical moment in the life of the owner of the basin as a warrior<sup>306</sup>. She also proposes that this basin was made for Sultan Al-Zāhir Baybars Al-Bunduqdārī, the artist's intention being to reflect the owner's military and sporting achievements through scenes on his basin.

In conclusion, we find clear evidence of how architectural representations on Islamic metalwork had messages to convey. We have seen the ways in which a religious significance, as in the case of the metal bowl, or a political meaning, as in the case of the metal plate, could be reflected through the depiction of simple architectural forms, confirming a strong association with the function of the objects on which these representations appear. The architectural and decorative details of the represented building forms also refer to their artists. Furthermore, despite often being borrowed from a non-Muslim source, the meaning and significance of these architectural representations were adapted to Islamic art, and were conveyed in distinct ways. In the following section, I will try to demonstrate the arguments of this thesis in relation to examples of glassware.

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<sup>306</sup> Behrens-Abouseif 1988-1989, p.5.

## 2.2 Architectural Representation on Glasswork

Architectural representation on glassware is found on a limited number of examples, including two glass pieces from the Kafler Collection, which are attributed to Egypt or Syria and date back to the mid or late thirteenth century. The first small glass fragment, probably a part of a beaker or a bottle neck<sup>307</sup>, shows a building with few details in which a human figure is attempting to bend to pick up an object from inside the building, while another person is shown standing outside the building. The second fragment, also probably a neck of a bottle<sup>308</sup>, does not include any human figures, but shows part of a brick building<sup>309</sup>. A third example from Syria comprises two enamelled glass fragments (now in the Benaki Museum, Athens)<sup>310</sup> dating back to the mid-thirteenth century, and representing brick buildings, each with an arcade open to the air surmounted by a turret. Some human figures are represented standing in the arcade and looking outside the buildings<sup>311</sup>. It is not possible to determine the significance of these architectural representations as the artefacts are only small fragments and the objects cannot be seen as wholes.

Architectural representations on examples of Islamic glasswork were not only decorative; their main significance was to reflect the seasons of the year, and, in some cases, to bring blessings to their owner. Even though this study proposes that the architectural forms on these glass objects were hidden signatures of the artists, it is not easy to interpret their precise origin or artistic background. It may again be the case that uncovering the function of an object decorated with architectural images helps in understanding the significance of its decoration. There are three glass

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<sup>307</sup> (LNS 186 KGc).

<sup>308</sup> (LNS 188 KGn).

<sup>309</sup> Carboni 2001b, p.341.

<sup>310</sup> (Inv. no. 3663). For more information, see Clairmont Ch. 1977, *Catalogue of Ancient and Islamic Glass*, (Athens), p.127, cat. nos. 458, 460.

<sup>311</sup> Eddé 2001, p.112.



objects which are most interesting in this respect: a bottle and two beakers. The use of these glass objects may have varied from one case to another; consequently, the artist seems to have employed architectural representation to indicate such usage, as will be explained in detail in the course of this study.

In the following section, I will demonstrate how the architectural forms exhibited represent the seasons of the year, an idea that, although borrowed from a non-Muslim origin, was developed and given meaning under Islamic rule. This will be investigated in the following section through the study of glass examples from the Ayyubid and Mamluk eras.

### **2.2.1 Enamelled Glass Bottle from the Ayyubid Period**

On the body of a pear-shaped glass bottle (now in the Furusiyya Arts Foundation, Vaduz, Leichtenstein)<sup>312</sup> (fig.66) with a low foot and flaring neck, four architectural representations can be discerned. The bottle originates from Syria and dates to mid-thirteenth century Ayyubid period<sup>313</sup>. To focus the light on the exact meaning of the architectural forms represented on the bottle I will analyze in detail the description, origin, and the possible significance of the architectural forms, which will support the main argument of the thesis. I will start with a description of the glass object and the scenes in which the architectural forms are displayed.

#### **2.2.1.1 Description of the Architectural Representations**

The decoration on the body of the glass bottle is rendered in enamel, and is divided into four bands. The uppermost band starts at the neck, with a representation of seven standing human figures. Considering the type of dress and headdresses that the figures are wearing in the scene, long tunics and headdresses with capes or pointed hoods, it is possible that they represent Christian religious figures. The

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<sup>312</sup> First published in Hungarian in a general survey of Islamic Art by Fehérvári Géza. For more details, see Fehérvári Géza 1987, *Az Iszlám Művészeti Története*, (Budapest), pl.122.

<sup>313</sup> Carboni 2001c, p.242.

second band, which lies between the neck and the shoulder of the bottle, is decorated with medallions filled with floral ornaments. The third band is on the body of the bottle, and contains the main themes of the decoration, buildings, human figures, and vegetal motifs. The fourth decorative band is at the bottom of the bottle near the base, showing figures of walking animals<sup>314</sup>. The main scene, which lies in the wide middle band on the body of the bottle, is an open-air scene, where four buildings, separated by some agricultural scenes, and human figures, are depicted.

One of the buildings (fig.66) is double-storeyed, and covered with three pointed domes. The lower storey, which is built of bricks, is decorated with a round medallion, and contains a double folded door. The upper storey, which has a built in window, is surrounded with a railing that forms an arcade. Opposite this architectural representation, on the other side of the bottle, stands the second building. It appears as a hanging structure (fig.67), its lower storey has an arcade with four columns, while its upper storey has a cross, and a railing overlooking the street, with a triple arcade in the middle. It is supported by short columns, and is flanked on either side by two windows, each with a gabled roof. Behind each of the two windows, there is a tower topped with an onion shaped dome, which has arrow-slit-like apertures. One interesting feature about this arcade is that it has lamps hanging from its arches, which could indicate it to be a religious structure. The third building, which stands to the right of the second, consists of three floors. The first has a shrine-like entrance with a window, covered with an onion shaped dome. This forms the staircase leading to the second floor, which is surrounded by an arcade, whose columns support its roof. The third floor has two shrine-shaped constructions, each culminating in a gabled roof. The fourth building is to the left of the third one and has three floors. The first floor is brick built, the second is in the form of an

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<sup>314</sup> Carboni 2001c, p.242.

arcade with a window at its left side, and the third forms the roof of the building. There are two towers on either side of the building, with onion shaped domes, between which stands a small shrine-shaped structure with a gabled roof. The study of the form of these architectural representations reveals the various features of the buildings that may assist in determining their significance. However, the origin of the form of these buildings, which are shown with specific architectural features, is still unclear. In the next section, we will examine the possible origin of these building forms in an attempt to shed light on their significance.

### **2.2.1.2 Source of the Architectural Representations**

The buildings depicted on the bottle, according to some studies, are of a Christian origin, due to the appearance of various Christian elements in the scene. The presence of the cross on the top of one of these buildings confirms the Christian religious character of the structure. The Christian appearance of the human figures standing between or in the buildings, who appear as monks or deacons, may also indicate the Christian nature of the scene<sup>315</sup>. This assumption is supported by recalling other examples of Muslim art with Christian imagery. For example, the wine jars (fig.68) which were discovered in the royal *Ḥarīm* of Jawsaq Al-*Khāqānī* (220-223 A.H. /836-39 A.D.), the palace of Al-Mu'taṣim, were decorated with Christian images of bearded men wearing monastic costumes and holding staffs before them. These jars are dated to the ninth century A.D., and are attributed to Sāmarrā' in Iraq<sup>316</sup>. Another example of 1240 A.D., from either Egypt or Syria, is a basin (fig.69) (now in the Freer Gallery Collection) inscribed with the name of Al-Ṣāliḥ Najm Al-Dīn Ayyūb, and whose exterior surface carries Christian imagery. It has five lobed medallions inserted between the words of its inscribed text, which are

<sup>315</sup> Carboni 2001c, p.243.

<sup>316</sup> Baer 1989, p.6; Irwin 1997, p.111. For more information about these jars see Herzfeld Ernst 1927, *Die Malereien Von Samarra*, (Berlin), p.83-95; Rice 1958, p.15-33.

interpreted by Esin Atil as representing the Annunciation, Mary with the Child, Jesus, the Raising of Lazarus, the Entry into Jerusalem, and the Last Supper<sup>317</sup>.

The attribution of the bottle to Syria supports the proposition that this scene can be interpreted as Christian in origin<sup>318</sup>. Strong relations between the Ayyubids and the Christian community in Syria may support this Christian interpretation of the architectural representations. Many glass vessels and other art objects of different material with Christian imagery, which were designed as gifts for the elite members among the Christian community, symbolize these relations<sup>319</sup>. In the Ayyubid era, Christians were still living in Northern Syria and in Palestine. The Frankish emigrants, who came from different countries, cultures, and backgrounds to these coastal Islamic countries, also influenced art there<sup>320</sup>. Evidence of Christian influences in Syrian glasswork is shown in the many glass fragments from the Ayyubid period discovered there, which are decorated with Christian figures and buildings of a Christian nature. There are also intact examples of Ayyubid glassware with themes of Christian origin<sup>321</sup>, including displaying episodes of Christian religious life, and others possibly depicting monastery scenes, which are sometimes combined with Muslim or Christian courtly scenes<sup>322</sup>. The similarity between the human figures represented on the bottle, and those of the bishops and monks represented in Syrian manuscripts<sup>323</sup>, indicates the Christian origin of the scene on the glass bottle. The human figures represented on the neck of the bottle were shown in a frontal view, with their hands folded. This attitude is comparable to the figures

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<sup>317</sup> Atil 1985, p.137-139.

<sup>318</sup> Carboni 2001c, p.244, 245.

<sup>319</sup> Atil 1985, p.145; Barrett 1949, p.XV.

<sup>320</sup> Baer 1989, p.2, 3.

<sup>321</sup> Carboni 2001a, p.30.

<sup>322</sup> For more details see Katzenstein Rane A. & Lowry Glenn D. 1983, "Christian Themes in Thirteenth Century Islamic Metalwork", *Muqarnas*, vol.I, p.53-66; Evans Helen C. & Wixom William D. 1997, *The Glory of Byzantium: Art and Culture of the Middle Byzantine Era, A.D.843-1261*. Exh.Cat. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, (New York), nos.283-285.

<sup>323</sup> See Buchthal H. 1939, "The Painting of the Syrian Jacobites in Its Relation to the Byzantine and Islamic Art", *Syria*, vol.XX, p.136-150.

of the bishops wearing pointed hoods and folding their hands in an attitude of prayer, as in the 1219-20 A.D. Syrian manuscript copied in the monastery of Mar Mattai near Moşul (now in the Bibliotheca Apostolica Vaticana, Rome)<sup>324</sup>.

Furthermore, as well as the origin of the buildings and human figures on the bottle being identified as Christian, the rest of vegetal and agricultural scenes can be acknowledged as having a Christian source. These are the agricultural scenes found between the architectural images on the body of the bottle. In Syria and Mesopotamia during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries A.D., Christian scenes of architecture, accompanied with agriculture, seem to have influenced the art of the Muslim world. These scenes are believed to represent episodes of Christian monastery life<sup>325</sup>.

To conclude, previous study of the description and origin of the architectural representations on the Ayyubid bottle clarifies their Christian features. The evidence of strong Christian symbols within the scheme decorating the body of the bottle, and its attribution to the same provenance and period as other dated objects already discussed, convincingly suggest the bottle's Christian origin. To understand the meaning of these Christian themes on the Ayyubid bottle, it is necessary to refer to the possible significance of the architectural forms shown.

### **2.2.1.3 Significance of the Architectural Representations**

In the following section, I will discuss two possible interpretations of the architectural forms that decorate the body of the glass bottle: religious and political.

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<sup>324</sup> (Vat. Syr.559, fol.16R), for more details see De Jerphanion Guillaume 1940, *Les Miniatures du Manuscrit Syriaque no.559 de la Bibliothèque Vaticane*, (Vatican City), pl.5, no.16; Baer 1989, fig.128.

<sup>325</sup> Carboni 2001c, p.244, 245. For more information on these Christian figures see Ettinghausen 1962, p.67-80.

### 2. 2.1.3.1 Religious Significance

Due to the representation of a church among the buildings on the body of the bottle, as identified by the presence of a cross at its top, the decoration of the object might be interpreted as being religious. This study suggests that this Christian building representation is interpreted as a blessing for the owner of the vessel, offered to him together with the drink contained in it. The identification of the Christian figures, which may represent clerics or monks, is not a symbol of Muslim victory over Franks; had this been the intention, predominantly Muslim features would have been used with only a few references to Christian themes. There has not been found one single clear Muslim sign in the scene, whether agricultural, architectural, or figural<sup>326</sup>.

Another religious interpretation proposed by Stefano Carboni states that the meaning of the whole scene, with its architectural representation, reflects the theme of the seasons of the year in the life of a monastery or an abbot. Supporting this interpretation is the observation of two people repeated in the scenes, these being the monk and deacon of a specific monastery for whom the whole scene is designed. In accordance with this explanation, the architectural forms could be interpreted as a monastery and other Christian structures. However, the question is now raised of why vegetation is represented along with the architectural forms, especially as all the scenes interspersed between the four buildings are agricultural<sup>327</sup>. In answer to this question, Melanie Gibson identified the function of this imagery as a manifestation of the stages followed in wine making<sup>328</sup>. This excludes the ploughing scene, and considers the trees shown in the background of the four agricultural scenes as merely decorative elements. This might be an appropriate interpretation if the bottle were

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<sup>326</sup> Carboni 2001a, p.30.

<sup>327</sup> Carboni 2001c, p.245.

<sup>328</sup> Gibson 1983, p.39.

used mainly to contain wine, although this explanation does not match the function of the architectural representations shown. In this case, it is possible that the scene refers to stages followed in the making of wine as the content of the bottle. It has also been suggested that the whole scene, with its agriculture and architecture, might refer to the harvesting of grapes if it is read anticlockwise. However, this is not a satisfactory explanation, as it does not agree with the orientation of the rest of the scene. This led other studies to consider the scene as a depiction of the collecting of olives, apples, and cherry fruits from the trees shown in the background of this scene<sup>329</sup>.

Even though Stefano Carboni agreed that this bottle has an unusual shape with its flaring neck, which may suggest its function as a pouring vessel, he disagreed with Gibson's opinion. Carboni has suggested that the fruit could be dates collected on mats, with trees rising high behind them. According to his observations, the scene can be interpreted as referring to the seasons of the year. Carboni argued that only one (fig.70) of the four agricultural scenes is the harvesting of grapes. The grapes were easily identified through their colour, the shape of their leaves, and the way they hang in clusters. A deacon in a long cloak, with a large white bowl, raising his hands to reach the fruit is shown. This type of agricultural scene clearly suggests a representation of autumn. Carboni suggests the second agricultural scene (fig.71) is the collection of dates, referring to summer by showing a palm tree with dates hanging from its branches with the colour corresponding to that of the fruits collected on the mat beneath the tree. The third scene (fig.72) is a ploughing scene, referring to winter. However, the fourth scene, which shows a donkey loaded with fruits of red, blue and white colours, is uncertain, but may refer to spring<sup>330</sup>.

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<sup>329</sup> Carboni 2001c, p.245.

<sup>330</sup> Carboni 2001c, p.245.

### 2.2.1.3.2 Political Significance

From a political perspective, many possible meanings could be suggested. The whole scene could be a celebration of one of the political events that took place in the community. For example, it could be a detailed representation of the celebration of the appointment of a new abbot to a famous monastery. This would explain the need for the depiction of a Christian scene with Christian figures and buildings. Another explanation for the presence of the Christian scene may be that the bottle was a present sent by a Muslim Ayyubid ruler to a Christian ruler of a neighbouring country, or from a wealthy abbot to a Muslim ruler<sup>331</sup>. It might have also been an expression of the largely peaceful coexistence of Muslims and Christians living side by side, achieved in art through the display on the glass bottle of features representing both communities. Muslim features are shown elsewhere on the bottle to attest to its Muslim production; for instance, the floral decorations suggest a Muslim influence, as seen on the two bands on the body of the bottle, one at its neck, and the other on the lower part of the body<sup>332</sup>.

As stated above, both religious and political meanings could have been the purpose of the architectural representations and the scenes in general on the glass bottle. I support the idea that the imagery on the glass bottle refers to the seasons of the year. However, I do not totally agree that this has anything to do with monastery life, or the appointment of a new abbot, since similar themes have been found on other Islamic art objects. For example, the Mamluk glass beakers and the manuscript of *Kitāb Al-Bulhān*, which will be mentioned in more detail later, have architectural representation and some Christian symbols accompanying agricultural representations. In these cases, we cannot interpret the scenes in relation to

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<sup>331</sup> Carboni 2001c, p.245.

<sup>332</sup> Carboni 2001a, p.30.



monastery life, but rather as representations of the seasons and months of the year. This is further demonstrated by considering the relationship between the interpreted meaning of the scene and the functional use of the object on which the architectural forms are represented.

As an object mainly used for containing different types of drinks, it is plausible that the bottle is decorated with scenes representing the seasons of the year. That the bottle was likely used for beverages is demonstrated by a fragmentary Fatimid vessel (now kept in the Islamic Museum, Cairo)<sup>333</sup> decorated with a scene (fig.73) of a woman pouring a drink from a bottle similar in shape to this glass example<sup>334</sup>. Moreover, when considering the functional use of the bottle, we should bear in mind that it was a tradition that every guest at an Ayyubid or Mamluk banquet had a number of glasses of different sizes for various types of beverage<sup>335</sup>. Seasons of the year yield different types of fruits, which can be used to produce drinks to fill these glass vessels, accordingly, the agricultural and vegetation scenes on the body of the bottle show cultivation and planting activities related to these different fruits. However, this interpretation does not provide us with a satisfactory explanation as to the architectural forms in the scene. It is feasible to suggest that the combination of architectural representation on the bottle with agricultural scenes perpetuates a non-Muslim tradition of displaying the seasons of the year, and this may justify the Christian features within the scenes on the bottle, as the result of influence from this non-Muslim source.

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<sup>333</sup> (Inv.no.14987).

<sup>334</sup> Meinecke-Berg 1999, p.352. For more information on this scene see Ettinghausen Richard 1956, "Early Realism In Islamic Art", *Studi Orientalistici In Ouvre di Giorgio Levi Della Vida*, vol.I, (Rome), p.269, 270.

<sup>335</sup> Carboni 2001b, p.334.

The theme of the representation of the seasons of the year can be traced back to pre-Islamic antiquity, as well as to the Western Middle Ages<sup>336</sup>. The origin of the theme dates to the fifth dynasty B.C., to the Ancient Egyptian era<sup>337</sup>, as shown on a painted limestone fragment of relief (fig.74) in the sun temple of King Neusera at Abū-Ghurūb (now in Ägyptisches Museum, Berlin)<sup>338</sup>. It depicts two registers of activity in the marshes of the Delta<sup>339</sup>. Representation of the four seasons also occurred in Byzantine mosaics in North Africa, which cannot be dated later than the fifth century A.D.<sup>340</sup>. An example of this is the mosaics from Cesarea- Cherchel<sup>341</sup> in Algeria<sup>342</sup>. These mosaics, which are dated to the beginning of the third century A.D.<sup>343</sup>, show the labours of the fields in reference to the seasons of the year<sup>344</sup>. Another example are the mosaics from Haïdra (Ammaedara), which are dated to the end of the third or beginning of the fourth century A.D.<sup>345</sup>, in which the seasons are represented as the standing Erotes with his normal attributes flanked by birds and framed by seasonal plants<sup>346</sup>. A further example includes the Mosaic of the Year at Hippo, probably dated to the early fourth century A.D.<sup>347</sup>, which represents the seasons of the year through a scene of a young man standing outside a circle that he seems to turn with this right hand. The wreaths interlace to create four smaller

<sup>336</sup> Rice 1954, p.1.

<sup>337</sup> Robins 1997, p.64.

<sup>338</sup> (Inv. No. 20038 Bildarchiv Preussischer Kulturbesitz).

<sup>339</sup> In the lower register is preserved part of a scene showing the trapping of birds in a clap net. The clap net itself is missing but six men can be seen holding the rope that will pull the net shut. In the register above two men are depicted putting birds that have already been caught into a cage. To the left a cow and her calf can be seen, part of a larger scene of husbandry that is now lost. The top of the block preserves a bottom of a water scene. The marsh setting of the scenes is made explicit by the tall stands of reeds and other vegetation. Much of the colour survives, with blue for the water, green for the plants. See Robins 1997, fig.58, p.64.

<sup>340</sup> "Much earlier, scenes of vintage, of wine-pressing and olive-gathering are frequent on the Campana slabs of the best period; here, however, satyrs, and fauns replace real farmers". Levi 1941, footnote 62, p.277.

<sup>341</sup> See Levi 1941, p.277.

<sup>342</sup> Koseleff 1942, no.909, p.79.

<sup>343</sup> Bérard 1935, p.129, 130.

<sup>344</sup> Dunbabin 1978, p.114, 115.

<sup>345</sup> Salomonson 1965, p.62, 63; Dunbabin 1978, p.158, 159.

<sup>346</sup> Dunbabin 1978, p.158.

<sup>347</sup> Salomonson 1965, p.63; Dunbabin 1978, p.159.

circles containing masks alternating with four ovals containing nude female figures which are believed by Katherine Dunbabin to represent the four seasons<sup>348</sup>. Furthermore, in pre-Islamic antiquity of the West, the calendar of Filocalus, or “the Chronograph of 354 A.D.”<sup>349</sup>, shows the seasons of the year<sup>350</sup>. Examples of this type of art also existed in pre-Islamic Syria and Palestine, in which the seasons and months of the year were depicted, including at Beth Alpha, Diar Solaib, and Antioch<sup>351</sup>, where the most prominent instances of such representation can be found<sup>352</sup>.

Beth Alpha is a Jewish synagogue that contains a floor mosaic completed by two artists, Marianos and his son Hanina<sup>353</sup>. It was executed, according to an inscription found on the door of the entrance to the synagogue, in the time of the Emperor Justin, who is identifiable as either Justin I (518-27 A.D.) or Justin II (565-78 A.D.)<sup>354</sup>. This Jewish mosaic pavement (fig.14) is divided vertically into three panels. The second panel (fig.75) is decorated with a representation of the zodiac cycle that is placed within a square. The inner circle includes a representation of the sun riding a chariot driven by four horses<sup>355</sup>. The outer circle of this central medallion contains the twelve signs referring to the zodiac. At each of the four corners of the large square, there is a cherub with only the upper part of its body visible, each symbolising one of the four seasons of the year; for example, spring is represented as a golden-haired girl wearing a chain and emerald necklace, and a dress fastened to her shoulders by two straps. There is also a representation of a

<sup>348</sup> Dunbabin 1978, p.158, 159.

<sup>349</sup> See Strzygowski Josef 1888, “Die Calenderbilder des Chronographen Vom Jahre 354”, *Jahrbuch des Kaiserlich Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts. Ergänzungsheft I*, (Berlin).

<sup>350</sup> Levi 1941, p.251.

<sup>351</sup> For Representations of months and seasons of the year in antiquity see Levi 1947, I, p.85-88,161, 162.

<sup>352</sup> Kitzinger 1965, p.13.

<sup>353</sup> Kitzinger 1965, p.13.

<sup>354</sup> Kitzinger 1965, p.15.

<sup>355</sup> Sukenik 1932, p.35.

shepherd's crook and baskets of cheese at her breast, and a bird in front of her with some flowers<sup>356</sup>.

In examples of the pre-Islamic era, as previously mentioned, the theme of showing the seasons of the year was abstract, without any agricultural or architectural representation, which could not have been the direct inspiration for the themes of the glass bottle, despite ultimately being the origin of the concept. However, study of the development of scenes depicting the seasons of the year in Western art will demonstrate that Western art was the direct source of inspiration for the use of the theme in Islamic art.

Reference to the seasons and months of the year in the West developed and became more complex in the course of time. Such scenes influenced how the seasons of the year were depicted later in the Muslim era. In the art of the West from the first and second centuries onwards, single female or male figures were used to represent each season or month<sup>357</sup>, until the eleventh century when the single figure was replaced by two figures united in a scene<sup>358</sup>. A later development occurred in the Middle Ages, whereby these figures, single or united, were replaced with images of individuals engaged in different religious, civil, and agricultural activities, which became known as "Active Seasons". This principle of "Active Seasons" originated in ancient Byzantine and Greek art and was later inherited by art of the Western Middle Ages and the Islamic era<sup>359</sup>. One of the earliest examples is a small Hellenistic frieze found in the Metropolitan Church of Athens, Hagios Elueuthérios (Panhagia Gorgopiko)<sup>360</sup>, and dates to the first or the second century A.D. It represents the seasons and months of the year in terms of Athenian religious

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<sup>356</sup> Sukenik 1932, p.38.

<sup>357</sup> Hanfmann 1951, I, p.75; Rice 1954, p.1; Koseleff 1942, no.909, p.78.

<sup>358</sup> Koseleff 1942, no.909, p.81.

<sup>359</sup> Levi 1941, p.287; Rice 1954, p.1; Koseleff 1942, no.909, p.78.

<sup>360</sup> Thiele 1898, p.8, 9; Levi 1941, fig.18.

festivities and customs by means of different vintage and ploughing scenes<sup>361</sup>. Another relatively early example, the Carolingian<sup>362</sup> calendar from the ninth century A.D., shows the seasons and the twelve months of the year (fig.76) as human figures engaged in various activities<sup>363</sup>.

Depiction of activities has been the method adopted to represent the seasons of the year appearing in the eleventh century A.D., from which the glass bottle was inspired. In the Calendar of *Gérone*, which dates to 1000 A.D., we may also recognize the seasons and months of the year as human figures engaged in different activities. February (fig.77), for instance, is shown as hunting birds, March (fig.78) as catching serpents, April (fig.79) as labouring in a field, and June (fig.80) as fishing<sup>364</sup>. Further examples of the representation of the seasons of the year include architecture. On the Western front of Rheims Cathedral<sup>365</sup>, the four seasons of the year are also represented. Here, winter is shown as a man wearing heavy clothes warming himself before a fire. Spring is pictured as a standing young man wearing clothes and accessories, summer as a mantle floating in the breeze, and autumn as a centaur shooting arrows with a bow<sup>366</sup>.

This development from a single theme, in which the seasons of the year were represented as single figures, to active themes, which showed figures engaged in activities with one another, had an impact on the representations of the seasons and months in Islamic art. This development was adopted in the Muslim era but adapted and given new significance, as will be explained. Representations of the labours of each month and the seasons of the year were therefore known in Islamic art and

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<sup>361</sup> Fowler 1873, p.45.

<sup>362</sup> See Schapiro Meyer 1940, "The Carolingian Copy of the Calendar of 354", *The Art Bulletin*, vol.XXII, p.270-272.

<sup>363</sup> Comet 1992, pl.3.

<sup>364</sup> Comet 1992, pl.5.

<sup>365</sup> See Demaison L. 1911, "REIMS, Epoques Préhistorique et Romaine", *Congrès Archéologique*, p.10.

<sup>366</sup> Fowler 1873, p.45.

architecture<sup>367</sup>. However, since only late examples of this have survived, it is not possible to know what earlier examples might have looked like. Nevertheless, the study of these late examples shows that the idea of representing the theme of seasons of the year existed in the Muslim era, which supports our assumption that this was the case for the scene shown on the body of the glass bottle.

Later examples in Islamic art, with a developed theme of the seasons of the year, appear on a limited numbers of candlesticks, where agricultural activities related to specific seasons are evident<sup>368</sup>. On another art medium, the Islamic manuscript, the same idea was practised; for example in the manuscript of *Kitāb Al-Bulhān* or “Book of Well-Being”, dated prior to 812 A.H. /1409 A.D., and according to the reconstruction of its colophon to 801 A.H. /1399 A.D., the seasons of the year and the labours of the months were illustrated. This manuscript (now in the Bodleian Library, Oxford)<sup>369</sup> deals with astrology, divination, and prognostication. It has fifty-four miniatures, including popular legends and wonders of the world. Written in Baghdad by ‘Abd Al-Ḥasan Ibn ‘Alī Ibn Al-Ḥasan, a native of Baghdad, the manuscript depicts many architectural buildings. It was painted during the rule of Aḥmad Ibn ‘Uways 784-813 A.H. /1382-1410 A.D.<sup>370</sup>. In this manuscript, each representation of a season occupies half a page, and is inserted between headings such as *Al Qawl ‘Alā Faṣl Al-Ṣaif*, or The Discourse on the Season of Summer. In the text of each season is some advice on food and health to be taken into consideration at that particular time of the year<sup>371</sup>. In the representation of spring (fig.81), for example, the artist depicted a man sitting under a tree and playing a lute

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<sup>367</sup> Baer 1986, p.245.

<sup>368</sup> Baer 1986, p.245.

<sup>369</sup> (Or.133) for more details see Carboni Stefano 1988, *Il Kitāb al-bulhān di Oxford*, (Torino); Rice 1954, p.3-5.

<sup>370</sup> Rice 1954, p.3.

<sup>371</sup> Rice 1954, p.4, 5.

in a garden adorned with flowers, cypresses, and peach or almond trees<sup>372</sup>. For autumn (fig.82), a male figure is shown sitting holding a cup in his hand filled with a dark red liquid, and in front of him is a long necked bottle. For winter (fig.83), the artist represented a male figure in bed with bare trees around him to reflect the cold weather, while for summer (fig.84), he painted a male figure hunting birds in a garden<sup>373</sup>.

These forms for the seasons' representations in the manuscript of Kitāb Al-Bulhān are believed to have been inspired by contemporary Western works. A group of illustrated manuscripts of the Northern Italian *Tacuinum* may have been the immediate source of inspiration for the artists of the Muslim era. In these Italian manuscripts, spring is represented by people picking flowers and winding wreathes, summer by a harvest scene (reaping corn), autumn by a vintage scene, and winter by an old male figure sitting in front of a fire<sup>374</sup>. The twelfth century had also been a period in which harvesting and vintage scenes abounded in the calendars of the Medieval West as references to the seasons and months of the year. For example, a twelfth century Italian representation of the months of the year on the porch of the Church of San Zeno at Verona shows a harvesting scene for June<sup>375</sup>. In twelfth century English calendars, weeding or plant clipping was used to represent the same month<sup>376</sup>. In other twelfth century Western Medieval manuscripts, October is indicated by ploughing and sowing scenes showing four oxen and two peasants<sup>377</sup>. September is illustrated as a vintage scene, and a grape-treading scene in the vat

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<sup>372</sup> Rice 1954, p.5.

<sup>373</sup> Rice 1954, p.6.

<sup>374</sup> Rice 1954, p.7-9.

<sup>375</sup> For example, it depicts a human figure climbing a tree and gathering its fruits in a basket. In August a vintage scene is depicted in which a figure prepares the casks to receive the wine, see Webster 1938, p.58, 59.

<sup>376</sup> Webster 1938, p.93.

<sup>377</sup> Koseleff 1942, no.909, p.84.

with the farmer being handed a basket of grapes by a picker<sup>378</sup>. Therefore, the question about the agricultural scenes shown on the bottle and their relation to the representation of the seasons of the year can now be answered, but the question regarding the architectural forms and their representation on the bottle is not completely resolved.

Iconographical reference to the seasons of the year with architectural buildings involved exists in various examples of calendar representations. In the mosaics of Saint-Romain-en-Gal (Rhône) of the third or fourth century A.D.<sup>379</sup> (now in the Louvre Museum), there is a calendar scene illustrating the religious dates of the year in the form of human figures engaged in activities related to religious feasts. Among the scenes is a representation of winter depicting the sowing of seeds in a field (fig.85). The background of this scene is decorated with a picture of the architectural form of a building with a gabled roof resting on columns. Another scene from the same calendar shows the activity of transporting rocks (fig.86), wherein a small structure with a gabled roof, supported by some columns, appears on the right hand side. A further scene, with a background that includes an architectural representation of another gabled roofed building with a window and a door, illustrates the sacrifice to the Lares (fig.87)<sup>380</sup>.

From the twelfth and thirteenth centuries A.D., many Western Medieval works carry scenes of the seasons and the months of the year which include buildings. The twelfth century manuscript of the "Evangiles de Vani" (fig.88), dated between 1184 and 1213 A.D., depicts a scene showing the months of May, June, October, and November in reference to a season of the year. It depicts a table with an architectural frame supporting a small arched building. A further example is the twelfth century

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<sup>378</sup> Koseleff 1942, no.909, p.84.

<sup>379</sup> Lafaye 1892, p.324.

<sup>380</sup> Comet 1992, p.39, 40; Webster 1938, p.97.



manuscript (now in the Vatican Library)<sup>381</sup> that combines architecture with agriculture in a representation of the months of the year. It has an illustration (fig.89) on fol.48v, in which the lower register is occupied by a group of buildings of different forms surrounded by vegetation; some of the buildings have gabled roofs, while others have semi-domed roofs<sup>382</sup>. From the thirteenth century A.D., other Western Medieval examples further support this hypothesis. The thirteenth century calendar known as the Candlemas Psalter (now in the Pierpont Morgan Library)<sup>383</sup> shows a scene (fig.90), on fol.2v, referring to the month of February with a standing woman accompanied by a building. This building is shown frontally, with the entrance covered by two arches, one above the other. The lower is a tri-lobed arch, while the upper is a pointed arch, at the top of which there is a pole in the form of a cross<sup>384</sup>.

The above examples show how Western Medieval art had a great influence on Muslim art in terms of the representation of the seasons of the year. However, the fact that the seasons of the year also appear in many Byzantine mosaics raises a controversy about the origin of these seasons' representations on the glass bottle. According to Pauline Donceel-Voûte, the Byzantine mosaic floor in the Church of Saint Georges in Syria, which dates to 722 A.D., depicts various everyday activities including an agricultural scene. This scene shows three palm trees with two men; one holding a hawk, and the other collecting dates from a tree with a harvesting tool<sup>385</sup>. Another Byzantine example includes the Gospel in the Library of Saint Mark in Venice, which represents the months of the year as human figures; each is

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<sup>381</sup> (GR.746).

<sup>382</sup> Rice 1954, p.3.

<sup>383</sup> (MS M79) see Henisch 1999, p.187.

<sup>384</sup> Henisch 1999, p.187.

<sup>385</sup> Donceel-Voûte 1988, p.53.

depicted between a capital and an architrave<sup>386</sup>. This question of the origin of the scene on the Ayyubid glass bottle can be resolved by studying in depth its architectural representations and comparing them with those in the Byzantine models, especially those shown in the floor mosaics in Syria, Jordan and Palestine<sup>387</sup>.

The dissimilarity between the Byzantine building forms and those on the glass bottle suggests another source of inspiration for the idea of the seasons of the year and the architectural forms as represented on the bottle. Indeed, the clear distinction between the representation of the months of the year in Eastern and Western art that was confirmed by Doro Levi may point towards a Western source for the theme on the glass bottle. For example, in the calendar of Filocalus, as a representative of Western art, the months were represented by religious ceremonies; however in Eastern calendars, which were directly inspired by Byzantine art, they were shown as genre scenes<sup>388</sup>. Moreover, the similarity between the architectural forms on the glass bottle and those in the miniature paintings of the Crusaders in Jerusalem<sup>389</sup>, as mentioned in the previous chapter, which have many Western features<sup>390</sup>, indicates the Western influence on the themes of the Ayyubid glass bottle. Consequently, we may draw the conclusion that the direct source of the scenes on the glass bottle was Western Medieval art rather than the Byzantine tradition, although the latter can still be said to have been one of its origins.

The Ayyubid glass bottle is not the only Islamic example in which architectural, agricultural, and vegetal representations combine in scenes of the seasons and months as inspired by the West. Further investigations show that the

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<sup>386</sup> Levi 1941, p.286.

<sup>387</sup> Piccirillo 1993, figs. 209, 299, 308-310, 337, 348, 504, 542-545.

<sup>388</sup> Levi 1941, p.286.

<sup>389</sup> Buchthal 1986, p.5, 8.

<sup>390</sup> See chapter one p.69-71.

same idea is found in the Muslim manuscript of Kitāb Al-Bulhān, previously referred to, wherein the climes of the seasons of the year were referred to in scenes with architectural representations. David T. Rice, in his study of the source of the representation of the seasons and labours in this Muslim manuscript, made the point that even though they were influenced by a Western European source, the styles of their architectural forms are not exact replicas if compared to their models<sup>391</sup>.

Comparing the architectural representations of the Kitāb Al-Bulhān manuscript with those on the glass bottle, many similarities can be noticed, indicating a similarity in function between these motifs in representing the seasons of the year. The buildings represented in the Kitāb Al-Bulhān manuscript are highly influenced in their designs and plans by European models. They are shown as high buildings, (figs.91, 92) simply built with windows, entrances, domes and minarets. In the scene representing the first clime (fol.41r), a building is shown with a Christian symbol. In this illustration (fig.91), we can observe two buildings; the one on the right has an entrance surmounted with a square slab decorated with floral and geometrical motifs. Its roof is covered by a ribbed dome resting on a tall drum containing small square openings, near this stands a small square with a representation of a cross to identify it as a Christian building. In addition, in the illustration of the second clime (fol.47v), there is another example of a Christian building, the plan of which is similar to the churches of Byzantine manuscripts<sup>392</sup>. From the description of architectural forms in the Kitāb Al-Bulhān manuscript, it is clear that there are similarities between the buildings represented in this Muslim manuscript and those painted on the glass bottle. Firstly, in both examples, the

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<sup>391</sup> Rice 1954, p.7. For more information on this Western source see Toesca E.B. 1937, *Il Tacuinum Sanitatis*, (Bergamo); Schlosser J. Von 1895, "Ein Veronesisches Bilderbuch Und Die Höfische Kunst Des XIV. Jahrhunderts", *Jahrb. D. Kunsthistorischen Sammlung d. allerh. Kaiserhauses*, vol.XVI, p.144-230; Serra L. 1940, *Theatrum Sanitatis*, (Rome).

<sup>392</sup> Rice 1954, p.12.

scenes show buildings accompanied by different types of vegetation. Secondly, both include some buildings with Christian features. The representation of these buildings in the manuscript does not refer to a year in the life of a monastery, and so this theme should not necessarily be taken as the significance of the scenes on the glass bottle. Thirdly, both examples are inspired by non-Muslim sources. Fourthly, in neither case does the architectural imagery refer to specific buildings.

We have considered the Kitāb Al-Bulhān manuscript as an example for comparison with the glass bottle because, with regard to the theme of the seasons of the year, the Kitāb Al-Bulhān manuscript reflects well the adoption of the Western Medieval style of representation. This is particularly so when it employs a hunting scene to illustrate one of the seasons in its illustrations. Activities such as hunting, sport, and defeating enemies were also used to refer to the seasons of the year in Western manuscripts. From the second quarter of the eleventh century, the Anglo Saxon calendar (fol.7) shows hunting and pasturing swine as a representation of September. A male figure with dogs is depicted blowing a hunting horn, while another tends hogs rooting for acorns. On fol.7v (fig.93) of the same manuscript, a scene for October shows hunting with a falcon represented in four scenes: a nobleman with a falcon, another male on horseback, ducks in a stream, and an ostrich-crane. In twelfth century Medieval manuscripts in Germany, hare hunting was used to indicate the month of January<sup>393</sup>. Furthermore, in twelfth century Italy, the representation of the months of the year on the porch of the Church of San Zeno in Verona, mentioned above, includes a mounted warrior armed with a shield and a spear for one of the months<sup>394</sup>.

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<sup>393</sup> Webster 1938, p.87.

<sup>394</sup> Webster 1938, p.57-59.

Inspired by the West<sup>395</sup>, hunting scenes were frequently used to refer to summer as a season in Islamic art. Some of the scenes represented the hunters on horseback, while others showed them on foot<sup>396</sup>. For example, in the manuscript of *Kitāb Al-Bulhān*, summer (fig.84) is described as a hunting scene where a male figure is aiming an arrow at a bird<sup>397</sup>. Another example includes a glass bottle (now exhibited in the Metropolitan Museum of Art)<sup>398</sup> whose body is decorated with a wide band of horsemen, which may indicate the same hunting theme<sup>399</sup>. Other scenes with polo players, which denote the seasons of the year in Islamic art of the Middle Ages, exist. A bottle that was excavated in the Northern Caucasus (now in the Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg)<sup>400</sup> shows horse riders possibly engaged in the same activity<sup>401</sup>. It is conceivable that other decorative scenes of horsemen, hunters, and polo players commonly used on Islamic glass vessels represent the seasons and months of the year in this way. However, some of these scenes, on different types of objects, may have another purpose, that is to say to entertain the owner of the vessel. Estimating the significance of the scene can only be done by relating it to the function of the object on which it appears. Evidence of this relationship between decoration and function suggests that the scene on the bottle, as a representation of the seasons of the year, would match its use as a vessel containing drinks made from the fruits in season<sup>402</sup>.

<sup>395</sup> As in the representation of January in the *Chronicon Zwifaltense minus* of Stuttgart of the twelfth century.

<sup>396</sup> Rice 1954, p.9.

<sup>397</sup> Rice 1954, p.6.

<sup>398</sup> (Inv.no.41.150), For more details see Jenkins Marilyn 1986, "Islamic Glass: A Brief History", *The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin*, vol.XLIV, no.II, p.3-56.

<sup>399</sup> Carboni 2001b, p.338.

<sup>400</sup> (Inv.no. TB-50), for details see Kramarovsky Mark 1998, "The Import and Manufacture of Glass in the Territories of the Golden Horde", *Gilded and Enamelled Glass from the Middle East*, (London), p.96-100.

<sup>401</sup> Carboni 2001b, p.338.

<sup>402</sup> Fowler 1873, p.49.

Given the above-mentioned facts, we may conclude that the artist of the glass bottle decided to use architectural representation with agricultural scenes, for which he found parallels and models in Western Medieval art, to represent the seasons and months of the year. It was also through the representation of buildings with religious signs that the artist represented blessings offered to the owner of the vessel. The artist was thereby able to relate the scene on the bottle to the seasons of the year, as well as to the function of the bottle as a container of drinks and as a drink-offering vessel.

The next examples under discussion will be two Mamluk glass beakers. The study argues that the decorations of the two beakers evoke similar themes- those of the seasons of the year and of religious blessings to the owner- and achieve this by using both agricultural and architectural iconographies. This further supports the main argument of the thesis, and confirms the relationship between the meaning of the architectural iconographies and the function of the objects bearing them. This approach will also shed light on the artist by referring to the details of the decoration and architectural representations that suggest his origin. The study will emphasize the fact that in the case of the two Mamluk beakers, the concept of religious blessing is strongly in evidence in the use of both architecture and human figures. This is in contrast to the Ayyubid bottle, which mainly relied on general forms of architectural representations to convey its blessings.

### **2.2.2 Gilded Glass Beakers from the Mamluk Period**

Glass beakers were produced extensively in the Ayyubid and Mamluk eras. Various studies of these beakers have categorized them into two distinct types. The first has a cylindrical body and flares outwards below the opening of the beaker for a few centimetres, before curving inwards near the rim. The second presents more of an open shape, with the walls of the beaker continuing to flare all the way to the

opening<sup>403</sup>. Summer Kenesson has provided us with further categories of beaker form (fig.94) used under Muslim rule. The first and second types have sides that flare towards the mouth, sometimes starting at the base of the vessel and continuing right up to the rim. The third variety is a large type of beaker introduced in the period between 1250 and 1310 A.D., and is either enamelled or fluted. The fourth is similar to the third in terms of shape, but is narrower and not as big. The fifth and last is short with straight sides and a flared mouth, and is made of thick glass<sup>404</sup>.

### **2.2.2.1 Description of the Architectural Representations**

Gilded glass beakers are rarely decorated with architectural representation. John Carswell's research emphasized that the representation of these architectural forms on the beakers studied is very distinctive, the likes of which have never been previously seen<sup>405</sup>. Such a representation on glass objects began to disappear towards the end of the thirteenth century A.D., when epigraphy replaced them<sup>406</sup>. The two gilded glass beakers (figs.95, 97), almost identical in terms of form and decoration, dating to 657 A.H. /1260 A.D. in the Mamluk period (now exhibited in Baltimore, Walters Art Gallery)<sup>407</sup>, are well-known as the Baltimore beakers. They display many architectural forms worth studying. Each has a cylindrical tapering body with a flaring rim, and short foot ring, and each is enamelled in green, red, cobalt blue, grey, and white. Two bands of Arabic inscription, which are not identical, appear on each beaker, one at the top and the other at the bottom. The architectural forms are displayed on the glass in the area between the two bands of inscription.

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<sup>403</sup> Kenesson 1998, p.45-49; Carboni 2001b, p.328.

<sup>404</sup> Kenesson 1998, p.46, 47.

<sup>405</sup> Carswell 1998, p.61.

<sup>406</sup> Atil 1981, p.127.

<sup>407</sup> (Inv. nos. 46.17, 46.18).

The first glass beaker<sup>408</sup> (fig.95) has a representation of two buildings. One is octagonal, and covered with a ribbed dome at the base of which appears a bird, possibly a goose. Below the dome there is a lamp suspended at the centre of an arch. The front side of the building has a door, while the slanting sides are punctuated with windows. On one side of the building, we can see a protruding human face looking out from an opening. The second building, on the same beaker, is hexagonal with an arcade and hanging lamps. The slanting sides have parapet walls, and, in the centre, where the open door appears, there is a representation of an ambiguous structure. Rachel Ward referred to John Carswell's opinion that this structure is a catafalque<sup>409</sup>. This building is surmounted by a small structure of two levels. The lower level has two small square windows, while the upper one is in the form of arches supported by pillars, roofed with a ribbed dome decorated at its base with a cornice. The second beaker<sup>410</sup> is decorated with building forms that are repeated twice (fig.97). The first consists of two levels covered with a ribbed dome. The lower level, which has a double folding door, has a wide band of a cornice, while the upper level has a small rectangular window. The second building has two storeys surmounted by a bulbous dome. The lower storey has a double folding door, and is topped with a plain cornice at the end of which stands a youth waving his arms, while the second (upper) storey has a long rectangular window<sup>411</sup>.

The two beakers carry some inscriptions that consist mainly of praise to the ruling Sultan. The inscriptions on one of the beakers read: "Glory to our Master....the Just...", and on the second beaker: "Glory to our Master, the Sultan,

<sup>408</sup> For more information, see Drouot Hôtel 1912, *Collection De Feu M. Jean P. Lambros D'Athens et De M. Giovanni Dattari Du Caire: Antiqués Egyptienne Greques et Romaines. Sale Catalogue by J. Hirsch and A. Sambon*, June 1912, (Paris), no.608, pl.LX; Lamm Carl Johan 1929-30, *Mittelalterliche Gläser und Steinschnittarbeiten aus dem Nahen Osten*, vol.I, no.8, (Berlin), p.330-331; vol.II, pl.127:8.

<sup>409</sup> Ward 1998, p.61.

<sup>410</sup> For more information, see Drouot Hôtel 1912, no.609, pl.LX; Lamm 1929-30, vol.I, no.9, p.331; vol. II, pl.127:9.

<sup>411</sup> Carswell 1998, p.61.



the Royal, the Learned...”<sup>412</sup>. From this description, it is clear that the representations of these architectural forms have particular messages to convey, as will be discussed in the next section.

#### **2.2.2.2 Source of the Architectural Representations**

In order to understand the source of the architectural forms shown, an analysis of the architectural designs on each glass beaker is crucial. On the first glass beaker, the octagonal building (fig.96) was interpreted by John Carswell as a stylized representation of the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem, on the basis of the similarity between the representation of this octagonal building and the view of the Dome of the Rock when seen from the Mount of Olives. The second building on the same beaker (fig.96) most probably, in Carswell’s opinion, stylistically symbolizes the Holy Sepulchre, whose façade (fig.99), with its upper two storeys and crowning dome, matches it. Since the Dome of the Rock and the Holy Sepulchre were the most important buildings in Jerusalem, it is possible to assume that the whole scene on the beaker corresponds to the city of Jerusalem. This is supported by considering a map of 492 A.H. /1100 A.D. that represents Jerusalem, where the two buildings, the Dome of the Rock and the Holy Sepulchre, are comparable in appearance to those on the beaker<sup>413</sup>. However, my opinion is that both the edifices on the beaker could possibly replicate Muslim buildings. The octagonal building could be a Mosque, for two reasons. The first is the presence of a Mosque lamp, leading us to assume that the building could have been used as a Mosque at the time when it was depicted on the beaker, the second is that octagonal plans were used throughout the Muslim era for the construction of various types of edifice. The second building on

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<sup>412</sup>

Atil 1981, p.126, 127.

<sup>413</sup> Carswell 1998, p.62.

"عز لمولانا السلطان...العاذل...", "عز لمولانا السلطان المالك العالم..."

this beaker can also be taken as a mosque. In any case, the lamps hanging from the arcade of a building suggest a religious structure whether Muslim or Christian.

On the subject of the second beaker (fig.98), John Carswell suggests that one of the buildings represented symbolizes a shrine of the Crusaders, such as the Church of Saint Anne, and the other the Northern minaret of the Haram enclosure, which has a parapet and a dome<sup>414</sup>. Esin Atil argues against these interpretations, pointing out that the architectural forms on the two beakers are more likely to represent monasteries inhabited by monks and visitors. This is an acceptable opinion, as it would explain the human figures shown looking from the openings of the upper floors of some of the buildings. According to this theory, the buildings and the figures on the beakers would represent individuals from the Christian community<sup>415</sup>. Many Christian features in the scenes suggest that some of the buildings illustrated refer to Christian structures. For example, the garments that the figures are wearing, such as the cloak clasped over an ankle length robe, as well as their caps and tonsures, suggest a Christian source. Moreover, the figures accompanying architectural forms are also represented with halos surrounding their heads, as if they were ecclesiastical personages<sup>416</sup>. However, the representation of halos around the heads of the figures does not necessarily attest to their Christian identity, as such halos also appear in Islamic manuscripts of the thirteenth century. This feature, the figures with halos, was explained by Hugo Buchthal as one of the Byzantine influences on Muslim art<sup>417</sup>. Whether the buildings are Muslim or Christian in origin is still problematic. If these buildings are Mosques, the absence of their minarets in the scenes is difficult to account for. On the other hand, if they are

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<sup>414</sup> Carswell 1998, p.62.

<sup>415</sup> Atil 1981, p.126, 127

<sup>416</sup> Carswell 1998, p.61.

<sup>417</sup> Buchthal 1940a, p.127.

related to Christian imagery, it is also surprising that the cross is not to be found anywhere on the buildings<sup>418</sup>.

The identification of these decorations as Christian may, however, be supported by considering the origin of the artist. In the following part of the study, we will try to show how Muslim and Christian features in the architectural representations function as a disguised signature of the artist who produced them, reflecting his religion or artistic background.

### **2.2.2.3 Architectural Representations as the Work of an Artist**

It has been proposed by Esin Atil that the two glass beakers were produced in the city of Aleppo in Syria, which until the Arab conquest was totally Christian<sup>419</sup>. Thus, the influence of the location in which the beakers were produced is reflected in the representation of some Christian features on them. This also implies that the artist could have lived in Aleppo, and wanted to reflect its Christian atmosphere by using Christian features and architectural modes familiar to him on the glass beakers<sup>420</sup>. However, that some of the represented buildings might be depictions of those in Jerusalem raises the possibility that the artist could have had connections with the area of this city<sup>421</sup>. Architectural representations not only suggest the origin of the artist, but they also reveal his religious interests. It is possible that the artist who produced these beakers was Christian, and that he wanted to represent one of the sacred scenes known to him. This is a plausible theory given two historical facts. The first was the practice of recruiting Christian glassmakers in the Mamluk period to produce work for Mamluk rulers. The second relates to the nature of the area of Aleppo in Syria, where many Christian buildings had survived into the Mamluk era,

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<sup>418</sup> Atil 1981, p.126, 127

<sup>419</sup> Atil 1981, p.126, 127.

<sup>420</sup> Shalem 1998, p.65.

<sup>421</sup> Carswell 1998, p.62.

including churches and monasteries, which were probably the models that inspired the artist whose origin can be ascribed to Aleppo<sup>422</sup>.

It is not necessarily the case that these beakers were produced for a Christian owner in order to justify their Christian features. We should not ignore the fact that some objects were produced for the Christian community, as demonstrated by Carole Hillenbrand when she confirmed that some of the artefacts were produced for the Crusaders community. She adds that the Crusaders who were living in Syria and Palestine from the eleventh to the thirteenth century A.D., kept Islamic artefact in their houses and palaces in the Near East. Hillenbrand bases this on the known fact that Muslim and Crusader rulers used to exchange luxury gifts of all kinds as part of political life at that time. It is possible that many of these artefacts carried Arabic inscriptions, which were not very important to the Crusaders in terms of being read or understood but were, rather, elements of decoration<sup>423</sup>. I do not totally agree with Hillenbrand, as Islamic artefacts with Christian imagery that pre-date the Crusades are abundant. This suggests that Christian imagery was almost always used for the purposes that are proposed in this study, that is to say, to agree with the function of the artefact and act as a signature of the artist who was possibly Christian. The increase of the Christian imagery in thirteenth century A.D. Syria and Palestine is not only because objects were being produced for the Crusaders but also because of the nature of society at that time. There were already many Christian artisans working alongside Muslim ones and their number only increased with the advent of the Crusaders. Accordingly, there was a noticeable increase in the adoption of Christian features and ideas on various Muslim artefacts. Since many of these artefacts with Christian imagery also have Muslim features in their decoration, it seems likely that Muslims adapted Christian themes into an overall Islamic spirit,

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<sup>422</sup> Atıl 1981, p.126, 127.

<sup>423</sup> Hillenbrand 1999, p.388-391.

which shows that artefacts with Christian features could very possibly have been produced for Muslim rulers.

Carole Hillenbrand agrees with Eva Baer<sup>424</sup> on categorizing the artefacts with Christian imagery produced in the Crusader era into two groups: those produced for a Muslim ruler and symbolizing the Muslim victory over the Crusades, which are distinguished by their inclusion of some Muslim decorations along with the Christian features, and those produced for the Crusader rulers which are purely Christian<sup>425</sup>. Since the beakers fall into the first category, displaying numerous Muslim features in their decorative details and inscriptions, it is plausible to consider them as being made for a Muslim and not a Crusader ruler. Hence, this discussion explains the role of the architectural representations on the beakers in terms of serving as the signature of the artist.

Having dealt with the origin of the artist, the study will now consider the significance of the architectural iconographies on the beakers, demonstrating how the function of the beakers may explain their meaning as representations of the seasons of the year.

#### **2.2.2.4 Significance of the Architectural Representations**

##### **2.2.2.4.1 Political Significance**

From a political perspective, the architectural forms shown on the beakers could be said to symbolize the virtuous care paid by the ruler to the holy city of Jerusalem. Given the likelihood that these architectural forms represent buildings from Jerusalem, it is plausible to suggest that the scenes served to commemorate acts of donation and gift giving performed by the ruler to the actual establishments represented by these architectural depictions. Significantly, these buildings, which

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<sup>424</sup> Baer 1989, p.42.

<sup>425</sup> Hillenbrand 1999, p.388.

were located in holy places visited by pilgrims, required the recording of the acts of the ruler there. To support this opinion, it is important to consider that the Mamluks were attentive to holy places, as previously discussed. Therefore, it can be suggested that the particular combination of these two buildings was significant as a reference to pilgrimage. Early in history, pilgrimage to Jerusalem was first directed towards the Temple of Solomon, which was later replaced with the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, and the Dome of the Rock as the only pilgrimage destinations in Jerusalem.

#### **2.2.2.4.2 Religious Significance**

Another interpretation of the architectural forms on the second beaker (fig.98), this time religious in nature, is that they are a commemoration of the visit of Jesus Christ to Jerusalem. Since the buildings represented on this beaker match the description of the buildings passed on his route to Jerusalem, it is possible to propose such a function for these architectural forms. The route that Christ followed on his visit enters Jerusalem by St. Stephens Gate, proceeds down the Via Dolorosa, and passes a medieval building, the Minaret of the Haram enclosure<sup>426</sup>. This reading is supported by the fact that children are shown on the top and inside of the buildings, which might represent the greeting of Christ on his entry to Jerusalem<sup>427</sup>. Stefano Carboni has also referred to this possibility, and argued that the beakers could represent scenes or events connected to Jerusalem, probably as part of a nesting set. They narrate religious stories or events from literature, which may also be the themes for decoration on other objects of art. It is, therefore, plausible that illustrations could have passed from historical to literary works and works of art as

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<sup>426</sup> Carswell 1998, p.62.

<sup>427</sup> Atil 1981, p.127.

may be the case on the enamelled glass beakers<sup>428</sup>. The function of the beakers could therefore be a part of a group of a nesting set for storage purposes. Whether these architectural forms commemorate the virtues of the Muslim ruler or the visit of Jesus Christ to Jerusalem, the buildings represented are demonstrated, in either case, to have religious connotations.

While there is limited evidence to support the theory that the scenes represented refer to a historical record of the visit of Jesus Christ to Jerusalem. However, there is more evidence to support the idea that the scenes refer to the seasons of the year, and represent some religious buildings for the blessing of the owner. This interpretation is further strengthened by the fact that the beakers were made for a Muslim ruler, as indicated by their inscriptions. Therefore, it is rather likely to interpret the scene as a religious formula for blessing and protecting the beakers, as well as the owner who used them. Being neither historical nor benedictory, the inscriptions on the two Mamluk glass beakers do not suggest that the scenes shown record a moment in history or religion. In fact, they suggest that the beakers were probably produced for a ruler, and therefore it is reasonable to believe that the artist wanted to transmit a blessing wish via the scenes represented to the owner of the beakers, that is, the Sultan<sup>429</sup>.

Given this conclusion, the Christian images in the scenes on the beakers are ambiguous. Unlike the case of the Ayyubid bottle, the human figures on the beakers represent various categories of Christian religious personages that can be identified through the different types of clothes that they are wearing. The way in which these figures are dressed is similar to other Christian religious figures that appear in both Christian and Islamic art further emphasizing the religious blessing conveyed by the scene. In Christian art, similar types of dress can be found. Examples include a sixth

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<sup>428</sup> Carboni 2001b, p.331.

<sup>429</sup> Atıl 1981, p.126, 127.

century manuscript with an illustration (fig.100) of “The Entry of Jesus to Jerusalem”, in which the human figures wear similar types of dress to those on the beakers<sup>430</sup>. In the same manuscript, there is an illustration (fig.101) showing Jesus preaching at the gates of Antonia, where Christian figures are shown wearing garments identical to those on the beakers. The manuscript from Bāwīt, of the sixth or seventh century A.D. (now in the Louvre Museum, Paris)<sup>431</sup>, has an illustration (fig.102) of Christ with Abt Menas. The two figures are shown with garments that have many features in common with those on the glass beakers<sup>432</sup>. Another example is the Paris manuscript Copte 13<sup>433</sup>, which was painted in 1180 A.D. in Damietta, in the Delta of the Nile. This manuscript includes scenes from the New Testament showing Christian figures dressed in garments similar to those represented on the beakers. For example, on fol.7 of this manuscript (fig.103), there is a scene of John the Baptist shown clad in a garment identical to those depicted on the beakers<sup>434</sup>.

From the thirteenth century manuscripts, many examples attest to the Christian type of scenes on the beakers. Passages from a Gospel Book, from Iraq (Moşul) dated 1216-1220 A.D. (now in the British Library)<sup>435</sup> written in Syriac and used in church services illustrate people clad in similar garments to those on the beakers. On fol.141 of this manuscript, there is an illustration (fig.104) of “The Communications of the Apostles”, in which Christ offers a cup of wine to one of the Apostles. The way in which the Apostles are dressed is comparable to the figures shown on the two Mamluk glass beakers<sup>436</sup>. In another manuscript, attributed to Germany (now in the

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<sup>430</sup> Landay 1974, p.40.

<sup>431</sup> (Inv.no.X5178).

<sup>432</sup> Galavaris 1981, p.35.

<sup>433</sup> See Buchthal H.& Kurz O. 1942, *A Hand list of Illuminated Oriental Manuscripts*, (London).

<sup>434</sup> Buchthal 1940a, p.132.

<sup>435</sup> (Inv. no. Add. 7170).

<sup>436</sup> Galavaris 1981, p.37.



British Library)<sup>437</sup>, and dated to 1227-1246 A.D., is an illustration (fig.105) of the authors Alanus de Insulis (Magister Alanus) and Petrus Cantor, whose names are inscribed over their heads, engaged in a debate. These two figures are also represented with garments very similar to those depicted on the two Mamluk glass beakers<sup>438</sup>. A further example is an illustration (fig.106) referring to “Judas’ Betrayal”, “Jesus Being Scourged and Mocked”, and “Peter Denying Christ”, from the earliest surviving Book of Hours, dated 1240 A.D. (now in the British Library)<sup>439</sup>, which shows in its scenes monks and nuns clad in garments similar to those on the beakers<sup>440</sup>.

Christian figures were also depicted on various media of Islamic art in this way. For example, a reference to Christian religious figures was indicated in some of the illustrations of the manuscript of *Kalilah wa Dimnah* dated 627 A.H. /1230 A.D. (now in the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris)<sup>441</sup>. These were also shown dressed in a similar way to the figures on the beakers. Three examples show a monk with a hooded garment similar to that illustrated on one of the beakers: on fol.55 (fig.107), depicting a scene of “the Monk before the Judge”; on fol.89v (fig.108), showing “the Monk and His Guest”; and on fol.101 (fig.109), with the scene of “the Thieves and the Monk”<sup>442</sup>.

The question now arises of why these Christian figures and themes were represented on the two Mamluk glass beakers, and where this tradition came from. The answer relates to many factors. Firstly, the scenes on the beakers represent the seasons of the year as borrowed from the West, so it is a natural consequence that Christian elements were inherited by these representations, mainly in terms of the

<sup>437</sup> (Inv. no. Add. 19767).

<sup>438</sup> Galavaris 1981, p.37.

<sup>439</sup> (Inv. no. Add. 49999).

<sup>440</sup> Galavaris 1981, p.37.

<sup>441</sup> (Inv. No. 3465), See Knatchbull W. 1819, *Kalila Wa Dimna, or Fables of Bidpai*, (Oxford).

<sup>442</sup> Buchthal 1940a, p.131.

depiction of human figures. It was common in Christian art to represent Saints in scenes referring to the seasons and months of the year. This is demonstrated by an early eleventh century example of a calendar icon in a manuscript attributed to Sinai (now in the monastery of Saint Catherine)<sup>443</sup>. This includes an illustration (fig.110) of the months from September to November in the form of Saints. Some of the garments shown in this illustration correspond with those limited examples shown on the two Mamluk glass beakers<sup>444</sup>. In addition, while some of the figures in this illustration are shown engaged in activities, others are shown simply standing in different positions, as in the case of our beakers. Secondly, within the context of the representation of the seasons in Western art, human figures, vegetation, and building iconographies sometimes appear collectively. In some cases, these human figures in such representations are not shown performing any agricultural activity related to the seasons of the year. The role of the human figures depicted on the beakers, with their distinct religious dress that identifies them as monks, is not only to refer to the seasons of the year, but also to strengthen the theme of the religious blessing that is already represented in the scenes by the presence, as previously mentioned, of buildings of religious fame. In other words, the benedictory significance is indicated not only through the religious buildings displayed, but also through the religious status of the figures involved. This religious meaning here is strengthened through the representation specifically of monks between the buildings as opposed to the generically Christian figures represented on the Ayyubid glass bottle, whose imagery focuses more on the theme of the seasons of the year.

The idea of using images of Christian monks to convey the message of blessing as represented on the Muslim beakers perpetuates a Christian tradition. In

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<sup>443</sup> For more information see Weitzmann K.1966-67, "Byzantine Miniature and Icon Painting in the Eleventh Century", *Proceedings of the XIIIth Inter. Congress of Byzantine studies*, (Oxford, London), pl.35, p.209-224.

<sup>444</sup> Galavaris 1981, p.34.

early Christianity, the figure of a Saint on different household objects played the role of a religious amulet designed to bless the owner. It was a powerful means of ensuring security and protection against many unpleasant forces, including the evil eye, and other constant threats<sup>445</sup>. Various examples of amulets depicting Saints were attributed to the early Byzantine period. One example is a hematite amulet (fig.111) (now in the British Museum, London) that shows on one of its faces a figure of a standing Saint (Saint Prokopios, a martyr of Caesarea, Palestine) with his hands upraised in a praying attitude. On the other side of the amulet is inscribed a text of invocation reading: "Holy Prokopios!", thus identifying by name the figure of the Saint represented on the amulet<sup>446</sup>. Taking this tradition as a basis, we may be able to explain the figure riding a donkey in one of the scene on the beakers as representing a Saint. Mounted Saintly figures were often depicted on Christian amulets<sup>447</sup>. One example (fig.112) is a bronze amulet (now in the Kelsey Museum of Archaeology)<sup>448</sup> with an inscription reading: "much-suffering eye" on one face, while on the other there is a representation of a mounted rider with a lion and a dragon<sup>449</sup>. While in some cases, the riders depicted on these amulets were shown slaying an animal or human, it would have been inappropriate to present the same idea in Islamic art. Accordingly, on the beakers, this iconography was adapted to become a mounted Saint not engaged in any activity, a motif designed to convey blessings<sup>450</sup>.

What may also support the theory that the figures of Saints on the two Mamluk glass beakers were used for giving religious blessings to their owner is the fact that in the West, such figures were frequently applied to vessels. It could be that Muslims

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<sup>445</sup> Maguire 1996, p.118.

<sup>446</sup> Maguire 1996, p.121.

<sup>447</sup> Maguire 1996, p.120.

<sup>448</sup> (Inv. no.26115).

<sup>449</sup> Maguire 1996, p.122.

<sup>450</sup> Maguire 1996, p.122.

had inherited the same idea of relating the blessing function to a figure of a Saint on their vessels, as in the case of the beakers. Sixth century pottery bowls and dishes (fig.113) manufactured in North Africa (now in the Kelsey Museum of Archaeology)<sup>451</sup> and exported to the Byzantine world frequently had Saints' images. An example (fig.114) of this group (now in Istanbul Archaeological Museum)<sup>452</sup> was found in Egypt, in the town of Karanis<sup>453</sup>. This idea seems to have moved from the West to Islamic lands, where a Muslim lustreware bowl (fig.115) (now in the Victoria and Albert Museum) was produced with a central figure of a Saint holding and swinging a censer, and probably carried the same meaning. It dates to the first half of the twelfth century A.D., and is signed by a Muslim potter called Sa'd<sup>454</sup>.

The repetition of the figures on the two Mamluk glass beakers, as well as the repetition of the architectural representations of the famous religious buildings, may be explained by the same theory. In Christian art, the repetition of the figure of the Saint or monk on the object was to ensure the protection and effectiveness of the religious blessings. It was believed that the greater the number of religious figures, the deeper was their effect on unseen forces<sup>455</sup>. This may explain the repetition of the figures of Saints and building iconographies on the Mamluk beakers. Furthermore, the purpose of the variety of type of garments they are wearing was mainly to identify them in their different roles, for example as bishops or monks, which was probably meant to ensure their various benedictory effects on the owner of the vessel. This is supported by the fact that in Christian art, there was great distinction between classes of Saints by means of their garments<sup>456</sup>.

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<sup>451</sup> (Inv. no.20024).

<sup>452</sup> (Inv. no.561).

<sup>453</sup> Maguire 1996, p.127, 129.

<sup>454</sup> Rice 1991, p.92.

<sup>455</sup> Maguire 1996, p.120.

<sup>456</sup> Maguire 1996, p.16.

Given this explanation, the human figures shown in the small apertures of the buildings, and the small figure shown standing on top of one of the buildings, are probably symbols of people witnessing and watching the event of the blessing of the owner of the beakers. Human figures represented in the windows of buildings were a feature known in Muslim art. An early example is the twelfth century metal plate (fig.62), previously discussed, on which human figures, probably females, are shown looking through the side balconies of the castle or palace. These, as was explained earlier, were symbols of the royal *Ḥarīm* and the royal palace, placed as if to wish the owner of the plate infinite sovereignty and authority, as well as victory. However, they are also used to emphasize another point, which is the desire to witness the great event of the victory of the owner over his enemies, as depicted on the plate. The idea of human figures looking through windows appears again in another example, the scene of royal entertainment (fig.116) at a wall fountain, on the ceiling panel in the palace of the Cappella Palatina in Palermo, which dates to the middle of the twelfth century A.D. Two ladies are shown looking out from windows into an area that is probably the royal reception room, where two musicians are playing flutes, and standing to the side of a wall fountain. Richard Ettinghausen identified this scene as a symbol of luxurious court life, where the combination of women, music, and the sound of running water is evoked. This does not contradict the idea that the onlooking women are also symbols of the witnessing of an important occurring event, the playing of music having attracted their attention, and captured their hearts. These figures have thus decided to share in the event's beauty, which explains their presence at the windows<sup>457</sup>.

According to this theory, the human figures represented at the windows of the buildings shown on the beakers are also there to witness a great event. This is

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<sup>457</sup> Ettinghausen 1962, p.47.

supported by the fact that not only are female figures represented, but also apparently male ones, such as the figure clad in a yellow hood, and the small figure standing on top of the roof of one of the buildings. However, we should not ignore the fact that this feature of onlooking figures also draws on Christian influence. An example of a subject in Christian art that shows people watching and witnessing the occurrence of an event is the entry of Jesus Christ into Jerusalem, in which certain figures are shown looking from windows, while others are shown on the rooftops of some of the buildings. When adapted to Muslim art as with the beakers, the most clearly Christian features of the people witnessing the event, such as the palm branches in their hands, are omitted.

The idea of using a religious scene, or a scene with religious connotations, to bless the owner of the vessel was inherited from earlier Christian tradition, which, in my opinion, may explain the Christian features of some of the elements and buildings on the glass beakers. This idea was later perpetuated in the Muslim era. The footed enamelled glass bowl with Solomon's seal (fig.117) (now in the Mayer Museum in Jerusalem), attributed to Damascus and dating from between 1270 and 1280 A.D is a good example.<sup>458</sup> It contains on the inner face of the bowl a central motif in the form of a hexagram, a familiar feature in both Islamic and Jewish art. In Jewish writings, the hexagram was referred to as the Shield of David, which was understood as a symbol of Solomon's power over spirits. However, in Islamic culture and religious thought, this motif was understood as *Khātim Sulaymān* or Solomon's seal, a symbol adopted in the Near East to offer protection against evil spirits. Solomon is mentioned in many verses in the Qur'an, in relation to his power. "So we subjected to him [Solomon] the wind, that blew at his commandments, softly, whether he might light on and the Satans, every builder and diver and others

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<sup>458</sup> For more information on this bowl, see Lamm C.J. 1929-30, *Mittelalterliche Gläser Und Steinschnittarbeiten Aus Dem Nahen Osten*, vol.I, (Berlin), p.374; vol.II, pl.161:1.

also coupled in fetters”<sup>459</sup>. In the thirteenth century, the image of Solomon was illustrated in manuscripts in Baghdad, such as in the album of the Topkapi Library, at Istanbul<sup>460</sup>. Since it was used as an amulet to ward off the evil eye, the image of his seal was used in the Muslim era on the interior of bowls and dishes<sup>461</sup>. This may indicate that the idea of using an image as an amulet also existed in Islamic thought. However, in the case of the beakers, the artist decided to convey the same meaning in a different way, namely by using architectural forms of religious implications.

Representations of holy structures were used long before the Muslim era as amulets for sanctification and protection. An example of an art object that demonstrates this is the Pilgrim flask, which was a common and prominent artefact in early Christian art. Religious cycles relating to the life of Jesus began to appear on such flasks as early as the post-Justinian age. These early flasks had representations of Christian architectural forms, depicted in a simple abstract (stylized) form. One example is a cycle of the life of Christ (fig.118) that runs round the body of a flask, beginning with the Annunciation, and ending with the Ascension, rendered as a series of pictorial medallions. This cycle includes a representation of a simple shrine-like building, with a pyramidal roof surmounted by a cross. The façade of the building is divided vertically into three sections, with the central one probably representing the entrance. Scholars have not conclusively achieved the identification of this building, nor was it explained in any reference.

In the late sixth and early seventh centuries, pilgrims visited many holy places including Palestine, and there was thus considerable demand for the production of such flasks. The themes depicted on their sides began to reveal a new trend, as the illustrations became related to the pilgrimage destinations through their depiction of

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<sup>459</sup> (Qur'an, Sura 38, verse 36).

<sup>460</sup> See Fares B. 1959, "Figures Magiques", *Aus Der Welt Der Islamischen Kunst: Festschrift Fur Ernst Kühnel*, (Berlin), fig.2, p.154-156.

<sup>461</sup> Hasson 1998, p.41-43.

architectural elements of holy buildings and places. The Church of the Nativity at Bethlehem, the site of the Crucifixion on Golgotha, and the Church of the Holy Sepulchre adjacent to it were among the buildings depicted. The function of the architectural images, which were not just decorative, but also religious in nature, was to provide further protection and blessings through the religious nature of its architectural representations to the individual who used the flask as a pilgrimage souvenir. In another example, a pre-Islamic pilgrim ampulla representing the cycle of the life of Christ, there is a scene with an architectural form symbolizing blessings to its owner. On one face of the object is a representation of the Crucifixion, while on the other, there is a depiction of women at the tomb. The tomb is shown as an architectural shrine with a pyramidal top. Flanked on either side by holy women with halos on their heads (a symbol of holiness) they grieve for the deceased, the religious character of the scene on the flask. Besides referring to the risen Christ, such imagery could also have functioned as an additional sign or symbol of blessing for the whole pilgrim flask as well as its holder<sup>462</sup>.

It would seem that the Christian pilgrim flask and its religious benedictory decorations influenced Islamic art. This may explain the representation of famous religious structures on the two Mamluk beakers, as inspired by Christian imagery. Evidence of such an impact is the emergence of pilgrim flasks with Christian imagery in the Muslim era. A famous example (fig.119) (now in the Freer Gallery of Art)<sup>463</sup> is a pilgrim flask or canteen in the form of a large metal bottle with a concave front and a flat back. The scenes on the flask show Christian imagery, including the Nativity, the Presence in the Temple, and the Entry into Jerusalem. In the scene of the Presentation in the Temple, there is an architectural form, which represents the

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<sup>462</sup> Kitzinger 1980, p.151-153.

<sup>463</sup> (Inv. no.41.10). For more details on this pilgrim flask see Schneider Laura T. 1973, "The Freer Canteen", *Ars Orientalis*, vol.IX, p.137-156; Dimand M.S. 1934, "A Silver Inliad Bronze Canteen with Christian Subjects in the Eumorphopoulos Collection", *Ars Islamica*, vol.I, p.17-21.



temple in which the episode occurred with its three domes and inner space divided into three aisles<sup>464</sup>. The representations of religious structures on the beakers do not imply that they were used as pilgrim flasks, as their shape and form do not correspond with such a function. It was only the religious nature and benedictory purpose of their architectural representation which were inspired by the pilgrim flasks.

It is important to recognize that not all pilgrim flasks of the Muslim era have religious architectural representation. Because these items were produced for a broad public, the themes of their decoration draw on a variety of decorative ideas used in Islamic art. A glass vessel (figs.120, 121) (now in the British Museum)<sup>465</sup> attributed to fourteenth century Muslim era has been identified by scholars as a pilgrim flask with its shape being comparable to that of leather water flasks used in the Middle Ages. This piece was probably made to be sold to pilgrims on their way to the Holy Land. The decoration of this glass flask makes no attempt to represent famous architectural representations of benedictory significance, since the vessel was not produced for royalty. The body of the flask is decorated with floral ornaments surrounding a cavalier who is shown wearing a feathery hat and thigh-high leather boots, with straps to hold them up like waders, as a way of providing some protection against wild animals. There is also a medallion of a man sitting crossed-legged in a turban and a robe and holding a cup in his right hand, as well as a scene of musical entertainment<sup>466</sup>.

The same architectural forms on the Baltimore beakers may be interpreted differently. To understand the purpose of combining both Muslim and Christian architectural imagery on one piece of art, the following two interpretations are

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<sup>464</sup> Baer 1989, p.19, 20.

<sup>465</sup> (Inv.no.OAI 869.1-20.3).

<sup>466</sup> Ward 1998, p.30, 31.

presented. Firstly, that architectural elements were used for strengthening ties between Muslims and Christians. Secondly, that they were used to bless and protect the owner of the beaker by displaying symbols relevant to both Muslims and Christians<sup>467</sup>. The practice of combining Christian and Muslim elements on a single piece of art began in the thirteenth century Ayyubid realm. From the mid-thirteenth century A.D. to the early Mamluk period, many metal objects, especially those produced in Syria, followed this tradition<sup>468</sup>.

The combination of architectural and vegetal imagery on the two Mamluk beakers can be explained as referring to the seasons of the year. As has been demonstrated above with other examples of Islamic art and architecture, there was a relationship between the significance of architectural representations and the function of the building or object on which they are depicted. According to Summer Kenesson, the various forms of beakers and their decorative themes related them to their functional uses. Some may have been involved in ceremonies, others used as gifts or intended for export and sale on the open market. The majority were used as drinking vessels in courtly events, such as festivals and celebrations. This is made evident by the study of another medium of art: Islamic manuscripts<sup>469</sup>, where human figures are shown holding beakers full of drink in courtly celebrations. One example is the illustration on the frontispiece of the manuscript of the *Maqāmāt* of Al-Ḥarīrī (fig.122) in the National Library, Paris<sup>470</sup>, which illustrates a courtly scene depicting a seated male figure holding a beaker in his hand similar in shape to the two Baltimore beakers. The *Kitāb Al-Diryāq* (Book of Antidotes), a manuscript of Moṣul or North Jazira, which dates to 595 A.H. /1199 A.D., (now exhibited in the Vienna

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<sup>467</sup> Carswell 1998, p.62.

<sup>468</sup> Atil 1981, p.126, 127.

<sup>469</sup> For example, the frontispiece of *Kitāb Al-'Aghānī* (Book of Songs) that dates to 1218-19 A.D. (now in the National Library in Cairo), (vol.IV adab farisi, no.579), shows an enthroned figure with a beaker in his hand. See Hoffman 1999, p.406.

<sup>470</sup> (Ms. No. 5847).

National Library)<sup>471</sup> also shows how beakers were used in festivals and celebrations. This can be seen on its frontispiece (fig.123), where an enthroned ruler is shown sitting and holding a beaker in his hand<sup>472</sup>. On a fresco (fig.124) from a Fatimid aristocratic dwelling in Old Cairo (now in the Islamic Museum, Cairo)<sup>473</sup>, is also a scene of a seated figure holding a beaker. Other examples in the form of Fatimid lustre-painted plates further confirm the use of beakers in celebrations and at court<sup>474</sup>. These include a plate (fig.125) signed by Ja'far (now in the Islamic Museum, Cairo)<sup>475</sup>, which depicts a prince holding two beakers<sup>476</sup>.

Another general function of some of these types of glass vessel was to provide easier, more secure means of transportation as well as space-saving storage. They were sometimes used to contain wine, as shown by illustrations that show the vessels filled with red liquid that is interpreted as being wine. However, they could also have been used as containers for water as Summer Kenesson has highlighted. For other types of drinks known in the Mamluk court, such as fermented mare's milk (*Qumiz* or *Kumiss*)<sup>477</sup>, or certain alcoholic beverages, Chinese porcelain bowls were used rather than glass vessels<sup>478</sup>. However, Summer Kenesson thinks that beakers could also have been used to contain fermented mare's milk, which would mean that they were used for all types of drinks<sup>479</sup>.

The representation of religious architectural forms on the Baltimore beakers as a way of offering blessing and protection to their owner suggests that it is highly unlikely that the beakers were used for wine; on the other hand, it is much more

<sup>471</sup> (A.F.10) see Hoffman 1999, p.406, 407; Contadini 1998b, p.56, 57.

<sup>472</sup> Contadini 1998b, p.56, 57; Hoffman 1999, p.406, 407.

<sup>473</sup> (Inv. no.12880).

<sup>474</sup> Another example on a Fatimid lustre painted pottery plate (now in the Benaki Museum) signed by Tālib shows a seated figure holding a beaker. see Meinecke-Berg 1999, p.351, 352.

<sup>475</sup> (Inv.no.13478).

<sup>476</sup> Meinecke-Berg 1999, p.351, 352.

<sup>477</sup> See Irwin Robert 1997, "Eating Horses and Drinking Mare's Milk", *Furusiyya*, (Rayadh), p.148-151.

<sup>478</sup> Carboni 2001b, p.334.

<sup>479</sup> Kenesson 1998, p.47.

probable that they would have been used for water or date juice. Since it would contradict Islamic theology, the scene is unlikely to represent the process of wine making. Islamic art translated, modified, and adopted the scenes of Western Medieval manuscripts to suit Muslim theology. This is evident if the illustration of the season of autumn (fig.82) in the Islamic manuscript of *Kitāb Al-Bulhān* is compared with its suggested North Italian source. The comparison provides vital evidence for this idea, as it shows that in the former, the artist had replaced the un-Islamic scene of wine making with a seated man holding a cup filled with a dark red coloured liquid, possibly date juice. As David Rice has explained, many *Ḥadīths* warned Muslims against the evil of alcohol; for instance: "Prayer of him who drinks wine is not accepted by God" and "Cursed is he who drinks, buys, sells wine or causes others to drink it"<sup>480</sup>. That the artist of this scene of the *Kitāb Al-Bulhān* was referring to the drinking of date juice is further suggested by the depiction of a palm tree in the background<sup>481</sup>.

However, scenes of wine making do exist in some instances of Muslim art. This does not contradict the Islamic tendency towards the prohibition of wine, but emphasizes it in a different way. One example of a wine making scene (fig.126) appears in the illustration of the twelfth *Maqām* of the thirteenth century Schefer *Maqāmāt* of Al-Ḥarīrī. It shows two people engaged in wine making: a dark-skinned figure shown trampling grapes in a wine press or strainer, and another, white person pouring the contents of a jar into a bowl. The illustration of this scene was necessary to match the meaning of the text, which reads: "I made a vow to Allah not to visit a tavern again, even if I were given the treasure of Baghdad, and that I would not look

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<sup>480</sup> Guthrie 1995, p.185, 186.

<sup>481</sup> Rice 1954, p.9.

upon (be present at) any drink (vineyard) squeezer (press)"<sup>482</sup>. I believe that if the focus of the scene on the two Mamluk glass beakers had been on wine making, the artist would have treated the scene in more detail, which was the case on other examples of Islamic art with this type of imagery. This leads to the conclusion that the scenes on the beakers are unlikely to be representations of the wine making process, because it would have been inappropriate to associate religious structures with wine, a substance prohibited in the Islamic religion, and because of the lack of detail for a wine making scene.

A satisfactory explanation for the imagery is to interpret it as representing the seasons of the year. Firstly, the similarity in theme both with the Ayyubid glass bottle and the manuscript of *Kitāb Al-Bulhān*, in terms of representing vegetation alongside architecture, supports this suggestion. There is also similarity between the beakers and Western Medieval manuscripts with the theme of the seasons of the year, in which scenes combine architecture with vegetation. The combination of architecture with agriculture, the presence of religious buildings, and the depiction of Christian and Muslim features and symbols (such as the peacock to indicate the building's religious nature) are all features which support this interpretation.

It is clear that the role that architectural representation played on pieces of art, as explained above, was mainly to create a strong association between the significance of the architectural forms shown and the function of the object on which they appeared. The presence of architectural representations strengthens the meaning of the scene and its association with the function of the beaker, while the absence of architectural forms weakens this link. This is confirmed by considering two other enamelled glass beakers (fig.127) from Syria, dating to 647-668 A.H. /1250-70 A.D., which were part of a nesting set decorated with scenes that narrated events in a

<sup>482</sup> "وعاهدت الله سبحانه وتعالى ان لا احضر بعدها حانة نباد ولو اعطيت ملك بغداد وان لا اشهد معصرة الشراب"  
Ḥarīrī 1985, p.104; Shah 1980, p.53.

story. On one beaker is an open-air scene with a male figure standing on the shore of a pond, while on the other beaker a male figure is depicted standing up to his knees in water<sup>483</sup>. Both men are raising their hands to a tree, with five cranes above each one<sup>484</sup>. A further example without architectural representation is a thirteenth or fourteenth century beaker (now in the British Museum, London)<sup>485</sup> with fish decoration (fig.128), discovered in Quft in Upper Egypt<sup>486</sup>. The significance of the scenes on these beakers is not clear. In my opinion, whereas the scenes on the first two may be narrating a story from literature, it is probable that the representation of fish on the latter carries the meaning of wealth, as if offering the owner of the vessel an everlasting wealth. By contrast, the significance of such pictorial decoration becomes clear when an architectural representation is included in the scene. One example of a beaker with an architectural form on it is a Minai ceramic beaker or goblet (figs.129, 130) (now in the Freer Gallery of Art, Washington)<sup>487</sup> whose decoration is related to Persian literature. There is a strong tie between the significance of the architectural representations and the function of this ceramic beaker. The scenes narrate the story of Bizhen and Manizheh, which forms part of the great Persian epic of the Book of Kings or the *Shāhnāma* manuscript<sup>488</sup>. The story relates how Kaykhusrau offered a reward for any brave warrior who could rid the Forest of Irmān of its wild boars. Only Bizhan volunteered for the task, but when he reached the forest, his companions refused to enter, so he decided to go and fight the boars alone. He was victorious and cut off the boars' heads as a symbol of victory<sup>489</sup>.

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<sup>483</sup> Meinecke-Berg 1999, p.352.

<sup>484</sup> Meinecke-Berg 1999, p.352.

<sup>485</sup> (Inv. no.1879 5.22 68).

<sup>486</sup> Carboni 2001a, p.192.

<sup>487</sup> In Rayy there is a famous ceramic art called Minai ware in which series of vessels and tiles were painted in several colours over the fired ivory glaze. See Kühnel 1971, p.104.

<sup>488</sup> Grabar 2000a, p.39.

<sup>489</sup> Swietochowski 1994, p.100.

This story was illustrated in versions of the *Shāhnāma* of Firdaūsī manuscripts, in a manner that shows similarity to the imagery on the Minai beaker, which encouraged Dunham Guest to think that the illustrations of the *Shāhnāma* had been the inspiration for the vessel's decoration<sup>490</sup>. The Īnjū'id *Shāhnāma* (741 A.H. /1341 A.D.) (now in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, H.O. Havemeyer Collection)<sup>491</sup>, Gutman *Shāhnāma*, and the small *Shāhnāma* (699 A.H. /1300 A.D.) (now in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Fletcher Fund)<sup>492</sup> all contain illustrations of this episode. Although they narrate the same event, that is "Bizhan Slaughters the Wild Boars of Irmān", the three depictions take very different forms. In the first manuscript version, Bīzhan is depicted (fig.131a) on horseback wearing a helmet and armour, and striking a boar with his sword. In the second version, he is shown (fig.131b) on foot as a mature man with a beard and moustache, slaying the boars with his sword. In the third manuscript version, he is depicted (fig.132) not dressed in armour, but in a long robe with short sleeves, with an Il-Khanīd cap over his head, and is riding a pony<sup>493</sup>. While acknowledging their connection to the *Shāhnāma* narrative, Oleg Grabar thinks that the scenes on the beaker relate to an oral tradition of story-telling<sup>494</sup>.

The scenes, are arranged into three bands (fig.129) around the body of the beaker. The uppermost shows a picture of the stormy night that put fear in the heart of the hero, leading him to call upon his lover to share and relieve his fears. It shows his beloved at a building (fig.130), described as her home, and the inscriptions read: "Amid the Woes of that long vigil strait at heart I rose. I had one in the house, a loving wight...". She then comes out from the house and offers fruits to the poet

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<sup>490</sup> Guest 1942-1943, p.148.

<sup>491</sup> (Inv no.29.160.22).

<sup>492</sup> (Inv.no.25.68.1).

<sup>493</sup> Swietochowski 1994, p.76, 77.

<sup>494</sup> Grabar 2000a, p.40.

hero, saying: "My darling idol fetched me lamps [from] a shrine, fetched quinces, oranges, pomegranates, wine, and one bright goblet fit for King of Kings". The rest of the band shows scenes that indicate his calm and cheer. Other scenes on the goblet represent Bizhan as the victorious hero of a boar hunt. The strong association between the significance of the architectural representation and the function of the goblet is clear; the artist who produced the beaker wished to render a "bright goblet" worthy of the "King of Kings" for the owner. Furthermore, the artist wished the owner of the beaker the same tranquillity, cheer, and victory as that offered to the hero of the story<sup>495</sup>. This confirms the general function of the beaker as a drink offering vessel. The role of the architectural form thus clarifies the meaning of the scene. The two Mamluk glass beakers demonstrate the same point.

To summarize, it is evident that the architectural representations on the Baltimore beakers were not only for decoration, but also had particular significance. The scenes on the beakers refer to the religious and artistic background of the artist who executed them, and illustrate from the theme of the seasons of the year. Religious architecture is shown alongside vegetation, blessing the owner throughout the seasons of the year. It is my opinion that instead of representing unknown buildings, the artist was skilful enough to depict buildings of religious nature and fame to introduce another level of significance to the architectural representations. In other words, they were chosen to represent the offering of protection and blessing to the owner of the beakers, in addition to the vessels' basic function of offering him a drink. In the following section, I will illustrate how architectural forms represented in Muslim manuscripts were ways of referring to the origin, religion, and artistic background of the artist, as well as reflecting the meaning of the text, which

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<sup>495</sup> Guest 1942-1943, p.148, 149.



demonstrates a strong relationship between the architectural representation and the text and function of the manuscript.

## 2.3 Architectural Representations in Manuscripts

The study of Islamic manuscripts presents a new forum for understanding the significance of architectural forms, and provides further evidence of their meanings within Islamic decoration. Early studies show that illustrations would appear in a manuscript to reflect the contents or clarify the meaning of the text. This was the case with all types of manuscripts, from those dealing with medical plants, such as *De Materia Medica*, to those concerned with animals, such as *Kalīlah wa Dimnah*<sup>496</sup>. It was also the case with manuscripts of the *Maqāmāt* of Al-Ḥarīrī, in which a greater number of architectural forms are found.

The idea of representing images and architectural forms in manuscripts was an old tradition that was already in use in the pre-Islamic era<sup>497</sup>. It was inherited by Islamic art when architectural representations began to appear on manuscripts before the Fatimid period<sup>498</sup>. Already as early as the eleventh century A.D. this tradition was at its peak, with a number of such architectural scenes being used to depict themes of non-religious meaning similar to those found on other objects of art and architecture. This development was partly due to the foundation of an artistic school in Baghdad concentrated on producing illustrations for manuscripts<sup>499</sup>.

Many examples of such architectural representations of the early period have been found with no text to describe their significance, while others preserve a few words or phrases which help to identify the meanings of the architectural forms shown. Fortunately, other manuscripts have been discovered intact. In this study, I

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<sup>496</sup> Piotrovsky 2000, p.35.

<sup>497</sup> Grabar 2001, p.1.

<sup>498</sup> Grube 1995, p.71.

<sup>499</sup> Piotrovsky 2000, p.35.

will be dealing with some of the early manuscript fragments with architectural representations that lack any accompanying text (examples include the Qur'anic manuscript from Sana'a, and the Fatimid or Ayyubid manuscript fragment showing a fortress wall), as well as some other complete manuscripts which retain their texts, such as the *Maqāmāt* of Al-Ḥarīrī, the *Jāmi' Al-Tawārīkh*, and the manuscript of the *Ḥadīth Bayāḍ wa Riyāḍ*. The lack of text on the fragmentary examples makes it difficult to assess the exact significance of the architectural representations on them. However, study of the other complete examples makes it clear that such scenes were mainly translations of the texts of their manuscripts, and reflections of their artists.

Among the earliest manuscript fragments discovered in the area of Fuṣṭāṭ in Egypt is an illustration (now exhibited in the Islamic Museum, Cairo)<sup>500</sup> of an animal fable scene (fig.133) depicting a fox riding a goat. In the background of the scene stands a building with an entrance framed by a semi-circular arch decorated with coloured circles and supported by two pillars. The building consists of an upper storey with two small square windows and a central larger one covered with a curtain. The building is covered with a dome, and terminates on either side with a wall ending in a pointed triangular edge, probably forming the staircase leading to its roof<sup>501</sup>. Another example (fig.134) is a fragment of paper (now in the Louvre Museum, Paris), with coloured illustrations, that on the recto showing two seated people, while that on the verso depicts a man in front of a rectangular building surmounted by three domes<sup>502</sup>. A further example with architectural representation (fig.135) was found in the Al-Fayyūm district in Egypt. It is a double page from a manuscript and displays a painting of two tombs under a tree (now exhibited in the

<sup>500</sup> (Inv. No. 13192, Essen exhibition 1961). See Grube 1995, p.71.

<sup>501</sup> Grube 1995, p.71.

<sup>502</sup> Grube 1995, p.74.

National Library, Vienna)<sup>503</sup>. It dates to the end of the ninth or the beginning of the tenth century A.D.<sup>504</sup>. The tombs are almost identical in their superstructure, each one is built of three steps and ends in a vertical projecting element, which looks very much like a tombstone<sup>505</sup>. The recto of the right leaf of the manuscript fragment has four lines of inscription written in coarse handwriting, probably the hand used for the whole of the manuscript. The verso has twelve lines of a text which continues in four more lines on the left leaf<sup>506</sup>. The tomb illustration is represented in the middle of the inscriptions; the last line of the top paragraph of the inscription reads in Arabic: "Until death did them part", "This is their tomb", which demonstrates that the scene of the tomb was a direct translation of the text<sup>507</sup>. It has been stated by David S. Rice that the depiction of the tomb and the tree, seen in relation to the few remaining lines of the written text, is probably an illustration of a love story in Arabic literature. To support his opinion, Rice relied on the line of inscription that states: "Death did them part", and explained that this was a traditional way to end love stories in Arabic literature.

This might well be the case of this fragmentary illustration given the nature of the many love stories that exist in Arabic literature<sup>508</sup>. An example is the love story of the 'Udhrite lovers 'Urwa and 'Afra, playmates and cousins who fell in love and promised to marry. 'Afra was forced by her father to marry a Syrian stranger and 'Urwa was told that 'Afra was dead, and was shown a false tomb. Discovering that she was in fact alive, 'Urwa went to see her, and on return to his native land, died of a heart attack. On hearing of the death of 'Urwa, 'Afra asked the permission of her

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<sup>503</sup> (PER Inv. Chart. Ar.25612).

<sup>504</sup> Rice 1959, p.211.

<sup>505</sup> Grube 1995, p.75.

<sup>506</sup> Rice 1959, p.209.

<sup>507</sup> Rice 1959, p.211, 212.

<sup>508</sup> Rice 1959, p.211, 212.

husband to visit 'Urwā's tomb, where she lay down and died<sup>509</sup>. Another love story that ends with the two lovers buried together is that of 'Utba and Rayya, mentioned in the 681<sup>st</sup> night of the Arabian Nights, as well as in other texts, Rayya's father agreed to 'Utba's marrying his daughter, but 'Utba was injured while trying to defend a caravan and died the next day. Rayya, upon hearing the news of his death, threw herself from her litter and was killed and buried near her lover 'Utba<sup>510</sup>.

Other early manuscript fragments indicate that the significance of architectural forms was related to the function of the manuscripts. This is exemplified by a funerary illustration (fig.136) on a manuscript fragment (once in the Collection of Hans P. Kraus)<sup>511</sup> dating to the twelfth or thirteenth century A.D. and which is attributed to Syria. Although its text is missing, the illustration shows that the manuscript probably carried a religious meaning. It has a representation of either a mausoleum interior or a complete Mosque. The interior is identifiable as a mausoleum through the recognition of the shape of a cenotaph placed within an ornamental wooden screen, similar to the *Mashrabiyyah* worked wooden *Maqsūra* or screens found around such cenotaphs as that of Imām Al-Shāfi'ī<sup>512</sup>. The cenotaph that occupies the central part of the illustration is covered with a shroud, similar to the lengths of cloth covering the cenotaphs of important individuals into the present day<sup>513</sup>. Ernst Grube identifies the scene as a section of a complete Mosque divided into three aisles, the central one being wide, and the two flanking ones narrower, with arches or niches from which lamps are suspended<sup>514</sup>. He identifies the object in the central part of the illustration as a small table or stool covered with a piece of

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<sup>509</sup> Rice 1959, p.211; Al-Iṣfahānī 1867, XX, p.152-158.

<sup>510</sup> Rice 1959, p.212; Burton 1843, V, p.289-294; Lane 1851, III, p.238-242.

<sup>511</sup> For more information, see Grube 1972, p.33.

<sup>512</sup> Micheau 2001, p.212.

<sup>513</sup> Micheau 2001, p.212.

<sup>514</sup> Grube 1972, p.33.

cloth decorated with Arabic inscriptions, which could be the back (cover) of a book<sup>515</sup>.

The text of this manuscript is unfortunately lost. Even though its religious spirit is indicated by the presence of the lamps hanging from the arches, the nature of the building represented is still not clearly Muslim or Christian. Ernst Grube has referred to some purely Islamic features in the painting, like the use of blocks of stone of alternating colours for the construction of the arches, which was a feature first introduced in the Umayyad Mosque of Cordova in the ninth and tenth centuries A.D.<sup>516</sup>. This technique was also in use in the Ayyubid and Mamluk eras under the name of *Ablaq* masonry<sup>517</sup>. Other Islamic features include the smaller arches superimposed above the arch of the *Miḥrāb* niche, outlining the arch with a multi-lobed decorative frieze. This decorative feature was known in Islamic Spain and Syria. Moreover, the joggled voussoirs forming the arches of the smaller niches flanking the *Miḥrāb* were a common feature in the Umayyad era and subsisted until the twelfth and thirteenth centuries A.D.<sup>518</sup>.

The next example to be discussed is another manuscript fragment dating from the Fatimid or Ayyubid period.

### **2.3.1 Fortress Wall on a Paper Manuscript Fragment from Fustāt**

This manuscript fragment (fig.137) (now kept in the British Museum)<sup>519</sup> was discovered in Fustāt. It bears a representation of a fortress wall which has been the subject of some debate. This study argues that the architectural representation on this

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<sup>515</sup> Grube 1972, p.33.

<sup>516</sup> Grube 1972, p.33.

<sup>517</sup> Mischeau 2001, p.212.

<sup>518</sup> Grube 1972, p.33.

<sup>519</sup> Department of Prints and Drawings, Inv. no. 1938.3-1201; See Gray 1938, p.91-96; Contadini 1998a, fig.14, p.13; Eddé 2001, no.62, p.94.

example is not just designed for decoration, but also to convey two core messages: first, it throws some light on the origin of its artist, and second, it has a political significance. I would also argue that this depiction of a fortress wall commemorates the victorious battles of Saladin against the Franks. The relationship between the significance of this architectural representation and the function of the manuscript cannot be easily understood due to the loss of the rest of the manuscript. However, through a consideration of the description and origin of the manuscript fragment, and of the artist who painted it, it is possible to pinpoint the exact significance of its architectural representation.

### **2.3.1.1 Description of the Architectural Representation**

The manuscript fragment shows part of a brick fortress wall topped with crenellations. Warriors armed with weapons such as shields and swords are seen all around the fortress wall. They are represented riding horses and wearing military dress and equipment, such as helmets and boots.

### **2.3.1.2 Source of the Architectural Representation**

In order to establish the function of the fortress representation, it is important to consider the source of the scene. Basil Gray has pointed out that the illustration differs in style from the traditional Muslim miniatures of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries in colour, idea and the way each element is represented<sup>520</sup>. This statement encourages a detailed study of the origin of the architectural ornamentation represented on this paper fragment. It has been observed by Basil Gray that the drawing has some non-Muslim features. For instance, the shields shown in the scene derive from a non-Muslim source. These long kite-shaped shields are of a type used by the Normans in Western Europe during the eleventh and twelfth centuries A.D. During the occupation of Sicily by Roger I in the

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<sup>520</sup> Gray 1938, p.93.

eleventh century A.D., the Normans introduced this shield to the Mediterranean area, and it was not until the twelfth century A.D. that this armour appeared in the art of the Muslim world<sup>521</sup>. Another feature of non-Muslim origin, which appears to have been borrowed from Classical times, is the red colour used in this painting. Studies have drawn attention to the fact that this red colour was frequently used in Egypt from the Classical period onwards, and that was the reason for its presence in Muslim painting<sup>522</sup>.

It is important to investigate how non-Muslim features were able to appear on this painting. According to historical records, from 1164 A.D. to 1169 A.D. in the Fatimid era, the political conditions in Egypt permitted powerful foreign interference. As Fuṣṭāṭ weakened, the King of Jerusalem, the French King Amaury I (Amalric) and his Crusaders came from Jerusalem to attack Egypt. At the same time, Nūr Al Dīn, the ruler of Syria, sent his armies to fight for the Fatimids against the Crusaders. Thus, it is plausible to assume that the artist who painted this manuscript fragment was skilful in reflecting these conditions by introducing non-Muslim armour and facial features in his depiction of the warriors<sup>523</sup>.

It is possible that this manuscript was produced in the Ayyubid period, in the thirteenth century A.D. There is a range of evidence to support this idea. The first is the representation of the curved blade in the hands of one of the warriors. These had largely replaced straight swords during the Ayyubid era. The second piece of evidence is the depiction of warriors on the left side of the manuscript fragment, who wear a style of costume fastened at the sides rather than the front. This type of costume is also shown on incusted metal objects attributed to the end of the

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<sup>521</sup> Gray 1938, p.91, 92.

<sup>522</sup> Gray 1938, p.94.

<sup>523</sup> Behrens-Abouseif 1989, p.7; Gray 1938, p.95.

thirteenth century A.D.<sup>524</sup>. The third indication is the representation of a type of high helmet that terminates in a long tuft that extends down the back of the head. These are similar to the headdresses shown in Syrian manuscripts of the first half of the thirteenth century A.D. The fourth indication is the pointed shields, already referred to. Anne-Marie Eddé highlighted the fact that the Normans frequently used these kinds of shields in Egypt after the end of the thirteenth century A.D.<sup>525</sup>. The fifth indication is the fortress wall with crenellations, built of stone or brick in alternating vertical and horizontal courses. The red and yellow colours of the courses recall the *Ablaq* technique, which was only seen in Syria and Palestine during the twelfth century A.D., and which was seen earlier at the end of the tenth century in the Great Mosque of Cordova. Such a feature is not found in any of the surviving Fatimid buildings, and it may indicate that this building is to be related to the Ayyubid or the early Mamluk period<sup>526</sup>.

### 2.3.1.3 Architectural Representation as the Work of an Artist

Referring to the previous discussion of the origin of the architectural representation, which revealed both Muslim and non-Muslim features in the scene, I would propose that these factors suggest the origin of the artist. According to Anna Contadini, another source for the decoration of this painting is evident. The architectural decoration shown in the paper manuscript fragment from Fuṣṭāṭ has parallels with pieces of glazed pottery (fig.138) from the tenth or eleventh century A.D. found in Mahdiyyah and Ṣabra Maṣṣūriyyah in Tunisia<sup>527</sup>. This is particularly evident in the style of the figures represented along the wall of the castle<sup>528</sup>. This observation provides us with an important clue about the origin of the artist.

<sup>524</sup> Eddé 2001, p.94.

<sup>525</sup> Eddé 2001, p.94.

<sup>526</sup> Eddé 2001, p.94.

<sup>527</sup> (Now in Benaki Museum Athens: 11762).

<sup>528</sup> Contadini 1998a, p.12.



However, the question of whether the artist was a Muslim or not is problematic. I would argue that the artist was a Muslim for two reasons. The first is that he may have represented a scene to celebrate the victory of a Muslim ruler over some non-Muslim enemies. To demonstrate this theme, it is possible that the artist was Muslim and wanted to commemorate this event. The second is the statement by Anna Contadini regarding the stylistic origin of some elements of the scene. This implies that the artist was a Muslim from Mahdiyyah or Şabra Maṣṣūriyyah, whose work reflects the style of art prevalent in his place of origin.

The discussion regarding the source of the architectural decoration on the painted piece of paper and the artist who was commissioned to carry it out provides an explanation for some of the scene's decorative elements and non-Muslim features. It is now necessary to investigate the reason why these elements were represented through a discussion of the significance of the architectural form depicted.

### **2.3.1.4 Significance of the Architectural Representation**

#### **2.3.1.4.1 Political Significance**

It is probable that the whole scene was produced to commemorate the victory of a Muslim ruler over his non-Muslims enemies, as the image appears to represent the siege of a fortress under Muslim rule. I propose that the scene commemorates one of the battles of Saladin against the Franks. This interpretation may be supported by the non-Muslim elements used in the painting, which suggest a confrontation between a Muslim and a Christian army. The scene is a military theme illustrating warriors, some of whom have Muslim arms, while others have non-Muslim versions, in addition to the drawing of a fortress wall. The power and strength of the ruler was often reflected by the representation of a fortress or fortified enclosure that

he besieged<sup>529</sup>. Accordingly, I think that the text of the manuscript also referred to the military achievements of the ruler. This is likely if we consider the fact that the tradition of illustrating historical texts in Islamic art dated back to the early period, for example, by the eighth century wall paintings<sup>530</sup> of Pjanjikent<sup>531</sup>.

In order to demonstrate the political significance of the architectural form represented, a study of earlier non-Muslim art that uses the same idea is required. These non-Muslim examples with architectural representations of besieged fortresses show that the basic idea of this iconography originated long before Muslim rule. Studying pre-Islamic examples closely, we can identify the steps of conceptual development in these architectural forms until they reached the Muslim era. Providing evidence of this are battle scenes on buildings and different art objects from the Ancient Egyptian period. For example, the representation of the battle of Qādish, dating back to the New Kingdom, 1304-1237 B.C., on the walls of the temple of Luxor, shows King Ramsis II single-handedly charging the enemy. In this scene, a castle is represented to symbolize the fortified city that the King and his troops had invaded and conquered<sup>532</sup>.

However, as the Islamic manuscript is fragmentary, a full demonstration of the intention or identity of its artist is not possible. In order to investigate these questions more fully, the study will now discuss other, more complete, examples that address and support the main arguments of the thesis. The next example under discussion is the Qur'anic manuscript fragment from Sana'a.

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<sup>529</sup> Jairazbhoy 1996, p.21.

<sup>530</sup> For more information, see Marshak Boris 1995, "Legends, Tales, and Fables in the Art of Sogdiana", *Biennial Ehsan Yarshater Lecture Series*, no.I, (New York).

<sup>531</sup> Zeren 1989, p.250.

<sup>532</sup> Groenewegen-Frankfort 1951, p.133.

### 2.3.2 The Qur'anic Manuscript from Sana'a.

This study argues that the architectural forms in the Sana'a Qur'anic manuscript fragment were not just decorative, but were also for the purpose of representing the Mosque as the sacred place in which the Qur'an was safely kept. Thus, the layout of the Mosque represented does not refer to a particular Mosque but rather to a general mosque architectural plan to indicate this religious significance. This study also argues that the architectural forms represented work as a disguised signature of their artist, who is presumably related to the city of Sana'a by origin or knowledge. Inside the Mosque of Sana'a in Yemen, a cache containing 40,000 parchment pages with 520 folios of a manuscript with an Arabic Qur'anic text was found<sup>533</sup>. Two architectural representations appear in the manuscript which comprises 25 pages; each measures at least 51 cm. in height and 47 cm. in breadth<sup>534</sup>. The first folio of this Qur'anic manuscript fragment opens on one side (fig.139) with a circle and octagon, and on the other side (fig.140) with an architectural building. The second folio (fig.142) represents another architectural figure on one side, while on the other side the text of the first Sura of the Qur'an indicates the page is a Qur'anic manuscript<sup>535</sup>.

The architectural representation in this Qur'anic manuscript is unique, for as Oleg Grabar stated, the representation of architecture in Qur'anic manuscripts disappeared after the Qur'an of Sana'a<sup>536</sup>. It is also important to note that the use of full-page images on the frontispiece of a manuscript is unusual and needs investigation. The two architectural representations are relatively similar, but not identical. It has not yet been verified whether the architectural iconographies are of

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<sup>533</sup> Grabar 1992, p.155, 156.

<sup>534</sup> They are now kept in the 'House of manuscripts' at Sana'a having the inventory no. 20-33.1. See Bothmer 1987, p.5.

<sup>535</sup> Creswell 1979, I/I, p.145

<sup>536</sup> Grabar 1992, p.164

two different buildings or two views of the same building. They occupy what were originally either the first and last pages of a volume in the Qur'anic manuscript, or, more probably, the first pages of two volumes. Each architectural representation is planned on a vertical axis, which assists in the reconstruction of the missing right side of one of the two images. However, other parts of the two representations were planned horizontally. The missing parts, which have been reconstructed, are the top edge of one of the architectural representations and the lower edge of the second<sup>537</sup>. To enable us to discover the meaning of these architectural representations, consideration of their appearance and origin is required.

### **2.3.2.1 Description of the Architectural Representations**

The two buildings illustrated are supposed to represent a plan of a Mosque. One of them (figs.140, 141), is on one folio, and is illustrated with an entrance façade which has three gates that are each approached by three steps. The staircases of each gate are connected to one another by two low walls. The gates open into a hypostyle hall with semi-circular arches that carry carved rather than painted decoration. This is with the exception of the arches at the far rear of the building, which are plain. The four arcades are arranged horizontally. Each arcade extends vertically on two different levels, connected to each other by painted wooden tie beams carrying hanging lamps. There is a nave cutting through the arcades on the central axis. At the rear end of the building, there stands a piece of furniture with a railing, which appears to be a *Minbar*. At the other end of the building, a projecting arched element seems to have been added later, since it appears to go beyond the building. Outside, at what appears to be the back of the building, there are trees shown with water flowing at their bases. Nearby, there are traces of the

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<sup>537</sup> Grabar 1992, p.156.

representation of another structure, which has a spiral element on its left upper side; it could be the lower part of a tower.

The building shown on the other folio (figs.142, 143) looks very similar to the one described above, but with a few variations. It has an entrance façade with only two gates leading to the hypostyle hall. One of the most obvious differences in the depiction of the two buildings is the number, shape and form of the arches of the arcades of the hypostyle hall. In this building, there are six arcades, with a niche on the interior back wall. These arches have a different shape and form to those in the other illustration (fig.140). A further difference is that this Mosque illustration (fig.142), unlike the first, is represented with a court, which has a bouquet of flowers originally placed on top of a now lost column. The entrance façade (fig.143) has an arched element that, in contrast to the case of the previous building form (fig.141), appears to have been an original part of the illustration rather than a later addition. This is because the arched element is firmly linked to the building and is not protruding. The two buildings are externally similar. The garden at the back of the building is similar to that of the other illustration, with flowing water at the base of the trees<sup>538</sup>.

These two architectural representations raise questions as to their origin. In the following discussion, I will consider the source of these forms.

### **2.3.2.2 Source of the Architectural Representations**

There is evidence to suggest that the idea of using an architectural representation for the opening page of a manuscript originated in the Byzantine period. Since a title page preceded these architectural folios in the Sana'a manuscript, it is plausible to propose that the architectural representations correspond conceptually with the conventions of Imperial Byzantine manuscripts.

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<sup>538</sup> Grabar 1992, p.157-159.

The introductory pages of the Vienna Dioscorides manuscript, dated 512 A.D. and produced for Princess Anicia Juliana, have an architectural scene which represents a tradition that seems to have inspired the architectural forms in the Sana'a manuscript. Both manuscripts are similar, if not in the form of the architectural representation illustrated, in the fact that they are both Holy Books whose frontispieces are decorated with architectural forms. The main difference between the Vienna Dioscorides and the Sana'a manuscript is that the former has the title page and the architectural representation on the same folio, while in the latter case, the two were executed separately on two different folios<sup>539</sup>. Another similarity between the two manuscripts is that the first folio of the Vienna Dioscorides is also decorated on one side with a circle and octagon motif, which again suggests the inspiration for the Sana'a manuscript. This motif is a kind of Cosmogram, and it was borrowed with some changes: in the Qur'an, it has been decorated with a repetition of the inner octagon in an eight-pointed star<sup>540</sup>.

Another Byzantine example which has an architectural representation very similar to that in the Sana'a Qur'an seems to have started the tradition of representing an architectural form in the frontispiece of a manuscript. It is the frontispiece (fig.144) of a mid-twelfth century volume of the Homilies of Gregory of Nazianzus<sup>541</sup>, which depicts a palatial setting. The similarity in details between this architectural representation and those of the Qur'an shows that the two manuscripts are related. Two points have to be considered in relation to this suggestion. Firstly, according to Anthony Cutler, there is a risk involved in the comparison of a secular setting (as in the Byzantine example) with a religious setting like that of the Sana'a

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<sup>539</sup> Grabar 1992, p.155, 156.

<sup>540</sup> Creswell 1979, I/I, p.145

<sup>541</sup> Greek Manuscript no.510 of the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, see Omont Henri 1902, *Facsimilés des Miniatures des plus Anciens Manuscrits Grecs de la Bibliothèque Nationale du VIe au XIe siècle*, (Paris: E Leroux).

Qur'an. Secondly, the date of the Qur'an, which, as will be explained further, is earlier than that of the Byzantine manuscript makes it impossible for the Byzantine manuscript to have influenced the Qur'an<sup>542</sup>. However, it is still evident from the manuscripts that artistic influence was exchanged between Byzantine and Islamic art.

The size of the Sana'a manuscript, which is large for a Qur'an of the early time to which it has been attributed, also suggests inspiration from a non-Muslim tradition in which large Holy Books existed. The Qur'an measures approximately 51 by 47 cm., which is the same size as a few Western parchment manuscripts. Only one other large parchment Qur'an has been discovered, and attributed to the period of the orthodox Caliph 'Alī or 'Uthmān in the seventh century A.D. Even though large Qur'ans seem to have been in use at that time<sup>543</sup>, the Sana'a manuscript is one of the largest Qur'ans in existence<sup>544</sup>.

The date of this Qur'anic manuscript is under debate. Oleg Grabar places it earlier than the eleventh century A.D., on the basis of its material, namely parchment<sup>545</sup>. Von Bothmer suggested that this Qur'anic manuscript was probably produced in the eighth century A.D. for the Mosque of Sana'a on the orders of the Umayyad Caliph Al-Walīd. This suggestion is based on the many architectural features that appear in the illustrations of the two Mosques that match those of the Mosques of Damascus, Medina, and Sana'a as they stood at the time of Al-Walīd<sup>546</sup>. The illustrations may refer to this act of sponsorship and accordingly represent the Mosque of Sana'a.

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<sup>542</sup> Cutler 1999, p.643.

<sup>543</sup> Grabar 1992, p.155, 156.

<sup>544</sup> Bothmer 1987, p.5.

<sup>545</sup> Grabar 1992, p.155, 156.

<sup>546</sup> Bothmer 1987, p.16.

Indeed, some features of the illustrated architectural forms in this Qur'anic manuscript fragment do show similarities with those of the Great Mosque of Damascus (fig.145a), the Umayyad Mosque of Al-Medina, and the Great Mosque of Sana'a. Nevertheless, I do not believe the Sana'a manuscripts' architectural illustrations to be blind copies. With the current state of research, it appears that they refer to a general plan of a Mosque rather than to a particular location. The two Sana'a Mosque illustrations gather various architectural features from different Mosque plans, combining them to create the most complete Mosque form as reworked by the artist, signifying the place where the Qur'anic manuscript is supposed to be kept. The following evidence supports this opinion. Comparison of the plan of the buildings represented in the Sana'a manuscript with the three above-mentioned Mosques reveals similarities and differences. Von Bothmer stated that the architectural plan of the illustrations shows some features in common with that of the Great Mosque of Damascus: "It shares with the Great Mosque of Damascus the two tiers of arcades, the central nave and the three paralleled aisles, and the transept that formed a central path flanked with columns...the Mosque on the right with the aisles parallel to the *Qiblah* wall bisected by a transept is closely related to the Umayyad Mosque in Damascus built by Al-Walīd and completed before his death. We may notice, here exactly as in the Great Mosque of Damascus, a subdivision of the wall of the two storeys, before the fire in 1893. The hall consisted of large arches supported by tall columns...then a sequence of smaller columns stands above the arches which is accelerated by the insertion of one column below the vertex of each of the lower arches..."<sup>547</sup>.

In terms of the Great Mosque of Damascus plan (fig.145a), one of the similarities between the plan of this Mosque that was built by Al-Walīd in 96 A.H. /

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<sup>547</sup> Bothmer 1987, p.9.



715 A.D., and one of the two Sana'a Mosque illustrations (figs.140, 141) is the orientation of the *Qiblah*, or sanctuary aisles, since they are in both cases parallel to the *Qiblah* wall. Another similarity is the transept dividing the sanctuary hall into two halves. Furthermore, the subdivision of the walls of the Great Mosque of Damascus into two storeys shows similarities to the Sana'a illustrations (figs.140-143). Before the fire of 1893 (fig.146a), the arcades of the Damascus Mosque looked very similar to those in the Sana'a illustration. They had large arches supported with tall columns, and above, there was a row of smaller columns, each standing above the vertex of each of the lower large arches, as one of the Damascus Mosque's original features<sup>548</sup>. Creswell quoted Sir Charles Wilson who saw these arcades of the sanctuary of the Mosque (fig.146a, b, and c) in 1865 and his description matches those forming the original feature of the Great Mosque<sup>549</sup>. Another area of similarity with the Damascus Mosque is the representation of the three entrances in the Sana'a Mosque illustration (figs.140, 141), which recalls the three gates at the Southern side of the ancient enclosure wall of the Great Mosque of Damascus in the Umayyad era<sup>550</sup>. According to Creswell, the South wall of the Great Mosque of Damascus had three entrances (figs.147, 148) which were seen and observed by A.C. Dickie<sup>551</sup> a few years after the fire of 1893 A.D. Dickie described them as being located in the centre, or a little to the right, of the South wall. Ibn Shākir also saw these doors much earlier, as Creswell mentioned, in 1328 A.D.<sup>552</sup> when part of the South wall was demolished. Creswell noted that it was a beautiful gateway made out of cut

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<sup>548</sup> Bothmer 1987, p.9.

<sup>549</sup> Creswell 1979, I/I, p.165.

<sup>550</sup> Bothmer 1987, p.10.

<sup>551</sup> See Dickie A.C. 1897, "The Great Mosque of the Omeiyades, Damascus", *Palestine Exploration Fund Quarterly Statement*, p.268-282, Plate II.

<sup>552</sup> See Kutubī Muhammad Ibn Shākir 1980, *Uyūn Al-Tawārīkh*, (Al-Qahirah), MS.No.638, (fol.16a), &40a and b, translated by Sauvaire H. 1896, "Description De Damas", *Journal Asiatique*, vol.IX/pt.VII, p.185-285; Quatremère 1845, *Sultans Mamlouks*, vol.II/I, Appendice p.270.

stone, with a large central door flanked on the right and left by smaller doors<sup>553</sup>. In 1953 A.D., Creswell was able to examine the remains of the triple entrance, and by studying the plaster coating, it was established that this triple entrance was a later insertion into the enclosure wall of the Mosque<sup>554</sup>. The only area of difference between the Great Mosque of Damascus and the Sana'a Mosque illustrations is the fact that in the Sana'a Mosque illustration (figs.140, 141) the upper row of arches (fig.149) does not follow the same sequence when it comes to the transept. Instead of extending over the larger arches of the transept, this upper arcade turns into two small pointed arches touching each of the two large arches of the transept<sup>555</sup>.

Considering the plan of the Medina Mosque (fig.145b), which was renovated by Al-Walīd during 88-90/707-709 A.D., some features were also similar to those in the illustrations. For example, it shared with the Mosque illustration (fig.142) in the Sana'a Qur'an a central court with the hall in front of it, and with a portico running all around<sup>556</sup>. The plan of the Medina Mosque at the time of Al-Walīd tapered from South to North. The Southwest angle was 87° while the Southeast was 85°. This tapering also occurs in the representation of the Mosque in the Sana'a Qur'anic manuscript. Creswell, however, disagreed that these were the original angles of the Mosque at the time of Al-Walīd, and suggested that the plan of the Mosque was square, with the dimensions of 200x200 cubits. He added that this was an inherited tradition that was seen earlier in the Mosques of Kūfah (fig.145c) and Wāsiṭ, which were built according to the same plan and measurements<sup>557</sup>. The Mosque illustration (fig.140) and the Medina Mosque are also alike in the number of the arcades of the

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<sup>553</sup> Creswell 1979, I/I, p.158.

<sup>554</sup> Creswell 1979, I/I, p.160.

<sup>555</sup> Bothmer 1987, p.10.

<sup>556</sup> Bothmer 1987, p.9.

<sup>557</sup> Creswell 1979, I/I, p.145

Western (*Qiblah*) *riwāq*, namely four<sup>558</sup>. They are different in that the columns in the Medina Mosque supported architraves and not arches, unlike those of the Sana'a Qur'anic Mosque illustrations<sup>559</sup>. They also differ in the number of gates they have, with these being four in the case of the Medina Mosque, which most probably also had a fifth at one time on its Northern side, which was demolished by Al-Mahdī when he extended the Mosque Northwards<sup>560</sup>.

When comparing the Sana'a manuscript illustrations with the plan of the Great Mosque of Sana'a which was rebuilt by Al-Walīd in 87-97 A.H. /705-15 A.D. (fig.150a, b), it is evident that there is a similarity between the two. The Mosque illustration (fig.140) displays three doors or entrances; likewise, the Northern façade of the Great Mosque of Sana'a had three entrances<sup>561</sup>. Another telling similarity that only applies to the Great Mosque of Sana'a concerns the two side minarets that the artist represented in the Mosque illustration (fig.140). In the Umayyad period, unlike the Great Mosque of Damascus and the Medina Mosque, the Sana'a Mosque, like the building of the illustration, had only two minarets, whereas the Mosques of Damascus and Medina each had four minarets<sup>562</sup>. This is confirmed by Creswell's statement that under the rule of Al-Walīd, the Great Mosque of Damascus had four minarets. Creswell noted that these four minarets which were in the form of square corner towers of the enclosure wall when Al-Walīd built the Mosque were still standing: the two on the Northern side were in such bad condition that he had to demolish their upper parts, while the two on the South remained unfinished. A further minaret decorated with mosaics which once stood on the site of the present

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<sup>558</sup> Creswell 1979, I/I, p.145.

<sup>559</sup> Bothmer 1987, p.9.

<sup>560</sup> Creswell 1979, I/I, p.144.

<sup>561</sup> Grabar 1992, p.162; Bothmer 1987, p.10.

<sup>562</sup> Bothmer 1987, p.10.

Northern minaret was probably built by Al-Walīd<sup>563</sup>. It was also quoted by Ibn Baṭṭūṭah<sup>564</sup> and mentioned by Creswell that the Medina Mosque had four minarets at the time of Al-Walīd, which, as in the case of the Great Mosque of Damascus, stood at the four corners of its enclosure wall<sup>565</sup>.

Another area of similarity between the Sana'a Mosque illustration (fig.140) and the plan of the Great Mosque of Sana'a concerns the stonework that was added to the Mosque in the time of Al-Walīd. This may explain the difference in the illustration between the material used for the columns of the transept (which appears hard and fine) and that used for the columns in the rest of the Mosque. In addition, the Sana'a Mosque during the Umayyad era was provided with a richly worked *Mihrāb*, which may also explain the prominent and distinctive depiction of the *Mihrāb* area in the same Mosque illustration<sup>566</sup>. In addition to these features, the garden that is shown on the top of the two Sana'a illustrations copies the design of the actual Mosque, which was once surrounded with a garden as an integral part of its design. The representation of a river that accompanies vegetation at the top or back of the mosque illustrations may refer to the fact that during the Abbasid period, under the rule of the Yu'firīds and Ṣulayhīds, Sana'a expanded to the West, reaching the boundary of the watercourse and the *Sa'ila* that sometimes reached flood proportions<sup>567</sup>.

As argued above, the artist of the illustrations was influenced by a number of architectural features of different Mosques, in order to produce his unique plan of an ideal Mosque. This could pose a problem in identifying information about the artist himself. However, the characteristic features that are associated exclusively with the

<sup>563</sup> Creswell 1979, I/I, p.179.

<sup>564</sup> "وجعل عمر (عمر ابن عبد العزيز في عهد الوليد ابن عبد الملك) للمسجد اربع صوامع في اربعة اركانه..."  
Ibn Baṭṭūṭah 1960, p.118; Gibb 1958, I, p.171.

<sup>565</sup> Creswell 1979, I/I, p.149.

<sup>566</sup> Lewcock 1986, p.86.

<sup>567</sup> Costa 1980, p.155.

area of Sana'a in the illustration of the two mosque forms reveal the origin of the artist. This shows that the artist was skilled enough to localize his images despite the fact that they were intended as general Mosque plans, and to refer to his artistic background.

### **2.3.2.3 Architectural Representations as the Work of an Artist**

Deciding on the place where the manuscript was originally produced is problematic. It has been suggested that this manuscript was produced either in Yemen or in Damascus, since the latter was the capital of the Umayyads at the time when it may have been produced. Nevertheless, other possibilities exist such as Mecca or Medina, since these were great religious centres in the early Islamic era. However, it is most likely that the manuscript was made in Sana'a. This can be explained by some features in the illustrations that are linked to Sana'a, some of which have already been discussed and more of which will be noted in the following section. Thus, I propose that the artist who produced the two Mosque illustrations is related by origin or artistic background to Sana'a. In light of this assumption, we may reject Von Bothmer's suggestion of attributing this Qur'an to Damascus<sup>568</sup>.

There is much evidence to show that either this Qur'an was originally produced in Sana'a, where it probably remained in its Great Mosque, or that the artist was influenced by some architectural features of that city due to his artistic background or knowledge. For example, the designs of the doors of the two architectural representations show similarity to those of the Great Mosque of Sana'a<sup>569</sup>. Admittedly, this is not a feature exclusive to the area of Sana'a. Such door designs were also found elsewhere, in later dated examples of Muslim architecture, and are believed by Ronald Lewcock to have been a perpetuation of an old

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<sup>568</sup> Bonnenfant 1987, p.52.

<sup>569</sup> Bonnenfant 1987, p.52.

tradition<sup>570</sup>. For instance, the pair of folding doors constructed of joined panels are common in the region of the Gulf, especially Kuwait. Some Kuwaiti doors consist of six-panelled or four-panelled elements, as in the Bayt Al-Badr, which dates to 1837-1847 A.D. and has a Diwan door of six-panelled type<sup>571</sup>. Similarly, the door of the men's reception room (Majlis) in the Bayt Al-Ghānim is of a panelled type<sup>572</sup>. Furthermore, the vaults above these doors bear a strong resemblance to those shown in our two Mosque illustrations. The doors of the front façade of Bayt Al-Badr are covered with vaults designed as semi-domes, with a half rosette in the centre of the doors<sup>573</sup>. This feature is also found at the Bayt Al-Ghānim, whose doors have semi-circular fanlights over them, divided into three glazed sections by curvilinear decorations in the wood that follow a concave-convex silhouette. The only difference between these Gulf doors and those of the Great Mosque of Sana'a lies in the arrangement and order of the panels that form the two folds of the door, for those in the illustrations follow a system exclusive to the city of Sana'a<sup>574</sup>.

Indeed, a closer study of the design of the illustrated Mosque doors does show that they are similar to the design and decoration of surviving examples of wooden doors in other ancient Mosques from the city of Sana'a. Among the examples are monumental doors (fig.151a, b) with two folds that separate the sanctuary from the exterior, or from adjoining areas, such as the ablution hall or the mausoleum<sup>575</sup>. The wooden decoration on the doors of the Great Mosque of Sana'a mainly repeats geometrical forms, used elsewhere inside the Mosque. In the centre of the *Qiblah* wall of the Great Mosque of Sana'a, there are alabaster top lights (fig.152), unfortunately blackened with the soot of centuries, which are surrounded with a

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<sup>570</sup> Lewcock 1978b, p.36.

<sup>571</sup> Lewcock 1978b, p.36, 22.

<sup>572</sup> Lewcock 1978b, p.36, 22.

<sup>573</sup> Lewcock 1978b, p.15.

<sup>574</sup> Bonnenfant 1987, p.53.

<sup>575</sup> Bonnenfant 1987, p.52.

great composition of geometrical wooden decorations forming the roof of the Mosque<sup>576</sup>. This kind of decoration appears prominently in the Sana'a illustrations. The semi-circular arch that appears over the doors depicted in the illustrations is also one of the common features of Sana'a's architecture. It appears extensively over the windows and doors (fig.151b) of Sana'a's old houses. This demonstrates a relationship between the Mosque illustrations and the city of Sana'a<sup>577</sup>.

Furthermore, the verticality of the manuscript architectural representations is comparable with the façades of old houses (figs.153, 154) in the city of Sana'a, which were tall tower-like buildings consisting of five to nine storeys containing arches. Tall houses were in use in Sana'a as early as the pre-Islamic era, as evidenced by a stone of unknown provenance showing a graffito of a house in Sana'a with nine storeys. These structures were also described by many travellers and historians, such as Al-Ḥamdānī in around 330 A.H. /943 A.D., as including many storeys. In one of his accounts, he describes the houses of Sana'a as being different from any other on earth, being large enough to protect their inhabitants from the deadly heat of the summer<sup>578</sup>. Al-Rāzī gave a detailed description of the houses of Sana'a, referring to the fact that they were tall, imposing, and costly<sup>579</sup>. He also referred to the loftiness of structure of Sana'a houses. On one occasion in 183 A.H. /800 A.D., he wrote that: "one of the buildings was known as Al-Barāmikah house ....it had large doors with huge arches ...it had many storeys and shops"<sup>580</sup>. Thus, through reference to descriptions of the old city of Sana'a in ancient texts, the verticality of Sana'a's houses can be demonstrated, and this feature recalls the

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<sup>576</sup> Lewcock 1986, p.34.

<sup>577</sup> Grandguillaume 1995, I, p.225.

<sup>578</sup> Al-Ḥamdānī 1983, p.345.

<sup>579</sup> Al-Rāzī 1974, p.111, 112.

<sup>580</sup> Al-Rāzī 1974, p.106; Lewcock 1986, p.81.

vertical appearance of the arcades that the artist has represented in the Sana'a Mosque illustrations<sup>581</sup>.

Another feature in the Qur'anic illustrations that finds parallel in the real city of Sana'a is the representation of a small garden at the end or back of the Mosque. *Waqf* documents in Sana'a emphasize that earlier Mosques were usually planted with vegetables and fruits, which were sold to the inhabitants who were living in surrounding houses; accordingly each house overlooked small green areas. This feature of small green gardens related to houses and at the same time to Mosque-services in Sana'a may have inspired the artist to depict a small garden at the top part of both illustrations<sup>582</sup>.

From this discussion, it can be seen that the provenance of this Qur'anic manuscript is most likely to be the city of Sana'a. This supports the argument of this thesis that the architectural forms could work as the disguised signature of the artist, reflecting his origin or artistic background. In the next section, I will investigate the relationship between the significance of the architectural forms depicted and the function of the Qur'anic manuscript bearing them.

#### **2.3.2.4 Significance of the Architectural Representations**

Various explanations are possible for the significance of the Mosque representations on the frontispieces of the Sana'a Qur'an, including from two different perspectives: the religious and the political.

##### **2.3.2.4.1 Religious Significance**

One of the possible religious readings of the illustrations in the frontispiece of the Sana'a Qur'an is that they are reminiscence of one of the Qur'anic verses that describes God as a light in a niche. This view is in light of the mosque lamps which

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<sup>581</sup> Lewcock 1986, p.64

<sup>582</sup> Lewcock 1986, p.64



are shown suspended from niches or *Mihirābs* as if symbolizing the Qur'anic verse<sup>583</sup> that reads: "The similitude of his light is as a niche wherein a lamp is, the lamp is in a glass. The glass is as it were a shining star. (This lamp, is) kindled from a blessed tree, an olive neither of the East nor the West, whose oil would almost glow forth (of itself) though no fire touched it"<sup>584</sup>. It should be added that in the reconstruction of the two buildings that was made by Oleg Grabar, the niches with their lamps were ignored, accordingly, the significance of the illustration can be interpreted in a different way.

According to Oleg Grabar, the architectural decorations of the Sana'a Qur'anic manuscript are meant to represent Paradise. This concept was evident in many earlier examples of art and architecture, relating to the usually religious function of the building or object bearing the architectural decoration. Such an interpretation is tempting for the Qur'anic manuscript fragment given its religious purpose. Oleg Grabar sees the architectural representations in this manuscript as a manifestation of passages from the Qur'an that refer to Paradise, including verses<sup>585</sup> that mention gardens and rivers surrounding buildings<sup>586</sup>. This may be accurate if we apply it to the representation of the buildings, trees and flowing water, in the manuscript frontispieces. However, the same architectural forms can also be interpreted as political insignia.

#### **2.3.2.4.2 Political Significance**

Von Bothmer proposes that the Sana'a Qur'an was one of many produced for Al-Walīd and kept in the Great Mosque of Sana'a<sup>587</sup>. Given that this manuscript was possibly produced for Al-Walīd, it is plausible that these architectural

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<sup>583</sup> (Qur'an, Sura 24, verse 35).

<sup>584</sup> Betsche 1978, p.63.

<sup>585</sup> (Qur'an, Sura 29, verse 58; Sura 34, verse 37).

<sup>586</sup> Grabar 1992, p.163.

<sup>587</sup> Flood 2001, p.189.

representations have political connotations<sup>588</sup>. The commemoration of the activities and virtues of the owner or patron was sometimes realized by either depicting scenes of his achievements or referring to them on the various pieces of art and architecture that he sponsored. The buildings depicted in the Qur'an can be assumed to illustrate the Great Mosque of Sana'a after it was restored and enlarged in the time of Al-Walīd. This is particularly so given that the Mosque-type of the illustration, with its courtyard, clearly recalls the rebuilding by Al-Walīd of the Mosque of the Prophet Muḥammad at Medina (the Ḥaram Al-Nabawī), and the design of the Great Mosque of Sana'a when it was expanded during his reign. Thus, the illustrations in the Qur'an manuscript seem to refer to the restoration by this ruler of the real Mosque of Sana'a, which could have been provided with the manuscript soon after its construction was completed<sup>589</sup>.

It is, then, clear that the Mosque representations on the frontispiece of the manuscript were not simply for decoration, but were also designed to represent a certain significance or theme, although whether this significance was religious or political remains unclear. My personal opinion is that these representations refer to a general Mosque plan, to reflect an idea about the place in which the Qur'an is kept and preserved. In order to understand the significance of the architectural forms in this manuscript fragment, it is important to consider the function of the object bearing them. The Qur'an, as a Holy Book, is supposed to be kept safe inside the Mosque, and usually as close as possible to the sanctuary area (*Qiblah*). Therefore, I would suggest that the artist might have wanted to refer to the place used for housing the Qur'an. There is, in my view, an emphasis by the artist on the particular place where the Qur'an should be kept. In the Mosque illustration (figs.142, 143) where

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<sup>588</sup> Creswell 1979, I/I, p.145; Piotrovsky 2000, p.101.

<sup>589</sup> Piotrovsky 2000, p.101.

the central open court (*Sahn*) is depicted, the artist shows a general Mosque view. However, in the other Mosque illustration, (figs.140, 141), he decided to concentrate on the sanctuary, where the Qur'an is supposed to be kept, by representing a specific view of the area where the *Mihrāb* is located. The two Mosque illustrations can also be seen as leading the spectator in a short visual tour through the layout of the open *Sahn* Mosque plan, starting at the entrance and moving through to the arcades and eventually the sanctuary and its *Mihrāb* (fig.140), passing with the *Sahn* as it appears in the second mosque illustration (fig.142). This is as if the artist is leading the reader of the Qur'an visually to the interior of the Mosque, where the Qur'an itself is kept, first through the arcades, and then towards the *Sahn* of the Mosque. To better understand the meaning of architectural forms in Qur'ans, a study of earlier as well as contemporary Muslim and non-Muslim Holy Books with architectural representations is necessary.

Other Qur'anic manuscripts with architectural representations rarely survived. The only other surviving example is an eighth century Qur'an from Egypt<sup>590</sup>, in which a glimpse of an architectural form (fig.155) appears in the illumination of one of its titles. This shows a decorative arcade with its arches resting on columns supporting a decorative roof. This type of architectural representation and decoration was not repeated elsewhere in Qur'ans after the ninth century. Rachel Milstein offered a possible explanation as to the disappearance and rarity of such decoration. She claimed that: this was "a result of the heated debate about the nature of the eternal Word of God and the Archetypal Book (*Umm Al-Kitāb*)"<sup>591</sup>. In other words, since the Qur'an represented the everlasting Archetypal Book in heaven, it was not

<sup>590</sup> See Moritz Bernhard 1905, *Arabic Palaeography: A Collection of Arabic Texts From the First Century of the Hidjra Till the Year 1000*, (Cairo).

<sup>591</sup> This is a codex from ca.1000 in the Karaite Synagogue of Old Cairo, Gottheil no.17. (See Milstein 1999, p.435, 436).

suitable to enhance it with architectural representations which refer to actual architecture that will one day vanish<sup>592</sup>.

Religious books with architectural representations go back to the pre-Islamic period. Architectural forms were often depicted in Gospels, an example being a specimen of a parchment scroll (now exhibited in the Vatican Library)<sup>593</sup> that dates to the fifth or the sixth century A.D. This depicts Joshua Rotulus and the Angel in front of Jericho (fig.156), which is represented in the background as a group of roofed buildings of different shapes and sizes pierced with small narrow windows<sup>594</sup>.

During the tenth and eleventh centuries A.D., architectural representations were frequently used in Jewish Holy Books. One of the main differences between Jewish Bibles and Qur'ans of the tenth century A.D. was the frequent insertion of architectural representations in the former. The purpose of these architectural forms in Jewish Bibles was to indicate the relationship between the sanctuary and the Holy Book, enabling artists to present the Holy Book as a sort of building where religious orders and laws were maintained. In Jewish theology, the Torah was always referred to as a monument with a roof held by pillars and columns, whose chapters are gates, and whose index is the key. After the destruction of the Temple of Jerusalem, the figure of the Temple built in a free Zion became a symbol of salvation. Accordingly, the representation of the temple in Holy Books and on other art media in Judaism constituted an important integration of art and religion. For example, in a Bible that dates to 929 A.D., produced in the Karaite Synagogue of Old Cairo (now in St. Petersburg)<sup>595</sup>, architectural figures are displayed on the border of some of the pages (fig.157) in the form of small buildings with domes or gabled roofs. These were possibly intended as a map to accompany Genesis 3, which mentions the story of

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<sup>592</sup> Milstein 1999, p.435, 436.

<sup>593</sup> (V.Palat.Gr.431). See Rice 1935, p.129; Diehl 1910, p.232.

<sup>594</sup> Rice 1935, p.129; Diehl 1910, p.232.

<sup>595</sup> (NL.R., Firk. Hebr. II B.17.) See Milstein 1999, p.433, 434.

Jacob's journey into Beth-El. This is suggested by the fact that these architectural representations are accompanied with inscriptions describing the journey and the shrine<sup>596</sup>. Another illustration (fig.158) in the same manuscript shows a temple and its implements<sup>597</sup>. In another Bible copied in Cairo, dated 1008 A.D. and now in St. Petersburg, there are representations of architectural elements (fig.159)<sup>598</sup> including a schematic plan of the Messianic temple<sup>599</sup> (fig.160)<sup>600</sup>.

This same phenomenon of architectural representations in Holy Books appears in examples of Gospels dating back to the eleventh and twelfth century A.D., as demonstrated by the study of Greek and Syrian manuscripts in Jerusalem<sup>601</sup>. A miniature<sup>602</sup> (fig.161) produced in the eleventh or twelfth century A.D. as part of a four-Gospel parchment manuscript shows some similar, but not identical, forms of buildings in its background. It depicts Saint Matthew sitting at a writing desk against a background of buildings covered with gabled roofs, each with narrow long rectangular windows<sup>603</sup>. Another manuscript<sup>604</sup> (fig.162) from the same period, that formed the headpiece of the Book of Acts, was copied from a similar example accompanying the third Gospel. In this miniature, Saint Luke is represented as a middle-aged man sitting at a writing desk, in a setting with background representations of conventional buildings covered with gabled roofs, each with rectangular windows<sup>605</sup>.

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<sup>596</sup> Milstein 1999, p.433, 434.

<sup>597</sup> (NL.R. Firk, Hebr. II. B.17).

<sup>598</sup> (NL.R. Firk. Hebr. II.B. 19a, fol.457v, 476v, 477r.).

<sup>599</sup> (NLR Firk, Hebr.II. B. 49, fol.2v). For more information about its meaning see Yaffa Levy 1993/4, "Ezekiel's Plan in an Early Karaite Bible", *Jewish Art*, vol.IX-XX, p.68-83.

<sup>600</sup> Milstein 1999, p.436.

<sup>601</sup> These are seventy-one miniatures, all belong to the Byzantine period, and most of them were painted in the second Golden Age. Eight of the Greek pictures, those contained in Codex 5, and the eight Syrian miniatures are of the thirteenth century, but all the rest, including the two examples mentioned in the text of this study, are the works of artists who lived in the eleventh and twelfth centuries A.D. and all are religious in character. Hatch 1931, p.vii.

<sup>602</sup> (Fol.5v, Codex 31, Now in the Greek Patriarchal Library, Jerusalem).

<sup>603</sup> Hatch 1931, p.76.

<sup>604</sup> (Fol.113, Codex 47, Now in the Greek Patriarchal Library, Jerusalem).

<sup>605</sup> Hatch 1931, p.102.

An architectural representation symbolizing the plan of a church (fig.163a, b) occupies the frontispiece of Saint John's Arabic Gospel Book in the Monastery of Saint Catherine in Sinai<sup>606</sup>. The idea, as we have seen, was adopted for Qur'ans, but the form of the architectural representation here differed from those in the non-Muslim Holy Books. The building represented in the Sana'a Qur'an is a Mosque, chosen because it agrees with the Muslim religion and because it emphasizes the religious function of the Qur'anic manuscript<sup>607</sup>.

The study will now deal with a further example of a manuscript related to the main theme of the thesis: the Maqāmāt of Al-Ḥarīrī. Unlike the two previous fragments, this manuscript is complete.

### **2.3.3 The Manuscript of the Maqāmāt (the Assemblies) of Al-Ḥarīrī**

It was in 634 A.H./1237 A.D. that a famous version of the Maqāmāt of Al-Ḥarīrī influenced by the school of Baghdad was produced; it is now known as the Schefer version (now kept in the National Library, Paris)<sup>608</sup>. Its illustrator was Yaḥyā Ibn Maḥmūd, known as Al-Wāsiṭī. Its miniatures include depictions of religious buildings such as Mosques and Madrasas, as well as of civil buildings such as houses, a palace, a Khan (caravanserai), a shop, a library, a tavern, and a village<sup>609</sup>.

#### **2.3.3.1 Description of the Architectural Representations**

The illustrations in this manuscript show various types of architecture whose role was not just decorative, but mainly designed to reflect the signature of the artist,

<sup>606</sup> For more information, see Yani Maimaré 1985, *Katalogue of Arabic Gospels in Mt. Sinai*, (Athens); Kamel Murad 1970, *Catalogue of all manuscripts in the Monastery of St. Catherine on Mount Sinai*, (Wiesbaden); Weitzmann Kurt 1973, "Illustrated Manuscripts at St. Catherine's Monastery on Mount Sinai", *Medieval and Renaissance Studies*, vol.V.

<sup>607</sup> Grabar 1992, p.163.

<sup>608</sup> (under no. 5847). See Ukasha 1992, p.17.

<sup>609</sup> Ukasha 1992, p.17.

the meaning of the text, and the nature of the manuscript, thus creating an association between their meanings and the function of the manuscript. In order to investigate the significance of these architectural forms, and their relation to the function of the manuscript, a study of both them and the Arabic text that they accompany will now be undertaken.

Among the religious buildings included in the illustrations of this manuscript are Mosques with various forms and layouts. In some examples, the outline structure of the Mosque is not represented, but the interior is shown with some elements that identify the building as a Mosque, including a *Minbar* (Pulpit), and a *Mihrāb* (Prayer Niche)<sup>610</sup>. Other illustrations do show the exterior plans of the Mosques. The most magnificent of all Mosque representations is that (fig.164) in the fiftieth Maqāmah (fol.164), which shows the Mosque of Baṣrah, detailing its architectural elements and decoration. The most significant aspect of this Mosque is that it contains an inscription on a panel over the arcade that reads: "And Our Lord the Imām Al-Mustanṣir Bī Allah, Commander of the Faithful, May God Prolong His Days"<sup>611</sup>.

Not only is religious architecture found in this manuscript, but also civil architecture. The architectural design of the houses in some cases displays a sliding roof, a door, and a wooden bench. Sometimes the house is shown with an exterior dome and upper balcony, while the interior contains candlesticks, trays, and cups. In another picture, a palace is represented both internally and externally. The exterior is depicted (fig.165) with its domes, balcony, arches and door, while the interior (fig.166) is shown (fol.122) as a two-storeyed structure. Further civil architectural representations including depictions of a Madrasa (fig.167) and library (fig.168). The latter is shown with crenellations, a shallow dome, and shelves loaded with

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<sup>610</sup> Grabar 1963, p.100.

<sup>611</sup>

Ukasha 1992, p.151.

"و مولانا الإمام المستنصر بالله أمير المؤمنين خلد الله ملكه"

books. The shelves and crenellated frieze on top of the library are similar to those represented in the St. Petersburg manuscript of the palace of the governor of Merv<sup>612</sup>. The Madrasa (fig.167) is illustrated with a dome, upper balcony, arched entrance and a wooden throne for the teacher. Other illustrations show a Khan (caravanserai), shops, and a tavern. The Khan (fig.169) has two storeys and is in the background of the illustration. There are two illustrations of shops, (fig.170) and (fig.171), showing Abū Zayd at the door of his shop as a cupper: the cupping technique, also known as *Ḥijām*, being one whereby a number of cups were used for treating different diseases<sup>613</sup>. The tavern (fig.126) is shown as a two-storeyed building with musicians and dancers. There are two architectural representations of a market and a village. The market (fig.172) is portrayed as a simple roof resting on wooden columns. In contrast, the illustration of the village (fig.173) is rather complex and lively, and shows Mosques, houses, animals, and different daily activities. There is another version of the same subject in this manuscript; it shows a simpler form of the village with a waterwheel. The diversity of the architectural forms illustrated in the manuscript encourages a study of their source to determine their role and significance.

### 2.3.3.2 Source of the Architectural Representations

According to Hugo Buchthal, some of the architectural representations in the Schefer Maqāmāt appear to be of Byzantine origin, for two reasons. Firstly, the tripartite architectural division of the architectural form represented is similar to iconographical representations in the Byzantine mosaics of Monreale. An example is the mosaic scene of Christ and St. Thomas with, in its background, a building with a

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<sup>612</sup> Guthrie 1995, p.116.

<sup>613</sup> Guthrie 1995, p.109.



tripartite division<sup>614</sup>. It has been emphasized by Hugo Buchthal that the architectural representation in three parts, with a large room in the centre and two other smaller rooms at the sides, is one of the main characteristics of Maqāmāt manuscripts<sup>615</sup>. We can see such tripartite architecture in the representation of the tavern (fig.126) in the twelfth Maqāmāh (fol.33), in that of the Mosque of Samarqand (fig.174) in the twenty-eighth Maqāmāh (fol.48), in that of a shop in a market (fig.172) in the thirty-third Maqāmāh (fol.105), and in that of the palace (fig.166) represented in the thirty-ninth Maqāmāh (fol.122). Secondly, the second indication of Byzantine influence is the inclusion of the feature of a single arch, as seen in the Madrasa representation (fig.167) in the illustration of the forty-sixth Maqāmāh (fol.148).

Other Byzantine elements also appear in the architectural illustrations of the Maqāmāt, for example the house (fig.175) whose interior is illustrated in the fifth Maqāmāh (fol.13v). Even though the style of the house and its contents suggest a purely Islamic form, the idea of representing a man at the door of the building appeared earlier in similar illustrations attributed to the Byzantine period. This indicates the adoption of a Byzantine idea in representing a purely Muslim architectural form, which indicates a non-Muslim influence. On an ivory casket from Troyes, there is a representation of a fortress (fig.176) of an unusual design with two storeys: the lower one with the main entrance to the fortress has a man standing at the door<sup>616</sup>.

Could these Byzantine features in the architectural representations be a factor in their significance, or were they merely the result of artistic borrowing? This study will show that these non-Muslim features in the representation of architectural forms

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<sup>614</sup> Buchthal 1940a, p.127.

<sup>615</sup> Buchthal 1940a, p.129.

<sup>616</sup> Diehl 1910, p.615.

in the Maqāmāt manuscript served to reflect the meaning of the text, and to give information about the artist who introduced them.

### **2.3.3.3 Significance of the Architectural Representations**

#### **2.3.3.3.1 Architectural Representations Convey the Meaning of the Text**

Illustrations within manuscripts have been used for centuries to reflect the meaning of the text, and this is the case for most of the illustrations of the Maqāmāt of Al-Ḥārīrī. A study of the Arabic text makes it clear that the significance of various architectural representations is to visually reflect its meaning. In the following discussion, the study will show that the text seems to have influenced the illustrator in his selection of the type of imagery used. Whether the architecture represented is directly referred to in the text, or is implied by the overall narrative, there was felt a growing necessity for depicting the settings of the events described by the text.

This can be seen if we consider the illustration (fig.177) of the Mosque of Barqa'īd in the seventh Maqāmāh (fol.18v). The picture is a direct reflection of the Arabic text, which reads: "Al-Ḥārith Ibn Hammām related: 'I decided to move away from Barqa'īd but on sighting the moon of the Eid I was reluctant to leave this city and decided to stay there to watch the Eid after the presentation of the Eid tribute and the Eid prayer, so I put on new clothes and joined the crowd of Muslims and horsemen. I have followed the example of the Prophet Muḥammad in what he used to do by wearing a new garment and joining those who wanted to celebrate Eid. After the Muslims prayed, they gathered, and when it was very crowded, a Shaykh

appeared with his eyes covered”<sup>617</sup> The Maqāmah mentions also that Abū Zayd went onto the *Minbar* of the Mosque to preach to the congregation<sup>618</sup>, thus explaining why the Mosque was depicted, and why architectural details such as the *Minbar* were present in the illustration.

The representation of the Mosque of Al-Rayy<sup>619</sup> (fig.178) in the twenty-first Maqāmah (fol.58) is another example of a miniature reflecting the text, although in this case the text does not mention the word Mosque but simply refers to it as a place where people were gathered to hear an oration. The text reads: “Al-Ḥārith Ibn Hammām said: ‘Once I arrived at Al-Rayy and gave up the sins I used to commit...I went with the crowd until we reached a gathering to hear a Shaykh who was famous for his religious status and virtues, surrounded by a circle of his followers, those with moon-like faces, the Shaykh in a religious garment was adjusting himself (probably sitting) and was preaching loudly, with words touching the hearts...’”<sup>620</sup>.

The description of a preacher giving a sermon to the people in the text led the illustrator to represent a *Minbar* at which the preacher stands to address the community, which implies a religious setting being the scene of the event. The text also emphasizes that many people are gathered to listen to the orator, which led the artist to show an upper floor for women attending the sermon. However, since there is no reference to the other standard architectural features of a Mosque, the illustrator decided to exclude any non-essential elements from his depiction.

<sup>617</sup> "حكى الحارث ابن همام قال: ازمعت الشخوص من برقعيد وقد شمت برق عيد فكرهت الرحلة عن تلك المدينة او اشهد بها يوم الزينة فلما اظل بفرضه ونفله واجلب بخيله ورجله اتبعت السنة في لبس الجديد وبرزت مع من برز للتعيد وحين التأم جمع المصلين وانتظم واخذ الزحام بالكظم طلع شيخ في شملتين محجوب المقلتين"

Ḥarīrī 1985, p.57; Shah 1980, p.28.

<sup>618</sup> Ukasha 1992, p.50, 52.

<sup>619</sup> A city in Persian Iraq. See Ḥarīrī 1985, p.167; Steingass 1897, p.155.

<sup>620</sup> "حكى الحارث ابن همام قال: ... فلما حللت با لرى وقد حللت حى الغي... وانخرطت فى سلك الجماعة حتى افضينا الى ناد حشد النبيه والمغمور وفى وسط هالته ووسط اهله شيخ قد تقوس واقعسس وتقلنس وتطلس وهو يصدع بوعظ يشفى الصدور ويان الصخور فسمعته يقول..."

Ḥarīrī 1985, p.167, 168; Shah 1980, p.84.

A further example is the representation of the exterior of a Moroccan Mosque (fig.179) in the sixteenth Maqāmah (fol.42), which is indicated in the text as follows: “Al-Ḥārith Ibn Hammām said: ‘I performed the sunset (*Maghrib*) prayer in one of the Mosques of Morocco. After I had completed it, and prayed other prayers during the day, I saw a group of people gathered at one side of the Mosque, separated from the rest of the congregation, talking, arguing, and using some *Ḥadīths* to validate their arguments, so I decided to talk to them to gain some information and knowledge”<sup>621</sup>. Following the text, the artist necessarily had to represent the Mosque, but since the major events of the Maqāmah mainly occurred outside the Mosque, the artist represented the exterior of the building without detailing its interior. Another exterior representation of a Mosque (fig.180), in the forty-eighth Maqāmah (fol.158), is a reference to the Mosque of Banū Haram, which Abū Zayd entered. The text for this episode reads: “Al-Ḥārith Ibn Hammām quoted Abū Zayd Al-Serūgī as saying: ‘Since my camel had started the journey...I am looking forward to going and seeing Baṣrah...travelling through the roads leading to it...I came across an honoured area named after Banū Haram, where well-known Mosques exist...while I was travelling along its roads...I saw...a famous Mosque occupied with Muslims...who were arguing and talking...I approached them...in no time the calls to prayer were heard everywhere, straight after which appeared the Imām, so I stopped talking and prepared myself to stand ready to pray, then we were all too busy praying to think about talking and discussion for a while”<sup>622</sup>.

<sup>621</sup> "حكى الحارث ابن همام قال: شهدت صلاة المغرب في بعض مساجد المغرب فلما ادبتهما بفضلها وشفعتها بنقلها اخذ طرفي رقة قد انتبذوا ناحية وامتازوا صفوة صافية وهم يتعاطون كأس المنافثة و يقتدون زناد المباحثة فرغبت في محادثتهم لكلمة تستفيد او ادب يستزيد فسمعيت اليهم"

Harīrī 1985, p.129; Shah 1980, p.66.

<sup>622</sup> "روى الحارث ابن همام عن ابي زيد السروجي قال: ما زلت منذ رحلت عنسى... احن الى عيان البصرة... فادانى الاختراق في مسالكها... الى محلة موسومة بالاحترام منسوبة الى بنى حرام ذات مساجد مشهودة... فبينما انا انفض طرفها... اذ لمحت مسجدا مشتهرا بطرائفه... وقد اجرى اهله ذكر حروف البذل... فعجت نحوهم... فلم يك الا كقبسة الاعلان حتى"

A further example is afforded by the text of the twenty-eighth Maqāmah (fol.84), which reads: “Al-Hārith Ibn Hammām said: ‘I was heading for Samarqand...I performed my ablutions for the Friday prayer, as the *Ḥadīths* of the Prophet Muḥammad instruct, and I took up the attitude of prayer in its congregational Mosque, positioning myself close to the group around the Imām. I was lucky enough to be the first of the group of listeners, and chose the central position of this group to listen to the sermon”<sup>623</sup>. This description indicates that the setting is a congregational Mosque, which required the architectural representation in the manuscript to imply its large dimensions, and include all the necessary Mosque architectural elements of such a Mosque<sup>624</sup>. One of the elements of the illustration inferred from the text is the *Minbar* or pulpit, as it is mentioned in the narrative that the Imām (Abū Zayd) ascended the *Minbar*: “He ascended the throne of the *Minbar* until he reached the top, then waived with his right hand and sat down until the call to prayer was done”<sup>625</sup>.

Another case in point is the fiftieth Maqāmah (fol.164), which reads: “Al-Hārith Ibn Hammām narrated the following: ‘...On arrival at the Mosque of Baṣrah, which was at that time full of scholars and nobles with great numbers of students approaching the Mosque to learn at a place where beautiful speeches and the sound of pens are heard, so I myself hurried to reach it”<sup>626</sup>. The Mosque is described in the text in a way that highlights its cultural and educational heritage; consequently, the

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ارتفعت الاصوات بالاذان ثم ردف التأذين بروز الإمام فأعادت ظبي الكلام وحلت الحبي للقيام وشغلنا بالقنوت عن استمداد القوت وبالسجود عن استئزال الجود

Harīrī 1985, p.396-398; Shah 1980, p.248, 249.

<sup>623</sup> "أخبر الحارث ابن همام قال: قصدت سمرقند... و أخذت في غسل الجمعة بالأثر ثم بادرت في هيئة الخاشع الى مسجد الجامع لألحق بمن يقرب من الإمام ويقرب افضل الأندام فحظيت بان جلست في الحلبة وتخبرت المركز لإستماع الخطبة"

Harīrī 1985, p.221; Shah 1980, p.125.

<sup>624</sup> Steingass 1897, p.215-217.

<sup>625</sup> "فارتقى في منبر الدعوة الى ان مثل بالذروة فسلم مشيراً باليمين ثم جلس حتى ختم نظم التأذين"

Harīrī 1985, p.222; Shah 1980, p.125.

<sup>626</sup> "حكى الحارث ابن همام قال: ... إلا قصد الجامع بالبصرة و كان اذ ذاك مأهول المساند مشغوه الموارد يجتنى من رياضته ازاهير الكلام ويسمع في ارجائه صرير الأقلام فأنطلقت اليه غير وان"

Harīrī 1985, p.412; Shah 1980, p.259.

illustration of this Mosque (fig.164) surpasses all the other illustrations in its intricate details and beauty, indicating its importance and heritage compared with the other Mosques in the manuscript. To further demonstrate the importance of this illustration, the artist wrote the name of the Mosque on its exterior wall<sup>627</sup>.

A further example emphasizing the extent to which the architectural illustrations reflect the meaning of the text is the illustrations of a house (fig.181) that accompanies the fiftieth Maqāmah (fol.166). Reference to a house is given in the Arabic text as being in Baṣrah, to which Al-Ḥārith was invited. The text reads: "...Only when he had finished praying the five prayers, and a new day had started, did he take me to his house and offer me food and drink"<sup>628</sup>. Another house (fig.182) is referred to in the text of the sixth Maqāmah (fol.16), which relates that Al-Ḥārith was present at a *Diwān Al-Nazar or Al-Mukātabāt* held in a house in Marāghah<sup>629</sup>. The text reads: "Al-Ḥārith Ibn Hammām said: 'I had attended the Divan of inspecting and dealing with complaints (*Diwān Al-Nazar or Al-Mukātabāt*) in Marāghah, where beautiful speeches were made"<sup>630</sup>.

Through close attention to the Arabic text in the fifth Maqāmah (fol.12v), we can recognize that a house (fig.183) is mentioned in the text as *Finā'ikūm*, at whose door a visitor stopped and knocked<sup>631</sup>. The text reads: "Al-Ḥārith Ibn Hammām said: 'I spent the night in Kūfah...in the company of people who exchanged beautiful speeches...then in the darkness of that night, we heard a sound of someone outside, followed by a knock on the door, so we said: 'who is it?'...the person answered:

<sup>627</sup> Steingass 1897, p.401.

<sup>628</sup> "...إلى أن اكمل إقامة الخمس و صار اليوم أمس فحينئذ انكفأ بى الى بيته و اسهمنى فى قرصه وزينه"

Harīrī 1985, p.420; Shah 1980, p.264.

<sup>629</sup> Marāghah is in Azrbayjan. Steingass 1897, p.43; Ukasha 1992, p.49.

<sup>630</sup> "روى الحارث بن همام قال: حضرت ديوان النظر بالمراغة وقد جرى به ذكر البلاغة"

Harīrī 1985, p.48; Shah 1980, p.22.

<sup>631</sup> Ukasha 1992, p.45.

‘...someone asking for a favour came to your house’...I said: ‘When he captured our hearts with his beautiful speech...we opened the door and welcomed him in’<sup>632</sup>.

The same idea is evident in the palace representation (fig.165) of the thirty-ninth Maqāmah (fol.120), whose presence was essential to illustrate the text that reads: “So we reached an island...we reached a palace with an iron door and by its gate was a group of slaves standing...so we asked the slaves: ‘what is the reason for this sadness?’ No one answered...until one of the servants, an elderly one, started to reply: ‘Note that the owner of this palace is the ruler of this area...he has been told that his wife is pregnant...at the time of labour...his wife faces difficulty’”<sup>633</sup>. Therefore, the exterior of the palace was represented as the setting for this whole event occurred. In addition, it was necessary to represent the interior of the palace (fig.166), in the illustration on fol.122 of Abū Zayd prescribing a remedy to help the pregnant woman<sup>634</sup>.

The illustrations of the Madrasa (fig.167) in the forty-sixth Maqāmah (fol.148), and library (fig.168) in the second Maqāmah (fol.5v) also constitute interpretations of the Arabic text. In the case of the former, the text reads: “Al-Ḥārith Ibn Hammām said: ‘I missed Aleppo so much...I saw a Shaykh...accompanied by ten lads...so I decided to approach him to talk about him to the men of literature in Hems...so I sat close to him to learn from him...so he pointed his stick towards the eldest of his lads and asked him to recite some poems (from a text without diacritical marks) without reluctance...then he said to the next one: ‘...recite the poems, and add the right diacritical marks to recite this poem’...so the lad prepared his pen to

<sup>632</sup> "حكى الحارث بن همام قال: سمريت بالكوفة في ليلة... مع رفقة غزوا بلبان البیان... فلما روق الليل البهيم... سمعنا من الباب نبأ مستنبح ثم تلاها صكة مستفتح فقلنا من الملم... فقال: قد عرا فناءكم معترا... قال الحارث بن همام: فلما خلينا بعذوبة نطقه... ابتدرنا فتح الباب وتلقيناه بالترحاب"

Harīrī 1985, p.40, 41; Shah 1980, p.17.

<sup>633</sup> "فذهدنا إلى الجزيرة... حتى افضينا إلى قصر مشيد له باب من حديد ودونه زمرة من عبيد... فقلنا ابتها الغلطة ما هذه الغمة؟ فلم يجيبوا النداء... فابتدر خادم قد علته كبرة... وقال: اعلم ان رب هذا القصر هو قطب هذه البقعة... إلى ان بشر بحمل عقيلة... ولما حان النتائج عسر مخاض الوضع"

Harīrī 1985, p.318, 319; Shah 1980, p.195.

<sup>634</sup> Ukasha 1992, p.122.

write them, placed the writing board on his lap and started writing”<sup>635</sup>. In accordance with the text, which describes a teacher sitting with a group of students, the miniature portrays a lesson in a school<sup>636</sup>. In the case of the library illustration, the text reads: “Al-Ḥārith Ibn Hammām said: ‘Once I reached Hulwān (Helwan)...I visited its house of books (library), the place where all men of letters gather; those who devoted themselves to education came from different parts of the world”<sup>637</sup>.

In addition to these examples, we can note another that indicates the role of the illustrations in serving the meaning of the text. The twenty-ninth Maqāmah (fol.89) shows a building (fig.169) known as a Khan. The word *Khan* (caravanserai) appears in the Arabic text which reads: “Al-Ḥārith Ibn Hammām said: ‘Bad luck led me to the land of Wāsiṭ, so I decided to go there not knowing where to stay...bad luck led me to...a Khan prepared for strangers...where I took a room for myself”<sup>638</sup>. Accordingly, the Khan building was represented in the manuscript.

The reference to shops (figs.170, 171) in the forty-seventh Maqāmah, (fols.154, 156), is not direct but can be inferred from the text. The first illustration reflects the Arabic text which reads: “Al-Ḥārith Ibn Hammām said: ‘I decided to have a *Ḥijāma* treatment while I was in Yamāmah, and was advised to go to a Shaykh who treats well and cleanly, so I sent my servant to call for him to visit me, and waited for his arrival...my servant returned unsuccessfully without the Shaykh...so I decided to go to him myself...I saw a Shaykh who looked clean and

"روى الحارث بن همام قال: نزع بي الى حلب شوق غلب...لمح طرفي شيخا... وعنده عشرة صبيان...فطارعت في قصده الحرص لأخبر به ادباء حمص...فجلست اليه لأبلو جنى نطقه...فما لبث ان اشار بعصيته الى كبر اصيبيته وقال له: انشد الأبيات الاعواطل واحذر ان تماطل...ثم قال لتلوه...اجل الأبيات العرائس...فبرى القلم وقط ثم احتجر اللوح وخط"

Harīrī 1985, p.375-377; Shah 1980, p.237.

<sup>636</sup> Ukasha 1992, p.142.

"حكى الحارث بن همام قال:... فلما حلت حلوان..حضرت دار كتبها التي هي منتدى المتأدبين وملتقى القاطنين منهم والمتغربين"

Harīrī 1985, p.21, 23; Shah 1980, p.5, 6.

<sup>638</sup> "حكى الحارث بن همام قال:الجاني حكم دهر قاسط الى ان انتجع ارض واسط فقصدتها وانا لا اعرف بها سكنا..قادني الحظ الناقص...الى خان ينزله شذاذ الأفاق...فأستفردت منه بحجرة"

Harīrī 1985, p.228; Shah 1980, p.129.



neat...and around him...a great crowd...and he was preparing a strong lad ready for the *Hijāma* (cupping) treatment”<sup>639</sup>. This scene is shown as taking place in a shop.

The second illustration accompanies the section of the text in which the owner of the shop is described in the Arabic text as standing and addressing the people, complaining about a client who had refused to pay for the service that he had received from him, pleading financial problems and poverty. This was a sequel to the previous illustration and text, in which the client did not have money to pay the Shaykh after he received his treatment. The text reads: “And the Shaykh says to him: ‘I noticed that you received the treatment before you paid your money’. The lad said: ‘...I do not have money’... the lad then complained to the crowd, saying: ‘how strange it is that the Shaykh is so proud of himself for doing such a small job’... the Shaykh replies to him:...”<sup>640</sup>. Since the text suggests that the two events are closely related to each other in time, the act of addressing the people is also shown as taking place in the shop where the Shaykh was working. Although not being shown in the illustration, it is understood that the lad was addressing the people, however the illustration accurately reflects the Shaykh who had to reply back addressing the crowd.

Similar in significance is the illustration of the tavern (fig.126) of the twelfth Maqāmah (fol.33), directly referred to in the text which reads: “As it was said that once he entered ‘*Ānah*’ he never left a tavern, I wanted to find out the truth ...so I went to the city in disguise until I spotted the Shaykh in a colourful garment, between jars and a wine squeezer (press), surrounded by attractive and beautiful

<sup>639</sup> "حكى الحارث بن همام قال: احتجمت الى الحجامه وانا بحجر اليمامة فارشدت الى شيخ يحجم بلطافة ويسفر عن نظافة فبعثت غلامى لإحضاره وارصدت نفسى لانتظاره...ثم عاد عود المخفق مسعاه...ففعت المشى الى حجام...رأيت شيخا هيئته نظيفة...وعليه...من الزحام طباق و بين يديه فتى كالصمصامة مستهدف للحجامه"

Harīrī 1985, p.388, 389; Shah 1980, p.242.

<sup>640</sup> "و الشيخ يقول له: اراك قد ابرزت رأسك قبل ان تبرز قرطاسك...فقال الفتى:...إبنى لأفلس من ابن يومين...فقال الغلام للنظارة: يا للعجبة أنف فى السماء واست فى الماء...فقال له الشيخ:..."

Harīrī 1985, p.289-291; Shah 1980, p.242-244.

ladies offering drink, and candles giving light, and very fragrant flowers such as Jasmin, pipe, and lute”<sup>641</sup>. The text clearly states that this episode occurred in a tavern (*Hānah*), and it also relates that Al-Ḥārith swore not to visit any taverns in future. The text reads: “I made a vow to Allah not to visit a tavern again, even if I were given the treasure of Baghdad, and that I would not look upon (be present at) any drink (vineyard) squeezer (press)”<sup>642</sup>. This clarifies the reason why the tavern was chosen as the setting for the illustration.

A final example demonstrating the architectural representations’ close relationship to the text is the depiction of the village (fig.173) of the forty-third Maqāmah (fol.138). The Arabic text reads: “Al-Ḥārith Ibn Hammām said: ‘The distance and long tiring walk took me away to a land where any skilful guide is lost...Once we finally ended up there, where we landed...we met a young lad...Abū Zayd greeted him...and asked him: ‘was there a place there where dates were sold for speeches?’ The lad answered: ‘no’...Abū Zayd said: ‘and pastry for poems?’... ‘stop it, God bless you’...‘For these people the man of literature is like an uncultivated land...and, in addition, if literature is not linked to making money, its study is then a waste of time...’. Abū Zayd said to me: ‘have you noticed that literature is forbidden and its lovers have deserted it?...’. He replied: ‘I think you have to barter your sword to be able to feed yourself and your guest’”<sup>643</sup>. From this text, it is clear that Al-Ḥārith and Abū Zayd asked for food while having nothing with which to buy any provisions but their knowledge of poetry and literature, which

<sup>641</sup> "الى ان قيل انه مذ دخل عانة ما زابل الحانة فأعراى خبث هذا القول بسبكه...فأدلجت الى الدسكرة فى هيئة منكرة فإذا الشيخ فى حلة ممصرة بين دنان و معصرة وحوله سقاة تبهر وشموع تزهو وأس و عبهر ومزمار و مزهر..."

Ḥārīrī 1985, p.101; Shah 1980, p.51.

<sup>642</sup> "وعاهدت الله سبحانه وتعالى ان لا احضر بعدها حانة نباح ولو اعطيت ملك بغداد وان لا اشهد معصرة الشراب"

Ḥārīrī 1985, p.104; Shah 1980, p.53.

<sup>643</sup> "حكى الحارث بن همام قال: هفا بى البين المطوح والسير المبرح الى ارض يضل بها الخريت...فما ان بلغنا المحط...او لقينا غلام لم يبلغ الحنث...فحياه ابو زيد...وسأله ابيع هنا الرطب بالخطب؟ قال: لا والله...ولا العصائد بأقصائد؟...قال: اسكت عافاك الله...عندهم قد بار وولت انصاره ان مثل الأديب كالأربع الجديد...وكذا الأدب ان لم يعضده نشب فدرسه نصب...فقال لى ابو زيد اعلمت ان الأدب الأدبار؟...ارى ان ترهن سيفك لتشبع جوفك وضيفك"

Ḥārīrī 1985, p.346, 357, 358; Shah 1980, p.212, 218, 219.

they thought might be worth something. The illustration of the village in which this event occurred depicts a Mosque, a pond, houses, trees, birds and different shops in which activities take place.

In conclusion, the text was a clear guide to the artist in his use of architectural forms to illustrate their meaning. The frequency and variety of architectural forms in this manuscript indicate an increasing tendency in Islamic manuscript painting to illustrate the places where the events of the text occurred. This is acknowledged by the statement of Oleg Grabar that after the architectural representations in the Qur'anic manuscript of Sana'a, such representations started to appear more frequently in the manuscripts of the thirteenth century A.D. Examples of such thirteenth century A.D. manuscripts include copies of the *Maqāmāt* of Al-Ḥarīrī and the Dioscorides *De Materia Medica*<sup>644</sup>.

Oleg Grabar also refers to the use of architectural forms in manuscripts to reflect the importance of presenting the places in which the described events happen, as a translation of the text into an image. This practice seems to have been a tradition that developed in twelfth and thirteenth century manuscripts. Evidence to support this is provided by the Leningrad version of the *Maqāmāt* of Al-Ḥarīrī, which shows the events of the story of the fifth *Maqāmah* occurring in a house that is depicted twice. A reference to the setting of the fifth *Maqāmah* is also made in the thirteenth century Istanbul version of the *Maqāmāt*, where it is shown as a house with a sliding roof and a lamp on a tall stand. Similarly, in the Schefer version, which also dates to the thirteenth century, this *Maqāmah* is illustrated by a house. However, no other version of the same manuscript has an illustration of exactly the same subject. In

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<sup>644</sup> Grabar 1992, p.164.

contrast, most concentrate on depicting the scenes from the story told by Abū Zayd, the hero of the Maqāmāt, rather than on the settings of the events<sup>645</sup>.

It also appears that there is a strong association between the significance of the architectural forms represented and the function of the manuscript itself, as was demonstrated in the previous works that this study has discussed. Because the Maqāmāt is a manuscript concerned with a secular subject, it incorporates various examples of architecture where secular events take place. This explains the variety of architectural forms presented in the manuscript, which corresponds with the variety of locations, periods, and events described by the text<sup>646</sup>. Had the manuscript been religious, the building types represented in its miniatures would have been less secular in nature.

In the following part of the thesis, I will try to establish how architectural representations in the Maqāmāt manuscript work as the hidden signature of its artist.

#### **2.3.3.3.2 Architectural Representations as the Work of an Artist**

I consider that there is evidence to support the proposition that the artist who produced the work originated in Iraq, or at least was influenced by the artistic traditions of Iraq. This is because, as the study will show, the building iconographies in the Schefer Maqāmāt have many features in common with the architectural heritage and decoration of Iraq. This indicates beyond doubt that the artist, although representing different buildings from different parts of the world, saw these constructions from his own perspective, thereby reflecting his origin and artistic background. Even though the architectural forms represented conform to a style of architecture specific to Iraq, they do not refer to specific buildings or models, but rather to a general style of architecture that matches the building traditions of Iraq. I

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<sup>645</sup> Grabar 1963, p.98.

<sup>646</sup> Piotrovsky 2000, p.35.

will deal with each building type represented in the Maqāmāt separately, and analyze their architectural details which demonstrate the influence of Iraq.

#### **2.3.3.3.2.1 Houses**

The houses illustrated in the Maqāmāt follow a style of architectural representation prevalent in Iraq, an example being their predominantly tripartite design. These houses show similarity to, and share features with, the designs of houses in other areas of the Muslim world such as Egypt. Therefore, there are also features that are common to both these illustrations and houses outside Iraq. However, what allows us to attribute these illustrations specifically to the region of Iraq are some of their fine details, which are exclusive to Iraq.

Due to the lack of any detailed knowledge of the design of old houses in Iraq, which is a result of fires and floods, reference will be made to house designs of the same period that are mentioned in the Cairo Geniza, since these are believed by Guy Petherbridge to have been a traditional house type of the Middle East at that time<sup>647</sup>. Each house is described as a building with two reception halls on its ground floor, one of them being large and long, with marble walls, and two passages panelled with carved wood. Each passage has a door leading to an adjoining cabinet, so the reception hall is divided into three sections: the central passage and the two side cabinets. This design is similar to that of Byzantine houses, and maintained the tripartite division as a standard feature of house layouts of the Muslim era, which matches the depictions in the Maqāmāt<sup>648</sup>.

The illustration of the house (fig.184), in the fifteenth Maqāmāh (fol.47) of the Istanbul version (now in the Süleymaniye Library, Istanbul) is similar in many of its details to house illustrations in the Schefer version of the Maqāmāt. In particular, it

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<sup>647</sup> Petherbridge 1978, p.202-206.

<sup>648</sup> Goitein 1978, p.16.

reflects the Iraqi style of house building. The illustration shows Al-Ḥārith in his house inquiring about the “how and when” of Abū Zayd, who has just entered. The house is shown with its door, stairs, and movable roof<sup>649</sup>. Additional evidence relating the house design of the Istanbul version, and consequently that of the Schefer, to house traditions of Iraq is their similarity to a third house design in the St.Petersburg version, also attributed to Iraq. The house shown there is very similar to that in the Istanbul version, especially in the representation of some of its interior details, such as the jar placed under the stairs<sup>650</sup>.

In the Istanbul version, the structure on the roof of the house illustration is in the form of a ventilation tower covered in reed mats, which could be removed to allow in the cold breeze<sup>651</sup>. According to Guy Petherbridge, who carried out extensive studies in the area of house architecture, this type of house design generally conforms to the plan and design of a Mesopotamian town house of the thirteenth century<sup>652</sup>. He supports his theory by noting some common elements that appeared in Mesopotamian houses, such as wind catchers, wind scoops and wind towers. He believes that these features are old traditions that have persisted to the present time. Petherbridge located wind catchers similar to those in the Schefer Maqāmāt in the houses of Baghdad, the Lower Sind district of Pakistan, and in Herat in Afghanistan. Moreover, the cloth wind catcher that appears in some of the Schefer illustrations were also seen by him on the Batinah coast of Oman<sup>653</sup>. He also describes how the Mesopotamian house design sometimes included a second storey with a large central area covered with a wooden-frame conical ventilator that could be opened by rolling a section of the folding mat of the roof to one side. There

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<sup>649</sup> Grabar 1963, p.99.

<sup>650</sup> Grabar 1963, p.99.

<sup>651</sup> Petherbridge 1978, p.185.

<sup>652</sup> Petherbridge 1978, p.194.

<sup>653</sup> Petherbridge 1978, p.203.

would also be an internal staircase used as a cooling place where water jars were kept, leading up to the upper floor of the building<sup>654</sup>.

The records of the eighteenth century A.D. traveller to Iraq, John Jackson, who described some of its houses, may also be considered in this regard. It is believed by Petherbridge that Jackson's description shows the perpetuation of an old style of architecture in Iraq, which conforms to the house illustrations in the *Maqāmāt*<sup>655</sup>. According to Jackson's records, every house in the eighteenth century A.D. looked square. Sometimes it had two floors, the kitchen and water devices always occupying the ground floor, while the *Ḥarīm* and the reception hall, in the form of a gallery supported by pillars, constituted the second floor. There were two flights of stairs: one leading to a hall, the only one where visitors were admitted, while the other led to the *Ḥarīm*<sup>656</sup>.

Given the similarity between the Istanbul *Maqāmāt* and the Schefer *Maqāmāt* in some of the details of their house illustrations, it makes sense to attribute the Schefer version to the same area, Iraq. One similar feature is the ventilation system represented in these house illustrations, which belongs to a type familiar from Iraq, namely the wind scoop or the wind catcher. Accounts refer to Baghdad houses having one or two of these scoops in each room, depending on its size or function. Such air scoops were discovered in Baghdad houses dating from as early as the ninth century A.D., the time that the city of *Sāmarrā'* was built, and they survive to the present time<sup>657</sup>.

Another architectural element attributed to Iraq which appears in some of the house illustrations, such as in the fifth *Maqāmāh*, is the three-tiered crenellation or the honeycomb *Muqarnas* dome. This architectural element was seen in Iraq in the

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<sup>654</sup> Petherbridge 1978, p.194.

<sup>655</sup> Petherbridge 1978, p.196.

<sup>656</sup> Petherbridge 1978, p.196.

<sup>657</sup> Petherbridge 1978, p.202, 203.

late Abbasid mausoleum of Sitt Zubaydah in Baghdad, which is famous for its conical brick Muqarnas dome (fig.185c) and dates between 1179-1225 A.D. when it was built by Al-Nāsir. An earlier example of the same type of Muqarnas is the dome of Imam Dur (fig.186) at Sāmarrā'<sup>658</sup>, which is the tomb of Sharaf Al-Dawlah Muslim, an 'Uqaylid Emir, dating back to 1085 A.D. This dome rises in five corbelled zones, creating a fluted cupola, with each zone formed of eight Muqarnas cells decreasing in size with height<sup>659</sup>. The tomb of Imām Yaḥyā in Moṣul, which dates to 1229 A.D., is also famous for the use of an interior Muqarnas dome, which appears as a combination of honeycomb niches arranged on a cruciform plan<sup>660</sup>. This type of Muqarnas appears in the Maqāmāt illustrations in the form of three-tiered crenellations of geometric forms, for example over the entrance portal of the house shown in the fiftieth Maqāmah, (fol.166). Another example of this type of dome is in the illustration of the palace in the thirty-ninth Maqāmah, (fol.122), where there is a pair of honeycomb Muqarnas domes covering the roof of the palace.

Honeycomb ornaments were also frequently used more generally in Iraq, for example in the decorations of the gallery around the courtyard of the Abbasid palace in Baghdad, which dates to the last quarter of the twelfth century, or the first third of the thirteenth century A.D.<sup>661</sup>. Honeycomb decorations have also been applied to the surface of the dome over the tomb of Zumurrud Khātūn, wife of Hārūn Al-Rashīd, which dates to 1202 A.D.<sup>662</sup>. Another example of such ornament can be seen in the minaret of the Mosque (*Jāmi'*) of Al-Qumriyyah in Baghdad, which dates to the late Abbasid era, 1228 A.D., where the cylindrical shaft of the dome terminates in a single row of pointed arched Muqarnas that supports a gallery which is also

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<sup>658</sup> Philon 1978, p.247.

<sup>659</sup> Philon 1978, p.251.

<sup>660</sup> Philon 1978, p.249.

<sup>661</sup> Fathi 1979, p.19.

<sup>662</sup> Fathi 1979, p.21.



cylindrical in shape. Another example is the Abbasid palace, which was founded during the time of Al-Mustanşir in the late Abbasid era, in around 1230 A.D., where there is an arcade surrounding the courtyard of the palace which is covered by a Muqarnas vault<sup>663</sup>. Furthermore, the minaret of Sūq Al-Ghazl in Baghdad, which dates to the Il-Khanīd era in the late thirteenth century, has a twelve-sided base with four layers of Muqarnas decoration. In addition, the shaft of the minaret is crowned by five rows of Muqarnas decoration. Much later, in the late fourteenth century A.D., the Madrasa of Khan Al-Mirjān that dates to 1357 A.D. had a tomb attached to it containing a square chamber covered with a dome supported by three rows of Muqarnas that remind us of the Muqarnas decorations under the dome of the palace illustration. Similarly, in the Khan Al-Mirjān that is dated to 1359 A.D., corbelled Muqarnas support the first floor gallery of the building. A final example is in the city of Irbil, where the minaret of the Ulu Jami', dating back to the Zangid or Atabeg period in the early thirteenth century, has Muqarnas cells forming the transition of the base of the minaret from the octagonal to the circular shaft<sup>664</sup>.

Another decorative feature unique to Iraq is the decorative terracotta found in the architectural representation of houses in the Schefer Maqāmāt illustrations. These are illustrated in panels over the side cupboards, in which domestic utensils would have been stored, in the rooms of the houses. An example is shown in the fifth Maqāmāh (fol.13), inside the house of the spinner, decorating the open niche (or built-in storage) to the side; and appearing as a panel with repeated heart-shaped elements, with inset plaques of terracotta, applied only to the back, with no joints. Similar decorations are found in a number of illustrations in the other Maqāmāt versions of Iraq, for example, in the illustration of a Mosque in the version<sup>665</sup> that

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<sup>663</sup> Philon 1978, p.247.

<sup>664</sup> Philon 1978, p.249.

<sup>665</sup> (Arabe 6094).

dates to 1222 A.D.<sup>666</sup>. Terracotta decorations deeply carved with arabesque patterns set in recessed panels were found in Baghdad adorning the eight exterior façades of the tomb of Sitt Zubaydah 1179-1225 A.D.<sup>667</sup>. Similarly, the Sūq Al-Ghazl Minaret, of the late thirteenth century, has Muqarnas at both its base and shaft, decorated with terracotta panels with a pattern of split-leaf palmette against a finely carved arabesque background<sup>668</sup>. Terracotta inserts carved with arabesques, with knotted Kufic inscriptions in cut bricks placed in pointed arched niches, are also seen on the exterior façade of the tomb of Imām Yahyā in Moṣul that is dated to 1229 A.D.<sup>669</sup>.

Apart from their architecture, some other features of the Maqāmāt house illustrations are distinctly Iraqi. One of these features is the richly rendered decorative heavy brocade curtains that appear in many of the house representations in the Maqāmāt illustrations, for example, that of the fifth Maqāmāh, (fol.13). It is possible that Wāsiṭ was the area from which these house iconographies were borrowed, or to which they referred, since it was famous for the production of the richest types of window and door curtains, as well as tapestry woven carpets<sup>670</sup>.

### 2.3.3.3.2.2 The Palace

The architectural form of the palace depicted in the Schefer Maqāmāt is similar to that of the tavern represented in the same manuscript. This palace representation contains two floors, with a central reception hall on each flanked by a chamber on either side. This architectural arrangement is found in other building iconographies of the same manuscript, confirming its attribution to one style of architecture, namely that of Iraq. Palaces were among the most favoured types of architecture in Iraq in the Muslim era, being both the residence and seat of power for

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<sup>666</sup> Blochet 1926, pl.IV.

<sup>667</sup> Philon 1978, p.247.

<sup>668</sup> Philon 1978, p.248.

<sup>669</sup> Philon 1978, p.249.

<sup>670</sup> Ahsan 1979, p.195, 192, note 201.

Muslim rulers. The architectural design of the two-storeyed palace in the Schefer Maqāmāt conforms to palatial architectural traditions known in Iraq. One example is the Abbasid palace (Sharābiyyah Madrasa), which is also a two-storeyed rectangular building, built between the last quarter of the twelfth century and the first third of the thirteenth century A.D.<sup>671</sup>. Moreover, illustrating the exterior of a palace was a traditional style of representation only found in Iraq, as it appears in the thirty-ninth Maqāmāh of the only two versions of the Maqāmāt attributed to that region: Schefer, (fol.120), and Istanbul, (fol.154), in which the two palaces are similarly depicted<sup>672</sup>.

The domes crowning the palace, with their windows ventilating and lighting the interior of the building, recall the form of domes found in actual architectural examples of public bathhouses or *Ḥammāms*, which were extensively built in Iraq. It is, then, clear that the architectural features of the palace representation relate to the style of architecture practised in Iraq<sup>673</sup>.

Other decorative features also support the same assumption, such as the stucco ornaments that exist above the narrow antechambers of the door of the palace, which appear as stucco or marble spandrels, with a small plaque in the same material. These plaques are carved or moulded in relief and set in wood, and would probably have served as decorative ventilation grilles. Such stucco decorations were widely used in the palaces and houses of Sāmarrā' at an earlier period, and applied mainly to dados, window lattices, and *Mihrābs*<sup>674</sup>. The heart-shaped element, which appears on the two small plaques above the ground floor of the palace representation, is another decorative element characteristic of Iraq, and is repeated in other architectural depictions in the same manuscript. It appears again in the illustration of the house in the fifth Maqāmāh, which further indicates that these architectural

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<sup>671</sup> Fathi 1979, p.19.

<sup>672</sup> Grabar 1963, p.104, 107.

<sup>673</sup> Guthrie 1995, p.163.

<sup>674</sup> Guthrie 1995, p.163.

forms are governed by one main spirit of decoration that links them to Iraq. The same is true for the other elements that recur in the illustrations, such as iron doors, and the heavy brocade draperies that appear in both the palace illustration, and the house illustration of the fifth Maqāmah.

### 2.3.3.3.2.3 The Library

Libraries in the Muslim world in general, and in Iraq in particular, were numerous, and it follows that Iraq had a rich heritage in terms of library construction. In Baghdad, the Abbasids constructed a library which was attached to the academy of Bayt Al-Ḥikmah (the House of Wisdom) or Dār Al-‘Ilm (The Abode of Learning), built either by Al-Ma’mūn in 813-833 or possibly by Hārūn Al-Rashīd in 789-809 A.D.<sup>675</sup>. The earliest Dār Al-‘Ilm was built in Moṣul in the third century A.H.<sup>676</sup>. In Moṣul, in 935 A.D., the scholar Ja’far Ibn Ḥamdūn established a small institute, which was considered a religious institution (*Waqf*), with a library attached to it<sup>677</sup>. It was in 993 A.D. that Šābūr Ibn Ardāshīr, the servant of Bahā’ Al-Dawlah, whose power extended over Iraq and Khuzestan, founded a famous library in Baghdad located between the two walls of the city. The Seljuks destroyed it in 1055 A.D.<sup>678</sup>. Yāqūt also referred to the fact that Merv, in Eastern Persia, had no fewer than ten rich libraries, and mentioned a specific library there, which existed in 1216-18 A.D., where he worked for three years<sup>679</sup>. The tradition of library building in Iraq, in addition to the accordance between the illustrations and the text of the manuscript, could have encouraged the artist to depict the library illustration in the Schefer Maqāmāt. The scarcity of pictorial representations of libraries in other manuscripts may further support this.

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<sup>675</sup> Pedersen 1984, p.113.

<sup>676</sup> Nashabi 1980, p.72.

<sup>677</sup> Pedersen 1984, p.124.

<sup>678</sup> Pedersen 1984, p.123.

<sup>679</sup> Pedersen 1984, p.128.

However, that Iraq had a rich heritage of library construction is not to say that such a heritage was not found elsewhere in the Muslim world. For example, following in the tradition of Cairo and Baghdad, Spain was also a great centre of library building in the Muslim era, especially in the Umayyad period<sup>680</sup>. The second Umayyad Caliph, Al-Ḥakam II Al-Mustanṣir 350-366 A.H. /961-976 A.D., founded a great library in Cordova. This library was famous for many reasons: it attracted famous writers from different parts of the Muslim world, it was a centre for the translation of numerous ancient Greek works into Arabic<sup>681</sup>, and it was highly maintained thanks to the interest of the founder himself in the subject of Islamic Spain, as well as other branches of knowledge. This is confirmed by the fact that he wrote about a dozen references to what he had read in his manuscripts<sup>682</sup>. Furthermore, in Fatimid Cairo, many libraries were constructed with a view to supporting the Fatimids' religious mission<sup>683</sup>. However, these other traditions do not preclude the possibilities that the illustration of a library in the Schefer Maqāmāt was partly inspired by the cultural and library-building heritage in Iraq.

Baghdad was a centre for paper use and production, as well as a place where many scholars from different branches of knowledge lived and worked. The use of paper, especially by bureaucrats, rose from the ninth and tenth centuries A.D. onwards, reflecting the change from an oral tradition to the use of written text and books for which great quantities of paper were needed. In Baghdad, large number of Qur'anic manuscripts were copied and produced on paper, the most famous of which is that of Ibn Al-Bawwāb<sup>684</sup>. Furthermore, from the tenth and eleventh centuries A.D., the industry of book making flourished in Iraq, and consequently the number

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<sup>680</sup> Wasserstein 1990-91, p.100.

<sup>681</sup> Wasserstein 1990-91, p.99.

<sup>682</sup> Wasserstein 1990-91, p.101.

<sup>683</sup> Walker 1997, p.193.

<sup>684</sup> Bloom 2000, p.17.

of bookshops there exceeded one hundred<sup>685</sup>. Great scholars including Al-Khawārizmī, who was a native of central Asia, was once attached to Al-Ma'mūn's House of Knowledge in Baghdad<sup>686</sup>. In addition, the movement of translating ancient scientific works into Arabic, which was encouraged in Baghdad by the introduction and the increasing use of paper<sup>687</sup>, was supported by libraries, and accordingly, there was a tendency towards the construction of these buildings<sup>688</sup>. Islamic interest in the translation of ancient sciences into Arabic started in the ninth century A.D., at the same time as when paper was introduced, which led to the development of the production of illustrated manuscripts in Iraq<sup>689</sup>. Eva Hoffman suggests that this translation movement started as early as the mid-eighth century, while Dimitri Gutas has stressed the importance of this movement, which took place in Baghdad under the rule of the Abbasids<sup>690</sup>. One example of such a translation is the Arabic version of the Greek manuscript of Dioscorides' *De Materia Medica* that can be traced back to 1083 A.D. or possibly earlier<sup>691</sup>.

Unfortunately, none of the ancient libraries of Muslim Iraq has survived, but the Schefer Maqāmāt library illustration reflects two important facts about libraries in Iraq: that they were very large, and that they conformed to a special design in order to house a large number of books. This was indeed the case with libraries in Iraq, as described in the records of historians. Due to the lack of survival of ancient libraries in Iraq, we will consider the records of historians, as well as similar library designs elsewhere in the Muslim world, which will give us a clue as to how ancient libraries in Iraq could have looked. Firstly, the plan of the library as illustrated in the

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<sup>685</sup> Hoffman 2000, p.45.

<sup>686</sup> Bloom 2000, p.18.

<sup>687</sup> Bloom 2000, p.18; Hoffman 2000, p.45.

<sup>688</sup> Hoffman 2000, p.46.

<sup>689</sup> Bloom 2000, p.18.

<sup>690</sup> Gutas 1998, p.53; Hoffman 2000, p.44.

<sup>691</sup> Bloom 2000, p.18.

Schefer Maqāmāt is similar to another library in Shiraz. Al-Maqdisī described this library, which was built by ‘Aḍud Al-Dawlah in 983 A.D. as part of his palace, as consisting of a large anteroom leading to a long arched hall, with rooms on all sides, where scholars from all disciplines could converse in peace<sup>692</sup>. The library was built on an impressive scale as a complex of buildings covered with domes, and comprised upper and lower tiers with 360 rooms. The book stacks were located in a large vaulted room of their own, with a number of chambers attached to the rooms, furnished with cabinets with decorated doors as tall as the average man<sup>693</sup>. Inside the cabinets, there were books, and in each department, there were catalogues placed on shelves. A ventilation system was attached to some rooms providing them with fresh air, worked through the drawing back and forth of hanging tapestries and the circulation of water pipes around the rooms<sup>694</sup>. Secondly, as regards the size of libraries, in the Maqāmāt illustration, there are four rows of leather bound volumes stacked on their sides on shelves within small compartments; each is enclosed within simple spandrels, a position which minimizes the number and size of volumes stored in the library. Other depictions of libraries are in the St. Petersburg manuscript version, and in the Maqāmāt version of the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, which dates to 1222 A.D.<sup>695</sup>.

Historical records estimating the number of books in libraries show how these buildings were extremely large and explain why books were placed in such a manner in the Schefer Maqāmāt illustration. In Iraq, the library of Karkh in Baghdad once contained approximately 10,400 books, as well as 100 copies of the Qur’an<sup>696</sup>. In Baṣrah, there was once a huge library containing approximately 15,000 books built

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<sup>692</sup> Kabir 1959, p.33.

<sup>693</sup> Al-Maqdisī 1873, p.449; Pedersen 1984, p.123.

<sup>694</sup> Al-Maqdisī 1873, p.449; Pedersen 1984, p.124.

<sup>695</sup> Guthrie 1995, p.115, 116; Arnold 1929, fig.32; Ettinghausen 1977, p.87.

<sup>696</sup> Kabir 1959, p.33.

by one of the sons of Mu'izz Al-Dawlah, known as Ḥabashī, it had large numbers of loose volumes and unbound sheets<sup>697</sup>. Another example is the tenth century library founded by the second Umayyad ruler Al-Ḥakam Al-Mustanşir in Cordova, Spain. It contained approximately 400,000 books, and its catalogues alone, which only contained titles, constituted forty-four volumes of twenty pages each<sup>698</sup>. Another example is a late tenth century description of the library of the Fatimid palace in Cairo founded by the second Fatimid ruler Al-'Azīz, which housed 40 collections of books, or 40 rooms of books; the ancient sciences collection alone containing approximately 18,000 volumes<sup>699</sup>. One indication of the richness of this library is that the Caliph ordered for it thirty copies of a special reference work, called Kitāb Al-'Ayn by Al-Khalīl Ibn Aḥmad<sup>700</sup>. Another indication of the size of libraries is that when the great college (Al-Madrasa Al-Mustanşiriyyah) was built by Al-Mustanşir in 1234 A.D., some of the books from the Caliph's library were transferred to the college library: their number was quoted as 80,000 volumes<sup>701</sup>.

A further record describes how in the search for a specific book in the library of the Khizānat Al-Kutub in the Fatimid era, it took more than half a night to check and open the large number of boxes in which the books were kept<sup>702</sup>. In addition, the library of Al-'Āfdal, the Fatimid Vizier, contained approximately 500,000 books at the time of his death, which were moved by Al-'Āmir to the library of the palace and many of which were endowed by him as *Waqf*<sup>703</sup>. Another great Fatimid library existed in one of the halls of the hospital of the Caliph Al-'Āmir, and contained

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<sup>697</sup> Kabir 1959, p.31.

<sup>698</sup> Wasserstein 1990-91, p.100.

<sup>699</sup> Pedersen 1984, p.115; Fathi 1979, p.22.

<sup>700</sup> Walker 1997, p.195.

<sup>701</sup> Pedersen 1984, p.115; Fathi 1979, p.22.

<sup>702</sup> Walker 1997, p.194.

<sup>703</sup> Walker 1997, p.196.



approximately 200,000 bound volumes, covering many branches of knowledge<sup>704</sup>. According to another description by Maqrīzī, in 1056 A.D., during the rule of the Fatimid ruler Al-Mustanşir, when the Fatimid treasury was dispersed, the Vizier Abū Al-Faraj Muḥammad Ibn Ja'far Ibn Al-Mu'izz Al-Maghribī transported the books, which were in his house to Alexandria, loaded onto the backs of twenty-five camels. This shows the great number of books that were in his possession<sup>705</sup>. Furthermore, under the rule of Al-Ḥakim in 395-400 A.H. /1006-1011 A.D., an innovation was made by building an annex to the North side of the Western half of the palace in Cairo. This was an academy called Dār Al-'Ilm, which was supplied in part from the palace library stock (treasury) with a large collection covering all branches of knowledge<sup>706</sup>. Al-Ḥakim also paid stipends to the scholars who were to teach there, and supplied the library with all furnishings and supports. The library also offered facilities for the copying of its books, with ink, paper, and pens being made available to all readers<sup>707</sup>.

Further evidence of how large libraries were in the Muslim world is the illustration (fig.187) of a library represented in the tenth A.H. /sixteenth century A.D. manuscript of the Book of the King of Kings [Shāhanshāhi-namah] (now in the University Library, Istanbul)<sup>708</sup>. It was produced by Aḥmad-i-Tabrīzī, and shows the library in which Taqī Al-Dīn and other astronomers were working in Istanbul, with shelves stacked with books that are organized in a similar way to those of the Schefer library illustration. The library was once identified as the third major Islamic observatory, established in Istanbul in 983 A.H. /1575 A.D. by Taqī Al-Dīn and subsequently destroyed by the order of the Caliph who was angered by certain

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<sup>704</sup> Walker 1997, p.196.

<sup>705</sup> Hoffman 2000, p.38.

<sup>706</sup> Pedersen 1984, p.116, 117.

<sup>707</sup> Walker 1997, p.189.

<sup>708</sup> (Ms no. FY1404).

predictions of astrologers. The first two great libraries: the Maraghah library dated 657 A.H. /1259 A.D., and the Samarqand library, were also attached to observatories<sup>709</sup>. These three great libraries displayed the same style of architecture, which also conforms to the library illustration in the Schefer Maqāmāt<sup>710</sup>. The library described in the Schefer Maqāmāt text was located in Baṣrah, a town famed as a seat of scholarship, which may indicate that it was illustrated to refer to a building of some importance. An indication of the close relationship between libraries and the promotion of scholarship is that when Al-Mu'taḍid planned for his new palace in Baghdad in 892-902 A.D., he wanted to build an annex with residential and study accommodation for leading intellectuals and scholars of science and letters<sup>711</sup>. Another example to emphasize such a point is that 'Aḍud Al-Dawlah had a room built adjacent to his palace library in Shiraz, that was reserved exclusively for scholarly discussions held away from the people<sup>712</sup>.

It could be that the Schefer illustration refers to a special room in a library designed for scholarly affairs; especially as it is framed in the illustration by two side spandrels which suggest a separate space. Alternatively, these spandrels may show that the image is specifically of one of the many sections of the library that dealt with different subjects including science, geography, and astronomy. In either case, the picture reflects what an interior of a library in Iraq may have looked like. However, it is not possible that the illustration is referring to a bookseller, as argued by Edmond Pauty who refers to this illustration as a representation of a bookseller "*une boutique de libraire*", because the Arabic text describes it as *Dār Kutubuhā*, or

<sup>709</sup> For information on the history of astrological observatories in Islam see Wiedemann Eihard 1970, "Zu der Astronomie Bei Den Arabern", *Aufsätze Zur Arabischen Wissenschaftsgeschichte*, vol. I, (Heldsheim), p.258-271.

<sup>710</sup> Nasr 1976, p.112-114.

<sup>711</sup> Pedersen 1984, p.115.

<sup>712</sup> Kabir 1959, p.31.

“the House of its Books”. The Arabic suffix *hā* or “its” refers to the city of Baṣrah, thus identifying the building as the library native to that city<sup>713</sup>.

We have seen that the attribution of the library illustration in the Schefer Maqāmāt to Iraq is not only based on its relationship to Iraqi heritage of library building, or to the historical records showing the large dimensions of Iraqi libraries, but also based on its similarity to other illustrations attributed to Iraq. The shelving unit in the Schefer Maqāmāt library illustration shows a similarity in design to another represented in illustration no.31 (fig.188) in the manuscript of *De Materia Medica* dated 1224 A.D.<sup>714</sup> and produced in Baghdad. A second illustration with the same arrangement of shelves is in another Dioscorides manuscript in Istanbul<sup>715</sup>, containing the fourth and fifth books of *De Materia Medica*, as well as the work of Hunayn<sup>716</sup>.

In addition, the abstract floral decoration of leaves that appears in the crenellated frieze in the illustration of the library in the second Maqāmāh (fol.5) represents one of the main decorative features found in many actual structures in Iraq. For example, the stucco ornamented *Miḥrāb* in Al-Mujāhidī Mosque in Moṣul, and the terracotta decoration on the exterior of the mausoleum of Sitt Zubaydah display this decorative feature<sup>717</sup>. The occurrence of this kind of decoration in another version of the Maqāmāt, the St. Petersburg’s, and in another building representation, the illustration of the palace of the governor of Merv, confirms the Iraqi nature of the architectural forms.

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<sup>713</sup> Pauty 1935, p.28.

<sup>714</sup> (Istanbul, Suleymaniye Library, Aya Sofya Muzesi MS. 3703, fol.2r, the original copy is now in the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York).

<sup>715</sup> (Aya Sofya Muzesi MS. 3703, fol.2r).

<sup>716</sup> Brandenburg 1982, p.114.

<sup>717</sup> Al-Janabi 1982, fig.6, pl.187.

#### 2.3.3.3.2.4 The Madrasa

The Madrasa representation of the Schefer Maqāmāt illustration, as shown in the forty-sixth Maqāmāh (fol.148), can be associated with Iraq for many reasons. The first is that the representation of a complete Madrasa structure is a reflection of the unparalleled importance that Madrasa building had in Iraq. Of the many examples of Madrasas that once existed in Iraq are some to mention. It was under Abbasid rule in Baghdad that Al-Ma'mūn established the House of Wisdom or Dār Al-Ḥikmah, already referred to, as a translation institute supervised by Ḥunayn Ibn Ishāq<sup>718</sup>. Another Madrasa was built in 383 A.H. /993-4 A.D. in Baghdad as an academy, with a library and seminary attached to it. Ṣābūr Ibn Ardāshīr, the Vizier of Bahā' Al-Dawlah, founded it in the Karkh quarter in a place known as "In Between the Two Walls"<sup>719</sup>. From the same court of Bahā' Al-Dawlah, Sharīf Al-Rādī founded yet another academy in Iraq and called it Dār Al-'Ilm; this institution provided its scholars with everything they needed in relation to their work. This task of meeting scholars' needs was entrusted to a treasurer, but even so, and to facilitate the scholars' access even in the treasurer's absence, Al-Rādī provided each scholar with a key to the store<sup>720</sup>. Another Madrasa, also known as Dār Al-'Ilm or the Academy of Learning, was developed in Baghdad in the period between 946 A.D. and 1055 A.D., containing a library, reading room and seminar rooms<sup>721</sup>. Another example is the Mustanşiriyyah College in Baghdad, which was founded by the Abbasid Caliph Al-Mustanşir Bī Allah Abū Ja'far Al-Manşūr, who ruled in the years 623-640 A.H. /1226-1242 A.D.<sup>722</sup>. This rich tradition of Madrasa building in Iraq is due to the region's position as a centre of learning where the capital of the Muslim

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<sup>718</sup> Samadi 1955, p.243.

<sup>719</sup> Kabir 1959, p.33.

<sup>720</sup> Kabir 1959, p.33.

<sup>721</sup> Kabir 1959, p.32.

<sup>722</sup> Awad 1945, p.12.

Empire was based for many years. This explains why the artist decided to represent the building of the Madrasa in the Schefer Maqāmāt as an imposing structure.

From the eleventh to the thirteenth century A.D., certain factors motivated the introduction of educational scenes in manuscript illustrations of that period. These factors included the rise of Madrasa building under the rule of the Seljuks, and the institutionalization of Sufism (Şufî rite) into a new form. Even though scenes of learning from this period are plentiful, none represent the Madrasa in its complete architectural form, and there is thus no emphasis on the architectural setting of learning events<sup>723</sup>. In contrast to these earlier works is the Schefer Maqāmāt Madrasa illustration of the thirteenth century, which represents the Madrasa in its full pictorial form. In my opinion, this was for two main reasons: firstly, because it refers to the cultural heritage of teaching institutions in Iraq. Secondly, the nature of the text of other manuscripts sometimes requires hiding the building form, the place where the event occurs, and focusing on the event itself, which further shows how the architectural representation emphasizes the meaning of the text.

The earliest Madrasa representation dates to the end of the twelfth century or the beginning of the thirteenth century A.D. and is in the manuscript of Varqa and Gulshah (now in the Topkapi Saray Museum)<sup>724</sup>. It depicts (fig.189) a classroom, where the tutor is seated on a throne in the middle of the scene and above his head is an inscription describing him as a teacher or *Mu'allim*. To the right of the teacher, Gulshah is shown seated holding a book, while to his left, Varqa is shown with a book in his outstretched hand. The building of the Madrasa looks like a house or a tent rather than a school, specifically when compared to the Schefer Maqāmāt Madrasa illustration. This agrees with the meaning of the text, which mainly states

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<sup>723</sup> Pancaroğlu 2001, p.163.

<sup>724</sup> (H841, p.4v).

that Varqa and Gulshah were sent to school when they were ten years of age, suggesting that they received their education in a simple place like a house or a tent<sup>725</sup>. In other examples, a representation of a Kuttāb is shown on a Persian lustre bowl (fig.190a, b) from Kashan in Persia (now in David Collection in Copenhagen)<sup>726</sup>, which dates to the last quarter of the twelfth century A.D. It depicts a scene of a school interpreted as an episode from the narrative of Laīlā and Majnūn, subject of one of the most famous poems in Persian literature. In this scene, the schoolmaster is represented holding a rod and an alphabet board. All of the students are illustrated with their writing boards inscribed with some letters. A bookstand and a ewer shown near the schoolmaster completes the school setting<sup>727</sup>. The building of the Madrasa itself is not pictured. In another example, a Madrasa or *Maktab* is depicted on the body of a candlestick (now kept in a private Collection in the Museum of Mankind, London)<sup>728</sup>. It shows a teacher instructing a group of students, probably children. He is represented as a bearded man sitting on a high chair and holding in his hand a long stick that he is pointing towards his students in an attitude of instruction. Some of the students are represented holding their writing boards, while one is depicted sleeping with his writing board under his head; others play a game on the floor. One striking representation in this scene shows a student leaving the classroom with his classmate on his back. This Madrasa scene finds parallels in its composition with the Schefer Maqāmāt Madrasa representation in terms of the position and seat of the teacher, and in the fact that all the students are represented in the same way<sup>729</sup>. They differ in the fact that on the candlestick, the setting of the

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<sup>725</sup> Baer 2001, p.74.

<sup>726</sup> (no.50/1966).

<sup>727</sup> Baer 2001, p.75; Hayward 1976, no.344.

<sup>728</sup> Baer 1983, footnote 300. A poor photograph is published in the Exhibition Catalogue 1976, *City of San'a: Nomad and City Exhibition, Museum of Mankind, Ethnographic Department of the British Museum, World of Islam Festival*, (London), p.77.

<sup>729</sup> Baer 1983, p.240, 241.

Madrasa as a building is absent, whereas in the Schefer Maqāmāt, the Madrasa illustration is shown as a complete architectural form, which emphasizes the importance of the Madrasa building tradition in Iraq.

Another later dated example of a Madrasa representation is an illustration of Laīlā and Majnūn (fig.192) in a Nizāmī Khamsah manuscript (now in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York), in which the setting of the Madrasa is again absent. Similar to this is a scene (fig.193) in another Nizāmī version, which dates to 848 A.H. /1445 A.D. (now in the John Rylands Library, Manchester)<sup>730</sup>. It is attributed to the Turkman style and was probably painted in Shiraz<sup>731</sup>. The illustration depicts Laīlā and her lover, who fell in love while they were still at school, and their love had separated them from their colleagues at school<sup>732</sup>. The setting where the event took place, although illustrated, is shown as a rather secular building without any clear indications of its architectural type<sup>733</sup>.

In all these examples, the meaning of the text led the artist to hide the architectural setting of the Madrasa. The complete form of the Madrasa representation in the Schefer Maqāmāt was, by the same token, vital as it agrees with the text of the Maqāmāh which states that Abū Zayd was a teacher who schooled his pupils in Arabic literature. Madrasas were not only designed for theological teachings, but also for other subjects including literature, science, maths, and calligraphy. Ibn Jubayr referred to this when he was describing his travels in Damascus in 1184 A.D. He stated that there was a Madrasa, which he named a *Mahdarah*, which was supported by a special *Waqf* to finance both its students and teachers, instructing orphans in Qur'an recitation, calligraphy, and literature<sup>734</sup>.

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<sup>730</sup> (Pers. Ms. 36, fol.107r).

<sup>731</sup> Baer 2001, p.78.

<sup>732</sup> Hillenbrand 1977, p.14.

<sup>733</sup> Baer 2001, p.79.

<sup>734</sup> Ibn Jubayr 1907, p.272.

Evidence that the depiction of a full Madrasa setting relates to the architectural heritage of Iraq is produced by comparing the different Kuttāb illustrations in the various versions of the Maqāmāt of Al-Ḥarīrī<sup>735</sup>. In all the versions of the Maqāmāt that were produced in the first half of the thirteenth century A.D., the scene of the Kuttāb is shown as occurring either inside a Mosque or a Madrasa. But it is only in the three versions attributed to Iraq: the St. Petersburg (Leningrad)<sup>736</sup> (fig.191a), Istanbul (fig.191b)<sup>737</sup>, and the Schefer (fig.167), that the Madrasa is indicated as a complete architectural setting. This includes the representation of some ventilation devices that distinguish the building as a Madrasa as opposed to a Mosque: the architectural form of the Madrasa has either a wind catcher, as in the Istanbul and Leningrad (St. Petersburg) versions, or a ventilation shaft, as in the Schefer version. By contrast, the setting in all other versions such as that of Paris<sup>738</sup>, those in London<sup>739</sup>, and that of Vienna<sup>740</sup> is not shown in its complete architectural form. Indeed, in these manuscripts, the event of the Kuttāb is illustrated within a simple or decorative frame, as a substitute for the representation of an architectural setting, giving no clue whatsoever to the nature of the place where the Kuttāb was practiced.

Attributing the Madrasa illustration in the Schefer Maqāmāt to Iraq is also supported through its similarity to another representation of a Kuttāb in a manuscript produced in Baghdad. This conforms to the traditions of Kuttāb representations in Iraq, suggesting the same provenance for the Schefer Madrasa illustration<sup>741</sup>. This is through the representation of a Kuttāb (fig.194) in a manuscript that contains part of

<sup>735</sup> Grabar 1984, p.98.

<sup>736</sup> (Courtesy Academy of Science Leningrad, pl.23, p.214).

<sup>737</sup> Oleg Grabar assumes that this manuscript was probably also attributed to thirteenth century A.D. Baghdad. See Grabar 1963, p.107.

<sup>738</sup> (MS. No. 6094, fol. 167), See Grabar 1984, microfiche 9A11.

<sup>739</sup> (MS. No. 1200, fols. 156, 161), See Grabar 1984, microfiche 9B4, 9B5; (MS. No. 9718, fols. 191,196), See Grabar 1984, microfiche 9B6, 7.

<sup>740</sup> (fol. 170, See Grabar 1984, microfiche 9C5).

<sup>741</sup> Baer 2001, p.80.



Nizāmī Khamsah (now in Topkapi Saray Library, Istanbul)<sup>742</sup>. It was produced in Baghdad in 866 A.H. /1461 A.D. and depicts Laīlā and Majnūn at school. The setting of the event as a Mosque is indicated by several elements, including a minaret, a dome, and a *Mihrāb*<sup>743</sup>.

Other evidence linking the Schefer Madrasa illustration to Iraq includes the matting cover for its roof, which represents a common building practice in Iraq. This matting cover has a wooden frieze carved at its bottom to allow airflow, which is a feature still seen in houses built in the Arabian Gulf<sup>744</sup>. Matting is a material well suited to a country with a hot, dry climate such as Iraq, and was used in many cities there including Kūfah, which had a climate hotter than that of Baghdad<sup>745</sup>. Qazwīnī in his writings described the weather of Iraq saying: "The climate of Baghdad is rather warm, but mild and open to the North ...the fruits of the warm climate are found here in excellence and in abundance like dates...However, the fruits of a cold climate do not ripen here in great excellence"<sup>746</sup>. Also, literary descriptions of the damage caused by the fire that broke out in 501 A.H. /1108 A.D. in Kharābat Ibn Garada in Eastern Baghdad serve as evidence of the hot climate of Iraq. They relate how houses and buildings were destroyed, and how people took precautions to protect their homes from destruction by hiring people to stay on the terraces of their houses and guard them from fire. Because of the intense temperature, some of these guards put up tents on the terraces of the houses as shelters from the heat<sup>747</sup>. Given its climate, it is no wonder that Iraq was a land in which reed matting was used on the roofs of certain buildings. For example, we know from literary sources that when the mausoleum of Ma'rūf Al-Karkhi was damaged by fire in 459 A.H. /1068 A.D.,

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<sup>742</sup> (H761, folio 106r).

<sup>743</sup> Baer 2001, p.79.

<sup>744</sup> Guthrie 1995, p.122.

<sup>745</sup> Qazwīnī 1919, p.37.

<sup>746</sup> Qazwīnī 1919, p.41.

<sup>747</sup> Maqdisi 1959, p.294.

some of the wood and reed matting of its walls and dome were destroyed<sup>748</sup>. Because the Schefer Maqāmāt version was produced in Iraq, some of its buildings are shown with the same roof matting covers attributed to the architectural traditions of Iraq. The roof of the Madrasa illustrated in the forty-sixth Maqāmāh (fol.148), which looks like a wooden dome with a reed matting cover, is repeated elsewhere in the manuscript. It appears, for example, again in the illustrations of houses shown in the fifteenth Maqāmāh (fol.40) and in the fiftieth Maqāmāh (fol.166)<sup>749</sup>.

### 2.3.3.3.2.5 The Khan

The illustration of the twenty-ninth Maqāmāh (fol.89) of the Schefer Maqāmāt verifies its attribution to Wāsiṭ in Iraq. This is further confirmed by the text of the illustration, which mentions that the Khan under discussion is located in Wāsiṭ. A study of the architectural details of the building and its decorative features will further indicate its attribution to Iraq, where the actual architecture exhibited similar features. Qazwīnī, on one occasion, strategically described Wāsiṭ as a place of trade where Khans existed. He wrote that it was a city in the third clime, founded by the Umayyad governor Ḥajjāj in 83 A.H. /702 A.D., and situated on the Tigris, for the most part on the Western Bank. He also added that its revenue was the property of the treasury and amounted to 448,500 Dinars, which again indicates that this town was a centre of trade and a source of revenue, where Khans for housing traders and travellers were to be expected<sup>750</sup>. On another occasion, he added that trading ships come from the city of Wāsiṭ up from the Tigris and unload in Baghdad, which further strengthens the mercantile reputation of the city of Wāsiṭ<sup>751</sup>. Unfortunately, however, none of the Khans of Wāsiṭ survives. The Khan represented in the Schefer

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<sup>748</sup> Maqdisi 1959, p.286.

<sup>749</sup> Guthrie 1995, p.122.

<sup>750</sup> Qazwīnī 1919, p.53.

<sup>751</sup> Lewis 1974, II, p.73.

Maqāmāt was probably one of the now long gone Khans constructed in Wāsiṭ. It was probably once located on the banks of the Tigris, where ships loaded with goods arrived in Wāsiṭ; this is likely given that the Khan is a type of building that only exists in areas of trade. The building is a large lodging house with a central courtyard designed for the merchants who have plied on trade routes. It provides storage for both goods and products from the nearby workshops, and at the same time lodging for travellers and visitors<sup>752</sup>.

It is not possible to determine exactly how a Khan in Iraq, or specifically in Wāsiṭ, would have looked in the thirteenth century A.D., because most of the Khans of Iraq dating from the twelfth to the fourteenth century A.D. have disappeared or been destroyed. Many factors contributed to this, the first being the frequency with which fires and floods occurred in Iraq in the eleventh and twelfth centuries A.D. which destroyed most of its standing buildings. The second was the architectural campaigns of the Seljuks, who demolished all Abbasid buildings in Iraq, and especially in Baghdad, in order to reuse their material and replace them with Seljuk buildings<sup>753</sup>. Nevertheless, I will attempt to determine the design of the Khans of Iraq using three sources; the first being the records of historians from the early Muslim era up to the thirteenth century A.D.; the second, still surviving fourteenth century A.D. Khans in Iraq; and the third, twelfth to fourteenth century A.D. Khans in other Muslim regions, which have some features in common with the Schefer Maqāmāt Khan illustration.

Firstly, as regards the records of historians, Ibn Jubayr, when talking about Khans in Iraq, referred to only one twelfth century A.D. fortified Khan to the Northwest of Moṣul. He described the city of Moṣul at that time as having a large

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<sup>752</sup> Fathi 1979, p.11.

<sup>753</sup> Maqdisi 1959, p.281.

area where all the important buildings such as Mosques, Madrasas, Hammams, Khans and markets were concentrated. Ibn Jubayr also stated that in the twelfth century A.D., the Emirs of the city had constructed new buildings, especially in its market; one of which was a Qaişariyyah for the travelling merchants, built with decorative materials never witnessed anywhere else before. According to his description, the Qaişariyyah looked like a great Khan with iron doors for securing the enclosure, and was surrounded by shops and houses built on top of one other<sup>754</sup>. Secondly, the only Khan surviving in good condition in Iraq is the fourteenth century A.D. Jala'irid Khan Mirjān in Eastern Baghdad, which is a large two-storeyed rectangular brick building founded by the governor of Baghdad, 'Amīn Al-Dīn Mirjān, in 760 A.H. /1359 A.D. as a trading centre and lodging place for merchants. Its portal, which is covered by a pointed arch, protrudes, and leads to a large internal courtyard covered with a roof supported by vaults, and that was the reason why it was also known as "The Covered Khan"<sup>755</sup>. This roof allows light through into the Khan via its various vents which are angled in all directions<sup>756</sup>. The design of this Khan, although belonging to the fourteenth century, shows similarity with the Khan illustration in the Schefer Maqāmāt, which indicates that this design was the traditional Khan layout in Iraq used in the early period and remaining prevalent until the fourteenth century A.D.

Thirdly, the Schefer Khan illustration shows some features, such as the inclusion of two storeys and ventilation shafts, in common with the traditional Khan architecture that existed not only in Iraq, but also in other Muslim regions, such as Cairo. However, to indicate its relationship to Iraq, the artist represented other, distinctive material and decorative features exclusive to this land. The Khan in the

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<sup>754</sup> Ibn Jubayr 1907, p.235.

<sup>755</sup> Fathi 1979, p.23; Mez 1937, p.117.

<sup>756</sup> Fathi 1979, p.23.

Schefer Maqāmāt consists of two floors, the lower being that which was usually used for the lodging of animals, and for this reason Al-Wāsitī represented it on a larger scale with large doors compared with those of the upper floor. This would have allowed the lodging and entry of packs of animals and their burdens into the lower storerooms. The upper floor, with its rooms, was usually prepared for the lodging of merchants and travellers and their belongings. Ibn Jubayr, in his records, referred to the design of the Khan when describing a Khan in Acre in 1184 A.D., prepared for the lodging of his trip. There the merchants put their belongings, which actually include animals and cattle, in its lower storey, and stayed in its upper one<sup>757</sup>. It is also mentioned by Ibn Jubayr that the twelfth century Acre Khan had either a square or a rectangular walled exterior with a single portal, wide enough to allow camels and heavily-laden cattle in, which again conforms to how the artist represented his Khan in the Schefer Maqāmāt<sup>758</sup>. Even though the lower floor in the Schefer Khan illustration has a large opening and five large doors floor to correspond to the functional use of the Khan, the artist showed the event of the story, which should have taken place in the upper floor, as if taking place in the lower floor. The only possible explanation for this is that the artist wanted to focus on the incident where Abū Zayd and his son rob the sleeping merchants.

Another description of a Khan that can be considered in relation to the Schefer Khan illustration is that of Tanūkhī, who states that Qādī Abū Bakr Aḥmad Ibn Sayyār told him how a traveller was benighted and had spent the night at a deserted Khan near a thicket, where there was a source of water. It was a moonlit night and there was a haunt of lions. The traveller, being aware of this, mounted the roof of the Khan, got some bricks, and laid them down in the doorway of the

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<sup>757</sup> Ibn Jubayr 1907, p.302, 303.

<sup>758</sup> Sims 1978, p.101.

staircase of the Khan. He then sat and watched<sup>759</sup>. From this narrative, it is possible to suggest that the design of a Khan usually included two tiers linked by a staircase. Even though this is also a convention of thirteenth century Arab painting when interiors of architectural representations were depicted with two-storeys, the study of many other examples of Khan architecture show that this feature is exclusive to it.

Another notable architectural element in the Schefer Khan illustration is the ventilation shaft, which represents an essential part of the original design of some Khan structures. Its main purpose was to vent the unpleasant smell of the animals lodged in the lower floor, and to put off the hot climate by allowing the circulation of fresh air to cool the building. This feature was also found in Cairo, for certain letters in the Cairo Geniza state that ventilation had been necessary in Khan architecture since the early Islamic era. Because of this, travellers requested in these letters private lodgings to avoid both the smell and noise of the packs of animals in the Khan (or caravanserai)<sup>760</sup>. The ventilation shaft that is shown in the Schefer Khan illustration is on the left side, and takes the form of a shaft extending from the ground floor up to the roof of the building, similar to ventilation shafts attached to houses as mentioned in the Cairo Geniza. This feature was known in the Geniza and in contemporary Arabic literature as a *bādāhanj* or a “wind catcher”. At the bottom of this shaft, there was a door for privacy, and sometimes in summer, people slept at the end of this shaft to enjoy the cool air<sup>761</sup>.

As for the features exclusive to Iraq, the Schefer Khan illustration is a rich building both in its material and decoration, and this recalls the nature of Khan architecture of Iraq, which was richer by comparison to that of other Muslim regions. For example, Syrian caravanserais were considered the poorest in material

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<sup>759</sup> Tanūkhī 1921, I, p.100, 101; Tanūkhī 1922, p.109, 110.

<sup>760</sup> Goitein 1978, p.11.

<sup>761</sup> Goitein 1978, p.17.

and decoration<sup>762</sup>, which may confirm the links between the richly furnished and built Khan represented in the Maqāmāt and the rich Khan building tradition of Iraq. Another feature is the illustration of six columns forming the first floor gallery, which are shown as bluish in colour, probably indicating that they are of Iraqi marble. Northern Iraq was rich in marble that was widely used for decorative purposes<sup>763</sup>. Marble mosaic decoration and the inlaying of marble with paste were techniques practised in Moṣul in the twelfth century A.D. Marble was mainly reserved for the decoration of *Mihrābs*, doorways, and wall facings, and was deeply carved with arabesque designs, similar to the kind of decoration that appears in the Khan illustration<sup>764</sup>. Wooden doors with bands of iron reinforcements and round metal handles were frequently used in the construction of Khans in Iraq for added security. This feature again appears in the illustration of the Khan in the Schefer Maqāmāt. Ibn Jubayr, in his description of Khans in Iraq, such as that of Moṣul, namely Qaiṣariyyah<sup>765</sup>, which he passed on his travels in Iraq, noted that the doors of these buildings were fortified with iron<sup>766</sup>. He also referred to a rectangular two-storeyed building with a central court that was closed at night with a fortified door<sup>767</sup>. Iron nails with ornamental heads, like those in the Schefer Khan illustration, seem also to have been used in the Khan-architecture of Iraq, both for reinforcement and decoration. Evidence shows that the heads of the iron nails existed in Baghdad, and was seen on some buildings such as the doors of the 'Amādiyyah Mosque, as well as on the door built by Badr Al-Dīn Lū'lū' in 1246 A.D. in Iraq. In the former, the heads of these iron nails are shown as eight-petalled rosettes, a common motif

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<sup>762</sup> Herzfield 1942, p.48; Herzfield 1943, p.24.

<sup>763</sup> Al-Duri 1970, p.222.

<sup>764</sup> Philon 1978, p.246.

<sup>765</sup> Ibn Jubayr 1907, p.235.

<sup>766</sup> For more information about a Qaiṣariyyah, see Sims 1978, p.107.

<sup>767</sup> Elisséeff 1980, p.102.

applied in the decoration of that time, mainly to reinforce the joints of the building<sup>768</sup>.

It may be concluded from the previous discussion that the artist's intent was a Khan illustration, with some traditional features common to conventional Khan design, but also including very detailed elements that relate the architectural form specifically to Iraq. Having considered the Khan illustration, a study of another architectural form appearing in the same manuscript is vital to support the attribution of these architectural representations to Iraq as references to either the origin or artistic background of the artist.

#### **2.3.3.3.2.6 The Tavern**

The main motivation of the artist in illustrating the tavern was, in my view, to reflect the tradition of wine making by possessing a wine factory that once existed in Iraq in the Abbasid era. It was in Sāmarrā' that the Mu'taṣim's palace was built around 221-5 A.H. /836-9 A.D. It contained four T-shaped basilica halls around a domed chamber, where a large number of painted cooked wine or grape juice containers were discovered<sup>769</sup>. This could have encouraged the artist of the Maqāmāt to refer to the tavern as a building and to construct it after the traditional style of architecture in Iraq, as will be demonstrated.

The similarity between the illustration of the tavern in the Schefer Maqāmāt and an illustration of a pharmacy in another manuscript, *De Materia Medica*, also produced in Baghdad in around 1224 A.D., could also link the tavern's architectural form to Iraq. Not only is the architectural layout of the two buildings similar, but also the scenes' composition, which further shows that the Maqāmāt is of Iraqi provenance. Although the subject of the illustrations in the two manuscripts is

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<sup>768</sup> Margoliouth 1927, p.528.

<sup>769</sup> Rice 1958, p.15, 16, 21.



different, the first showing the preparation of medicine and the second, the preparation of wine they depict similar episodes, which provide further evidence for their attribution to the same area or style. Both buildings are illustrated in a way that gives the impression that they include of a series of rooms in which various activities take place, including the preparation, storage, and consumption of the substances being respectively produced<sup>770</sup>. In both manuscripts, people are shown engaged in various activities, and an assortment of jars- incised, painted with decorations, and coated with Bitumen or cloth inserted with a seal- appears in both examples<sup>771</sup>.

Another version of the *De Materia Medica* manuscript that dates to 1222 A.D. and produced in Iraq shows similarity to the Schefer *Maqāmāt*, particularly in the representation of the strainer (fig.195) on a tripod in an illustration of a physician preparing medicine. The scene looks very similar to the preparation of wine as represented in the Schefer *Maqāmāt*, again indicating an Iraqi provenance for the latter<sup>772</sup>. Add to that the fact that the layout of the tavern, with its tripartite division and two floors, finds parallel not only in other building illustrations in the Schefer *Maqāmāt*, but also in other manuscripts attributed to Iraq around the same period.

A further architectural feature attributing the tavern architectural representation to Iraq is the nature of its domes. The three domes covering the upper storey of the tavern are shown with insets for light and ventilation, a feature that can be seen in Iraq, for example, in the Muqarnas dome covering the tomb of Sitt Zubaydah, where the Muqarnas was pierced to allow light into the building<sup>773</sup>.

#### **2.3.3.3.2.7 The Village**

Further evidence showing that Iraq was the artistic background of the artist is revealed by considering the materials and architectural designs that appear in the

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<sup>770</sup> Guthrie 1995, p.190.

<sup>771</sup> Rice 1958, p.31.

<sup>772</sup> Martin 1912, II, pl.7b.

<sup>773</sup> Philon 1978, p.247.

illustration of the village in the forty-third Maqāmah (fol.138) of the Schefer Maqāmāt. Stone and burnt brick are used in many of the buildings depicted. In the upper part of the illustration of the village, the artist skilfully shows a series of five vaulted structures, *niches*, as houses, and one as a cattle byre. The individual semi-circular vaulted structures are shown as if in cross-section, each one being built of a roughly hewn stone bound with mortar. In this village illustration, the stonework is left undressed on most of the outer faces, but has edges smoothed in a technique known in Iraq, and especially in Moṣul, as *Qubbadār*. This material was popular in the seventh century B.C., before the advent of Islam, as shown by the walls of Nineveh. Stone as a building material was used abundantly in Northern Iraq, as well as in the Southwest, such as in Shithatha near Al-'Ukhaydir, while gypsum, which was used in the mortar, was only found in the Southwest of Iraq.

Burnt brick, which appears in other building forms in the illustration of the village, was a common material in Iraq. Most of the houses in the city of Karkh, on the Western bank of the river of Baghdad, were built of burnt brick<sup>774</sup>. The walls of the city of Baghdad were also built of burnt brick, during the rule of the twenty-eighth Abbasid Caliph Al-Mustazhir<sup>775</sup>. Moreover, the earliest Islamic use of decorative patterned brickwork is attributed to Iraq, and dates to the eighth century A.D., when it appeared in the palace of 'Ukhaydir<sup>776</sup>. Evidence indicating the widespread use of burnt bricks in Baghdad in buildings and decoration is manifest in the records of historians describing the destruction caused by the fire of 480 A.H. /1088 A.D. in the Ḥalabah quarter of the city, which note that the fire destroyed stocks of wood that had been gathered for months for the firing of bricks in kilns<sup>777</sup>.

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<sup>774</sup> Qazwīnī 1919, p.41.

<sup>775</sup> Qazwīnī 1919, p.40.

<sup>776</sup> Lewcock 1978a, p.137.

<sup>777</sup> Maqdisi 1959, p.291.

### 2.3.3.3.2.8 The Graveyard

The graveyard illustrated in the Schefer Maqāmāt is of a form attributable to Iraq. Graveyards were found in abundance in Iraq, where many tombs of religious personages were venerated. This may have encouraged the artist to depict tombs, as represented in the eleventh Maqāmah, (fol.29). Outside the city of Baghdad, there are many holy graves and numerous shrines. Among the many holy tombs and graves on the Western bank of the river, are the shrines of Kāzim and his grandson Tāqī, the seventh and ninth Imāms, and the tomb of Imām Ibn Ḥanbal, the Sūfi Imam. Other tombs can be found on the Eastern bank, such as the tomb of Abū Ḥanīfah. Ruṣāfah, a small township, is the site of the graves of the Abbasid Caliphs, while Eastern Baghdad is the location of the tombs of Shaykh Shihāb Al-Dīn Suhrawardī, and ‘Abd Al-Qādir Gilānī<sup>778</sup>.

The illustrations of the thirteenth Maqāmah, in which a cemetery with tombs is represented, is one of the very rare examples of Islamic painting to show tombs or cemeteries<sup>779</sup>. The type of tombs represented in the illustration of the Schefer graveyard shows that the picture was chosen to reflect the origin of the illustrator who introduced them into the manuscript. David Rice emphasized that the manner in which the cemetery and tomb forms in the Maqāmāt manuscript were represented was left to the choice of the illustrator, who could determine the place where the miniature should be placed in the text. The illustration is also judged by how closely it matches the text<sup>780</sup>. It is therefore plausible to assume that the illustration of the cemetery shows some minor details unmentioned in the text, mainly to add some information about the origin of the artist who produced the work<sup>781</sup>. This is

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<sup>778</sup> Qazwīnī 1919, p.42.

<sup>779</sup> Rice 1959, p.213.

<sup>780</sup> Rice 1959, p.217.

<sup>781</sup> Rice 1959, p.214.

convincing if we consider that although the text of the manuscript tells the same story in all versions, it is differently illustrated in each case. However, the main event, the entombment of the corpse, takes prominence in every version, but with wide variations according to the choices made by the different illustrators of each particular Maqāmāt version<sup>782</sup>.

In the Schefer version, the scene shows the act of the entombment itself, during which the narrator and Abū Zayd disappeared. In this illustration, all the focus is on depicting how the corpse was laid in the tomb and surrounded with mourners<sup>783</sup>. By contrast, in another Maqāmāt version in Paris<sup>784</sup> (now in the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris), (fols.26r&v), the scene is treated differently, and shown in two illustrations: the first (fig.196a) illustrates Al-Ḥārith among the tombs while looking for a cure from the hardness in his heart. The second is of two sections joined together: the first depicting the entombment of the corpse, and the second (fig.196b) showing Abū Zayd addressing the mourners<sup>785</sup>.

The shape of the tombs in each version was also a factor left to the decision of the artist which reflected his origin or artistic background. As a result, the shapes of the tombs differ from one version to another. David Rice, in relation to this point, mentions that "burial customs are not only conservative by their nature but regional peculiarities survive for many centuries with remarkable tenacity". He also believes that the origin of the form of the tombs represented in the graveyard illustration in each Maqāmāt version not only matches the origin or artistic background of the artist, but also the origin of the miniature<sup>786</sup>. In the Schefer Maqāmāt, the tombs represented in the graveyard illustration (fig.197a) further confirm the manuscript's

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<sup>782</sup> Chenery 1876, I, p.164.

<sup>783</sup> Rice 1959, p.216.

<sup>784</sup> (MS.no.3929).

<sup>785</sup> Rice 1959, p.216.

<sup>786</sup> Rice 1959, p.218.

attribution to Iraq. They were depicted (fig.197b) and reconstructed by David Rice, who described them as typically South Mesopotamian in origin<sup>787</sup>. Given that these tomb forms are attributed to South Mesopotamia, it is correct to consider the whole scene as representing a cemetery in Iraq.

This is further demonstrated by considering another Maqāmāt version, the Paris copy<sup>788</sup> (fol.33v) (fig.198) dated 619 A.H. /1222 A.D., which is attributed to Syria or Egypt. Its tomb illustrations differ from those in the Schefer version in form and design, in contrast, the styles of tombs in these suggest a Syrian origin, and attribute it particularly to a Syrian atelier, possibly in Aleppo, as Hugo Buchthal has argued<sup>789</sup>. Buchthal supported his view by referring to the similarities between many of the details of this manuscript and those of the *Kalilah wa Dimnah* manuscript<sup>790</sup> attributed to an atelier in Aleppo. Through the inclusion of these works of various architectural details exclusive to Aleppo, it is plausible to attribute the Paris Maqāmāt<sup>791</sup> to the same atelier. This is further supported by the similarity between these two manuscripts and the manuscript of Copte 13, which seems to have inspired the decoration of both. It indicates how Aleppo, as the place of production of such manuscripts, preserved the style of late Antiquity (Christianity) that further evolved in the Muslim era<sup>792</sup>. This attribution is confirmed on consideration of the shape of the cenotaph depicted in the illustration, which conforms to the form of Syrian cenotaphs. In addition, their similarity to stone tombs with humped tops, which were used in Syria and Egypt, with the advent of the Ayyubid era<sup>793</sup>, confirms the same point<sup>794</sup>. Similarly, the tombs (fig.199) shown in the Oxford Bodleian Maqāmāt

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<sup>787</sup> Rice 1959, p.218.

<sup>788</sup> (MS. no.6094).

<sup>789</sup> Buchthal 1940a, p.123, 133.

<sup>790</sup> (MS. no. 3465).

<sup>791</sup> (MS. no.6094).

<sup>792</sup> Buchthal 1940a, p.131-133.

<sup>793</sup> Sauvaget 1948, fig. 86, p.137; Wulzinger 1924, pl.10b.

<sup>794</sup> Rice 1959, p.218.

version<sup>795</sup> (fol.23r), dated 737 A.H. /1337 A.D., conform to Mamluk tomb forms and probably originated in Egypt<sup>796</sup>.

### 2.3.3.3.2.9 The Waterwheel

The waterwheel represented in the illustration of the twenty-fourth Maqāmah (fol.69) is also relatable to Iraq. The first indication of this is the brick that is visible in the illustration, especially in the superstructure, which belongs to the type of brick commonly used in Iraq, such as in the Khan Al-Mirjān in Baghdad, dated 1359 A.D.<sup>797</sup>; the minaret of the Ulu Jami' in Irbil, which dates to the early thirteenth century A.D.; and the Mosque and Dār Al-'Imārah palace in Kūfah, which dates to the seventh century A.D. In Moṣul, the Mosque of Nūr Al-Dīn dated 1170-2 A.D. had a brick minaret, and the tomb of Imām Yaḥyā, dated 1229 A.D., was built out of brick<sup>798</sup>. In Sāmarrā', the Great Abbasid Mosque of Al-Mutaḡakkil had a brick enclosure wall, and the mausoleum of Imām Dūr dated 1085 A.D. was also built out of brick<sup>799</sup>. The attribution of the waterwheel represented in the scene to Iraq is not only based on its material, but also due to the historical fact that Iraq was known for its large number of waterwheels. For example, in 502 A.H. /1109 A.D., Sultan Muḡammad charged Bahruz with the construction of wells and their accompanying waterwheels on the Eastern side of Baghdad<sup>800</sup>.

It is important to bear in mind that *Sāqiyah* was known in Roman times, from about the beginning of the Christian era, in Egypt, Syria, and probably the North African coast<sup>801</sup>. In the Muslim era, Syria was also one of the Muslim provinces rich in waterwheels. According to Ahmad Al-Hassan, Syria was the only place where

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<sup>795</sup> (Marsh 458).

<sup>796</sup> Rice 1959, p.218.

<sup>797</sup> Philon 1978, p.248.

<sup>798</sup> Philon 1978, p.249.

<sup>799</sup> Philon 1978, p.251.

<sup>800</sup> Maqdisi 1959, p.295.

<sup>801</sup> Al-Hassan 1986, p.40.

both the *Sāqiyah*, an animal-powered machine, and the *Noria*, a water driven-wheel, were in use at the same time<sup>802</sup>. However, the design of the waterwheel in the Schefer Maqāmāt is not similar to that of Syrian waterwheels, which precludes Syria from being a possible source for the Schefer waterwheel illustration. The traditional Syrian waterwheel (*Sāqiyah*) as Al-Hassan describes it: “consists of two gears meshing at right angles, a large vertical cogwheel and a large lantern pinion. The pinion consists of two wooden disks held apart by spacer bars; the wooden teeth of the cogwheel enter the spaces between the bars. The vertical cogwheel is mounted on an axle over the source of the water”<sup>803</sup>. The design of the Schefer spiral-scoop waterwheel is also unlike that *Noria* known in Muslim Spain<sup>804</sup>, and seems instead to relate to another origin, probably Iraq<sup>805</sup>.

The similarity between the waterwheel represented in the Schefer Maqāmāt and another waterwheel in another manuscript attributed to Iraq strengthens this argument. The waterwheel represented in the frontispiece of Kitāb Al-’Aghānī or the Book of Songs, which dates to 1217 A.D. (now in Cairo) is shown in a royal scene indicated by the depiction of groups of only females standing on a brick-built bridge over a waterwheel. The scene also depicts ducks and fish shown in the water, and female musicians as well as other attendants<sup>806</sup>. The whole scene may represent a bathing party from a *Ḥarīm*, with the requisite musicians in the middle of the courtly relaxation<sup>807</sup>. Even though the meaning of the Kitāb Al-’Aghānī illustration of the waterwheel is different from that of the Schefer Maqāmāt, the two pictures share some features of the region to which they can be attributed, namely Iraq. These

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<sup>802</sup> Al-Hassan 1986, p.38.

<sup>803</sup> Al-Hassan 1986, p.39.

<sup>804</sup> The design of waterwheels in Spain will be dealt with in detail in the course of the study when discussing the manuscript of the Story of Bayād wa Riyād.

<sup>805</sup> Schiøler 1973, p.79.

<sup>806</sup> Rice 1953, p.129.

<sup>807</sup> Rice 1953, p.129.

features are, firstly, the material of which the waterwheel is made, and secondly, the design of the waterwheel, which is similar in a way to that in the Schefer Maqāmāt illustration, in being accompanied by a bridge similar to those waterwheels of Iraq. The attribution of the Book of Songs “Kitāb Al-’Aghānī” to Iraq is possible since its author, Abū Al-Faraj ‘Alī Ibn Ḥussayn Al-Iṣfahānī, was a native of Baghdad, where he died in 355 A.H. /967 A.D. In addition, the 1217 A.D. “Kitāb Al-’Aghānī” has been convincingly attributed to Moṣul under Badr Al-Dīn Lū’lū’, which suggests an Iraqi background for the representation of the waterwheel<sup>808</sup>.

Other evidence includes the fact that the copyist of the text of the Schefer Maqāmāt called himself Al-Wāsiṭī in the colophon of the manuscript, implying his origin as a native of Wāsiṭ or that he was born there, and establishing a relationship between his work and the tradition of painting in Iraq. Moreover, the style of the Schefer Maqāmāt is mainly representative of the Baghdad school of painting under which other versions of the Maqāmāt were also produced, such as the British Library version<sup>809</sup> in which illustrations reflect Baghdad’s style of painting<sup>810</sup>.

To sum up, analysis of the origin of the architectural iconographies in the Schefer Maqāmāt illustrations confirms that the illustrator was familiar with the meaning of the text and thus chose to represent types of buildings matching those mentioned in the text. However, the way in which the buildings were illustrated was left to the artist’s own perspective. We observed on many occasions the introduction of details not mentioned in the text in both the architecture and decoration of the building representations, with influences from Iraq being highlighted<sup>811</sup>. The representation of architectural forms in the Maqāmāt strengthens the relationship between the text and the illustrations and creates settings for a better understanding

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<sup>808</sup> Rice 1953, p.128.

<sup>809</sup> (OR. 1200).

<sup>810</sup> Buchthal 1940b, p.147.

<sup>811</sup> Grabar 1974, p.94



of the meaning of the text<sup>812</sup>. The next example, the *Jāmi' Al-Tawārīkh*, is another complete manuscript that displays various architectural forms supporting the main argument of this thesis.

### 2.3.4 The *Jāmi' Al-Tawārīkh* (The Collection of Chronicles)

#### Manuscript

I will try to show that architectural forms in the *Jāmi' Al-Tawārīkh* manuscript are not only for decorative purposes, but also have other roles to play. Their purpose and significance is to refer to the artists who produced the work, and to reflect the meaning of the text. These architectural forms also developed a strong association with the historical function and type of the manuscript, and work within the boundaries of its function. Of the many architectural forms in the *Jāmi' Al-Tawārīkh* manuscript, I will concentrate on two examples that clearly display the points of my study, the *Frāshī* pavilion, and the Buddha building. I will proceed by describing their forms, investigating their origins, and finally interpreting the possible meanings they convey.

The *Jāmi' Al-Tawārīkh* manuscript deals with general world history. It was compiled in the Il-Khanīd era to narrate the history of the Mongol tribes and record their conquest<sup>813</sup>. The history of the Mongols ended with the death of Ghazan in 1304 A.D., however, his successor Oljaytu ordered Rashīd Al-Dīn to enlarge the work into a history of the world under the title of *Jāmi' Al-Tawārīkh* or "Collection of Chronicles"<sup>814</sup>. Three main versions of this manuscript have been discovered. The first version, which is written in Arabic and dated between 707-714 A.H. /1307-14 A.D., is divided into two sections: one, namely the London Royal Asiatic Society, is

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<sup>812</sup> Grabar 1974, p.98.

<sup>813</sup> Gray 1978, p.13.

<sup>814</sup> Gray 1978, p.14.

now in the Khalili Collection<sup>815</sup> and dated 1314-15 A.D., while the other, dated to 1306-1307 A.D., was in Colonel John Baillie's Collection and is now in Edinburgh University Library<sup>816</sup>. Sheila Blair has attributed the illustrations of the Edinburgh and Khalili Collection sections to the same manuscript, while others suggest that they belong to two different manuscripts. William Morley sees the Khalili Collection manuscript as the second volume of Rashīd Al-Dīn's *Jāmi' Al-Tawārīkh*, in which the date 714 A.H. /1314-15 A.D. appears at the end of a section dealing with Indian history, while suggesting that the Edinburgh manuscript is the first volume. However, D. Forbes finds difficulty in accepting the proposition that they are two different volumes of one manuscript and instead argues that they are two portions of the same manuscript, due to the similarity between them in terms of format, ink, handwriting, dimensions, and number of lines per page<sup>817</sup>.

The second and third versions, which are written in Persian, are in the Topkapi Museum, Hazine Library, Istanbul, and are dated 714 A.H. /1314 A.D., and 717 A.H. /1317 A.D. respectively<sup>818</sup>. A fourth portion of the *Jāmi' Al-Tawārīkh* belongs to the Asiatic Society of Bengal<sup>819</sup>, written in *nasta'liq* and produced in Persia. It is believed by Basil Gray not to be earlier in date than 1430 A.D., and it is a part of the original copy of "The History of the World" compiled by Rashīd Al-Dīn. The *Jāmi' Al-Tawārīkh*, which reflects the contemporary picture of the Mongol period in Persia, covers the period from 617 A.H. /1220 A.D. to 698 A.H. /1298-99 A.D. It represents the style of art known under the Il-Khanids, with its obvious Chinese influence, combining the art of the schools of Inju and the Muzaffarids under the

<sup>815</sup> (MSS. 727. First discovered by William Morley in 1841 and published it in the Society's journal [volume VI pp.11-44] under the title of: "On the Discovery of Part of the Second Volume of the *Jāmi' Al-Tawārīkh*, Supposed to Be Lost").

<sup>816</sup> (MS. No.20.) see Inal 1963, p.163.

<sup>817</sup> Morley 1841, p.11-41.

<sup>818</sup> (MSS. H. 1653 & MSS. H. 1654). Inal 1963, p.163.

<sup>819</sup> (The Royal Academy Exhibition of Indian Art, the Asiatic Society of Bengal, formerly was in the Library of Fort William College).

Mongol tradition<sup>820</sup>. All versions of the manuscript are in a large format (36x25cm.) with numerous illustrations produced in two formats, either large square or rectangular<sup>821</sup>.

### 2.3.4.1 Description of the Architectural Representations

The two architectural forms that the study will deal with are: firstly, one full-page illustration (fig.200), which represents a pavilion type named *Frāshī* (fol.21v), and which is in the fourth portion of the *Jāmi' Al-Tawārīkh*, in the Asiatic Society of Bengal; and secondly, the Buddha building (fol.37v) in the Khalili Collection.

### 2.3.4.2 Source of the Architectural Representations

The two architectural illustrations: *Frāshī*, and Buddha building in this manuscript are diverse as they represent examples of various historical areas and events. Accordingly, the models for these architectural forms were taken from different sources. Chinese scrolls and wood-block books, narrative Buddhist sutras, West Christian and Byzantine religious manuscripts are all among the sources that inspired the design of the manuscript's architectural representations<sup>822</sup>. With regard to the *Frāshī* pavilion, mobile architecture including tents, carpets, canopies, bags, and hangings constituted one of the themes represented in Persian manuscripts. *Frāshī* is a kind of pavilion that we may regard as a form of mobile architecture<sup>823</sup>.

In investigating the source of the pavilion shown in the manuscript, it has been proposed that its origin is to be found in Chinese architecture<sup>824</sup>. Basil Gray suggested that this pavilion was intended to mirror the real pavilion that was built by the order of Uktay Qa'an in the city of Qarāqurum, the capital of the Mongols<sup>825</sup>. It was located in Erdeniju where an inscription in both Chinese and Mongolian

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<sup>820</sup> Gray 1954, p.65, 66.

<sup>821</sup> Blair 1993, p.270.

<sup>822</sup> Blair 1995, p.46-52.

<sup>823</sup> Jairazbh 1996, p.29.

<sup>824</sup> Gray 1954, p.68.

<sup>825</sup> Gray 1954, p.70

indicates the existence of this city. It describes the foundation of a city called Qarāqurum by Chingiz Khan in his fifteenth year, 1220 A.D. Basil Gray established that it was not until 1235 A.D., to which date the pavilion represented in the manuscript of Rashīd Al-Dīn has been attributed, that the town Qarāqurum was completed. There Uktay built the town wall and the palace<sup>826</sup>. According to the records of William of Rubruck, on the other hand, it seems that it was not until 1254 A.D. that the pavilion and its fountain were completed<sup>827</sup>. Consequently, Uktay, who died in 1241 A.D. was not the founder of the pavilion. The date for the pavilion possibly lies between 1254 A.D. and 1260 A.D., as can be demonstrated with reference to several facts. Firstly, the pavilion did not exist before 1254 A.D. Secondly, it ceased to exist after 1260 A.D. when Monka relocated the capital. Thirdly, it did not survive in 1277 A.D. when Qarāqurum was completely lost. Finally, the pavilion seems to have disappeared completely by 1275 A.D., as no description of it was found in the records of Marco Polo of that year. However, there is no proof whether the real fountain was dismantled and re-erected with its palace later than 1275 A.D., following the tradition of Chinese craftsmen, who used to dismantle palaces (where fountains used to exist) and re-erect them on later dates at a more suitable time, and when there was a demand for that<sup>828</sup>.

The other versions of Rashīd Al-Dīn's manuscript do not have an illustration of this pavilion. This structure was not recognized as a representation of the pavilion of Qarāqurum prior to Bergerron's reconstruction, which was published in 1735 A.D. Thus, this version of the manuscript contains the only representation of Qarāqurum at the time when it was the capital of the Mongols. According to literary sources, this pavilion was made out of gold and silver, with a fountain in the middle,

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<sup>826</sup> Gray 1954, p.70.

<sup>827</sup> Ruysbroeck 1900, p.156, 221.

<sup>828</sup> Gray 1954, p.70, 72.

surrounded by statues from whose mouths wine poured<sup>829</sup>. However, in contrast to this opinion, a concentrated study of the pavilion revealed that while the pavilion image was produced in Persia, it does not correspond with Persian architecture, although it does have some minor decorative details of Persian art (the balustrade on top of the pavilion, as will be discussed in detail later). Further investigation illustrated that neither was the pavilion in the painting inspired from an actual building, as it has no parallel at the time of Rashīd Al-Dīn, nor was it originated in any art work at, or prior to, the time of Rashīd Al-Dīn<sup>830</sup>.

Concerning the Buddha building in the Khalili Collection version, it recalls the architectural design of the now destroyed tomb of Rashīd Al-Dīn<sup>831</sup>. Sheila Blair suggests that the Buddha building was inspired by tomb architecture in Persia, and that the tomb structure of Rashīd Al-Dīn specifically was the original model for this representation<sup>832</sup>. It seems that Rashīd Al-Dīn's tomb complex was similar to that founded by Ghazan in Tabriz. Unfortunately, like Rashīd Al-Dīn's, Ghazan's tomb complex was destroyed<sup>833</sup>. Evidence for the actual model of the illustrated Buddha building, with its freestanding columns suggesting a square or octagonal design, is found in the designs of the surviving Il-Khanīd mausoleums, such as those of Oljaytu and Chelebi Oġhlu<sup>834</sup>. The surviving tomb complex of Ghazan's brother Oljaytu is a good example of the Il-Khanīd monumental tomb architecture, from which the Buddha tomb illustration was probably derived<sup>835</sup>.

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<sup>829</sup> Gray 1954, p.70.

<sup>830</sup> Gray 1954, p.72

<sup>831</sup> Blair 1996, p.42.

<sup>832</sup> Blair 1996, p.40, 41.

<sup>833</sup> Blair 1996, p.40, 41.

<sup>834</sup> Blair 1996, p.43.

<sup>835</sup> Blair 1996, p.40, 41.

### 2.3.4.3 Significance of the Architectural Representations

#### 2.3.4.3.1 Architectural Representations as the Work of an Artist

The variety of styles that appear in the illustration of Rashīd Al-Dīn's manuscript confirms the diversity of the artists who were working in the atelier of Rashīd Al-Dīn in Tabriz. The manuscript deals with the history of the world, and so various types of architectural forms, such as Indian, Chinese, and Persian, are to be expected. Thus, it is not possible to think that the artists who produced the miniatures of this manuscript were the same people who carried out the calligraphy and illumination, especially that the employment of different groups of painters and calligraphers was a common practice in such circumstances<sup>836</sup>. In this case, these groups of workers were presumably of different descents. For example, one team of scribes and illuminators working in the atelier of Rashīd Al-Dīn was that of Muḥammad Ibn Al-'Afīf Al-Kāshī, whose name suggests that he was a native of a city in Central Iran, Kashan<sup>837</sup>. The artist, and his group was recognized by the representation of a type of motif that was attributed only to him, that is to say a roundel decoration found on the frontispiece of the Indian chapter of the Jāmi' manuscript<sup>838</sup>. The repetition of this ornament on other architectural forms in the same manuscript further confirms that Muḥammad Ibn Al-'Afīf Al-Kāshī worked on the decorations of the manuscript. Among the artists were twenty Turkish slaves, who carried Turco-Mongolian names and were given epithets of origin or profession by Rashīd Al-Dīn himself, in order to enable him to distinguish them<sup>839</sup>.

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<sup>836</sup> Blair 1995, p.61.

<sup>837</sup> Blair 1995, p.62.

<sup>838</sup> Blair 1995, p.63.

<sup>839</sup> Blair 1995, p.64.

Chinese painters were also involved, especially for the production of the portraits of Chinese emperors and their attendants<sup>840</sup>. Indeed, due to the various Chinese features that appear throughout the illustrations of the manuscript, it seems that many of the artists who carried out the painting of the manuscript were Chinese. Basil Gray emphasized the degree of Chinese influence in the illustrations, suggesting that the painters were imitating Chinese artists in their style. However, such an imitation was difficult for the artists to achieve, especially as they were using the reed pen and hair brush, which were technically different from Chinese tools, in particular the full ink brush<sup>841</sup>. Further evidence of Chinese influence is that for the composition of this manuscript, a great part of which deals with Chinese history, Rashīd Al-Dīn investigated Chinese history and relied on four Chinese works: three on medicine and the fourth on administration. Accordingly, the transfer of Chinese influences onto the production of the Jāmi' Al-Tawārīkh was inevitable, especially since during the time of Ghazan, Tabriz became full of Chinese scholars, doctors, artists, and craftsmen<sup>842</sup>.

Concerning the *Frāshī* building, it is plausible to suggest that if Rashīd Al-Dīn was not present at the time of William of Rubruck to see the actual fountain and pavilion in Qarāqurum, from which the *Frāshī* building was supposedly inspired, he probably had access to some closely dated thirteenth century Chinese paintings with representations of pavilions and their fountains. Therefore, Rashīd Al-Dīn could have thought of these paintings as a source for the design of the pavilion represented in his place in order to represent it in his manuscript. It seems also that Rashīd Al-Dīn depended on the earlier Chinese model to correspond with the time and place of his manuscript. This is in addition to the fact that two famous Chinese astrologists,

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<sup>840</sup> Blair 1995, p.64.

<sup>841</sup> Gray 1955, p.159.

<sup>842</sup> Gray 1978, p.14.

Fu Meng-Chi and Li Ta-Chih, were known to have helped Rashīd Al-Dīn in the composition of the Chinese section of his *Jāmi'*, which further indicates the degree of Chinese influence on the composition of the *Jāmi' Al-Tawārīkh*<sup>843</sup>.

The next question to consider is why did the artist use a pavilion of a Chinese origin in this manuscript? What were his motivations and what are the meanings he wanted to convey? Through a study of the possible significance of this architectural form in the manuscript, it is possible to search for its exact meaning.

#### **2.3.4.3.2 Architectural Representations Convey the Meaning of the Text**

Reflecting the meaning of the text in a manuscript through illustrations has long been a tradition followed in Muslim manuscripts. In the case of the *Frāshī* example, in the Khalili Collection version, and after looking at the Arabic text of the manuscript, it is quite clear that the text required a representation of a pavilion. Since the manuscript narrates the history of China, the representation of this Chinese building was necessary. Besides, the order from the Il-Khanīd rulers to the Vizier to compose the first world history including the history of China, Europe, and India explains why some architectural forms of Chinese sources were involved in the illustrations of the manuscript<sup>844</sup>. The text of this illustration describes the Mongol town of Qarāqurum, where many Chinese families and artisans were working to serve the ruler and build his palace. As a result, it is possible that the patron of the manuscript called for a Chinese artist to carry out the task of illustrating this historical milieu, which explains why the architectural form chosen was Chinese. In accordance with this explanation, it would be accurate to assume that the artist was emphasizing his origin through the representation of this *Frāshī* architectural form,

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<sup>843</sup> Gray 1954, p.72.

<sup>844</sup> Blair 1990, p.159.



which was enormously common building type in his homeland, namely China. The representation of this pavilion was thus totally Chinese in terms of form<sup>845</sup>. However, the *Frāshī* building carries a minor decorative feature taken from Persian architecture. The Chinese artist probably wanted to reflect the overwhelming spirit of Persian art (and of Rashīd Al-Dīn) at the time of the production of the illustration, so he briefly referred to it through the representation of a brown wooden geometrically patterned trellis creating a balustrade around a roof terrace in the *Frāshī* pavilion. Such trellises are a feature of Persian architecture as they also appear in other Persian manuscripts, including the *Shāhnāma* of Firdaūsī manuscript (now in the Library of the Gulistan Palace, Teheran) dated 833 A.H. / 1429 A.D., which has an illustration of a building with the same trellis in the miniature of Isfandiyār Slays Arjasp and Resques His Sister<sup>846</sup>. A building with the same trellis is also found in the miniature that represents Iskandar and the Seven Sages, attributed to Bihzad, from the *Khamsah* of Nizāmī manuscript (now in the British Library)<sup>847</sup> that dates to 1494 A.D.<sup>848</sup>. A third example to include a trellis crowning a building is the illustration (fol.54) showing Shīrīn receiving Khusraw in her palace, from Amir Khusraw's *Khamsah* (Five Poems), copied by Muḥammad Ibn Azhar and dated to 890 A.H. /1485 A.D.<sup>849</sup>.

Concerning the Buddha domed building (fig.201), the representation of this building form clarifies the importance of the text in influencing the type of architectural forms used. Buddhist themes spread easily in the Mongol era due to the fact that Ghazan had been a Buddhist before he converted to Islam in 1295 A.D.; accordingly, we may imagine a great number of Buddhist monks and scholars from

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<sup>845</sup> Gray 1954, p.72.

<sup>846</sup> Bronstein 1994, fig.40, p.57.

<sup>847</sup> (Or.6810, fol.214r).

<sup>848</sup> Canby 1993b, fig.47, p.73.

<sup>849</sup> Binyon 1971, pl.LXII-B.78(e), p.95.

China, Central Asia, and Kashmir inhabiting Mongol lands at that time<sup>850</sup>. It should be added that after the seventh century A.D., Buddhism spread to Central Asia until it reached China<sup>851</sup>. The Buddha architectural form refers to a domed building in Kushinagara, which was originally built out of translucent crystal; however, due to the difficulty of representing this type of material, the artist depicted it as a brick building with large grill windows<sup>852</sup>. According to the Arabic text<sup>853</sup>, Buddha entered a domed building of translucent crystal and fell asleep as a pillar of light ascended from the centre of the dome. The fact that the artist represented a brick domed building does not imply that the illustrated architectural form does not match the text, on the contrary, it was only due to the difficulty facing the artist in illustrating a translucent crystal building that the illustrated building appeared in another form<sup>854</sup>.

Indeed, the Buddha domed building effectively conveys the meaning of the text, which narrates the life of the Buddha in Kushinagara, where he achieved Nirvana. The building represented relates to these stories, as can be seen if we look at Kamalashri's accounts, which relate that: "In Hindustan there was a town called kushinagara, whose inhabitants had been popular for their courage...Sakyamuni heard that when he decided to come to the town, the citizens decided to level the mountain to block entry, but Sakyamuni was able to descend from the sky without crossing the mountain. After some time, the end of his life approached and the ship of his existence sank in the storm swept waves. In that town, there arose at once a dome-shaped building made of pure solid crystal, Sakyamuni entered that building

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<sup>850</sup> Gray 1978, p.14.

<sup>851</sup> Blochet 1929, p.70.

<sup>852</sup> Gray 1978, p.34.

<sup>853</sup> "فظهرت قبة من بلور نقي فدخل شاكموني في القبة ونام كالاسد وكان الخلق يشاهدونه من خارج القبة...صفاء البلور ولم يكن لها منفذ طريق بل انسد ما كان لها مفتوحا من الأبواب فرأوا نورا مثل الإسطوانة خرج من رأس القبة"

Blair 1996, folio 277b (k27).

<sup>854</sup> Blair 1996, p.42, 43.

and slept there like a lion, the people were able to see him sleeping inside the building, through the transparency of the crystal. But still, they could not get in as the doors, which were first opened, were now closed”<sup>855</sup>.

In sum, we have seen that the representation of the *Frāshī* pavilion and the Buddha building was not intended solely for decoration. There can be no doubt that the images’ main purpose, besides referring to the origin of the artist, was to serve the text of the manuscript by translating its narrative into illustrations of architectural forms. In this case, it is important to acknowledge that the significance of the architectural representations described above, created strong links with the function of the text of the manuscript, and work within the capacity of serving this function.

The following example is considered as evidence of the same idea, again relating the meaning of the illustration to the meaning of the manuscript as well as referring to its artist. Along with similar points concerning architectural representation as those discussed in previous sections, the manuscript of the Story of Bayāḍ wa Riyāḍ can offer understanding of the meanings of some other architectural forms.

### **2.3.5 The Ḥadīth (The Story of) the Bayāḍ wa Riyāḍ Manuscript**

The study of this manuscript will show, as before, that its architectural forms are not merely decorative, but that they also contain some hidden meanings. It will throw light on how they work as an indication of the artist who produced them, reflecting either his Spanish, Moroccan, or even Eastern Islamic artistic background, depending on the type of decoration depicted in architectural illustrations. The study will also show how they reflect the meaning of the text, whose events occurred in a

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<sup>855</sup> Jahn 1985, p.98; Canby 1993a, p.305.

garden by a river, and so the architectural forms shown mainly display a garden enclosure, towers, and a waterwheel. This is by demonstrating the relationship between the architectural illustrations and the text of the manuscript.

This Islamic manuscript (now in the Apostolic Library, Vatican)<sup>856</sup> that narrates the love story of Bayāḍ wa Riyāḍ, dates to the thirteenth century A.D. It concentrates mainly on the events of a love story between Bayāḍ and Riyāḍ. According to the tale, Bayāḍ Ibn Ḥussayn Al-Khuzā'ī came to a certain country from Damascus with his father for trade. His father left him with some food and money. He was walking by the riverside in a garden and saw a girl in the trees, with whom he fell in love. She was one of the maidens of the Ḥājib's daughter<sup>857</sup>. The name of the country where the events of the story take place is not mentioned in the text, which is rather confusing. However, the text of the manuscript does mention *The Babylonian old woman* in reference to the old woman that Bayāḍ meets in the story<sup>858</sup>. It could be either that this woman was originally from Babylon, or that the country where all the events occurred was Babylon in Iraq<sup>859</sup>. Barbara Brend suggests that Iraq was the setting for the events of the story<sup>860</sup>.

### 2.3.5.1 Source of the Architectural Representations

In analyzing the designs of the architectural forms represented in this manuscript, two different theories are considered: the first suggests a Mesopotamian origin of the manuscript and its illustrations, while the second suggests an Andalusian or Moroccan origin. On the recognition of the similarities between the Bayāḍ wa Riyāḍ architectural details and the architectural and decorative features of Moorish Spain, it is possible to attribute the manuscript of Bayāḍ wa Riyāḍ to the

<sup>856</sup> (Ms. Ar. 368). Monneret 1941, p.209-223; Ettinghausen 1977, p.130-132.

<sup>857</sup> Nykl 1941, p.12.

<sup>858</sup>

Nykl 1941, p.29.

<sup>859</sup> Nykl 1941, p.7.

<sup>860</sup> Brend 1991, p.63.

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Islamic West, for example to Spain (Andalusia) or Morocco. However, even though the Bayāḍ wa Riyāḍ manuscript has some distinctive features that link it to the Islamic West, it also preserves details of the features and traditions of the Islamic East. This would not be the only illuminated manuscript from Western Islam which dealt with themes current in the Eastern Mediterranean world. Examples include the copy of the Arabic translated Dioscorides manuscript (now kept in the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris)<sup>861</sup> produced in Spain around the twelfth century A.D.<sup>862</sup>. The plants that are illustrated in this manuscript are comparable with those represented in other manuscripts produced in the Islamic East, particularly in Baghdad or Northern Mesopotamia<sup>863</sup>.

Proposing that the manuscript of Bayāḍ wa Riyāḍ was produced in the Islamic West in the thirteenth century A.D., the difference in style between this manuscript and another one, the *Book on the Fixed Stars* by Al-Ṣūfī, produced in the same era and region of the Islamic West, needs investigation. There is no doubt that the manuscript of the Book of the Fixed Stars or Ṣuwar Al-Kawākib of 'Abd Al-Rahmān Ibn Al-Ṣūfī (now in the Vatican Library)<sup>864</sup> was produced in the Islamic West, as indicated by the information mentioned in the manuscript itself about both its date and place of production. The differences in style between this Al-Ṣūfī manuscript and other similar versions of the same manuscript produced in the Islamic East confirms its attribution to the Islamic West, specifically Morocco, and dates it to 1224 A.D. When comparing this 1224 A.D. version of the Al-Ṣūfī manuscript with another version, of the same manuscript, produced in the Islamic

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<sup>861</sup> (Arabe 2850, Arabe 2890), Monneret 1941, p.212.

<sup>862</sup> For more information see De Slane M. le Baron 1883-1895, *Catalogue des Manuscrits Arabes, Bibliothèque Nationale*, (Paris), p.513, 514.

<sup>863</sup> Ettinghausen 1962, p.131; Ettinghausen 1977, p.130-132.

<sup>864</sup> (Inv no. Ross. 1033).

East (now in the Oxford Bodleian Library)<sup>865</sup> and dated to 1009 A.D., the differences can be marked. The 1224 A.D. Al-Šūfī version clearly reveals specific stylistic trends of the Islamic West, which are different from those of the Islamic East. For example, one of the constellations, namely Hercules, is shown as a mature bearded male figure with no turban, and wearing a red and blue striped garment, while in the 1009 A.D. Al-Šūfī version, this constellation is depicted as a youth with a garment full of folds<sup>866</sup>. However, it has been recognized that there are also differences between this Western Islamic Al-Šūfī manuscript and the Bayāḍ wa Riyāḍ manuscript. This difference does not preclude the latter's attribution to the Islamic West, but rather suggests that various forms of artistic expression were used in this region during the thirteenth century A.D., when the two manuscripts were produced.

As indicated above, the Bayāḍ wa Riyāḍ manuscript can also be related to the tradition of Mesopotamia, including the Baghdad and Moṣul schools<sup>867</sup>. One area of similarity between the Bayāḍ wa Riyāḍ manuscript and those of the school of Baghdad is the lack of any perspective, therefore all figures are on a plane, which is supported on the earth line in orthogonal projection<sup>868</sup>. Even the developments that took place in Mesopotamian art in the thirteenth century A.D., when new themes appeared because of the Mongolian conquest, are reflected in the Bayāḍ wa Riyāḍ manuscript. For example, on fol.14r (fig.214) the concept of perspective is expressed through two overlapping planes. The first plane shows ducks in water, while the second plane lies in the background of the scene and illustrates three women: two are on the right side under a pavilion, and the third is standing on the left side<sup>869</sup>.

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<sup>865</sup> (March 144).

<sup>866</sup> Ettinghausen 1962, p.130, 131.

<sup>867</sup> Monneret 1941, p.212.

<sup>868</sup> Monneret 1941, p.213.

<sup>869</sup> Monneret 1941, p.213.

This is comparable to the scene of a barber's shop in a version of the manuscript of the Maqāmāt of Al-Ḥarīrī dated 1230 A.D. (now in the Asiatic Museum of Petersburg)<sup>870</sup>.

Another area of similarity between the Bayāḍ wa Riyāḍ manuscript and Mesopotamian art is in treatment of the perspective of architecture. For example, the scene of the house (fig.202) (fol.23r) in the Bayāḍ wa Riyāḍ manuscript, is comparable with representations found in the Bidpai manuscript (now in the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris)<sup>871</sup> and in the Maqāmāt of Al-Ḥarīrī of the same library<sup>872</sup>. Further evidence to confirm the Mesopotamian origin of the Bayāḍ wa Riyāḍ manuscript is found in the scene of the garden, which parallels another Mesopotamian work, a painted ivory casket (now in the Victoria and Albert Museum)<sup>873</sup>. The similarities between the Bayāḍ wa Riyāḍ and three versions of the Maqāmāt of Al-Ḥarīrī of the thirteenth century A.D. also suggest a Mesopotamian background for the Bayāḍ wa Riyāḍ manuscript. These three Al-Ḥarīrī manuscript versions include the Maqāmāt<sup>874</sup> (now in the British Museum) that dates to 1256 A.D. and was copied by Omar Ibn 'Alī Ibn Al-Mubārak Al-Mawṣilī; the Paris Maqāmāt<sup>875</sup>, whose illustrations are connected to the Moṣul school; and the Schefer version<sup>876</sup>. These similarities include, for example, the settings of the scenes. However, there are differences in terms of how the architectural representations of these settings are positioned, for in the Maqāmāt, they are depicted in the background, like those in the Schefer version, but in the Bayāḍ wa Riyāḍ, they are

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<sup>870</sup> Monneret 1941, p.213. For more information, see Kühnel 1922, fig. p.10.

<sup>871</sup> (Inv no. Arabe 3467). For more information, see Blochet E. 1926, *Les Enluminures des Manuscrits Orientaux de la Bibliothèque Nationale*, tav.VIII, (Paris).

<sup>872</sup> Monneret 1941, p.213.

<sup>873</sup> (Inv no. 603-1902). See Diez E. 1911, "Bemalte Elsenbeinkastschen und piziden der Islamischen Kunst", *Jahrbuch d. preussisch Kunstsammlungen*, vol.XXXII, p.117, fig.2, p.122.

<sup>874</sup> (Ms. no. Or.1200).

<sup>875</sup> (Ms. no. Arabe 3929).

<sup>876</sup> Buchthal 1940b, p.147.

displayed at the sides. Another area of difference is that the events in the Bayāḍ wa Riyāḍ manuscript are concerned with an aristocratic atmosphere, since they relate to palaces and nobles. In addition, the movements of the human figures in the Bayāḍ wa Riyāḍ are sharp against the rough movements of those figures in the Maqāmāt<sup>877</sup>.

Despite displaying some Mesopotamian features, however, the Bayāḍ wa Riyāḍ manuscript is distinguished by differences that make it tempting to see the manuscript as the only surviving example of an illustrated work representative of Andalusian art<sup>878</sup>. The arched galleries, gabled-covered roofs, and double arched windows shown in the manuscript are not types found in the Mesopotamian school of the thirteenth century A.D., and are more likely to represent the Andalusian school of art<sup>879</sup>. Mesopotamian roofs, by contrast, take the form of domes or “merlatures” like those seen in the Maqāmāt manuscript of the Vienna National Library<sup>880</sup>, which dates to the thirteenth century A.D. on fol.21b of this Maqāmāt version, there is a scene of a male figure being bitten by a snake and calling two labourers to his rescue. The building where the event takes place is depicted with a roof corresponding to Mesopotamian style, a type which does not exist in the Bayāḍ wa Riyāḍ manuscript illustrations<sup>881</sup>.

Spain is a likely origin for the Bayāḍ wa Riyāḍ manuscript for a number of reasons. Firstly, it bears obvious similarities to Spanish manuscript paintings, including the miniature of Beatus (now in the Biblioteca Universitaria Nazionale di Torino), which dates to the twelfth century A.D. In this miniature describing the siege of Jerusalem, a building with a loggiato looks much like the buildings in the

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<sup>877</sup> Ettinghausen 1962, p.129.

<sup>878</sup> Monneret 1941, p.212. For more information, see Monneret De Villard 1940, *le Chiese della Mesopotamia*, (Roma), p.88-95.

<sup>879</sup> Monneret 1941, p.216.

<sup>880</sup> (A.F.10).

<sup>881</sup> Monneret 1941, p.216; Kühnel 1922, p.11; Arnold 1929, fig.33b.



Bayāḍ wa Riyāḍ manuscript<sup>882</sup>. Furthermore, the balconies in the Bayāḍ wa Riyāḍ manuscript are similar to those illustrated on fol.29 of the Beatus di S. Pedro de Cardena manuscript (now in the Archaeological Museum, Madrid), which dates to 1200 A.D.<sup>883</sup>. Secondly, taking into consideration the script in which the Bayāḍ wa Riyāḍ manuscript was written, it is evident that the manuscript has a Maghribi or Spanish (Andalusian) origin. The text is in the Maghribi script, whose name was derived from the name of the region Maghreb, which once included modern Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia. This script, which was preserved for manuscripts rather than architecture, continued to flourish even after Islam had left Spain<sup>884</sup>. It was only in the tenth and eleventh centuries A.D. that this script was first reserved for non-Qur'anic manuscripts, such as the copy of the Kitāb Al-Muwaṭṭa' of Mālik Ibn 'Anas<sup>885</sup> made by 'Ubaydallah Ibn Sa'īd Al-Ḳarrāq and completed in 391 A.H. /1001 A.D.<sup>886</sup>.

The Maghribi script is the only cursive script that was derived and developed from Kufic. One of the characteristics of this script is that its line can slide from relative thickness and darkness to almost vanishing thinness. Its letters can markedly change appearance from one line to the next. It has large open curves that dip deep below the horizontal line, and even touch through, though never overtake adjoining words and letters<sup>887</sup>. After the fifth century A.H. /eleventh century A.D., Western Kufic gave place to the Maghribi script, of which two derivatives were in use: the first is the larger, and is known as the Maghribi, while the second is the smaller and

<sup>882</sup> Monneret 1941, p.216; Goddard 1930, fig.3.

<sup>883</sup> Monneret 1941, p.216; Neuss 1931, fig.150.

<sup>884</sup> Welch 1979, p.70.

<sup>885</sup> Bernard 1995, p.21. For more information about this book, see Rayadh 1985, "The Unity of Islamic Art", *King Faisal Center For Research and Islamic Studies*, (Rayadh), p.21.

<sup>886</sup> The earliest codex of the Qur'an in Maghribi was completed in 483 A.H. /1090 A.D. and is now in the University Library in Uppsala. For more information, see Granada and New York 1992, *Al-Andalus: The Art of Islamic Spain*, (Granada and New York), no.74.

<sup>887</sup> Welch 1979, p.70.

is called the Andalusī<sup>888</sup>. The former is a monumental round script, less compact, with deep sublinear flourishes, which may encroach on the space of the tallest verticals of the next line<sup>889</sup>. The two scripts were probably invented in Spain, and moved from there to Africa<sup>890</sup>.

We have already seen that the origin of the illustrations and their features are mainly relatable to Andalusia, as is true also of the type of script used for the text which conforms to Spain. After this consideration of its origin, the next section will discuss the significance of the architectural forms of the manuscript.

### **2.3.5.2 Significance of the Architectural Representations**

#### **2.3.5.2.1 Architectural Representations as the Work of an Artist**

Even though there is no definite way of knowing in which region this manuscript was produced, whether Iraq or Spain, it is obvious that the artistic details of its architectural iconographies indicate the artistic background of the artist who has been influenced by Muslim art and architecture in Spain (Andalusia) and its features. However, the Mesopotamian features mentioned above open a controversy in justifying the origin of the artist. Accordingly, two possibilities suggest themselves. The first is that the artist was of Spanish origin, who worked on a supposedly Mesopotamian manuscript containing the love story of Bayāḍ wa Riyāḍ, in which he reproduced the illustrations of buildings. The second is that the Mesopotamian features in the supposedly Spanish Bayāḍ wa Riyāḍ manuscript were added at a later date to the work of an Andalusian artist<sup>891</sup>.

Many features attribute the architectural representations to the art of the Muslims in Spain. Firstly, the waterwheel or *Sāqiya* (fig.203) illustrated on fol.19r

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<sup>888</sup> Lings 1976, p.203.

<sup>889</sup> Lings 1976, p.204.

<sup>890</sup> Bernard 1995, p.22.

<sup>891</sup> Monneret 1941, p.216.

of the manuscript has been shown to be one of the thirteenth century A.D. hydraulic waterwheels or *Sāqiya*hs of Murcia in Spain<sup>892</sup>. This type of *Sāqiya*h (water-lifting machine) was believed to have reached Spain in the Islamic era from Muslim Syria, where these machines were abundant<sup>893</sup>. Another example (fig.204) of the same type of the *Sāqiya*h suggests that it was used in Cordova, specifically the *Sāqiya*h of the Albolafia<sup>894</sup>. Secondly, the shape of towers in the illustrated garden enclosure with their pointed roofs and arched windows (figs.203, 210, 211) is similar to some real architectural examples in the Alhambra, at Spain<sup>895</sup>. For example, the tower of the *portal* in the Alhambra (fig.205) looks similar in shape to those in the architectural illustrations of the Bayāḍ wa Riyāḍ manuscript. This *portal* tower has a triangular or pyramidal roof, below which is a double-arched window with window grills, similar to those of the Bayāḍ wa Riyāḍ manuscript<sup>896</sup>. The roofs (fig.206) of the Mosque of Cordova provide another comparison. Furthermore, the tower of the Peinador (fig.207), which is rectangular with a gabled roof, also resembles the garden towers in the Bayāḍ wa Riyāḍ manuscript<sup>897</sup>. In addition, the decorations of the window grills represented in the illustrations of the Bayāḍ wa Riyāḍ manuscript show similarities to the ornamentation over the façade of the Giralda (fig.208) at Seville<sup>898</sup>. They are also repeated on the façade of the North porch of the Acequia's patio (fig.209) at the Alhambra<sup>899</sup>. Another parallel is the gabled roof that covers the patio of the Arrayanes (fig.212) at the Alhambra in Spain, which has a portico of arches resting on columns. This roof is covered with a similar material to those of

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<sup>892</sup> Schiøler 1973, p.96.

<sup>893</sup> Al-Ḥassan 1986, p.40.

<sup>894</sup> Maldonado 1990, I, (fig.313a).

<sup>895</sup> Brend 1991, p.65.

<sup>896</sup> Arie 1973, pl.VIII, p.524.

<sup>897</sup> Irving 1992, p.192, 193.

<sup>898</sup> Vilá 1983, II/III, pl.b.

<sup>899</sup> Irving 1992, p.128, 129.

the towers illustrated in the *Bayād wa Riyād* manuscript<sup>900</sup>. In addition, a view of the Albayzin (fig.213) shows every building covered with the same type of roof<sup>901</sup>.

Thirdly, the way in which the garden architecture is depicted in one of the illustrations (fig.214) in the *Bayād wa Riyād* manuscript, with its large arches resting on columns, conforms to real examples of gardens in palaces and other buildings in Spain. In the garden of Alcoba (fig.215) at the Alcazar of Seville, and in the hall of Abencerrages (fig.216) in the Patio of the Lions at the Alhambra, the arches resting on columns with decorative capitals resemble those represented in the illustrations of the *Bayād wa Riyād* manuscript<sup>902</sup>.

Other specific architectural and decorative details of the architectural forms represented in the *Bayād wa Riyād* manuscript also exemplify the Andalusian influence and origin of these architectural representations. First, the trefoil arch, which is shown on one of the towers (fig.203) of the manuscript was frequently used in the decoration of Muslim architecture in Spain. Examples include the entrance of the *Mihrāb* sanctuary (fig.217) of the Great Mosque of Cordova<sup>903</sup>, and the interior of the chapel of the *Mihrāb* (fig.218) in the Mosque<sup>904</sup>. To this feature, we may add that the Andalusian or Moorish style appears also in the circular motifs on top of, and in, the spandrels of the arches. These circular or round projections that appear in the decoration of the arcades of the towers, as illustrated in the *Bayād wa Riyād* manuscript (figs.210, 211) resemble those found around the arched gate (fig.219) on one of the lateral sides of the Great Mosque of Cordova<sup>905</sup>. Such projections also crown the arches of the Dormitory of the Kings (fig.220) in the Alcazar palace in

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<sup>900</sup> Irving 1992, p.192, 193.

<sup>901</sup> Irving 1992, p.128, 129.

<sup>902</sup> Maldonado 1990, I, fig.273.

<sup>903</sup> Calvert 1906, p.10.

<sup>904</sup> Calvert 1906, p.147, 28.

<sup>905</sup> Calvert 1906, p.99.

Seville<sup>906</sup>. Other similar projections appear in the area of the columns (fig.221) where Fadrique was murdered<sup>907</sup>, and in the interior of the synagogue that is now the Church of Santa Maria la Blanca (fig.222) built in the Moorish style in 1200 A.D.<sup>908</sup>.

Another architectural detail which connects the building iconographies in the Bayāḍ wa Riyāḍ manuscript with the architectural and decorative traditions of Spain is the arched grill windows that appear on the upper end of the towers (figs.210, 211), and which are decorated with two motifs: the lozenge, and the four-petalled rosette placed within a lozenge. These lozenges, which are repeated all over, are similar to the lozenge stucco decoration (fig.223) on the walls of either side of the entrance of the principle façade of the Alcazar in Seville<sup>909</sup>. This motif also spread to cover the walls of the interior court (fig.224) of the Alcazar<sup>910</sup>. Similar lozenges are found over the door built in the West façade of the Great Mosque of Cordova in 960 A.H. /1553 A.D. by 'Abd Al-Raḥmān II<sup>911</sup>. In addition, lozenge decorations are to be found on the façade of the entrance to the hall of the Ambassadors in the Alhambra, in Granada<sup>912</sup>. The second method of decoration, namely the four-petalled rosette placed within a lozenge that appears on some tower illustrations (figs.203, 210, 211) in the Bayāḍ wa Riyāḍ manuscript, are parallel to those on the wall panel decoration in Santa Maria La Blanca in Toledo<sup>913</sup>.

Taking into consideration the above-mentioned points, it is possible to conclude that the artist of the manuscript was either from Spain or had a Hispano-Islamic artistic background, which he decided to make clear in his representations of the garden setting, the towers, and such details as the roofs and arched windows.

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<sup>906</sup> Calvert 1906, p.333.

<sup>907</sup> Calvert 1906, p.345.

<sup>908</sup> Burckhardt 1976, fig.10.

<sup>909</sup> Calvert 1906, p.249, 243.

<sup>910</sup> Calvert 1906, p.255.

<sup>911</sup> Burckhardt 1976, fig.1.

<sup>912</sup> Burckhardt 1976, fig.80.

<sup>913</sup> Calvert 1906, pl.XLIV.

Thus, the architectural settings in this case played the role of a covert signature giving the spectator clues as to the origin of the artist who produced this work of art.

### **2.3.5.2.2 Architectural Representations Convey the Meaning of the Text**

It was strongly suggested that the architectural elements in the illustrations of the Bayāḍ wa Riyāḍ manuscript were related to Spain, and the inscription is of the Western type of Islamic calligraphy that is traced back to the thirteenth century A.D.<sup>914</sup>. As well as indicating a Spanish background for the artist of the manuscript, these architectural settings also reinforce the meaning of the text. The events of the manuscript are mainly related to a garden near the Al-Thirḥār River, and so the illustrated settings represent the enclosure walls of the garden, where water devices, such as a waterwheel and a deck are displayed. Study of the Arabic text of the manuscript reveals the garden as the meeting place where most of the events in the story occur<sup>915</sup>. The text describing the first meeting between Bayāḍ wa Riyāḍ relates: "In the morning we went on our way to the place of the meeting, I went alone and left him walking along the river towards the garden". There is also an indication in the text that this garden is surrounded with an enclosure wall with a gate: "and the attendants are standing at the door of the garden".

The representation of a waterwheel (fig.203) in the Bayāḍ wa Riyāḍ manuscript illustrations is probably one among the many water devices that are expected to exist in such a setting. In another illustration, there is a depiction of a flight of steps that open into a hollow entrance, which is possibly a type of Nilometer used to measure the level of water in the river. Since these water devices are located along a wall identical to that of the garden, it is plausible to think that

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<sup>914</sup> Brend 1991, p.65.

<sup>915</sup> "فلما أصبح اخذنا في الدهوض نحو الموضع فمشيت انا وتركته يسير نحو الدهر الى الحديقة المذكورة..."  
Nykl 1941, p.6.

this wall is a representation of the enclosure, in which lies the gate, especially given that the garden lies by a riverside, as narrated in the text<sup>916</sup>.

Since the architectural representation of the garden is limited to walls, towers, and water devices, the artist decided to avoid repetition and dullness by showing the walls of the garden from different angles and positions. In the illustration (fig.203) of Bayāḍ lying unconscious by the river, the artist represents the wall together with a waterwheel. Another wall is illustrated in the scene showing Shamūl, one of the handmaidens and a friend of Bayāḍ, delivering a letter from his Riyāḍ<sup>917</sup>. In another scene, the open area that is surrounded by the garden structure is depicted. The garden enclosure appears to be bounded by two stone towers between which the garden extends, as shown in the illustration (fig.210) of Bayāḍ singing and playing the 'Ud in front of the woman and her handmaidens. Each tower has a ribbed triangular roof resting on arches of different types: semi-circular, pointed and trilobed. Similarly, in an illustration (fig.225) showing Riyāḍ playing the 'Ud and singing in front of her woman, we can see a representation of the two brick towers of the garden enclosure; one has screened *Mashrabiyyah* work and is surmounted by a gabled roof, while the second has an onion shaped dome<sup>918</sup>.

In another illustration, there is a representation of a house (fig.202), which also shows a relationship to the text of the manuscript. The accompanying text narrates the event in which Bayāḍ meets three attendants of the Ḥājib who wish to hand him a letter from his beloved, the now imprisoned Riyāḍ. He is invited to the house of one of the attendants, who handed him this letter. The scene (fig.202) depicts Bayāḍ sitting with the three women and taking the letter from the hands of one of them: "walk with us until we see her house to recognize it; the house is better for keeping

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<sup>916</sup> Nykl 1941, p.6, 7.

<sup>917</sup> Nykl 1941, p.28.

<sup>918</sup> Brend 1991, p.63, 64.

our secret, 'I went with them to the house, which lies near by the river in a nice place, I entered the house with them, and they told me about Riyāḍ, and gave me that book, in which I did not know what was hidden"<sup>919</sup>. The house is depicted with a triangular roof, a door, and some decorative arches<sup>920</sup>. This further indicates how architectural representations and setting in manuscripts reflect the context of the text.

To sum up, this study has clarified how architectural representations in the Bayāḍ wa Riyāḍ manuscript were not only for decorative purposes, but also for conveying significance. The architectural settings in this manuscript reinforced the meaning of the text and developed a strong association with the secular function of the manuscript. In addition, analysis of the architectural settings depicted by the artist emphasizes the previously stated hypothesis that an artist would try to announce his origin, religion, and artistic background by representing some architectural details as a form of disguised signature.

In conclusion, there is no doubt that the architectural representations on different objects of art not only perform a decorative function, but also have some significance to convey. Throughout the different regions of the Muslim world, and during different eras of Muslim rule, the use of architectural representations to declare certain messages was prevalent. A study of both the source of each architectural form and the information about the artist who executed the work clarifies the typology of each architectural figure and the reason why it was shown in this way in the first place. Further, by contextualising the work, it is possible to draw attention to some non-Muslim architectural features and elements that appear in the majority of the architectural representations on Islamic artefacts. This implies that in terms of architectural representation, there was an influence on Islamic art from pre-

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<sup>919</sup> "امش معنا حتى نرى دارها وتعرفه والدار خير من الفحص واستر لأمورنا فمضيت معهن الى الدار فاذا بالقرب من الدهر في موضع مليح فتدخلت معهن فاخبرنني باخبار رياض ودفعن الي هذا الكتاب ووالله ما اعلم ما فيه..."

Nykl 1941, p.37.

<sup>920</sup> Nykl 1941, p.37.



and non-Muslim sources. These influences were adapted in various ways to differentiate them from their non-Muslim sources and give them a significance or meaning peculiar to the Muslim era.

Many possible interpretations have been given for the explanation of the meaning of each architectural representation, matching the religious and ideological thought of Muslim society. These range from mainly religious interpretations that relate to passages from the Qur'an, the speeches (*Ḥadīths*) of the Prophet Muḥammad, and religious principals that Muslims should follow, to political interpretations such as the commemoration of either the victory or the virtues of the ruler. However, the only way to accurately determine the significance of the architectural representation is by studying the function of the structure or art object that bears it.

Broadly speaking about the idea of unity in Islamic art, the concept of connecting the significance of the decorations on the walls of a Muslim structure to the structure's function is paralleled in the case of artefacts also. This study has tried to show that scenes with architectural representations developed strong associations with the places which bear them and further that they work within the boundaries of the function of the Islamic building or art object. Examples on art objects acquire different functions, and the meanings of the architectural representations accordingly vary. On metal objects used to offer food and fruit to the owner, scenes and phrases of blessings and offerings were used. Benedictory imagery evoking an offer of the fruits of Paradise might take the form of an architectural representation surrounded by a heavenly garden, as is the case on the Umayyad metal bowl. Many of the wishing scenes could also reflect the idea of victory and sovereignty of the owner, as the significance of some architectural forms related to the subjects of warfare or a courtly life.

Glass bottles were used for containing juices made from different types of fruits, and in accordance with this function, it is understood the architectural representations with vegetation on the body of the bottle discussed above can be understood as referring to the seasons of the year during which trees yielded different types of fruits. Similarly, the architectural scenes on the bodies of the beakers serve the same function, again referring to the seasons of the year. They may also, however, refer to particular holy religious buildings, and in this case, they work as amulets to offer blessings and protection to the owner of the beaker.

Regarding manuscripts, the type to which it belongs and the meaning and function of its text explain the significance of its architectural illustrations. Being a religious work, the Qur'anic manuscript of Sana'a refers to a Mosque (a religious building) as the place where the Qur'anic manuscript is kept and preserved. In the *Maqāmāt* of Al-Ḥarīrī, and in accordance with its text, the architectural illustrations represent secular buildings such as houses, palaces, and shops, as well as religious structures such as mosques. In the *Jāmi'* Al-Tawārīkh, a historical manuscript, buildings related to the historical episodes of the text are represented. Finally, the architectural representations in the manuscript of *Bayād wa Riyād* also agree with the meaning of the text and the type of the manuscript. A garden wall and some water devices form the setting of the illustrations in this manuscript, although these are shown in a simple way to suit the secular nature of the manuscript. This clearly indicates that the architectural representations in these manuscripts reflect the meaning of their text.

It has therefore been shown that the decorations of Islamic buildings and artefacts, especially those including architectural representations, carried significance that is closely related to the function of the object or building bearing them. The study has also demonstrated how architectural representations on art

objects, as inspired by Muslim buildings, serve as references to the artist who produced them by indicating either his origin, religion, or artistic background.

In the next chapter, I will investigate certain artistic aspects and their role in revealing the hidden significance of architectural representations on Islamic buildings and art objects, in an attempt to provide evidence supporting the main argument of this thesis.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

# **Structural Significance of Architectural Representation on Islamic Architecture and Art Objects**

### **3 Structural Form and Elements of**

## **Composition in Architectural Representation**

In the previous chapter, the study examined how each architectural representation reveals a range of significance, and shows how these architectural representations contribute to understanding the meaning of Islamic decoration. This was established through discussion of a number of historical and cultural interpretations of the architectural representations shown, and their associations with the functions of the objects on which they are found.

Now that the concept of architectural representation has been established, attention can be turned to an analysis of the ways in which the architectural iconographies unveil their significance. This will reveal how the artist organizes the architectural iconographies to depict specific elements and make them comprehensible. The word structure is used in the sense of implying a form created by individual components which together complete a unit. In this chapter, I will consider how this is achieved in architectural iconographies on objects of art, and on architecture. I will also examine whether the painter used pre-established formulas and applied them to his own architectural representation, or created unique and original arrangements. Therefore, the discussion will present specific examples from antiquity, and refer to theological principles which were the inspiration for both the structural forms and elements of composition in architectural representations.

The study will cover two major sections: the structural form of architectural representation, and the elements of composition. The first aspect of the study deals with the typology of the architectural form; that is, which architectural forms are imitative, and which are imaginative and representational. Structurally, architectural iconographies can be divided into three groups: first, imitative architectural

representation which has many features in common with the original models in reality; second, imaginative architectural representation which has features that do not agree with reality, but were used as an abstract rendition of it; third, representational architectural form which combines both imitative and imaginative iconographies. The study will consider the third category in terms of introducing the imitative and imaginative architectural forms with a new target that is to represent significance beyond just imitating or being imagined. The representational architectural form shows how an architectural representation is used to imply feelings and emotions, some of which fall within the imitative structure (of some architectural representations), while others fall within the imaginative structure. The second aspect of the study, elements of composition, will deal with individual components recognized in architectural iconographies and the settings which create their structure. I will examine how artists used these elements such as furniture, scene composition, architectural elements, colour, and material as symbols indicating meanings. I will also focus on the treatment of space and how it was used in architectural representation to indicate significance, including linear, central, and angular perspectives.

In this chapter, I will attempt to show how the structural form and elements of composition explain what the artist requires of the viewer in approaching his work. In doing so, I hope to demonstrate that the structural form and elements of composition forming the architectural form are not merely used for decorative purposes, but also play a role in uncovering the significance of each architectural representation.

The architectural structural form is understood as a manifestation of an idea that can touch the internal ideas and emotions. It is a reflection of the artist's relationship

with the world of senses and ideas around him, with some limitations<sup>921</sup>. The architectural form can be further understood as displaying an image that is reassembled by the viewer in his mind. Hence, the meaning of the architectural form is not simply in its apparent shape as a form, but rather lies in the deciphering of images that are recalled in the mind of the viewer<sup>922</sup>. Some scholars, such as Ann Hardin, trace the idea of the structure of architectural representations to linguistic anthropology. According to her, the structure of the architectural representation is the design, or equivalent system, which is fundamental for a particular style. It offers the artist a means of organizing the architectural form and its elements of composition, which in turn give information as to how to create architectural iconographies in that style<sup>923</sup>. Therefore, the structural form and elements of composition are the structural features of the architectural representation. They underline the organization of its parts into a whole unit for identification and categorization<sup>924</sup>. To interpret the significance and thought behind the architectural representation, an analysis of its structural form and elements of composition is necessary, as this provides an explanation of the relationship between the architectural structure and the social, cultural, and religious orders around it<sup>925</sup>.

According to Dorothy Washburn, from an artistic point of view, the structure of an architectural form is a summary of the perceptions the individual artist had about his world<sup>926</sup>. Therefore, the architectural form is the messenger that carries the ideas the artist wants to transfer to the viewer<sup>927</sup>. Relying on the structure and elements of composition in the depiction of the architectural representations, artists create a

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<sup>921</sup> Kippenberg 1982, I, p.VIII.

<sup>922</sup> Stephen 1995, p.50.

<sup>923</sup> Hardin 1983, p.8, 9.

<sup>924</sup> Washburn 1983, p.2.

<sup>925</sup> Munn 1973, p.3.

<sup>926</sup> Washburn 1983, p.2; Godelier 1977, p.177.

<sup>927</sup> Boas 1955, p. 13.

relationship between their inner ideas and feelings and those of the viewers, as well as the real world all around them<sup>928</sup>. This will be discussed in detail in the course of this study. Thus, the study reveals how the architectural representation, through its structural form and elements of composition, declares the concealed signature of the artists. This concept can be traced back to the principles of Islamic theology, where the pious deeds of an individual should be presented with humility<sup>929</sup>.

In the next section, I will consider the various structural forms of architectural iconographies on artefacts and architecture, which illustrate their meaning and significance, an idea which was introduced in the previous chapter from the historical and cultural context. This will include a discussion of the imitative, imaginative, and representational architectural iconographies.

### **3.1 Structural Form of Architectural Representation**

Three structural forms of architectural iconography have been recognized through this study: imitative, imaginative, and representational. Dorothy Washburn, in her studies on the structural style in art, refers to the fact that the decision made by the artist in creating the structural form of architectural representation mainly depends on the cultural biases of the artist as to which aspects are emphasized, omitted, ignored, or minimized<sup>930</sup>. However, in this study, I argue that other factors may be considered in determining the aspects of any structural form of architectural representation in Muslim art. Even though some architectural imagery is described as being to some degree imitative, in other cases it appears to be highly imaginative. The majority of architectural representation in Islamic art combines both imitative and imaginative features of representation. The degree to which imitative or imaginative features predominate depends on the significance of the architectural representation.

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<sup>928</sup> Kippenberg 1982, I, p.VIII, IX.

<sup>929</sup> Kühnel 1971, p.17.

<sup>930</sup> Washburn 1983, p.2.



Whether it is imitative or imaginative, the architectural form in Muslim art, as the study has tried to demonstrate, is representational.

In the following section, the study will deal with the first type of structural form of architectural representation, namely imitative architectural representation, and will highlight its meaning and origin, as well as its role in revealing significance.

### **3.1.1 Imitative Architectural Representation**

#### **3.1.1.1 Meaning**

Imitative architectural iconographies appear on a number of objects of art and architecture of the Muslim era. As defined by Francis Sparshott, imitative architectural representation (that imitates a building) is a copy of the building's features and qualities. An imitative form is therefore a copy form of a building that deceives by its likeness to the real building<sup>931</sup>. Imitative architectural form has been given other definitions; for example, Eliel Saarinen has stated an imitative form is a clever reproduction by means of style, colour, or otherwise that brings about the idea of a building existing without infusing creative quality into the architectural representation produced<sup>932</sup>. Thus, the image resulting is not original<sup>933</sup>. The imitative architectural form may better be described as the work of an artist in which he relates the signs of the architectural form represented to an original architectural structure from which it was copied<sup>934</sup>.

Even though imitative architectural representation is a likeness, it is not a replica, nor a copy, nor a substitute<sup>935</sup>. It is true that the imitative architectural form has visible characteristics that are the same as, or very similar to, those of the real building; however, being imitative, judging from their similarity in appearance, does

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<sup>931</sup> Sparshott 1982, p.65.

<sup>932</sup> Saarinen 1948, p.12, 13.

<sup>933</sup> Schaper 1968, p.42.

<sup>934</sup> Sparshott 1970, p.364.

<sup>935</sup> Sparshott 1982, p.66, 67.

not always mean that the architectural representation is the same as the actual building<sup>936</sup>. Nelson Goodman also makes reference to this point<sup>937</sup> when he explains that the imitative architectural form is a faithful picture that represents as closely as possible the real building<sup>938</sup>. What is copied of the actual building, in one aspect, is one of the ways the real building is, or looks like, but not all of its ways at once<sup>939</sup>. Francis Sparshott provided an explanation that confirmed this when he stated that imitative architectural representation is expected to have different degrees of depicting aspects from the real building, as well as depicting certain selected entities of that building<sup>940</sup>. Thus, imitative architectural form could provoke in the spectator, in different degrees, the same feeling as when looking at the real building<sup>941</sup>.

Adding context to the last two opinions, Terry Lovell argued that we should not ignore the role knowledge plays in transferring the world of reality and actual buildings into imitative architectural forms represented by the artist and conceived by the viewer<sup>942</sup>. Louis Arnaud Reid has argued that complete imitation by architectural representation of all the aspects and details of the actual building is, in any case, impossible. He believes that the interest of the painter, who selects and invents what is expressed, determines the selection of specific details in the architectural representation<sup>943</sup>. In contrast, according to Francis Sparshott, the likeness between the imitative architectural form and the real building can only be specified by referring to what an observer would see from a particular angle<sup>944</sup>.

In this study, I intend to demonstrate that the selection of specific details in an imitative architectural representation is determined not only by the interests of the

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<sup>936</sup> Sparshott 1982, p.68.

<sup>937</sup> Goodman 1992, p.193.

<sup>938</sup> Goodman 1992, p.89.

<sup>939</sup> Goodman 1987, p.284.

<sup>940</sup> Sparshott 1982, p.70, 71.

<sup>941</sup> Aristotle 1984, p.37.

<sup>942</sup> Lovell 1980, p.17.

<sup>943</sup> Reid 1973, p.178.

<sup>944</sup> Sparshott 1982, p.67.

artist and the vision of the observer, but also by the significance of the architectural representation depicted in Islamic art. In addition, recognition has to be given to the demand of using the architectural form as a covert signature of the artist.

### **3.1.1.2 Origin in Muslim Art**

Imitative architectural forms were used in Muslim art to reflect significance that cannot be introduced without relying on a structural form of architectural representation. In this section, I will outline the roots and origins behind using an imitative architectural form in Muslim art and theology, and I will show how and why imitative architectural forms appeared on objects of art and on architecture, despite the fact that Islamic art has never been an imitative art or an art of realism. I will give consideration to the idea that even though imitation was disdained in Muslim theology, especially imitations of God's creations of living beings; it was indirectly encouraged when referring to man-made achievements such as architecture.

To argue that Islamic art has never been an imitative art, or an art of realism, is controversial because there have been cases in which imitation of nature, or realism, seems to have been maintained in both subject and illustration. Richard Ettinghausen has argued that Islamic art, in general, has been a type of art that encouraged realism<sup>945</sup>. He also stresses that this realistic approach was very popular in the Muslim era towards the end of the twelfth and the first half of the thirteenth centuries, when different scenes of the middle and lower classes were represented, especially in manuscripts and on different pieces of Moşul brass<sup>946</sup>. The earliest example of realistic art in the Muslim era is in the scenes (fig.226) depicted on the walls of Quşāyr 'Amrah, built in the late Umayyad period<sup>947</sup>. The Fatimid era formed the second major period of realistic art representation, during which scenes depicting the

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<sup>945</sup> Ettinghausen 1984, p.158, 159.

<sup>946</sup> Ettinghausen 1984, p.158, 159.

<sup>947</sup> Ettinghausen 1984, p.159.

non-royal class were often used, as shown in examples of lustre bowls with scenes of musicians and dancers<sup>948</sup>. Ettinghausen also refers to how the subject of some Muslim paintings reflects the real situations that occur in Muslim society; for instance, the dancers who appear in the Muslim art of Iran in the thirteenth century A.D. reflect the reality of the Muslim court. A passage in the *Kitāb Al-'Aghānī*<sup>949</sup> states: "He (the Caliph) sent (somebody) to 'Ash'ab and he brought him and he clothed him with trousers of monkey skin and he had a tail". This can be related to a scene (fig.227) on the walls of Quṣāyir 'Amrah, which shows a seated bear playing a stringed instrument accompanied by a monkey standing on his hind legs clapping his front paws, which Ettinghausen believes refers to a human entertainer dressed as an animal<sup>950</sup>.

According to Franz Rosenthal, realism in Muslim art and literature can be confirmed when dealing with Muslim literature and humour, as in the story of Al-'Ash'ab<sup>951</sup>, which is believed to have been composed around 800 A.H. /1398 A.D.<sup>952</sup>. According to Rosenthal: "the personalities who appear in connection with 'Ash'ab are as a rule much too insignificant for invention as effective characters in purely fictitious stories, situations in which those personalities appear are redolent of specific historical circumstances and could hardly have been invented in Post-Umayyad times...are often much too deficient in general interest to have been invented by anyone except a person interested in those personalities themselves"<sup>953</sup>. He added: "the 'Ash'ab legend and the history of Muslim humour in general, thus, reflect the historical development of Islamic society which passed from its worldly aristocratic

<sup>948</sup> Ettinghausen 1984, p.161-163.

<sup>949</sup> *Al-Iṣṣāḥānī* 1867, VI p.123, 124, *Al-Iṣṣāḥānī* 1969, VII, p.46.

<sup>950</sup> Ettinghausen 1965, p.219.

<sup>951</sup> Al-'Ash'ab was connected to members of the Muslim nobility and therefore many stories with political affiliations were connected with his name. His legend contains many religious jokes under his name. For more information about his legend see Rosenthal 1956, p.36-131, and the bibliography p.139, 141.

<sup>952</sup> Rosenthal 1956, p.18, 19.

<sup>953</sup> Rosenthal 1956, p.19.

stage via a political-religious to an urban middle class one"<sup>954</sup>. Furthermore, he suggests that the humour that is reflected in these stories has an Islamic origin, such as the *Ḥadīths* of the Prophet Muḥammad which show how Islam encouraged humour<sup>955</sup>. However, the studies of other scholars, such as Ernst Grube, Oleg Grabar, Anna Contadini and Herbert Hoffmann, have established the opposite, namely that Islamic art is not in general an art of realism or imitation.

In the case of Ernst Grube, he studied a Fatimid lustre painted pottery bowl (fig.228) from Egypt dating to the eleventh or twelfth century A.D., with a decoration of the preparations for a cockfight. He discussed whether the decoration on this bowl, and other similar ones, represents realism or not, and concludes: "None of these scenes is really new and not a single one could with certainty be identified as having been inspired by the observation of an actual event on the part of the artist...the style of these representations, derived from a tradition of a naturalistic rendering of the world, leads to a false interpretation of these scenes as renderings of common everyday-life subjects...these subjects are related to the life of the court and its pastimes...venerated cycles of symbolic representation that glorifies the power of the prince and his life-style of pleasure and prowess"<sup>956</sup>. In addition, Ernst Grube has shown how the study of Herbert Hoffmann is useful in explaining the history of the cockfight scenes as an "esoteric" symbol. According to Hoffmann, this type of scene dates to the fourth century B.C., as it appeared over the throne of Dionysos in the amphitheatre in Athens. He considers that this scene is not a reflection of a real activity that took place at that time, but rather it symbolizes the fighting spirit<sup>957</sup>. Grube comments on this study by saying: "The exact meaning of the fighting cocks in the Fatimid representation, the ancient tradition of the theme as such, and the

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<sup>954</sup> Rosenthal 1956, p.34.

<sup>955</sup> Rosenthal 1956, p.3, 4.

<sup>956</sup> Grube 1976, p.141.

<sup>957</sup> Grube 1995, p.195-220.

complex symbolism that is attached to it through the centuries would make it highly probable that also in the Fatimid period such a representation has nothing to do with such entertainment but refers to an esoteric, possibly erotic at any event courtly and [official] context”<sup>958</sup>.

As for the wrestlers that appear on many Fatimid lustre ceramics, they are a continuation of an old tradition, rather than representing a real activity that took place in the daily life of Muslims. This goes against the view of Richard Ettinghausen who referred to them as reflections of the wrestling matches performed in Egypt, stating as evidence E.W. Lane’s statement: “Wrestling matches are also sometimes witnessed in Egypt...”<sup>959</sup>. Ernst Grube has focussed attention on the fact that wrestling scenes were to be found in Classical, late Classical, and Byzantine art, from which it seems to have been adopted in Muslim art; for example, in the wrestling scene which appeared on an Athenian drinking cup (now in the British Museum, London) dated 520 B.C. Another example appears on a silver bowl<sup>960</sup> from Iran, or Central Asia, dated to the seventh century<sup>961</sup>. Such scenes were to be found in Ancient Egyptian art, for instance on the walls of the tomb of Tyanen, an Egyptian officer, dated about 1410 B.C., where there is a wall painting (fig.229a) of Nubian wrestlers showing five men marching together with the last man carrying a standard with two wrestlers on it<sup>962</sup>. Another relevant scene (fig.229b) is from the relief of the rock cut tomb of Meryre the second, dated 1355 B.C., where the scene on the wall of the tomb shows

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<sup>958</sup> Grube 1995, p.33.

<sup>959</sup> Lane 1923, p.357; Ettinghausen 1965, p.222.

<sup>960</sup> (The Arthur M. Sackler Collections).

<sup>961</sup> Grube 1995, p.31.

<sup>962</sup> Wrestlers in Ancient Egyptian Art.Website. “Representation of Wrestlers”. Online,<http://www.motherofhumanity.com/Nijart%20Webs/archives%20article%203.htm>. Accessed 3<sup>rd</sup> of December 2005.

King Akhenaten seated and receiving tributes from Nubia whilst being entertained by watching a wrestling match between a Nubian and an Egyptian<sup>963</sup>.

In other research, Grube has commented on the dancing figures represented on a Fatimid lustre painted bowl (now in the Freer Gallery of Art), and the dancing girl (now in the Islamic Museum, Cairo). He claims: "both pieces clearly have a common source of inspiration which seems quite certainly not the dancing girl at the Fatimid court, observed and rendered true to life by the painter, but an artistic convention for the representation of such figures<sup>964</sup>". He adds: "the subject of these representations form part of a well established iconographical cycle of images that visualize symbolically the life of the ruling class and that the standardized form of the image in this case is due to this specific relationship between art and reality"<sup>965</sup>.

Oleg Grabar when commenting on realism in Muslim art explained that the appearance of living creatures and their activities in Fatimid art is not a reflection of realism in art subjects. In fact, it exemplifies a relationship between Fatimid art and the Abbasid art of Iraq in the ninth century A.D. that re-emerged in the late ninth and tenth centuries A.D. on woodwork and ceramics in Egypt. This is in addition to the impact of Seljuk art on Fatimid art, which led to the introduction of new themes of animals and humans performing activities<sup>966</sup>. According to Grabar, the human representations on Fatimid ceramics, as in the example of courtly figures, do not reflect actual images in art; instead, he believes they were symbols for some meanings. This was explained by Grabar as follows: "These images can be interpreted in either one of two ways: we can argue that they are in some ways symbols or representations of individual figures identified here by their courtly

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<sup>963</sup> Wrestlers in Ancient Egyptian Art.Website. "Representation of Wrestlers". Online.<http://www.mothersofhumanity.com/Nijart%20Webs/archives%20article%203.htm>. Accessed 3<sup>rd</sup> of December.2005.

<sup>964</sup> Grube 1995, p.27.

<sup>965</sup> Grube 1995, p.31.

<sup>966</sup> Grabar 1972, p.175.

functions and the image together with the object on which it is found should be considered as some sort of private memorialization. Alternatively, and in our judgment preferably, these images are actually representations of functions, of hunting, music making, drinking, and dancing. These functions which identified princely life had acquired the more general meaning of symbolizing a [good life]<sup>967</sup>. He also included other scenes such as a woman half lying on a bed surrounded by attendants, about to pick up a musical instrument (now in the Islamic Museum, Cairo) as being a developed illustration of a courtly life of pleasure. A similar interpretation is the representation of the nude dancer, or of the two people wrestling (fig.230), an old man (fig.231) carrying a bucket on his back, and of a bearded person (fig.232) kneeling in front of a cheetah. Grabar terms these scenes "Narrative Scenes", as they appear to deal with a precise scene or event<sup>968</sup>.

Anna Contadini has explained the decorations of Fatimid lustre painted pottery as representing styles and techniques borrowed from other arts, demonstrating the emergence of new themes and decorations that were not in use before. For example, the Fatimid ceramics from Egypt include Byzantine elements, and other features from Persian and Mesopotamian areas. She notes: "the human and animal figures have a style indebted to a Classical tradition and sometimes also humour, which is rather distant from the more formal Abbasid conventions"<sup>969</sup>.

The above discussion suggests that Islamic art is not an art of realism, and even if the subjects are taken from daily life, it is never rendered in a realistic technique. If Muslim art did not encourage imitation of reality, it is reasonable to question the Muslim theological thought about imitation of the real world. I would argue that the tendency of Islamic art to disdain imitation and realism is understood from a

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<sup>967</sup> Grabar 1972, p.179.

<sup>968</sup> Grabar 1972, p.179.

<sup>969</sup> Contadini 1998a, p.71.



theological perspective. The act of imitation, especially that of living creatures, has been highly discouraged by Islam. A further theological consideration is the Islamic avoidance of competition with God, and the inner fear of images that imitate reality in Muslim theology. This has indirectly led Muslims to avoid the depiction of imitative forms. The speeches (*Ḥadīths*) of the Prophet Muḥammad illustrate the same idea. One *Ḥadīth* of the Prophet Muḥammad quoted by Al-Bukhārī says: “Whoever makes an image him will Allah give as a punishment the task of blowing the breath of life into it”. Another *Ḥadīth* says: “Those who make these pictures will be punished on the day of Judgment by being told ‘make alive whatever you have created’”<sup>970</sup>.

If both art and religion discourage imitation, where did the idea of imitative architectural form come from? Was it an artistic reaction against religion, or was it that religious bounds judged Muslim art? The answer to this question may lie in the fact that although imitation is disdained by Muslim theology, this only relates to one category, namely God’s creation of living beings including animals, humans and plants. This, of course, excludes man-made creations such as architecture. Accordingly, imitation of architecture is acceptable both artistically and from a religious point of view. Indeed, it is not only accepted, but is generally encouraged if we consider it as a feature of the aniconic tendency<sup>971</sup> in which the representation of living creatures was replaced by images of vegetation, geometry and also architecture.

### 3.1.1.3 Significance

In studying architectural representations on artefacts and architecture, it was observed in the first example, on the Mosque Madrasa of Sultan Ḥasan, that imitative

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<sup>970</sup> Ukasha 1981, p.7.

<sup>971</sup> For more information, see Chapter one in Arnold T. W. 1928, *Painting in Islam*, (Oxford); Creswell K.A.C. 1946, “The Lawfulness of Painting in Early Islam”, *Ars Islamica*, vol.XI-XII, p.159-166; King G.R.D. 1985, “Islam, Iconoclasm and the Declaration of Doctrine”, *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, vol.XLVIII, p.267-277.

architectural forms were used as a reference to a building of equal fame and grandeur to other actual well-known structures. The architectural forms represented by the portal (figs.29-33) are imitative in the sense that they have some specific features in common with their actual architectural building models, and that no imaginative or unreal element appears in their representation. In the case of the Mosque Madrasa, the (first) building represented has some features in common with the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem. The sculptured figure has an entrance flanked on either side with arched recesses with the dome supported by a row of windows, and the portal surmounted with an arch. This is a copy of the façade of the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem (fig.233) exactly as Creswell showed it in 1937. The other sculptured figures are probably imitations of great Byzantine structures that once existed or survived, but of which no names are given; accordingly, it is not possible to state the precise original model and the degree of imitation in these sculptured figures. These imitative architectural representations declare that the Mosque Madrasa is one of the great religious and educational establishments of the world. This requires that these establishments, when represented as architectural figures, maintain the original forms, so that they can transmit their significance. Another significance of the imitative architectural form in this example is to serve as a signature of the artist. Since it was stated in the previous chapter that the artist of the Mosque Madrasa was probably Byzantine Christian, or representing some Byzantine or Gothic structures, identified through their decorative details, the imitative architectural representation is a logical artistic method to introduce information regarding his origin, or artistic background.

However, on other occasions, imitative architectural form unveils a different meaning, namely that of offering the blessing of a religious architectural representation, through the representation of an imitative architectural figure, which provokes the same religious feelings as those achieved when looking at the original

model. This can be understood by considering the two Mamluk glass beakers (figs.95-98) where the architectural representations were imitative of famous religious structures whose religious blessing in reality is also great. On one of the beakers (figs.95, 96) the building form represented has many features in common with the Dome of the Rock, specifically the octagonal architectural plan, the dome on top of the building resting on arched windows, and the door flanked by arched windows. On the same beaker, there is a representation of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, which shares with the real model (fig.99) its lower storey with arched openings, and the upper storey with windows supporting a dome.

The next example which shows an imitative architectural form is the manuscript of the Story of Bayāḍ wa Riyāḍ, and can be seen in the representation of water and garden building iconographies (figs.203, 210, 211, 225). Analysis also reveals the background of the artist, who clearly indicates his origins, or his artistic background, through the decorative details that were discussed in detail in the second chapter.

As discussed above, imitative architectural representations are not just decorative, but are also used as structural forms to promoting meanings in architectural forms, unveiling their significance. In the following section, I will discuss how the significance of the architectural iconography represented may require an imaginative structural form. The question here is how similar to reality are these architectural forms represented in Muslim art? Moreover, how does this affect, if at all, the significance of the architectural form represented?

### **3.1.2 Imaginative Architectural Representation**

#### **3.1.2.1 Meaning**

The study of architectural representations on art and architecture in the Muslim era reveals that the idea of using imaginative architectural forms originated in the arts

of antiquity, and the Muslim period. Representing an architectural form which has a special significance needs a degree of imagination. Imaginative architectural representation is the second structural form through which the meaning of Islamic decoration is outlined. According to Gregory Currie, imaginative architectural representation may be described as creating a relationship between the actual building that is being imagined, and the imaginative architectural form. In this sense, the imaginative architectural form need not be a replica of the actual building<sup>972</sup>. Jean-Paul Sartre stated that imaginative architectural forms are not identical to their real building models in the perceptual world, since in imagination we free ourselves from the perceptual world<sup>973</sup>. The imaginative architectural form could therefore be described as the act of putting ideas together in a form which defies expectations and leads to the creation of something valuable in art terms, which is called by Gregory Currie "Creative Imagination"<sup>974</sup>.

At the same time, imaginative architectural representation mobilizes the virtual state of its image, which is the knowledge, and converts what it acquired by experience into something visible, which is the architectural form that is represented. Accordingly, imagination mobilizes the knowledge, which it furnishes into representation<sup>975</sup>. The function of imagination in architectural representation is to convert the experience or the knowledge of the real building into something visible, thereby giving it the status of representation. Thus, imagination opens up the possibility for something given to appear<sup>976</sup>. The imaginative architectural form is

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<sup>972</sup> Currie 2001, p.253.

<sup>973</sup> Sartre 1995, p.208, 209.

<sup>974</sup> Currie 2001, p.255.

<sup>975</sup> Dufrenne 1973, p.348.

<sup>976</sup> Dufrenne 1973, p.349.

therefore the mode or pattern in which the imagined architectural form is recognized by our consciousness<sup>977</sup>.

Donald Spence, in his study on the meaning of imagination, remarks that the imaginative architectural form does not display all the features and characteristics of the actual building which inspired it. In addition, other features are imagined and added. The imaginative elements in the architectural representation are explained by the fact that the artist created elements of a structural form which has been modified in some way in the memory of the artist. This modification includes placing emphasis on some elements found in the real building, and the neglect of others in order to express a special theme or idea<sup>978</sup>. This idea is further supported by Monroe Beardsley. He highlights the possibility that the architectural form may be produced in a variety of representations, on different occasions, which further emphasized this fact. Accordingly, the same architectural form can be presented in a wide variety of forms, depending on imagination. This follow-on variety has to be judged as being only associated to the architectural form itself and its different qualities<sup>979</sup>. For this reason, the imaginative architectural form is linked to the memories and knowledge of the artist which in turn are mingled with special themes and ideas to leave an impression on the viewer<sup>980</sup>. The creation of the imaginative architectural representation frees the artist from rules and doctrines in playing out his ideas, thoughts, and forms<sup>981</sup>.

Thus, we can only speculate that the memory and knowledge of the artist have a positive effect on the spectator as they open to him a debate between what is true and real in the imaginative architectural form that is represented in front of his eyes, and

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<sup>977</sup> Casey 1984, p.249.

<sup>978</sup> Spence 1984, p.60.

<sup>979</sup> Beardsley 1966, p.172.

<sup>980</sup> Spence 1984, p.57.

<sup>981</sup> Saarinen 1948, p.304; Spence 1984, p.57.

what it means. This aids understanding of the exact meaning of the architectural form represented<sup>982</sup>. Therefore, according to Gilber Ryle, an imaginative architectural form is a form of make-believe which does not exist as a picture in the mind's eye, but rather relates to our ability to remember, recognize, and recreate what we have seen<sup>983</sup>.

A more complex explanation of the meaning of an imaginative architectural form can be deduced from the comments of Eliel Saarinen on the meaning of imagination in art. In her definition, the imaginative architectural form is understood as the production of mental ideas and pictures, and has no relation to previous concepts, knowledge, or experience. The artist who transmuted them into a corresponding architectural image presents a record of these ideas<sup>984</sup>. This process involves calling up imaginative architectural images, as a way of showing the appreciation of the artist towards the real buildings, in which reality eventually reaffirms itself<sup>985</sup>. This means that imagination creates the imaginative architectural form which in spite of its unreality is so convincing that it seizes the consciousness<sup>986</sup>.

Before the crucial discussion on the significance of the imaginative architectural forms is set out, a few more comments should be made on the study of the origin of the imaginative architectural image in Muslim art.

### **3.1.2.2 Origin in Muslim Art**

Imaginative architectural representation as a structural form of art, unveiling meanings and significance of architectural iconographies, was not invented in the Muslim era; in fact, it existed long before in Graeco-Roman and Byzantine art. As was the case before the Muslim era, these architectural figures continued to explain

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<sup>982</sup> Spence 1984, p.61, 62.

<sup>983</sup> Ryle 1949, p.256, 257.

<sup>984</sup> Saarinen 1948, p.299.

<sup>985</sup> Walton 1990, p.13.

<sup>986</sup> Sartre 1966, p.153; Sartre 1962, p.136.

religious, social and political meanings in the Muslim period. Thus, the artist started to create a new element each time, so that he could transmit the meaning of the architectural representation, and therefore the meaning of the whole scene<sup>987</sup>. However, architectural forms expose meanings related to Islamic theology.

In studying the inspiration behind the use of imaginative architectural representation on such pieces of art and architecture in the Muslim period, a number of Islamic principles are revealed. It has always been required that Muslims should exercise a degree of imagination, especially in architectural representations. The imagination of architectural forms, as an idea, exists in the Qur'an. Different passages that describe Paradise and Hell give a detailed description of the forms of its architectural buildings. Similarly, we may quote an imaginative description in another Qur'anic reference to an architectural form which involves Solomon and the Queen of Sheba, where Solomon ordered the construction of a *Ṣarḥ* or palace built with slabs of glass or crystal to demonstrate his supremacy and authority over Queen Sheba. According to this Qur'anic verse<sup>988</sup>, the queen interpreted this building floor as a body of water. We may deduce from this verse that in Islam there are two degrees of imagination in architectural forms: firstly, imagining a building that does not exist in reality, secondly, imagining and understanding a building as something different from what has been described in words, for example, understanding it as symbolic reflecting religious or political messages.

Imaginative architectural iconographies further explain how their significance may correspond to Islamic theological thought, providing a better understanding of the whole meaning of the decoration. According to Oleg Grabar, in order to avoid any competition with God's creations, artists created their art forms by organizing the tiny

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<sup>987</sup> Papadopoulo 1980, p.103

<sup>988</sup> (Qur'an, Sura 27, verse 45).

components they are representing in a random imaginative way. This encouraged a higher level of imagination in the minds of Muslims by introducing more forms that are imaginative<sup>989</sup>. If it is true that this is a foundation of creating Muslim art, we may find a parallel in Qur'anic verses. From a philosophical and religious angle, all matter is composed of small parts which are turned into larger matter by the power of God, as indicated in different Qur'anic verses<sup>990</sup> describing the human being as being created of small cells turned into a human. Hence, the artist creates his art in a similar way to the way God creates living creatures; however, to avoid any competition with God's creations, the artist had to transmit his imaginative touches to his figures to avoid any resemblance to reality. This religious theory is also applied to architectural representation; especially if we consider that representing the outer world, as manifested in architectural forms, is a work of imagination and not just imitation. In agreement with this idea, Rekha Jhanji argued that once the artist has represented a moment of the outer world from his point of view, he separates it from the external real world. This resulted in the idea that the architectural form produced was no longer an imitation of reality<sup>991</sup>.

As far as imaginative architectural representation in Muslim art is concerned, purely schematic architectural forms appear in the *Maqāmāt* of the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris<sup>992</sup> dated 619 A.H. /1222 A.D., the Schefer *Ḥarīrī Maqāmāt*<sup>993</sup> dated 634 A.H. /1237 A.D. and the *Kalīlah wa Dimnah* in the Bibliothèque Nationale<sup>994</sup>. Alexander Papadopoulos, when describing architectural representation in the Schefer *Maqāmāt*, emphasized the idea that: "purely schematic architecture was painted

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<sup>989</sup> Grabar 2000c, p.46.

<sup>990</sup> (Qur'an, Sura 75, verses 37,38,39; Sura 85, verses 6,7; Sura 96, verse 2; Sura 22, verse 5; Sura 23 verses 12-16; Sura 40, verse 67).

<sup>991</sup> Jhanji 1980, p.116, 117.

<sup>992</sup> (Ms. Arabe 6094).

<sup>993</sup> (Ms. Arabe 5847).

<sup>994</sup> (Ms. Arabe 3465).



simply as a sign, as indication of a fact. This is only on the plane of language of verbal communication whereas on the plane of art such architecture is an outright failure as is also the device of denoting the sky by a blue lunule<sup>995</sup>. This use of imaginative architectural forms to transmit meanings persisted throughout Muslim rule. Imagination was also a focus for artists in Persian areas, with Persian miniatures representing architectural forms as an expression of a symbolic or ideal world, where fantasy and beauty are indicated, which led artists to favour imaginative architectural representations<sup>996</sup>. Architectural representation shows different types of surreal buildings which either show features that are not commonly used in architecture in reality, or show others which are impossible to achieve in reality. For example, the various versions of the miniature paintings of the Nizāmī Khamsah manuscript, especially those from 1439 A.D., contain many simplified architectural forms which are imagined<sup>997</sup>.

The next point for discussion is the significance of imaginative architectural forms on objects of art and architecture in Muslim art, which had freed themselves from the rigid aesthetic meanings to indicate significance.

### **3.1.2.3 Significance**

In terms of architecture, the architectural representations (figs.1-10) on the walls of the Great Mosque of Damascus, may be described as imaginative. The political significance of these architectural iconographies, from the artist's point of view, is implied in the representation of the building forms of a city reworked by the artist as shown in the scenes on the walls of the Mosque. The buildings represented are not identical to real structures, so the imaginative skill of the artist in representing

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<sup>995</sup> Papadopoulo 1980, p.104.

<sup>996</sup> Adahl 1981, p.46.

<sup>997</sup> Adahl 1981, p.49.

architectural iconographies in this media of art is in the manifestation of their imagined architectural elements.

The artist creates a city that does not exist, introducing a model of a perfect future city with magnificent richly decorated buildings under the rule of the Muslim Caliph. Thus, this method of using imaginative architectural forms is to achieve a dream of a city that Muslims will enjoy under their ruler, emphasizing his authority and power. It is possible to imagine surreal architectural representation<sup>998</sup>. For example, in the Western arcade of the Mosque (fig.10), on the centre of the spandrel of the second arch from the South, there is an illustration of a two-storeyed building with non-Classical proportions. Both the compartments and the roof of the building are rendered in accordance with the private imagining eye of the artist; for instance in the design of the roof which looks like a bunch of leaves set upside down as a basket<sup>999</sup>. The compartments of the building are depicted in an unusual form, having a set of arches behind and between which mullioned windows appear over four doors, with large pearls suspended from chains from their lintels. Another unusual feature is the lower part of the doors, which has a decoration of a latticed balustrade represented with a striking image. Furthermore, the supports of the arches and the balustrades in the architectural representation are of the same alignment, which is impossible in reality. Even if we assume that these balustrades represent the floor of the building, it is not possible to find them on the same level. Accordingly, the representation of these compartments originates from the imagination of the artist<sup>1000</sup>.

On the Umayyad metal bowl, there is another interesting example of an imaginative architectural representation, the fire temple (figs.39, 41). It was created to give the impression of a building representation composed of two buildings in one: a

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<sup>998</sup> Casey 1984, p.245.

<sup>999</sup> Brisch 1988, p.14, 15.

<sup>1000</sup> Brisch 1988, p.14, 15.

garden palace and a religious structure. The combination of the fire temple and the garden surrounding it derives from the imagination of the artist. However, there was a degree of imitation of reality, as the artist included in his representation of the fire temple a clear reference to its religious significance in offering its blessings of the infinite light.

Imaginative architectural representation is also recognized in the building iconographies of the Ayyubid glass bottle. These refer to general religious structures, and do not imitate any specific building form because the design of the building represented does not have any peculiar sign or element that marks it as a specific structure that exists in reality. In fact, it displays general architectural elements that can be found in any religious building, such as columns, arches, domes, towers and entrances.

Another example of an imaginative architectural form is the Mosque illustrated on the frontispiece of the manuscript of Sana'a (figs.140-143), which shows a degree of imagination in the representation of the Mosque design. Such imagination was vital in reflecting the function of the architectural representation. Firstly, it indicates to the viewer that this representation does not signify a specific actual Mosque such as Damascus or Sana'a, but rather represents a general plan of a Mosque. Accordingly, it cannot reflect any political meanings that may commemorate a particular Mosque's construction. Secondly, by his imaginative representation the artist indicates that the Mosque on the frontispiece refers to the general place where this Qur'anic manuscript is kept. That is why there is no reference to a specific Mosque plan, but instead to the idea of a Mosque structure housing the Qur'an, with more than one imagined architectural element appearing in the illustration. The imaginative feature in this representation is that it has more than one model of inspiration; namely the Mosques of Sana'a, Kūfah, Medina, and Damascus. As it has

models in reality, it is imitative; however, it is at the same time imaginative, in the sense that the architectural features found in the illustration are not found in reality in one Mosque.

There are further examples associated with imaginative architectural representations on objects of art. Such forms sometimes represent general plans of architecture to serve special significance, thus most of the building representations bear no relation to any actual monuments<sup>1001</sup>. This includes the Schefer Maqāmāt of Al-Ḥarīrī (now in the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris), in which the fiftieth Maqāmāh (fol.164) (fig.164) represents a Mosque, and shows a building representation with an imaginative feature. The significance of the illustrated Mosque is understood as not referring to a real Mosque, but rather to a general architectural plan carrying the name of the Caliph during whose reign the events of the Maqāmāh took place<sup>1002</sup>. This is to describe a religious place mentioned in the text of the manuscript, and at the same time to commemorate the name of the ruler and the time of the manuscript production, giving a political significance to the architectural representation illustrated. The plan and form of this Mosque illustration are similar to their counterparts in the Istanbul Maqāmāt version (fig.234), as well as in other versions of the Maqāmāt manuscripts. What makes it an imaginative architectural representation is that whereas in the Schefer version the Mosque representation contains an inscription referring to Caliph Al-Mustanşir, in the Istanbul version, it shows an inscription with the name of Al-Mustaʿşim, which reads: “and our Lord the Imam Al-Mustaʿşim Bī Allah, Commander of the faithful, may God prolong his days”.

According to Oleg Grabar, there might be a relationship between this Mosque representation in the Schefer version and its equivalent in the Istanbul version, due to

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<sup>1001</sup> Haldane 1978, p.15.

<sup>1002</sup> Grabar 1963, p.106, 107.

the fact that Al- Musta'shim is the son of Al-Mustanşir. One opinion suggests that the Mosque illustration in the Schefer version represents the Mustanşiriyyah Mosque in Baghdad. However, as the architectural representation of the Maqāmah does not reflect any of the characteristic architectural elements of the real Mustanşiriyyah Mosque, this cannot be the case.

In addition to these examples, another form of imaginative architectural representation is referred to by including in it the architectural characteristics of a certain region, and attributing them to a different provenance and era. Imaginative architectural forms of non-Muslim origin, such as Byzantine and Hellenistic forms of architecture are represented in the mosaic decoration of the Great Mosque of Damascus in Syria. The artist reworked his imaginative representation of the city of Damascus as it would be under the Muslim Caliph. The representation of famous architectural iconographies of religious and educational fame on the portal of the Mosque Madrasa of Sultan Ḥasan in Cairo demonstrates the same point of attributing the architectural characteristics of a certain region to a different provenance and era. The plans and forms of these famous architectural iconographies were verified to differ from those attributed to Cairene architectural models. This imaginative treatment establishes their significance in comparing their grandeur and fame to the Mosque Madrasa itself. In a further example, the Sasanian fire temple on the metal bowl is imaginative in the sense that it exists on a piece of art used in the Muslim world.

In the illustrations of the Schefer Maqāmāt of Al-Ḥarīrī manuscript, one architectural form predominates, regardless of the name of the provenance mentioned in the text, namely the style of architecture in Iraq. It serves the significance of the architectural representation by showing the function or type of the building whose form details were not mentioned in the text. It was possible for the artist to imagine

how the buildings looked, and to produce them in an imaginative form in the manuscript, regardless of where the buildings originated. This is possible as there is no detailed description in the text of the form of the building shown, and the text and scene describe only the building function and type. At the same time, these building forms clearly reflect the artistic background of the artist which influenced his architectural representation. Even though the events of the Maqāmāt took place in various regions of the Muslim world, including Syria, Egypt, Iraq, and Persia, the architectural forms in its illustrations did not clearly demonstrate this. It would appear that the artist relied on one style of architecture to reflect the place and time of the manuscript<sup>1003</sup>.

The next section will discuss in detail how the imitative or imaginative architectural form can be representational, in the sense that it reflects a wish or a hope for its onlooker. Whether it is produced from the imitation of real models in nature, or the imagination of the artist, the architectural form needs to transmit a meaning to the spectator. This means that the architectural form has to be representational to express a meaning of a feeling or wish, and a hope that may attract the spectator to unveil its significance, as will be explained in the following discussion.

### **3.1.3 Representational Architectural Representation**

#### **3.1.3.1 Meaning**

Considering the role of imitative and imaginative structural forms of architectural iconographies and their clear meaning in identifying significance, it is necessary to ascertain the role played by representational structural forms in the light of studying objects of art and architecture, and to attempt a deeper analysis of their significance. My primary goal in this section is to analyze how architectural forms

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<sup>1003</sup> Guthrie 1995, p.22.

signify meanings. I will begin with an identification of the meaning of the representational architectural form, its origin and its significance.

The term “representational” is somewhat slippery, and it is essential at the outset to consider just how this term is used in the art of architectural representation. Is a representational architectural form different from the previous two types: the imitative and imaginative? Alternatively, does it have some similarities with both types? If it does, it can be better described as representational architectural form, which can be in either an idealized, actual, or imagined depiction<sup>1004</sup>. In other words, architectural representation in Islamic art, whether imitative or imaginative, is representational. Whether it recalls models in reality, which makes it imitative, or is from the imagination of the artist, so is imaginative, it evokes feelings, and satisfies wishes and hopes through its form. Several conclusions may be drawn from the particular uses of representational architectural forms on objects of art and archaeology, which I am putting forward. These need to be made explicit, along with cautions about how such implications may not interfere in meaning with the imitative and imaginative structural forms of the architectural iconographies.

Representational architectural form implies that the architectural representation creates a relationship between itself, as a work of art, and something in nature, that is not a work of art<sup>1005</sup>. Accordingly, architectural forms may recall values or virtues. Hence, recalling feelings or values, which are not works of art, makes the architectural forms illustrated representational<sup>1006</sup>.

What are the principles which provide the basis for the architectural form that represents significance? The presentation of an architectural form as representational of feelings and emotions is not only composed of characteristics, which are not

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<sup>1004</sup> Stiny 1978, p.73.

<sup>1005</sup> Collingwood 1963, p.42.

<sup>1006</sup> Scruton 1982, p.216.

limited to any particular rules, but is also judged by rules. Here, within the context of a particular group of rules, the representational architectural form is complicated. The character of the architectural representation, by which the artist represents a certain subject, depends on the social and cultural conditions of the time. This, in turn, is influenced by the personality of individual artists, patrons, and rulers<sup>1007</sup>. The artist's skill lies in representing the nature and meaning of his experience in the form of an architectural image, thus making it tangible. The artist could have achieved this by understanding representational architectural forms that declare significance in their individual figures as symbol of the universal truth<sup>1008</sup>. This modified architectural image that the artist creates to indicate significance and make representational is described by aesthetics as representational when it works as an act of make-believe, or, in other words, when it is part of the process of making the architectural representation believed by the viewer. In this case, it could be that the architectural image shown is imitative of a real building or imaginative<sup>1009</sup>.

Representational architectural forms fall into roughly two categories according to the extent to which the architectural representation is identical to its original mode: first, there is imitative or mimetic, and second, there is imaginative or symbolic. In the first category, the presented set of images (arrangements of lines, colours, and sounds) resembles the set of images which it calls up in the imagination. In the second category, the presented images usually do not directly resemble the images, which they suggest<sup>1010</sup>. As a result, it is possible to say that the difference between imaginative, imitative, and representational is that in representational architectural forms there is a lower degree of imagination compared to the other two forms. In each of the two categories, theories which have some chance of successfully defining

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<sup>1007</sup> Munro 1970, p.294.

<sup>1008</sup> Arnheim 1974, p.169.

<sup>1009</sup> Walton 1990, p.51, 52.

<sup>1010</sup> Murno 1970, p.184.



representational architectural forms seem to place a great emphasis on how the architectural form should be exposed to set a standard in terms of representation. There are two main theories of representation that could also apply to architectural representation, namely conventionalism and resemblance theories. According to the first, in order to be representational, the picture of the architectural representation need not resemble its original model. The theory states that there is no relationship between ordinary (actual) and pictorial (image of) visual information, and the theory refers to pictures as vehicles for conventional symbolism. Therefore, we learn to read the conventional symbol of a cultural picture just as we learn to read the conventional words of a language. As the word *cat* does not resemble the animal, so the picture of a *cat* need not resemble its subject matter in the flesh<sup>1011</sup>.

Nelson Goodman justifies this theory by stating that when the imitative architectural representation is representational, it shows the architectural form as we may look upon it. The representational character accordingly created a version or construal of the architectural representation that is not copied but achieved<sup>1012</sup>. This theory of representational architectural forms appears to correlate with Mikel Dufrenne's concept when he talks of representational forms of art. In his opinion, the representational architectural form is not imitative because the expressed architectural form is the possibility of the represented, and the represented is the reality of the expressed<sup>1013</sup>. The expressed architectural form, in other words, transfigures the represented and confers on it a meaning, through which it becomes different from what it enjoys within reality<sup>1014</sup>.

R. G. Collingwood further explained the difference between the imitative and the representational architectural form. He suggests: "Representation must be

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<sup>1011</sup> Hagen 1986, p.86.

<sup>1012</sup> Goodman 1992, p.89.

<sup>1013</sup> Dufrenne 1973, p.185.

<sup>1014</sup> Dufrenne 1973, p.188.

distinguished from imitation. A work of art is imitative in virtue of its relation to another work of art, which affords it a model of artistic excellence; it is representational in virtue of its relation to something in 'nature', that is, something not a work of art"<sup>1015</sup>. He adds: "The painter has used the fact that he can paint as means to the production of a likeness; then he has used the fact that he is producing a likeness as an opportunity for producing a work of art"<sup>1016</sup>. Thus, it should be observed that representational architectural representation is different from imitative architectural form. Imitation can be limited to a single pair of images, that is to say, the imitative form and its model in reality, whereas the representational architectural form involves compiling many details. The second difference between both forms of representation lies in the fact that imitative architectural forms are conveyed through imitative expression, by materialistically imitating a model. However, in a representational architectural form a materialistic imitation of the original form is not necessary, since arousing a feeling or emotion, which is the symbolic expression of its meaning, is the issue<sup>1017</sup>. However, this does not imply that architectural iconographies, in order to be representational, have to be imaginary; on the contrary, to make an image representational is to make something of it unreal either in appearance or meaning<sup>1018</sup>. When the architectural form is representational, it means that it is perceived as something which exists separately from the architectural figure itself<sup>1019</sup>.

On the other hand, according to the second theory, that is the resemblance theory, in order to be representational, the architectural representation needs to resemble the original model which inspired it. The theory states that pictures succeed

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<sup>1015</sup> Collingwood 1970, p.42.

<sup>1016</sup> Collingwood 1970, p.45.

<sup>1017</sup> Murno 1970, p.184.

<sup>1018</sup> Walton 1990, p.106, 107.

<sup>1019</sup> Sparshott 1970, p.364.

as representations because they contain the same type of information as the world they represent<sup>1020</sup>. According to James Gibson, the true similarity, formal and perceptual, between pictures and the world they depict lies not in the presence of perceptiveness but in the shared possession of the invariant information specifying world properties. He argued that a picture, by definition, is a surface treated to contain the same type of invariant information as the part of the world it depicts<sup>1021</sup>.

So far, it has been established that the representational architectural form may be imitative or imaginative. Before investigating how a representational architectural form indicates significance, I would like to focus on a study of the origin of representational architectural imagery in Muslim art, to examine what it may reveal of facts and meanings in relation to Islamic art.

### **3.1.3.2 Origin in Muslim Art**

In order to explain the significance of each architectural representation, it is necessary to recognize that architectural representation, with the three structural forms previously explained; namely imitative, imaginative, and representational, was mainly used as a structural form to evoke emotions and feelings in the spectator. In this section, I intend to focus on analyzing the use of architectural forms as expressionistic forms in Islamic art, which was thought to have been a non-expressionist art discouraging the expression of feelings and emotions. I will also justify how the idea of using architectural representation in art agrees with the principles of Islamic theology, which may have caused its persistence.

In Greek art, the architectural representation of the Greek temple was used to express a spirit of peace and resignation. In Medieval eras, the Gothic Cathedral was an architectural symbol of reaching towards heaven, evoking a feeling of mystery.

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<sup>1020</sup> Hagen 1986, p.87.

<sup>1021</sup> Gibson 1971, IV, p.27-35; Gibson 1973, VI, p.43-45.

Accordingly, building representation in art can often be an expression of worship<sup>1022</sup>. In many other cases, temples were understood to symbolize the corners of the earth, while tombs signify the underworld<sup>1023</sup>.

This way of observing architectural representation, by penetrating the heart of its significance, has also been adapted to Islamic art. Representational architectural imagery, therefore, developed when not only does the building form evoke feelings, but also the building plan and type evoke emotions, which help in understanding its purpose and significance. Firstly, considering the building plan, this is shown in the example of Qubbat al-Şulaybiyyah which has an octagonal plan of architecture, which is reminiscent of the Dome of the Rock. Furthermore, it induces an idea of holiness, as was represented on one of the two Mamluk Baltimore glass beakers<sup>1024</sup>. Secondly, considering the building type, the type of architectural form represented evokes a feeling which is either of a religious nature, if it resembles a Mosque, or political, if it is an image of a castle. This is the feeling that both the artist and the viewer experience when looking at its equivalent in reality<sup>1025</sup>.

The reason for using architectural representation to represent and express feelings can be explained from two angles. Firstly, Islamic art is non-expressionistic, and consequently does not encourage the expression of feelings and emotions, which could only be referred to through either gestures or architectural representations. The second is that when architectural representation expresses feelings, it personifies Islamic theology. With the first approach, what makes it more complicated is the fact that direct facial expression of emotion in Muslim art is rare. This artistic theological idea was not invented in the Muslim era, but can be traced back to the Ancient Egyptian period, when facial expression was prohibited in art. According to Ancient

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<sup>1022</sup> Whittick 1960, p.350.

<sup>1023</sup> Langer 1959, p.97.

<sup>1024</sup> Brend 1991, p.32.

<sup>1025</sup> Collingwood 1963, p.53.

Egyptian religion, representations of the King or Queen were manifestations of God on earth<sup>1026</sup>; therefore, their representations should not have any facial expression. According to Gay Robins: "One of the conventions of Ancient Egyptian art was that formal figures of the elite should be shown in the ideal form desired for the next world, without any signs of disease, deformity, or old age...most statues of the Kings were made...also as embodiments and reminders of the King's power, strengthening the ties between the King and the local communities..."<sup>1027</sup>. He goes on to say: "the King was the link between the human and divine worlds, although the King was himself a human being the office of Kingship was divine, the human body of the King was the vessel in which divine Kingship manifested itself in the form of the royal Ka or life force that was passed on from one King to the next...Thus it made sense to show the statue in a special way looking ahead at what was happening in front of it so that the living performers of the rituals could interact with the divine or deceased recipient"<sup>1028</sup>.

The lack of facial expression in Islamic art was recognized by Richard Ettinghausen when studying some examples of Islamic art such as the *Maqāmāt* manuscript dated 1337 A.D. (now in Oxford, the Bodleian Library), in which he pointed out that the faces are stylized and offer only one set of features<sup>1029</sup>. Alexander Papadopoulos also emphasized the rarity of direct expression through facial features when he stated that in Arabic manuscripts all expressions of lyric, tragic, or epic disappeared<sup>1030</sup>. He notes: "In the Arab manuscripts one almost never sees any expression of great lyrical, tragic, or epic sentiments. Even mystic symbolism, of which there were certainly numerous and eminent Arabian representatives, can be

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<sup>1026</sup> Wilkinson 2003, p.54.

<sup>1027</sup> Robins 1997, p.75, 113.

<sup>1028</sup> Robins 1997, p.18,19.

<sup>1029</sup> Ettinghausen 1962, p.151.

<sup>1030</sup> Papadopoulos 1980, p.95.

sensed only on occasional frontispieces courtiers stand motionless around a prince holding a cup...". He also stated on another occasion: "The book by Ḥarīrī was immensely attractive to artists because it offered them boundless possibilities of realizing an entire social typology with the poses and gestures..."<sup>1031</sup>. Duncan Haldane claimed that non-expressionist human figurative representation continued to exist in the Muslim era under the rule of the Mamluks, when it evidently increased and was more unnatural than ever before, especially towards the end of the Mamluk era<sup>1032</sup>. He wrote: "Little emotion is shown in the manuscripts produced in the Burji period and the figures become even more stilted than before. In the Paris Furusiyya (Arabe 2826) the faces are of a completely different kind to those just mentioned and in some cases little more than quick line sketches"<sup>1033</sup>.

The reliance on the structural form of the architectural representation as representational uncovers how Islamic art is, in itself, expressionistic through non-expressionistic images, including architectural representations. It is not easy to reflect such feelings through emotionless images such as architectural figures, which further emphasizes the skills of the artist. It would have been much easier if the artist was dealing with human figures, through whose facial features feelings of happiness or sadness would be easily expressed<sup>1034</sup>. I would argue that in addition to the introduction of body gestures in Islamic art to express meanings, artists used architectural iconographies. The problem of the non-expressionistic nature of Islamic art forced the artist to rely on indirect ways to express meanings, such as gestures and the representation of architectural imagery. This theory was supported by Thomas Arnold when he stated: "Charming as these pictures are in colour, graceful in outline...they are for the most part lacking in any attempt at the expression of

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<sup>1031</sup> Papadopoulos 1980, p.95.

<sup>1032</sup> Haldane 1978, p.28.

<sup>1033</sup> Haldane 1978, p.28.

<sup>1034</sup> Langer 1959, p.25.

emotion...in consideration of this lack of varieties of emotive expression...the painter had to devise conventional modes of indicating emotions”<sup>1035</sup>. For example, by dealing with expressions through gestures, astonishment is expressed as a man putting his finger to his lips, while the gnawing of the back of the head shows the meaning of despair. In comparison, sadness and grief are indicated by a veil on the face of a human figure or by the tossing of the arms<sup>1036</sup>. The gesture of the heads of two listeners in a group inclines into the opposite direction explains their interaction with the group of people around them. The illustrations of *Al-Mubashshir Mukhtār Al-Ḥikam wa Mahāsin Al-Kalim*<sup>1037</sup>, from the first half of the thirteenth century A.D. Syria, contain a scene (fig.235) of a Salon with a representation reflecting the objection of a student. It shows a student on the left, with his gaze lost in the skies, as an expression of a thinking attitude, (now in the C. Ahmet Kütüphanesi Top Kapu Saray, Istanbul)<sup>1038</sup>.

A miniature representing a physician and attendant with *Heliotrope*, as one of the illustrations (fig.236) of the *De Materia Medica* manuscript, attributed to Iraq and dated 1224 A.D., links to the same hypothesis. It depicts a physician pointing his hand towards a plant, while his second hand is in his mouth. This attitude indicates that he was mediating on the medical properties of this particular flora. The person to the right is represented with a white beard, long garment and hooked crook, while the attendant opposite is cutting a stalk with a long knife, while holding it steady with his other hand<sup>1039</sup>. Another illustration (fig.237) in the same manuscript depicts the preparation of medicine from a flower of a wild vine. It shows to the left side, a prince seated on a throne, raising his right hand in an attitude of asking something of

<sup>1035</sup> Arnold 1965, p.133,134.

<sup>1036</sup> Arnold 1965, p.133,134.

<sup>1037</sup> (Ahmet III, 3206, fol.24v).

<sup>1038</sup> Papadopoulo 1980, p.99.

<sup>1039</sup> Atıl 1975, p.55.

another person seated on a stool in front of him. The latter is a physician characterized by a dark complexion in a gesture of explaining something by pointing to his eye, as a translation of the text of this illustration which reads: "and for eye inhalation"<sup>1040</sup>. A third example of gesture representation in the same manuscript of the *De Materia Medica* is the illustration (fig.238) depicting the physician Erasistratos with an associate. The gesture of the two people, both the reclining physician and other male figure standing in front of him, indicates that they are mediating on the various cures mentioned in the text using the traditional gesture of contemplation<sup>1041</sup>.

There is, however, a second theory to explain why Islamic art relied on architectural representations in expressing meanings and its relation to the principles of Islamic religion. Being non-expressionistic, architectural representation further reveals an Islamic principle in which art is associated with religion. It explains why Islamic art lacks any human emotional or expressionist forms, and verifies the tendency of favouring architectural representation in Muslim art. The tendency to use architectural representation recognized the belief of Muslims that representing human figures with facial emotions is considered, from a theological perspective, as an attempt to compete with God's creation of human beings.

K.A.C. Creswell has confirmed that there was a prohibition against painting in Muslim art, which he explained as follows: "The prohibition against painting did not exist in early Islam, but it grew up gradually, partly as a result of the inherited temperamental dislike of Semitic races for representational art, partly because of the influence of important Jewish converts, and partly because of the fear of magic"<sup>1042</sup>.

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<sup>1040</sup> Atıl 1975, p.56.

<sup>1041</sup> Atıl 1975, p.58.

<sup>1042</sup> Creswell 1946, p.166.



### 3.1.3.3 Significance

While the previous discussion has shed light on the way representational architectural form in Muslim art acquired a theological base, it is also necessary to consider the issue of theological impact in identifying the feelings, emotions, and expressions these architectural forms are signifying. In this section, I will explain how a representational architectural form indicates significance on objects of art and on architecture. I will argue that the significance of the representational architectural form, whether imitative or imaginative, is not only decorative, but also expresses feelings and emotions, as any work of art does, and reflects a disguised signature of the artist. However, I will try to explain that these feelings and emotions were introduced in a Muslim garb influenced by Islamic theological thoughts.

To discuss how a representational architectural imagery expresses feelings and emotions, as well as the artist's signature, requires consideration of various theoretical and critical works. While these various theories may differ widely in terms of their explanations of how a work of art is expressive of feelings, I will consider how these feelings are signified through the representational structural form of the architectural iconographies with theological roots.

In order for the architectural form to be representational and imply significance, it has to be expressive. In John Hospers's theory, he not only explores the notion of expression, but also emphasizes the role of both the artist and the work of art, in this case the architectural representation, in introducing feelings and emotions. According to his definition, the architectural representation is in some way expressive, especially of human feeling<sup>1043</sup>. Hospers then characterizes the general meaning of expression: "The term expression (and the related term expressive) can refer both to a process

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<sup>1043</sup> Hospers 1997, p.172.

engaged in by the artist and to a feature of the product of that process”<sup>1044</sup>. This implies that there are two types of expression in art: the first is related to the artist, showing what the artist expresses and feels when producing the architectural representation, and the second is related to the architectural representation itself. Here, within the context of the artist, Hospers goes on to identify the role of the artist in the expressionist theory of art. He comments that the artist in producing his architectural imagery representing a meaning whether religious, political, or social is being inspired by an emotional stimulation, whose nature and source he does not discover until he can find the architectural form that expresses it, which involves bringing it into a real form that can be seen and conceived by him and the spectator<sup>1045</sup>. Curt J. Ducasse concluded that when the artist presents a work of art, he is emotionally stirred by something that he perceived while producing his work of art, or by something he was thinking of; alternatively, he may be psychologically influenced, so he tries to express the feelings that he is inspired with by embodying them in his work of art<sup>1046</sup>.

According to Hospers, Collingwood, and Ducasse, architectural representation as a form of art cannot express emotions in itself. They suggest that instead it is the emotions of the artist that are reflected in the piece of art he is representing. In the case of architectural representation, the feelings of the artist form signs, and hidden signatures, referring to his origin, religious, or artistic background. Hence, artists represent architectural representation in relation to this context. For example: Byzantine structures, like those in Damascus Mosque; Gothic, like those of the Mosque Madrasa of Sultan Hasan; Chinese, like those in the manuscript of the *Jami' Al-Tawārīkh*; Spanish or Moroccan as those in the *Bayāḍ wa Riyāḍ* manuscript, and

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<sup>1044</sup> Hospers 1997, p.172.

<sup>1045</sup> Hospers 1997, p.172.

<sup>1046</sup> Ducasse 1955, p.68,124, 125.

Christian with representation of crosses like those in the Ayyubid glass bottle. D.W. Gotshalk considers the restricted role of the artist in expressing his feelings in architectural representation. In an attempt to explain how an artist may represent himself in his work of art, Gotshalk notes that the work of art is: "the expression of the personality of the artist or, more precisely, of his character as a technician and as a man. In non-representational works, the sort of materials can suggest this that the artist selects and emphasizes, by the way his presentational designs are built, by the abstract expressive content that he reiterates or underlines, and by the aims or goals or functions of his works"<sup>1047</sup>. If the religious, political, and social meanings that are expressed by the architectural representation are not those of the artist, where does the significance come from? While the previous theories of representation in an art work may provide necessary and sufficient meanings to explain emotions in architectural iconographies, a theory about the artist which simply masks a great many other difficulties, will not sustain the weight the overall theory of representation asks it to bear.

The emphasis on the role of the work of art, as separated from that of the artist, results in a further expressionism theory; one which relies on the role of the work of art in evoking feelings and emotions in the spectator. According to this theory, the expressed feelings and emotions that the work of art is signifying can be described as those of the spectator evoked in him. This implies that if we say that the architectural representation is representational and expressive, as it signifies, for example, a religious meaning, it means that the architectural form makes the viewer feel such a religious implication when looking at it. In other words, the architectural form creates an evocation, by inducing a religious feeling. R.G. Collingwood describes this evocation role in detail in his theory by stating: "The true definition of

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<sup>1047</sup> Gotshalk 1947, p.140, 141.

representational art is not that the artefact resembles an original (in which case I call the representation literal), but that the feeling evoked by the artefact resembles the feeling evoked by the original (I call this emotional representation)”<sup>1048</sup>. E. Hanslick when considering this theory of relating the emotion evoked in the spectator says: “the feeling of hope is inseparable from the conception of a happier state which is to come, and which we compare with the actual state. The feeling of sadness involves the notion of a past state of happiness. These are perfectly definite ideas or conceptions, and in defaults of them-the apparatus of thought, as it were-no feeling can be called hope or sadness for thought them alone can a feeling assume a definite character”<sup>1049</sup>. He adds: “Our emotions have no isolated existence in the mind, and cannot, therefore, be evoked by an art which is incapable of representing the remaining series of mental states”<sup>1050</sup>. This theory is particularly supported if applied to architectural representation in Islamic art, but only with those imitative structural forms in which the feelings evoked in the spectator are similar to what we feel when looking at the original models of inspiration.

I argue that architectural representation, which is one type of artwork, does not in fact express what the artist or the spectator is feeling, as was mentioned in the previous expressionist theories. This is in the sense that if the architectural representation is conveying religious connotations, it does not mean that the producer is religious when representing it, or the spectator is religious when looking at it<sup>1051</sup>. Vincent Thomas summarized this opinion by stating that: “Unlike merely giving vent to or betraying a feeling, artistic expression consists in the deliberate creation of something which “embodies” or “objectifies” the feeling”<sup>1052</sup>.

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<sup>1048</sup> Collingwood 1970, p.53.

<sup>1049</sup> Hanslick 1891, p.34.

<sup>1050</sup> Hanslick 1891, p.33.

<sup>1051</sup> Hospers 1997, p.174.

<sup>1052</sup> Thomas 1962, p.31.

Edmund Gurney's position in this debate is that the emotions and expressions that are conceived when looking at or listening to a work of art such as architectural iconographies or music, are not those of the artist who produced them, or of the receiver, but instead belong to the work of art itself<sup>1053</sup>. Another position on this nature of aesthetic judgment, which, like the view of Gurney, attributes the expression of feelings to the work of art and not to the artist, is R.A. Sharpe's expressionism theory. He considers that the composer of the work of art has a distinctive relationship with what he produces. This relationship is similar to that of the actor and the character he plays; the artist of the architectural representation knows how to make his piece of art convey religious, political, and social significance<sup>1054</sup>. Monroe Beardsley and O. K. Bouwsma agreed that works of art have "anthropomorphic" properties, which the first called "qualities" and the second called "characters". Consequently, we may characterize the work of art as being sad, sentimental, or impersonal. Art works thus have properties designated by the same words which designate feelings, emotions, attitudes, moods, and personal characteristics of human beings<sup>1055</sup>.

After a brief overview of some of the possible theories which may be valid concerning the representational structural form of architectural representation, we can see that several key areas are addressed as claiming to be the source of the emotional and expressive meaning of architectural representation. First, consideration is given to the idea that the emotions and feelings signified by the architectural form are not those of the artist. Second, the architectural form may be expressive in itself, by evoking feelings only in the imitative forms, which evoke feelings in the spectator similar to those evoked when looking at the original models. Third, the architectural

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<sup>1053</sup> Gurney 1880, p.317-328.

<sup>1054</sup> Sharpe 1983, p.106, 107.

<sup>1055</sup> Beardsley 1958, p.321-332; Bouwsma 1950, p.75-101.

form could be representational in itself, and has some qualities and characteristics that give it a religious, political, or social significance.

I personally agree with D.W. Prall, who summarized the process in which the representational architectural imagery may indicate significance by saying: "The expressiveness of art, then, is not unfamiliar phenomenon so far as it is merely one case of physical objects revealing on their surface, and thus specifying, the characteristics they express. But in works of art, the means to expression is consciously and technically taken as physical material of given qualities and possibilities of aesthetic surface, to be so coloured and so arranged in space as to give in its own way- the way possible to spatial form, and lines, and colours-the specific significance that the artist feels and is thus able to express, provided his technique is adequate"<sup>1056</sup>.

On the basis on these observations, regarding a plausible explanation for the representational theory of architectural iconography, I propose to examine the various types of feelings and emotions that are expressed by the architectural iconographies on Muslim architecture and objects of art included in this study. I will also consider the theological implications behind such exposed feelings and emotions on these architectural structural forms. I believe that the visual imageries created by the artist through his architectural representations are not exclusively produced as a mere artistic function. In my opinion, the artist intended to introduce the architectural form as representational to ideas based on Islamic theology, regardless of his origin or religion, or even the origin of the structural form he is using. As a result, it is demonstrated that artists had to conform to the rules followed by other Muslim artists, in terms of the meaning of architectural representations, who keep Muslim influence in the art works they are creating within Muslim community.

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<sup>1056</sup> Prall 1967, p.248.

In architectural representations, in order to reflect the political significance of the architectural forms on the walls of the Great Mosque of Damascus, ensuring the power, authority, and control of the Muslim ruler, the buildings are considered representational architectural forms as the artist reworked them in a special way. Through their form, plan, design, and decoration, the building forms represented evoke the hope that the place where the Muslims live, under their ruler, will look like a Paradise on earth. This is adequate in attracting the Muslims to the architectural forms shown, implying the relationship between the buildings represented, and life on earth. Hence, the architectural representation on the walls of the Great Mosque of Damascus may evoke a feeling of its being associated with daily life in the minds of the spectators. Associated with this evocation of a wish or a hope, the architectural forms in the Great Mosque of Damascus indirectly introduce the feeling of fear. These beautiful, lavishly decorated architectural forms give the impression that their inhabitants would enjoy settled and luxurious living. It is the possibility of not enjoying this dream. Moreover, it operates as a political announcement that suggests to Muslims that only in their ruler's reign, as the artist tried to indicate, will this dream come true.

The Mosque Madrasa of Sultan Hasan in Cairo may demonstrate the same theological principle. Even though the Madrasa's architectural forms represented by its portal identify their significance, by reflecting its grandeur and fame, they are considered representational in the sense that they raise a feeling that reminds Muslims of the virtues of pursuing education and religion to fulfil their hopes and wishes of gaining God's approval. Accordingly, it raises the contradictory feeling of fear of the loss that Muslims may face if they do not grasp this chance. In the Mosque Madrasa, the religious and educational types of the buildings sculptured by the portal by their very nature call to mind the virtues of religion and education.

Now turning to the example of the mausoleum of Baybars (fig.28) and the shrine of Gazur Gah (fig.38), which, as discussed in the previous chapter, have architectural representations that signify the meaning of Paradise. In the mausoleum of Baybars and the shrine of Gazur Gah, the architectural forms were imaginative buildings surrounded by gardens. These architectural figures are regarded as representational because they evoke the desire for Paradise. Even though there is a similarity between these representations and those in the Great Mosque of Damascus, in terms of the imaginative nature of the architectural forms displayed, the function of where the iconographical images were placed emphasizes their different significance. Evoking a wish related to Paradise, which the representational architectural form is indicating, has been widely used not only on architecture, but also on objects of art. The architectural form represented on the Umayyad metal bowl, although imaginative, is also representational for it declares this hope through the representation of a form or plan of a religious building, namely a fire temple surrounded by a garden. It also evokes the wish of gaining all the fruits and virtues of Paradise in life. In addition, the religious nature of the architectural form depicted evokes a wish for the protection and blessing of the owner. It also indirectly evokes fear of the unknown powers and forces from which the owner of the vessel will be protected and blessed.

The blessing wish, which appears to have been the religious significance of some architectural iconographies in the Muslim era, was raised again through the representation of religious buildings on the Ayyubid bottle and the two Mamluk glass beakers. Although the architectural representations shown, which were described as holy structures, are imaginative, they are at the same time representational as they may recall a feeling of their holy character. This same emotion is certainly evoked when we look at the original architectural models in reality. Therefore, it enabled the



onlooker to think that viewing a building, especially of a holy value represented on the glass vessel, can transfer its holy sentiments to the viewer.

The question now arises of why artists in the Muslim era relied on providing the significance of the blessing wish and hope through architectural forms. The answer to this question identifies other hidden meanings behind the architectural forms represented on these examples. Moreover, it clarifies the adoption of one of the ancient ideas that seems to have been altered in the Muslim era, and by which the architectural form may be described as representational; namely the fear of all that may harm the health and happiness of the human being that motivated the representation of scenes with blessing meanings. This idea dates back to primitive eras when these forces were understood to be out of one's control and power. These forces were mainly identified through nature, for example in wind and thunder. However, with the development of theological thoughts, these forces started to acquire other forms<sup>1057</sup>. Ornaments artistically fabricated out of skin, tusk, and bone impressively protect their owner from evil, or contribute towards the easy capture of animals by casting spells on them. The belief that man gains power over a person or an object by his power over its representation was the major inspiration of the primitive artist<sup>1058</sup>.

In Muslim religion, a reference to such forces was indicated, but in a different form and meaning, through the force of the envying eye and of magic. To overcome these powers and forces they relied on the reciting of religious utterances such as Qur'anic *Suras*<sup>1059</sup> or ritual praises to Allah. Thus, religious types of architectural iconographies were used on various examples of art in the Muslim era to refer to the blessing wish that the artist wanted to evoke through his architectural representation.

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<sup>1057</sup> Godelier 1977, p.177.

<sup>1058</sup> Mukerjee 1951, p.4.

<sup>1059</sup> (Qur'an, Sura 20, verses 65-70; Sura 113, verses 1-5; Sura 10, verses 80-81; Sura 25, verse 23).

These concepts, although adapted to Muslim theology, seem to have been the basic idea that artists relied on in representing some of the architectural representation in Muslim art. For instance, it is by the power of the representation of a particular religious building that one may overcome the unknown powers and forces. Even being of a non-Muslim origin, as was the case with the Umayyad metal bowl, the architectural form is still accepted by the Muslim viewer. The Muslims accept this as long as it is religious and it evokes a wish that the Muslim is looking forward to gaining regardless of the origin of the type of building used<sup>1060</sup>.

Interestingly, in another context and with a different meaning, a religious and holy feeling is evoked from the architectural representation of the Mosque on the frontispiece of the Sana'a Qur'an. In order for the artist to illustrate the place where the Qur'an was kept safe, which is the significance of his architectural representation, he evoked a holy feeling. He achieved this through the manifestation of a Mosque form that transmits such a meaning to the viewer. As the Qur'an is a Holy Book, the artist decided to represent a holy building that may convey the same holiness in the mind and heart of the spectator. The wish that is raised through the representation of this Mosque representation is the safety and protection of the Qur'an, together with a feeling of fear of anything that may cause damage to this Holy Book. In other words, Muslims were able to accept the architectural form depicted, and to understand its significance, only by recognizing its religious evocation. The only theological root for such an idea was mentioned in one of the Qur'anic verses<sup>1061</sup>, which describes how the Qur'an, as a Holy Book, will be kept within God's protection. Its relation to the Mosque representation is emphasizing the function of the Mosque as the safe place keeping the Qur'an<sup>1062</sup>.

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<sup>1060</sup> Miles 1985, p.133.

<sup>1061</sup> (Qur'an, Sura 15, verse 9).

<sup>1062</sup> (Qur'an, Sura 2, verse 114; Sura 9, verse 18).

The Ayyubid bottle (fig.66), and the two Mamluk glass beakers (figs.95, 97) are the best examples of introducing feelings of happiness and enjoyment by architectural representation, as they manifest these feelings in their scenes of seasons of the year. This significance is revealed through an understanding of how the artist represented the buildings, surrounded with trees and a variety of fruits to evoke the feeling of happiness and enjoyment that we may feel while looking at a similar building in the same place and time of the year. This scene, with its architectural forms, recalls a wish to gain all fruits of the four seasons as juices for the owner. This wish is understood in Islamic theology as being accompanied by an indirect feeling of fear, specifically the fear of losing such treasure for any reason, as mentioned in the Qur'an<sup>1063</sup>, when gardens with fruits have turned into deserts as a punishment of God on their owners. Similarly, the same wish of happiness and joy was evoked in architectural representations in the manuscript of the Story of Bayāḍ wa Riyāḍ, where the architectural elements used were simple tall towers, a waterwheel, and colourful decorations that give the impression of a spacious and happy place.

In some examples, architectural representation was used to evoke feelings of wishes and hope for victory. This includes the illustration of castle representation, which not only evoked wishes and hopes, but also revealed other theological meanings. Even though, in some cases they commemorate the victory of troops, they indirectly remind Muslims of *Jihād* being rewarded with Paradise as mentioned in the Qur'an<sup>1064</sup>, and evoke their feelings in achieving victories. When looking at this type of architectural illustration, as on the Fustāṭ manuscript fragment with a fortress wall (fig.137), it implies a meaning of commemorating victory. It suggests feelings of pleasure and pride in victory similar to what one may feel in a real battle.

<sup>1063</sup> (Qur'an, Sura 56, verses 63-67; Sura 18, verses 42-43; Sura 26, verse 7; Sura 78, verse 14-16; Sura 80, verse 25-31; Sura 6, verse 99).

<sup>1064</sup> (Qur'an, Sura 2, verses 154,190; Sura 3, verse 169-170; Sura 4, verse 74).

Accordingly, by representing the slaughtered or defeated enemies in the *Fuṣṭāṭ* painting, which illustrated a fortress, the artist was able to recall feelings of happiness for Muslims. That is why the function of the castle iconographical scenes is understood as commemorative. The fear that may accompany this kind of wish of victory is the fear of defeat and humiliation that reminds the Muslim of God's promise of victory<sup>1065</sup> to those who maintain the Qur'anic instructions regarding *Jihād*.

In other examples, architectural forms accurately transfer their significance by evoking feelings of sadness and mourning through their forms and designs. This includes the representation of tombs or mausoleums<sup>1066</sup>. One of their main aims was to trigger a feeling of mourning in the viewer. By the use of an architectural representation related to death, the artist was able to transmit the meaning of a mourning scene in a direct and simple way. Such scenes work as warnings of death to Muslims, urging them to increase their number of pious deeds on earth. It also reminds Muslims of the uniqueness of God and banishment of human kind on the Judgement Day.

Evoking such religious feelings by using an architectural representation unveils some Islamic principles of the Qur'an, in which God reminds Muslims through death as to the right path. Some artists only rely on architectural representation to transmit this meaning, as in the *Maqāmāt* illustrations. However, in the absence of any tomb architecture, the artist had to invest more effort in transmitting the emotions of mourning and sadness. The Demotte *Shāhnāma* manuscript of 1330-40 shows in the twenty-second<sup>1067</sup> and twenty-fourth<sup>1068</sup> illustrations, the Bringing of Isfandiyar's Bier (fig.239), and Rustam and Zavara's Biers, respectively, as attempts to reflect

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<sup>1065</sup> (Qur'an, Sura 47, verse 7; Sura 110, verses 1-3; Sura 3, verse 160).

<sup>1066</sup> Whittick 1960, p.158.

<sup>1067</sup> (Now in the Metropolitan Museum of Art 33.70, illustration no.22).

<sup>1068</sup> (Now in the Metropolitan Museum of Art 33.70, illustration no.24.).

feelings of mourning<sup>1069</sup>. However, in the illustration of the Schefer Maqāmāt of Al-Ḥarīrī (fig.197a), where a cemetery is identified in the eleventh Maqāmah (fol.29v) with many domed tombs surrounded by mourners, the artist combined both the tomb structure with human gestures.

Other types of feelings for wishes were evoked through architectural representations. This mainly serves the significance of the architectural representation as they reflect the meaning of the text. In the Schefer Maqāmāt, the evocation of feelings through the representation of architectural forms clearly transfers the meaning of the text. The illustration of the village (fig.173) in the forty-third Maqāmah (fol.138) was represented as being full of all the wishes the two heroes were trying to attain. This is despite the fact that the text did not mention any detailed description of what the village looked like. The artist, in the representation of houses and Mosques, expressed a wish of gaining shelter; with the trees, a pond and birds, and the activities carried out in the village symbolizing the wish of gaining nourishment. Accordingly, the meaning of the illustration is discernible through the architectural forms that evoked such feelings, emphasizing the richness of the village where poetry and literature were priceless.

In the light of this discussion, it can be demonstrated that it is the feeling which the artist evokes through the architectural form represented that clarifies its meaning or significance<sup>1070</sup>. The artist needs to be skilful enough to represent within the architectural form special designs that evoke such feelings. This involves the use of structural forms of the architectural figure, for example imitative or imaginative forms which are representational in the sense that they express meanings, wishes, hopes and fears, as well as some artistic and theological principles which are not used

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<sup>1069</sup> Grabar 1969, p.44.

<sup>1070</sup> Meiss 1989, p.304.

for a merely decorative purpose, but to reflect significance. Taken as a whole, this clarifies the meaning of the architectural representation, and the meaning of the whole scene in which the architectural representation is displayed.

In conclusion, there are three categories of structural forms of architectural iconographies: the imitative, the imaginative and the representational that includes the previous two structural forms. These operate as triggers for the certain feelings and emotions they encapsulate. These three categories have been demonstrated to have been employed to represent significance in Muslim art, and were not just for decoration. Furthermore, they unveil information about their artists, and work as their disguised signatures. In addition, they have been established as representing and adopting further theological and artistic ideas that affected both their structural forms and significance. In order to demonstrate how the structural form of the architectural representation could transmit significance, the elements of composition that create the architectural representation and its decoration will be examined. This is the second focus of this chapter, and includes the study of symbols and treatment of space as elements in the composition of the architectural image. I will first discuss symbols as elements of composition. In the next section, I will highlight details in the representation of the architectural form which were used by artists as symbols of its significance and meaning. I will divide such symbols into two main categories; first, the interior symbols which include furniture and scene composition, and second, the exterior symbols which include architectural elements (such as religious insignia, domes, gardens, and ventilation devices), material and colour.

## 3.2 Elements of Composition in Architectural

### Representation

#### 3.2.1 Symbolism

The study of various architectural forms on artefacts and on architecture reveals that symbols are among the many elements artists rely on in the composition of the precise significance of the architectural figures shown. The meaning of any architectural form is mainly conceived through understanding its nature by a consideration of its symbols.

As is the case with other structural forms and elements of composition, many types of symbols agree in the characteristic of recalling an emotion. Consequently, their function as an artistic element cannot be separated from the role of the imaginative, imitative, and representational forms of architectural representation in uncovering the significance of the architectural representations displayed. Therefore, it is appropriate to describe a symbol as a language which expresses emotions transmitted from the image or architectural representation to the viewer<sup>1071</sup>. Hence, a symbol is a transitional step between the original architectural structure that inspired the artist, and the architectural representation in which the symbol is introduced<sup>1072</sup>.

In the following section, I will examine different elements of composition used symbolically in architectural representation on different art and architecture, and their role in unveiling the significance of the architectural forms on which they appear. I will approach this issue of symbolism in architectural representation with two explicit assumptions. First, I take it to be the case that the significance of such architectural representations is revealed through the study of their symbolic features and elements.

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<sup>1071</sup> Collingwood 1963, p.268.

<sup>1072</sup> Collingwood 1963, p.56.

Second, I assume for the purpose of the arguments in this chapter, that such symbols were not just used for decoration, but also for uncovering meanings and significance. Therefore, they will relay Islamic principles and will be disguised signatures of the artists who created them. These symbols in architectural representation are classified by location into two main categories; interior details including furniture and scene composition, and exterior details including architectural elements, material, and colour.

### 3.2.1.1 Meaning and Origin

Symbols are the essence of architectural representations in Islamic art. The purpose of this section is to introduce the basic symbols in architectural representation, and to illustrate and explain the constant themes that occur with variation throughout the Muslim era. However, before moving on to a discussion of the various symbols in architectural representation, a definition of the word "symbol" is required. F. E. Sparshott defines a symbol in relation to its role in art. First, he states that a symbol is created when a sign is constructed in order to refer to what it signifies. In other words, it stands for, or refers to, the thing of which it is a sign<sup>1073</sup>. Hence, a symbol is a substitute for the thing symbolized, or stands in place of it<sup>1074</sup>. Second, he states that things are symbols or symbolic if they are in any way meaningful or significant, and especially if their significance is obscure and portentous<sup>1075</sup>. Northrop Frye's definition, unlike Sparshott's, generalizes the meaning of a symbol by stating that it is: "any unit of any literary structure that can be isolated for critical attention"<sup>1076</sup>.

S. K. Langer explains how a symbol transmits a meaning by suggesting that concepts are embodied in symbols; symbols then may be defined as "any device

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<sup>1073</sup> Sparshott 1970, p.360.

<sup>1074</sup> Sparshott 1970, p.361.

<sup>1075</sup> Sparshott 1970, p.368.

<sup>1076</sup> Frye 1957, p.71.



whereby we are enabled to make an abstraction"<sup>1077</sup>. The emphasis on the symbol working as a concept is a clear indication of significance. Rudolf Wittkower identified the depicted architectural representation as embodying a concept; for example, the square, rectangular or circular architectural form with domes means a building, therefore this concept of the architectural form functions as a symbol for a building<sup>1078</sup>. Albert Cook further established this by explaining that the symbol in architectural iconography is a representation whose representational character consists of being a rule that will determine the interpretant. Thus, it is possible with this explanation to account for a symbol as an idea<sup>1079</sup>.

Albert Moore agreed with the idea of considering a symbol as an idea by saying that to symbolize in architectural representation is to represent other features in this architectural figure, such as elements and signs of decoration with concepts that verify the significance and meaning to be conveyed<sup>1080</sup>. Susanne Langer in an attempt to define the meaning of a symbol mentioned that since it is an element of composition creating the form of the architectural representation, a symbol is therefore something beyond what it presents in itself; it has a meaning conveyed through the architectural form exposing it<sup>1081</sup>. Albert Moore stated that symbolism in architectural representation is in a way a translation of how the artist is adapting the environment around him in new ways and through the symbolic signs which make up his culture<sup>1082</sup>. In comparison, James Hall considered that even though a symbol is something that stands for, represents or denotes something else<sup>1083</sup> in art, it functions at many different levels according to the beliefs and social customs that inspire the

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<sup>1077</sup> Langer 1953, p.xi.

<sup>1078</sup> Wittkower 1977, p.174.

<sup>1079</sup> Cook 1989, p.9.

<sup>1080</sup> Moore 1977, p.26.

<sup>1081</sup> Langer 1984, p.302-303.

<sup>1082</sup> Moore 1977, p.26.

<sup>1083</sup> Hall 1994, p.ix.

artist<sup>1084</sup>. Edward Lucie-Smith identified a symbol as something which resonates within the mind of the spectator, and argued that the architectural form itself is no more than the sum of the symbols it contains<sup>1085</sup>.

According to Charles Molesworth, symbols are connected with a notion of delay, which suggests that the symbolic meaning occurs only through temporal unfolding. Moreover, symbols have a mystical dimension, which surpasses their natural qualities by building upon it<sup>1086</sup>. This confirms the skill of the artists in the Muslim era, who were capable of transmitting the significance and meaning of their architectural iconographies through the display of elements of composition such as symbols.

It can therefore be concluded that apart from the importance of the symbol of art in itself, it is as important as the work of art, which may not be apparent when simply judging the aesthetic qualities of the symbol. In architectural representation, symbols are important as they are so central, being what makes the significance of the architectural form possible, by considering that symbols are signs with meanings in themselves, used to refer to the significance of the illustrated architectural representation. Charles Molesworth makes specific reference to this quality in explaining its meaning: "A symbol is a semantic construct which substitutes one term or entity for another at this level of generality it can easily be equated with a sign"<sup>1087</sup>. But when emphasizing the role of a symbol in the work of art he added: "Counter to that, a symbol may be identified as central to works of art and is therefore more than merely a matter of the substitution of one semantic term for another or the possibility of sign making"<sup>1088</sup>. In later discussion, he pointed out that symbols are not what

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<sup>1084</sup> Hall 1994, p.ix.

<sup>1085</sup> Lucie-Smith 1972, p.8,18.

<sup>1086</sup> Molesworth 1992, p.413.

<sup>1087</sup> Molesworth 1992, p.412.

<sup>1088</sup> Molesworth 1992, p.412.

make art, but what make art possible<sup>1089</sup>. Through emphasizing the importance of a symbol in a work of art, Heinz Werner showed how a work of art is a symbol in itself. He defined a symbol as follows: "a work of art is a symbol...Art is a process of constructing symbols, but it is not symbolism, as language is. Every work of art is a whole and new symbolic form and expresses its import directly to any one who understands it at all"<sup>1090</sup>.

That the architectural form was symbolic in itself in antiquity was emphasized by James Hall, who showed how architectural symbols have long been used in history to indicate meaning. For example, the temple was used as a symbol of the divine presence. Its figure, which was mainly built to serve as the dwelling place of the deity who used to occupy it in the form of a statue, was a symbol of the house of this deity. It was also used to symbolize the universe, heaven, earth and the underworld, as shown in the Ancient Egyptian temples whose walls carried scenes representing the underworld and whose ceilings showed scenes representing heaven<sup>1091</sup>. James Hall further analyzed how elements of the architectural representation, such as a door or gate or tower, were used as symbols. He pointed out that the door or the gateway is the entrance to the realm of the dead in Byzantine funerary monuments, and how it was represented as a double door<sup>1092</sup>.

The idea and notion of symbolism was also in use in Muslim art, and this can be verified by studying various examples. For instance, the lion-gazelle mosaic in Khirbat Al-Mafjar (fig.240) that was constructed on the orders of Al-Walīd II (743-44) was understood to represent Al-Walīd II himself, and a beautiful woman. It transmits the idea of the power, strength, and fertility of the Muslim Caliph Al-Walīd II. This was clear from the translation and study of one of the poems that was written

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<sup>1089</sup> Molesworth 1992, p.412.

<sup>1090</sup> Werner 1955, p.5.

<sup>1091</sup> Hall 1994, p.89.

<sup>1092</sup> Hall 1994, p.65.

by Al-Walīd, in which he described himself as a hunter pursuing an antelope, which reminded him of his beloved Salma. After looking into the prey's eyes and neck, Al-Walīd II decided to leave her to live<sup>1093</sup>. In this lion-gazelle representation, the Caliph was personified as a lion, symbolizing his power and strength, and the woman was represented as a gazelle, which was the traditional image used to symbolize beautiful women in Arabic literature<sup>1094</sup>. This is supported by the fact that the representation of a lion in Islamic art, in general, was used as a symbol of royalty. Other animal symbolism in Islamic art may include birds, especially raptors, as symbols of Kingship, and small birds as symbols of luck and happiness<sup>1095</sup>. Lions biting door knocker rings is a symbol of beauty as in many illustrations of the *Jāmi' Al-Tawārīkh* manuscript, Istanbul version, dated to 1317 A.D., in which two massive lion heads were shown as door knockers of building iconographies<sup>1096</sup>. According to Otto Kurz: "[Lions bite the rings of the door knockers] says Ibn Ḥamdīs when describing the beauties of a palace in Bejaia (Bougie) in Algeria, his *qaṣīdah*<sup>1097</sup> dates from the last years of the eleventh or the very first years of the twelfth century". O. Kurz added: "In Muslim miniature painting the heads of lions appear over a fortified gate in the miniature<sup>1098</sup> of Istanbul version of Raṣḥīd Al-Dīn's History of the World and dates from 717 A.H. /1317 A.D."<sup>1099</sup>.

Furthermore, Quṣāyir 'Amrah, attributed to Al-Walīd II, has in the audience hall a representation of six Kings of the lands conquered under the Muslim rule. This

<sup>1093</sup> Behrens-Abouseif 1997, p.11-18.

<sup>1094</sup> Behrens-Abouseif 1997, p.11-18.

<sup>1095</sup> Brend 1991, p.226.

<sup>1096</sup> Kurz 1977, p.31.

<sup>1097</sup> For more information about the poems written in this concern, see Gabrieli F. 1959, "Il Palazzo Hammādīta di Bigāya Descritto da Ibn Ḥamdīs", *Aus Der Welt Der Islamischen Kunst. Festschrift Für E. Kühnel*, (Berlin), p.56; Schack A.F.Von 1877, *Poesie Und Kunst Der Araber in Spanien Und Sicilien*, 2 Aufl., I, p.XI n.I; II, p.27; Schack A.F.Von 1881, *Poesia Y Arts De Los Arabos En España Y Sicilia*, (Seville), p.144-149.

<sup>1098</sup> This is a miniature of horsemen approaching a castle as shown in Aga-Oglu Mehmet 1934, "Preliminary Notes on Some Persian Illustrated Manuscript in the Topkapu Saray Müzesi-Part I", *Ars Islamica*, vol.I, pp.183-199 and esp.p.183, fig.3.

<sup>1099</sup> Kurz 1977, p.31.

scene (fig.241) is interpreted either as a sign of the victory of the Muslim Caliph over his enemies, or as an announcement of his Kingship of the Muslim world, as granted by the other Kings of the world<sup>1100</sup>. It is also understood to signify the concept of the "Family of Kings"<sup>1101</sup>, which is symbolic in its meaning<sup>1102</sup>.

To symbolize a special time of the day such as night, the artist presented a segment of the sky with a crescent and stars as illustrated (fig.242) in the twenty-sixth Maqāmah of the Maqāmāt of Al-Ḥarīrī manuscript dated 738 A.H. /1337 A.D. (now in the Nationalbibliothek, Vienna)<sup>1103</sup> (fol.87 verso)<sup>1104</sup>. Pastimes were also referred to in Islamic art in a symbolic way. With a reference to the royal pastime in some scenes, the drinking of alcohol was implied from the representation of jars with fermented wines instead of depicting a scene of people drinking<sup>1105</sup>. The traditional scenes in the frontispieces of Muslim manuscripts (fig.243), which show an enthroned figure holding a cup in his hand surrounded with attendants, is not just a drinking scene, but a manifestation of a symbolized idea of the medium that constitutes a court around their master<sup>1106</sup>. The same idea could be applied to another scene (fig.124) of a seated prince holding a cup in his hand.

In brief, the meaning and origin of symbolism in art, and particularly in architectural representation, has been presented. In the next two sections, I will deal with individual elements of composition that I consider have been used as symbols in architectural representation. I will show how these symbols were adapted from antiquity to Muslim art in a way to indicate a specific significance and the signature

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<sup>1100</sup> Creswell 1968, p.91-93.

<sup>1101</sup> Grabar 1954, p.185.

<sup>1102</sup> Creswell 1968, p.91-93.

<sup>1103</sup> (A.F.9).

<sup>1104</sup> Ettinghausen 1962, p.149.

<sup>1105</sup> Ettinghausen 1962, p.43.

<sup>1106</sup> Papadopoulo 1980, p.95.

of the artist. I will first consider the interior, and then the exterior details of the architectural forms in Muslim art.

### **3.2.1.2 Interior Details as Symbols**

Of the many interior details of the architectural iconographies in Muslim art, I will consider only two: furniture and scene composition. The diversity of architectural forms can be classified into three minor categories; some relied mainly on using furniture as symbols, others mainly used scene composition, and others relied equally on furniture and scene composition.

#### **3.2.1.2.1 Furniture**

Furniture is one of the interior details used as symbols identifying the significance of each architectural form represented. Furnishings, including chairs, tables, beds, and glass lamps of the architectural form are symbols indicating its type and function, and, accordingly, its significance in the scene. This furnishing in architectural representation is therefore important as it creates the ethnic domain of any building in reality, and symbolically in art, of any architectural form<sup>1107</sup>.

The idea of using furniture as symbols was developed from ancient times. For example, the throne was a symbol of the seat of the greater deities and sovereigns, and their authority, especially in Hindu, Buddhist, and Christian art<sup>1108</sup>. In Muslim art, even though the idea of using furniture as symbols was taken from antiquity, it was used differently. Although the role furnishing plays in reality in the daily life of Muslims is small, furnishing representation in art works as symbols deserves consideration<sup>1109</sup>.

Firstly, dealing with the first category of symbolic representation, in which furniture was mainly used as symbols in identifying meanings and significance, the

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<sup>1107</sup> Langer 1959, p.100.

<sup>1108</sup> Hall 1994, p.89, 90.

<sup>1109</sup> Haldane 1978, p.16.

Umayyad metal bowl is a clear example. In demonstrating the religious blessing significance of the building representation, the altar is a symbolic furnishing element which reveals the religious character of the building, and clarifies its significance in casting its blessings to the owner. The representation of an altar in this building form also identifies it as a fire temple. As the raised altar is a surface over which the offerings and sacrifices were rendered, it is a symbol of sacrifice, worship, thanksgiving, and remembrance, which is related to the fire temple offering significance to the metal bowl<sup>1110</sup>.

Another element of furniture with a religious character is the Mosque lamps, which appeared in some examples to symbolize either a religious building in general, or a Mosque in particular. In many ways, Muslim manuscripts are the perfect media for symbolizing a Mosque representation, as in the Schefer *Maqāmāt* of Al-Ḥarīrī manuscript, in which many Mosques were mentioned in the text, and were represented by illustrations, and identified partly by the representation of Mosque lamps. The role of Mosque lamps as symbols in this example is to uncover the significance of the architectural form represented, indicating its relationship with the text. Similarly is the example of the Sana'a Qur'anic manuscript, in order to strengthen the religious significance of a building form as the place where the Qur'an is kept safe a figure of a Mosque representation with a great number of Mosque lamps appeared on its frontispiece. These Mosque lamps identify the type of the building shown, and thus unveil its religious nature and significance.

Concerning general religious building forms, whether Muslim or Christian, without classifying exact models, it can be recognized that lamps were also used to declare their religious nature, and therefore their significance. This was acknowledged in unveiling the religious blessing character of the buildings shown on

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<sup>1110</sup> Whittick 1960, p.129.

the Ayyubid bottle, and on the two Mamluk glass beakers. In these two examples, the building iconographies are illustrated with lamps hanging from their roofs, as symbols clarifying their religious nature. The blessing significance of these architectural forms is conceived upon recognition of their religious type as announced through their symbolic lamp representation. The representation of Mosque lamps in religious building iconographies, to indicate their religious significance in Muslim art, was a symbol of a theological principle that lies behind their simple representation. The relationship between the representation of Mosque lamps and their religious connotation is explained by the idea of the personification of light being one of the most important symbols of Allah in Muslim theology.

Muslim theological principles supported the idea that divinity was referred to by the Mosque lamp, as a symbol of the presence of God. In the Qur'an<sup>1111</sup>, a verse describes the divine presence of God as a light. "God is the Light of the heavens and the earth; the likeness of His Light is as a niche where in is a lamp, the lamp in a glass, the glass as it were a glittering star, kindled from a Blessed Tree, an olive that is neither of the East nor of the West, whose oil well nigh would shine, even if no fire touched it; Light upon Light; God guides to His Light whom He will"<sup>1112</sup>. The relationship between lamps and divinity seems to have passed down from antiquity to the Muslim era, a fact that is fundamental in recognizing their significance. They show how the idea of a lamp and its light, which was borrowed from pre-Islamic eras, was adapted in Muslim art. In ancient pre-Islamic eras, light was considered a symbol of the deity, and on many occasions, God was identified with light<sup>1113</sup>. Hanging lamps seem to have been in use much earlier than the Muslim period. According to Doris Behrens-Abouseif, the origin of lamps can be traced back to the Ancient Egyptian

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<sup>1111</sup> (Qur'an, Sura 24, verses 3-5).

<sup>1112</sup> Reinhart 1991, p.37.

<sup>1113</sup> Whittick 1960, p.310.



era, when *the feast of the burning of the lamps* was practiced<sup>1114</sup>. There is indeed evidence of lamps in Ancient Egypt, such as the alabaster lamps whose semi-transparent walls reflect the interior decorative scenes when lit. Two examples (figs.244, 245) of these lamps were discovered in the tomb of King Tutankhamen of the eighteenth dynasty<sup>1115</sup>. Such an idea relating light to divinity was found in Christianity, with Jesus Christ known as “the Light of the World”<sup>1116</sup>. The tradition of representing lamps in religious buildings was also maintained in Christian art, as in a painting of a church (fig.246) with the representation of Virgin Mary and Jesus Christ in which a lamp device is shown suspended from its roof<sup>1117</sup>, which in fact bears a close resemblance to Mosque lamps.

Another type of religious symbol is the *Minbar*, or pulpit which usually represents Mosque structures. If the stepped element inside the Sana’a Mosque representation is not the staircase inside the minaret, then we may say that the religious significance of its building is signified by one of the other elements that will be mentioned in the course of the study, namely the representation of a pulpit. It indicates further that the building shown is a Mosque. Similarly, the building forms illustrated in the Schefer Maqāmāt manuscript indicate the building types, and emphasize their accordance with the text of their manuscript.

Pulpits, or *Minbars*, in Mosques are depicted with a wide variety of forms and decorations, some of which are wooden pulpits with ivory inlays indicated by fine white lines<sup>1118</sup>. In manuscripts, particularly in the Sana’a Qur’anic manuscript, the *Minbar* was shown as a staircase flanked by a balustrade, leading to the seat of the Imam, with an arched upper gate. Similarly, in the seventh Maqāmāh (fig.177)

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<sup>1114</sup> Behrens-Abouseif 1995, p.3.

<sup>1115</sup> Carter 1933, II, p.30, 31.

<sup>1116</sup> Pelikan 2005, p.20.

<sup>1117</sup> Murcia 1966, fig.57.

<sup>1118</sup> Haldane 1978, p.16.

(fol.18), a representation of the Mosque of a city called Barqa'īd shows an interior *Minbar* with its complete elements, including wooden rectangular sides, a balustrade, a canopy, and an entrance door ending with crenellations. Another *Minbar* (fig.178) is depicted in the twenty-first Maqāmah (fol.58v) with its simple form, detailing its staircase, seat, and geometrical decorations.

In terms of artefacts, a further form of a *Minbar* was illustrated on the interior of a building represented on one (figs.95, 96) of the Mamluk glass beakers, identifying the architectural representation as a religious structure. The details of the *Minbar* form in the architectural representation operate as a symbol, and the artistic method used also uncovers the date of the building form depicted. I consider it is significant that either the form or decoration of the *Minbar*, as an interior piece of furniture in architectural representation, symbolizes the date of the building. This is important in understanding the significance of the building shown and its meaning. In reality, the traditional Mamluk form of a *Minbar* consists of two triangular panels with balustrades at the two sides, and narrow steps in between ending in an entrance door<sup>1119</sup>, as was shown in the illustrations of the Schefer Maqāmāt, the fiftieth Maqāmah (fig.164) (fol.164), and the twenty-eighth Maqāmah (fig.174) (fol.48). However, in the twenty-first Maqāmah (fig.178) (fol.58v) which represents the Mosque of Al-Rayy, there is a *Minbar* form with a simple more primitive look. Even though this *Minbar* is Mamluk, since it is in a Mamluk manuscript, the Schefer, its form recalls earlier examples. It is not possible to immediately tell which period this *Minbar* belongs to in terms of design or plan; however, its geometrical decorations indicate it is dated as Mamluk, which agrees with the date of the manuscript itself. The geometrical motifs of the Schefer's simple *Minbar* form are then Mamluk in date as compared to another work of art attributed to the same Mamluk era, namely an

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<sup>1119</sup> Kühnel 1966, p.45, 46.

illustration of a *Minbar* (fig.247) (fol.70) of a later Mamluk Maqāmāt version, now in Istanbul, dated 1242-1258 A.D.<sup>1120</sup>.

The earliest form of *Minbar* was made by Coptic wood makers for the Prophet Muḥammad, and consisted of two steps and a seat, with or without a backrest, similar to the *Minbar* form depicted in this illustration (fig.247)<sup>1121</sup>, so these early *Minbars* were relatively simple. Jonathan Bloom discussed the construction of the first *Minbar* of the Prophet: "The Ḥadīth relates that after Muḥammad's move to Medina from Mecca in 622 A.H. the Muslim community began to grow at a fast pace and the Prophet therefore needed to be seen and heard over greater distances as he addressed an expanding congregation...Tradition assigns the construction of the Prophet's *Minbar* to a carpenter who was a Coptic or Byzantine slave of the wife of an *Anṣārī*<sup>1122</sup>. In response to the woman's offer to have her slave build something for him to sit on, the Prophet ordered a raised seat to be made to enable him to address the community, and had it placed in the Mosque...The *Minbar* was made of Tamarisk wood...consisted of two steps and a seat just enough to elevate Muḥammad over the congregation. Its backrest was formed by three wooden boards (two uprights and a crossbar) and its arms ended in finials over which the Prophet would rest his hands"<sup>1123</sup>. Because of its similarity to another earlier *Minbar* (the *Saqqārah* pulpit dated to the sixth or seventh century A.D.) (fig.248), it seems to have been originally inspired in form by Christian pulpits<sup>1124</sup>.

By analyzing other interior symbols, we may also recognize the *Qiblah*. The *Qiblah* which is a marker for the direction of prayers towards Mecca is symbolized in any Mosque, in reality as well as in art, by the presence of either a *Mihrāb* or *Minbar*,

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<sup>1120</sup> Grabar 1963, p.100.

<sup>1121</sup> Bloom 1998, p.42.

<sup>1122</sup> *Anṣārī* is a Muslim who lived in Madīnah and was living there when the Prophet Muḥammad entered the city, and supported him.

<sup>1123</sup> Bloom 1998, p.42.

<sup>1124</sup> Gabra 1993, p.65.

or both in some cases. The *Qiblah* was illustrated as a *Mihrāb* in some illustrations in the Schefer Maqāmāt of Al-Ḥarīrī, as in the fiftieth Maqāmāh (fig.164) showing the Mosque of Baṣrah; the seventh Maqāmāh in the Mosque of Barqaʿīd (fig.177); and the twenty-eighth Maqāmāh (fig.174). The location of the *Mihrāb* or the *Qiblah* in the scene is another way in which this symbol is used to identify the type, form, and function of the architectural representation depicted, thereby uncovering its significance. For example, in the seventh Maqāmāh of the same Schefer manuscript, the artist indicated a Khan (fig.169), where facilities were offered to travellers, with a small Mosque identified in the illustration as a small area with a *Mihrāb*. The location of this Mosque *Mihrāb* to the right of the elevation of the roof of the building representation indicates that the building form represented is not a Mosque, otherwise the *Mihrāb* would have occupied a more prominent interior location. As a result, the religious significance of the illustrated building form is eliminated. This small *Mihrāb* area in the building representation possibly refers to a quite private space used as a Mosque within the Khan where the traveller could pray without being disturbed<sup>1125</sup>. In comparison, in the Sanaʿa manuscript, the *Mihrāb*, symbolizes the meaning of the building. It is in a prominent position clearly noticeable through the double arch at the top end of the illustration of the Mosque, thus clarifying the religious significance of the building depicted.

In addition to these interior symbols, ablution fountains are symbolic furniture elements of religious structures in art, as they are in reality. Consequently, they identify the Mosque representation in Islamic art as having religious significance. They occupy the area between the external and internal parts of the Mosque, providing the building with its washing facilities. Usually beside the Mosque fountain lie colossal marble jars with basins and taps to enable the elderly to practice the act of

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<sup>1125</sup> Guthrie 1995, p.96.

purification without difficulty<sup>1126</sup>. In the architectural representations of the Sana'a manuscript illustration, this traditional form of ablution fountain in the centre of the architectural representation was replaced with a symbolic element. The artist illustrated enormous bulbous jugs (figs.140, 141) with an excessively large gold waterspout next to the wall, standing between the stairs at the entrance of the building<sup>1127</sup>.

In addition to religious architectural forms, domestic or civil architectural forms, which reflect non-religious significance in Muslim art, were also identified by symbolic elements. In manuscripts, such as the Schefer Maqāmāt of Al-Ḥarīrī, representations of houses demonstrate how the architectural forms presented agree with the text of the manuscript. To emphasize this significance, the artist relied on internal symbols to indicate the building's iconographical form and function. Representations of beakers and bowls (figs.175, 181) as types of furniture are symbols indicating the civil nature of the building representation depicted<sup>1128</sup>. Other pieces of furniture in civil architecture include a bench, suggesting the architectural representation of a private house, and the small table with two bowls on its tray surrounded with people, which is a further symbol demonstrating the same architectural meaning, as illustrated in the fifth Maqāmah (fig.183).

In addition to these examples, the trefoil arch and the tripartite division, which were commonly used as symbols of a private house, appear in many of the illustrations of the Maqāmāt manuscript identifying its building forms as civil architecture<sup>1129</sup>. Similarly, in the twenty-ninth Maqāmah, the representation of the Khan (fig.169) as another civil type of structure was identified by the depiction of

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<sup>1126</sup> Dickie 1978, p.35.

<sup>1127</sup> Bothmer 1987, p.5.

<sup>1128</sup> Haldane 1978, p.16.

<sup>1129</sup> Haldane 1978, p.15.

furnishing elements, such as its chambers or units for study or residential purposes, a refectory, and a large open space where ceremonies usually take place<sup>1130</sup>.

### 3.2.1.2.2 Scene Composition

In other cases, where there is an absence of any interior furniture, the details of the interior scene or scene composition of the architectural representation work symbolically. In the *Fuṣṭāṭ* manuscript fragment, the scene composition indicates the building's iconographical meaning. The significance of commemorating the victory of the Muslim army in a battle is implied from the architectural representation of the castle, which does not introduce any pieces of furniture. The rest of the scene symbolizes the type and function of the building by the presence of soldiers with their weapons. Another example that was treated differently by the artist, in terms of reflecting the accurate significance of the building form represented, is the illustration of the Madrasa (fig.167) in the forty-sixth *Maqāmah* in the Schefer version of the *Maqāmāt* of Al-Ḥarīrī. The significance of this architectural representation, as illustrated earlier, is to reflect the meaning of its text which narrates how the Madrasa was the place where the events occurred.

Instead of using interior furniture to refer to the function of the school, for example shelves holding books, here the artist used an interior scene composed of the educational curriculum traditionally set in such buildings. Accordingly, the Madrasa was symbolized by the depiction of a group of students sitting on the ground. However, for a further explanation of the function and type of the building representation, the artist illustrated a symbolic image of a man sitting on a throne and holding a stick in his hand to indicate that he is a tutor<sup>1131</sup>. In other examples, showing the congregation inside a building with a preacher is a symbol of a gathering

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<sup>1130</sup> Jairazbhoy 1996, p.21.

<sup>1131</sup> Guthrie 1995, p.121.

place, probably a Mosque. This scene composition was used by the artist when referring to buildings of a religious character without the use of any elements of furniture. It can be seen in a number of illustrations: in the Schefer Maqāmāt of Al-Ḥarīrī, in the fiftieth Maqāmāh (fig.164) that refers to the Mosque of Baṣrah; the seventh Maqāmāh (fig.177) that refers to the Mosque of Barqaʿīd; the twenty-first Maqāmāh (fig.178) that depicts the Mosque of Al-Rayy; and the twenty-eighth Maqāmāh (fig.174) that shows the Mosque of Samarqand. The architectural division of the Mosque representation where this congregation is gathered is another indication of the function and significance of the building shown. For example, in the illustration of the Al-Rayy Mosque in the twenty-first Maqāmāh (fol.58) (fig.178) of the Schefer Maqāmāt, the Mosque representation was divided into two floors; the upper floor is occupied with women sitting crossed-legged and listening to a speech given by the Imam on the lower floor. This gives the viewer an idea of the type of building represented, namely a Mosque.

Showing people lying on beds or reclining on thrones, as a scene composition, identifies the architectural representation as a civil building, hence implying the significance of the building shown, and its relation to the manuscript. The Schefer Maqāmāt includes an illustration in the fiftieth Maqāmāh which depicts a scene composed of two persons inside a building, which can be recognized as a house due to their informal positions<sup>1132</sup>. Another example of a scene composition referring to civil architecture is in the thirty-ninth Maqāmāh of the same manuscript in which the artist shows a structure in two scenes arranged on two levels; the upper is for a person flanked by two attendants, while the lower is a scene of a woman in labour. Such a combination indicates that this event took place in a house or private residence.

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<sup>1132</sup> Haldane 1978, p.16.

A different scene symbolizing a village appears in the forty-third Maqāmah (fig.173) in which people are depicted practising various daily life activities. In another example, the architectural representation of a tavern (fig.126), as illustrated in the thirty-third Maqāmah, was symbolized by the representation of dancers, wine makers, and people drinking from beakers. Finally, in the manuscript of the *Jāmi' Al-Tawārīkh*, interior details symbolizing the meaning of architectural forms were used. For example, the *Frāshī* pavilion was depicted with an enthroned figure in the middle of a garden indicating the function of its architectural form shown as a mobile type of structure.

### 3.2.1.2.3 Furniture and Scene Composition

In other cases, interior furnishings and scene compositions work in collaboration to identify the significance of the architectural form represented. For example, in the illustration of the library in the second Maqāmah of the Schefer Maqāmāt, we find shelves loaded with books, and people sitting on the ground, with one person holding a book in his hand, identifying the building as a library<sup>1133</sup>. In contrast, in the manuscript of *Bayāḍ wa Riyāḍ* the architectural representation of the garden enclosure was symbolized by the presence of a waterwheel, the river, and vegetation. The scene composition that accompanies this architectural representation symbolizes its function. A garden enclosure is shown with open-air scenes and a gathering sitting in a garden singing and playing the 'Ud.

As has been shown, interior symbols such as furniture and scene composition have been used by the artist not only for decoration, but also to reveal artistic meanings behind the architectural forms, uncovering their significance. Such symbols played a prominent role in clarifying the building's iconographical type, form, and therefore, significance. In the following section, to trace the same idea, I will consider

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<sup>1133</sup> Guthrie 1995, p.115.



other elements in architectural representation, namely the exterior elements, which include materials and colour.

### **3.2.1.3 Exterior Details as Symbols**

#### **3.2.1.3.1 Architectural Details**

Exterior details uncover many of the hidden meanings of each architectural representation. In addition, the exterior details may be considered as a disguised signature of their artist. The following discussion will include two types of exterior details: architectural and symbolic decorative elements. The political significance of a city representation, as represented on the walls of the Great Mosque of Damascus, which reflects the city of Damascus as reworked by the artist during the rule of the Muslim Caliph, was referred to by using exterior architectural details that clarify such significance. It was necessary to represent different types of buildings in the scene to indicate a city, therefore, palaces and houses were depicted. In depicting palaces, the building iconographies include exterior architectural symbolic representations of theatrical shaped roofs, lavishly decorated façades, and hanging pearls in arcades. These exterior details and symbols ensure the building forms shown in the scenes are identifiable, and are distinguished from other comparable architectural representations, such as houses. Moreover, it enables the viewer to recognize the architectural iconographies depicted as palaces different in form and design from the ordinary versions of nearby buildings which are shown as simple and plain architectural forms.

When identifying the religious type of other building forms in another example, as in the Mosque Madrasa of Sultan Ḥasan, exterior architectural details symbolize iconographical significance. The building representations shown on the portal of the Mosque Madrasa of Sultan Ḥasan were indicated in type and function through their

exterior architectural details. These operate as symbols emphasizing the religious character of these buildings, and can be used as comparative examples to determine the standing of the Mosque Madrasa, thus verifying its glory. In this Madrasa, the dome on an arched neck, and the arcades on the frontal side of the second building signify their religious character. In addition, at the bottom of the vertical arched recess, the details of the second building with its gabled roof and windows, as well as its wide entrance reflect its religious connotation, possibly signifying a church.

In the case of the twelfth century metal plate (fig.62), the political significance in commemorating victory and establishing the authority of the ruler of a castle or a palace is revealed through its exterior architectural form. To indicate the function of the building as being a castle or a palace, the representation includes elevated floors, a protruding portal, and side balconies. This shows that the type of building represented is not a public type of structure, and that it has a specific importance.

In historical manuscripts, architectural illustrations can be attributed to a specific region and era in accordance with both the text, and type of the manuscript. The exterior details of the building representation, with their characteristic features, are essential in reflecting this meaning or significance. In the Jāmī' manuscript, the *Frāshī* building at Qarāqurum (fol.21v) in the Asiatic Society of Bengal version reflects this idea. Being a building attributed to the Persian area, the *Frāshī* building walls maintain one of the features of Persian architectural representations in that they were crowned with a brown wooden geometrically patterned trellis representing a balustrade round a roof terrace. This conforms to the characteristics of any building attributed to the Persian area and provenance.

In the second building illustration in the same manuscript, the Buddha building in the Khalili Collection Jāmī' manuscript version has some architectural details indicating its attribution to the Il-Khanīd Iran. It is shown with a door, engaged

columns, and a decorative frieze around the drum of the dome, which forms the architectural features of the Il-Khanīd Iranian architecture<sup>1134</sup>. This is in consideration of many other characteristics that attribute the Buddha building form represented to a Persian architectural heritage. Doors and windows in Persian architectural paintings were made of grills. The former are placed high in the façade of the building, without approaching steps<sup>1135</sup>. Exterior doors have tall and narrow openings with a door in two halves forming a pointed arch with a lintel of glazed tiles<sup>1136</sup>. The doors, the wooden material, the animal-headed knockers, and the window grills all recall the Il-Khanīd building features<sup>1137</sup>. The exterior details of the building, by standing on a high pedestal of rectangular stones, signify its character as a house or palace in Persian painting<sup>1138</sup>. The exterior details of the Buddha building of the Jāmī' manuscript also identify it as a mausoleum. The cut stone base, brick entrance portal and domed unit all form essential elements of any the Il-Khanīd mausoleum structure, like the Buddha building, providing the viewer with the information needed in identifying the type of the building depicted<sup>1139</sup>.

Surface decoration of the alternating black and white marble in the upper rim of the building and around the whole door was fashionably used in the portal of the hospital "*Bimaristan*" of Qalā'ūn, and is one of the characteristic features of Mamluk architecture<sup>1140</sup>. Such a surface decoration was reflected in art in the illustration (fig.249) of the bird bat (fol.27r) in the manuscript of "The Disclosure of the Secrets or *Kashf Al-Asrār*" (now in the Istanbul Suleymaniye Library)<sup>1141</sup> created by Ghānim

<sup>1134</sup> Gray 1978, p.34, 35.

<sup>1135</sup> Adahl 1981, p.49.

<sup>1136</sup> Adahl 1981, p.50.

<sup>1137</sup> Blair 1996, p.45.

<sup>1138</sup> Adahl 1981, p.49.

<sup>1139</sup> Blair 1996, p.43.

<sup>1140</sup> Haldane 1978, p.15.

<sup>1141</sup> (Lala Isma'il 565).

Al-Maqdisī, and dated to the mid-fourteenth century A.D., produced in Syria or Egypt<sup>1142</sup>.

Other examples include the architectural forms represented on the walls of the Great Mosque of Damascus with their Byzantine features, and the building forms depicted by the portal of the Mosque Madrasa of Sultan Ḥasan with their Seljuk influences. This is in addition to other examples, in particular the Sasanian fire temple on the Umayyad metal bowl; the Iraq type of architecture predominating in the Maqāmāt manuscript; the Chinese features in the *Frāshī* and Buddha buildings; and the Spanish Islamic features in the architectural forms as shown in the Story of Bayāḍ wa Riyāḍ manuscript.

### 3.2.1.3.1.1 Religious Symbols

In addition to the architectural details of the building iconographies represented that have been discussed above, the religious nature of other building iconographies can be determined through the representation of some exterior architectural elements and symbols such as minarets and domes<sup>1143</sup>. When examining the architectural representations on the walls of the Great Mosque of Damascus, a representation of a section of a minaret can be observed, which indicates that the building shown is a Mosque. On the Mamluk glass beakers, the religious blessing significance of the architectural iconographies is implied by the representation of a minaret form which extends over the roof of a building, and appears in the form of a domed tower. Accordingly, the idea the artist was trying to reflect to the spectator regarding the religious nature of the architectural representation is clear. Minarets are also depicted in the illustration (fig.164) of the Schefer Maqāmāt Al-Ḥarīrī in the fiftieth Maqāmah

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<sup>1142</sup> Haldane 1978, p.52.

<sup>1143</sup> Brend 1991, p.227.

(fol.164), where the Mosque represented accurately relates to the text of the manuscript<sup>1144</sup>.

If the building shown is Christian in form, other symbols of a Christian nature, such as a cross and a peacock, would clarify its religious type of structure, and, therefore, announce its significance. A cross stands on the roof of a few buildings (fig.15) in the mosaic decorations of the Great Mosque of Damascus, indicating that they are Christian architectural forms. By considering these types of architectural representation, as understood from their illustrated symbols, we may reject the idea of Paradise as an interpretation of the significance of the architectural representation on the walls of the Mosque. However, this architectural representation with Christian features supports the idea of interpreting it as a manifestation of the city Damascus. In one particular example, the artist modified some architectural elements to form a cross and indicate the religious nature of the building. In this case, an architectural representation, probably a church, is shown with its window and arrow slit arranged in the form of a cross. Another architectural representation with a Christian connotation is the peacock shown on top of the architectural representation on the two Mamluk glass beakers (Baltimore), which reflect a religious blessing connotation. This Christian symbol identifies the type of building, and shows its religious implication. Consequently, it clearly transmits its blessing significance to the onlooker.

Of the various exterior symbols that can also be referred to one is the crescent on top of a central large dome in a building representation, which symbolizes its religious nature, and therefore its religious significance. This is illustrated in a building representation on the metal bowl to signify a special type of architecture, particularly the fire temple.

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<sup>1144</sup> Bothmer 1987, p.5

### 3.2.1.3.1.2 Garden and Dome

In other cases, the nature or type of building shown was identified by the representation of either a garden or a dome. A garden could sometimes be a symbol referring to Mosque representation, although they were also attached to palace forms<sup>1145</sup>. Hence, it cannot be taken as an ultimate symbol of a Mosque structure. Therefore, it can be said that gardens may be useful in distinguishing architectural representations such as a palace or Mosque, but not a house.

In relation to Mosque representation, the example shown in the Sana'a Qur'anic manuscript fragment shows a garden attached to the Mosque. After the reconstruction of the Mosque illustration, as outlined and reconstructed by Oleg Grabar (fig.143), the garden was depicted in a symbolic way by representing trees, probably with a river flowing underneath. This seems to have been influenced by the decorations on the walls of the Great Mosque of Damascus. Having been built earlier, the Great Mosque of Damascus could have inspired the artist in his symbolic reference to a garden attached to a Mosque in the Sana'a manuscript.

Domes were the second type of exterior details and symbols used to identify the type of building. The diversity of form and shape of these domes symbolizes the type of architectural representation, and therefore conveys its significance. This study of the architectural representations on various examples of art and architecture has strengthened this assumption. The religious building representation of the Sasanian fire temple, as shown on the metal bowl, has five domes: four at the corners and one in the middle, indicating the religious nature of the building, and therefore explaining its religious significance. Similarly, the three domed building represented on the Ayyubid glass bottle is attributed to a type of religious structure. In addition, domed buildings were shown on the Mamluk glass beakers, symbolizing their religious

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<sup>1145</sup> Musée 1990, p.207.

function. Finally, in the manuscript of the *Jāmi' Al-Tawārīkh*, the Buddha building involved in religious events was represented with a dome, probably to refer to its religious function. These domes do not refer in their form to religious architectural representation, thus they are interpreted as representations of palaces. However, when the artist referred to a Mosque among this architectural selection, he displayed it with a dome which was different in form and shape from those of civil building iconographies. Whereas large bulbous domes were usually attached to religious representations, the domes of house representation were shallow (flatter) in form similar to those represented in many illustrations of the Schefer *Maqāmāt*. An example of a palace with a dome was shown in the illustration of the Schefer version of the *Maqāmāt* of Al-Ḥarīrī, as on fol.120.

### 3.2.1.3.1.3 Ventilation Devices

Ventilation devices, as exterior architectural elements, are symbols of civil architecture. An example can be found on the building depicted in the *Maqāmāt* version in the British Library<sup>1146</sup>, which dates to the first quarter of the fourteenth century A.D., and is attributed to Syria<sup>1147</sup>. The illustration (fig.250) of “Abū Zayd Meeting the Narrator at Nisibin” (fol.50r) shows a brick building with a dome, and a brick funnel or chimney, probably related to an air vent used for cooling the building’s interior in summer<sup>1148</sup>. Similar ventilation devices were also represented in the illustrations of the Schefer *Maqāmāt* in the Khan representation of the twenty-ninth *Maqāmāh*, which has a roof with a ventilation shaft to ensure it is provided with fresh air, and to allow travellers to escape the unpleasant smell of the stables within the Khan<sup>1149</sup>. The Schefer *Maqāmāt* architectural representation, with the

<sup>1146</sup> (Add. 22114).

<sup>1147</sup> Haldane 1978, p.67.

<sup>1148</sup> Haldane 1978, p.15.

<sup>1149</sup> Guthrie 1995, p.96.

representation of these ventilation shafts, attributes the building types to Iraq, where the manuscript was produced.

Sliding roofs form another element of civil architectural representation, and were indicated in many illustrations as exterior details of a house form<sup>1150</sup>. An example to demonstrate this feature is the illustration (fig.251) of “Abū Zayd Meeting Al-Ḥārith” (fol.80r) in the British Library Maqāmāt<sup>1151</sup> that dates to 723 A.H. /1323 A.D. and is attributed to Syria<sup>1152</sup>.

It is now clear how exterior symbolic elements were used in architectural representation to refer to a meaning, and not just as a decorative feature. They also referred to theological concepts by their form. In addition, they worked as indications of the artist who produced them, reflecting his artistic background, origin and, in some cases, religion. In the following section, I will discuss in detail two specific examples of exterior symbols in architectural representation: specifically, material and colour.

### 3.2.1.3.2 Material Presentation

The different use of building materials in architectural iconographies in Muslim art can be observed in both objects of art and architecture. Clear examples of this include the brick building representations on the Umayyad metal bowl, the Fuṣṭāṭ fortress wall, the Ayyubid bottle, and the two Mamluk (Baltimore) beakers contrasted with the solidity of the palace representation in the Schefer Maqāmāt of Al-Ḥārīrī in the thirty-ninth Maqāmāh (fol.120r)<sup>1153</sup>. The Buddha building in the manuscript of the Jāmi‘ Al-Tawārīkh uses a more substantial material, with marble for the main building and red brick for the dome. In comparison, the building illustrations in the

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<sup>1150</sup> Haldane 1978, p.15.

<sup>1151</sup> (no. 7293).

<sup>1152</sup> Haldane 1978, p.64.

<sup>1153</sup> Ukasha 1992, p.126.



Story of Bayāḍ wa Riyāḍ manuscript also represent solidity, but use wood and grills for the windows. This diversity in material in architectural representation was for a reason. I intend to show that material presentation as an element of composition in architectural representation was not merely used for decorative purposes, but was also used as a symbolic element to reveal meanings about the nature of the building represented. Furthermore, by studying its origin and history, the study will show how material presentation suggests other theological and artistic meanings behind the architectural form in which it was used as a symbol.

In reality, the use of material seems to have played a great role in the daily life of Muslims because many literary sources and manual descriptions record how Muslims used materials and worked them<sup>1154</sup>. For example, Ibn Khaldūn in his *Muqaddimah* distinguished between two types of building materials: stone or brick held together by quicklime or brick. Later in his description, he refers to how these materials were employed in construction by stating: "Bricks were made by putting the earth between wooden boards joined together with pieces of wood and tied with ropes or twine. Then the earth was mixed with quicklime pounded in this frame and then more earth was added and chaff would also be added"<sup>1155</sup>.

The diversity of material in architectural representations in Muslim art directly relates to a theological background. Such a diversity of material is a symbol of the immortality of God, compared to the finite nature of everything and beings, as was stressed in many Qur'anic verses<sup>1156</sup>. The relationship between material presentation in art and theological or philosophical thoughts seems to have existed in antiquity and been inherited by Muslims who adopted it to their art. In order to understand more about how the representation of material in architectural representation may reflect

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<sup>1154</sup> Irwin 1997, p.143.

<sup>1155</sup> Ibn Khaldūn 1900, I, p. 407; Irwin 1997, p.143.

<sup>1156</sup> (Qur'an, Sura 55, verse 27).

theological ideas and thoughts in Muslim art, it is important to consider in some detail pre-Islamic ideas on material representation in art<sup>1157</sup>.

The type of material used in the architectural representation implies its religious, political or social significance. In addition, it recalls some of the characteristics of the material on display; for instance, how it feels in nature, its solidity or fragility, its smooth or rough quality, its heavy or light features, and its quality as being easy or hard to work<sup>1158</sup>. For example, stone buildings are reminiscent of the feeling of strong and solid features of the structure that serves a specific function, meaning we may recognize the type of the building shown as a castle or a palace, in other words a type of building strong enough to stand firm in the face of raids and invasions. By studying examples of architectural representations on pieces of art and architecture, this point is further illuminated. Bricks were exposed in the construction of the architectural figures on the Ayyubid glass bottle and the two Mamluk glass beakers. This indicates that the types of structures illustrated were not palaces or castles, and therefore influences their functions and significance in the scene. Consequently, through its material, the structure shown announces whether it is public or royal, a factor which is vital in determining the type of building, and understanding its significance. Another example to demonstrate this idea is the manuscript fragment from Fustāṭ (fig.137) (now in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York)<sup>1159</sup> in which rows of mud buildings were shown. The artist wanted to indicate the material of the buildings he is illustrating as mud by removing any masonry divisions and representing the curved corners that are only obtained in a soft material such as mud. This is to indicate the architectural forms shown are civil structures, probably houses in a city or village.

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<sup>1157</sup> Piotrovsky 2000, p.53.

<sup>1158</sup> Munro 1970, p.162.

<sup>1159</sup> (Inv. No.Acc.no.1971.237.5).

It is surprising to find another example in the illustration of a fortress that appears to be built out of baked brick, and not stone. This does not contradict the previous assumption, however, it further indicates how material exposure implies the significance of the architectural representation represented. The baked brick in the fortress wall represented in the *Fuṣṭāṭ* manuscript fragment is in two colours. An analysis of the material used in the construction of the figure of the fortress added information to identify its date, and therefore its function and significance. It appears to commemorate one of the battles of Saladin against the Franks, and record the particular event of the victory of the Muslim ruler over non-Muslim enemies, as was discussed in detail in the previous chapter. In order to refer to this significance, the artist represented this material as having a special pattern, and used it as a signature indicating his artistic background. It is likely that he was living in Mahdiyyah or Ṣabra Maṣūriyyah, as was suggested in the previous chapter, and is therefore reflecting the artistic styles of his provenance. Therefore, he showed the building material of the fortress in a pattern that was commonly used in the Byzantine period in his region<sup>1160</sup>, and which seems to have been passed down to Muslim art.

In some cases, artists exposed the very details of the building materials, showing the building with different materials such as stucco, wood, and metal in its different parts identifying its form, type, and therefore its significance. In the *Story of Bayāḍ wa Riyāḍ* manuscript, the garden wall enclosure was built of brick, with wooden domes and grill windows. In the manuscript of the *Schefer Maqāmāt* of Al-Ḥarīrī, the illustration of the Khan was built, as indicated, of bricks, with shorter side *Mihrāb* coated with a layer of stucco and wood, similar to those used in the balconies and doors of the building. Another example from the same manuscript is the palace form illustrated in the thirty-ninth *Maqāmah* (fig.165) (fol.120r), which was built out

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<sup>1160</sup> Gray 1938, p.94.

of stone with wood used for its balconies and doors. In the illustration of the village in the same manuscript of the forty-third Maqāmah (fig.173) (fol.138r), the buildings were shown as being from different materials such as red brick for the houses and shops, and stone for the Mosque. However, in the cemetery illustration of the manuscript in the eleventh Maqāmah (fig.197a) (fol.29v), the tombs were all built out of bricks<sup>1161</sup>.

In other cases, the artist manipulated the use of the material by deciding on a specific material of his own choice. This could be considered misleading in that the artist does not reflect the exact meaning and significance of the architectural form represented, however, it is likely to only happen in exceptional cases. Such is the case in the manuscript of the *Jāmi' Al-Tawārīkh* in which the building of Buddha (fig.201) was constructed from different materials. The artist understands the building is a mausoleum of Buddha, which was originally made from translucent crystal, as the text of the manuscript says. However, due to the difficulty in representing this material in painting, the artist decided to represent a brick domed building instead<sup>1162</sup>. In the illustration, the main domed structure appears to be made out of marble, while the rest of the building appears to be of red brick. The lower courses of the structure are shown in stone and marble blocks<sup>1163</sup>, with the latter placed in an oblique pattern. Personally, I consider the effect of the oblique representation was essential to highlight the plan or design of the building shown, and facilitate its recognition and therefore its significance. This feature of material rendering was realized in many of the Maqāmāt of Al-Ḥarīrī illustrations, where building materials such as stone, brick, marble, stucco, reed matting and others were depicted in various positions<sup>1164</sup>. For

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<sup>1161</sup> This is when the study was justifying how architectural forms were represented, as seen by the artist and according to his pure discretion, as buildings attributed to Iraq.

<sup>1162</sup> Gray 1978, p.34, 35.

<sup>1163</sup> Munro 1970, p.177.

<sup>1164</sup> Guthrie 1995, p.22.

example, an oblique pattern as part of the building was depicted in the eleventh illustrated Maqāmāh (fig.197a) of the Schefer Maqāmāt (fol.29), in which the wall surrounding the cemetery was shown with both vertical and horizontal brick patterns. This also applies to the thirty-ninth Maqāmāh (fig.165) of the Schefer Maqāmāt (fol.120r), in which the palace depicted has some horizontal and vertical stone courses. A further example is the tomb illustration (fig.252) in the Leningrad Maqāmāt version (now in the Academy of Sciences)<sup>1165</sup>, in which the rendering of the material on the curved surface indicates that the building represents a tomb<sup>1166</sup>.

One unusual method of rendering the material of architectural representations in many examples is the frontal diagram of the symmetrical arrangements of its bricks or tiles that are shown on a horizontal level. This appears in the Fustāt manuscript fragment (fig.26) of a city representation, the glass bottle from the Ayyubid period (fig.66) and on the two glass beakers (figs.95-98) from the Mamluk period. This form of material rendering was believed to have been inherited from a traditional representation in the past. Being derived from pre-Mongol Iranian manuscripts, and the school of Baghdad, this technique of material rendering prevailed until the thirteenth century (1330-1340 A.D.), during the rule of the Il-Khanīds<sup>1167</sup>.

In the manuscript of the Story of Bayāḍ wa Riyāḍ, the material of its architectural representations was treated differently. The brick courses of the garden enclosure run horizontally and vertically, thus increasing the depth of the scene. As a result, the material of the buildings shown usually appears as a flat surface, as if receding, and thus creating a conceptual space. This method of material exposure seems to have been repeated in the Mongol period, during which the material position

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<sup>1165</sup> (MS S 23).

<sup>1166</sup> James 1974, p.317.

<sup>1167</sup> Jairazbhoy 1996, p.9.

exposure appears within the ruled margins of the illustrations in the frontal space of the picture<sup>1168</sup>.

Another factor in analyzing the material of the architectural representation and its significance is the fact that it does not appear in some architectural representations. In the Sana'a Qur'anic manuscript, the artist trying to illustrate their significance ignored the material of the two Mosque illustrations intentionally. There was no necessity to refer to a specific material in these Mosque representations, as long as the artist was expressing an idea of a general structure, and not of a specific building. This explains the artist's focus, which went beyond architectural forms to conceptual representation.

So far, this study has considered how material as an element of composition was used as an exterior symbol in architectural representation, uncovering the meaning the buildings represented, and operated as a covert signature of the artist. In the next section, I will focus on the second exterior symbol, colour, as an element of representation to support the same hypothesis.

### **3.2.1.3.3 Colour Symbolism**

Aristotle, as well as many other scholars including Trevor Lamb and Janine Bourriau identify colour as a means used by the painter or artist to picture and imitate things<sup>1169</sup>. For the painter, colour provides a means of expressing feelings and the intangible, making it possible to create a work of art<sup>1170</sup>. This was also the case with colour in architectural representation, as the following discussion will show. Before proceeding with an examination of the meaning and role of colour in indicating significance in architectural representation, I will provide a brief study of the

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<sup>1168</sup> Jairazbhoy 1996, p.9.

<sup>1169</sup> Aristotle 1984, p.32.

<sup>1170</sup> Lamb 1995, p.1.

historical, artistic, and theological origin of the artistic use of colour, to reveal its roots and help understand its meaning in Muslim art.

Colour was used symbolically by all civilizations in the pre-Islamic era. Indeed, at times, colour was used in antiquity for arousing emotions<sup>1171</sup>. For example, forces were indicated by stressing the contrast of light and dark, or juxtaposed tones. By increasing the saturation of the colour towards a focal point, its motion character is recognized, while by displaying the full intensity of the colour hues, in other examples, the force of war and struggle can be implied<sup>1172</sup>. Sometimes colour was used to reflect religious significance, like in the paintings of Ancient Egypt, where religious intentions predominate when the likeness of the deity and description of the world beyond is represented<sup>1173</sup>. Furthermore, in Ancient Egyptian and Greek art, degrees of colours, with their different graduations, had different religious or political significance, in which divine characters were indicated<sup>1174</sup>.

Colour was also used to indicate significance in the Christian era, by which Muslim art was directly inspired. The study of colour in Christian art shows that colour is related to psychology, as it exists mainly in the mind of the artist and the observer, and in many cases does not exist in reality<sup>1175</sup>. The artist decided to use some hues, or relationships between colours, that never existed in reality or in the natural world, to convey a sense of other-worldliness. This idea seems to have later been adopted in Muslim art, as will be established in the following discussion. In Christian art, colour operates on two levels: its inherent characteristic and its emotional connotations. Examples include black being an emblem of mourning and death, with blue symbolizing heavens, green hope and fertility. In contrast, red was

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<sup>1171</sup> Watkins 1941, p.18.

<sup>1172</sup> Watkins 1941, p.27.

<sup>1173</sup> Watkins 1941, p.38-39.

<sup>1174</sup> Betsche 1978, p.43.

<sup>1175</sup> Carpenter 1974, p.13.

the colour of love and hate, and of the power of action, which was usually associated with passion, blood, and fire. White and silver represent light, innocence, purity, joy, virginity, faith, and glory, and yellow and gold are symbolic of the sun; therefore, these are the colours of God and divinity. In addition, yellow symbolizes the illuminated truth removed from the shadows<sup>1176</sup>.

In the Muslim era too, colours were not just for decoration, but had significance. Their symbolism was used in Muslim art, which again justifies the role colours play to indicate significance in architectural representation. Black was the traditional colour of the Abbasid rulers, which was later on adopted as a sign of the Friday service, and as the colour of the costumes made for that service after the destruction of the Abbasids by the Fatimids. It was also used as a sign of Fatimid loyalty to the established kingdom and religion of Islam<sup>1177</sup>.

Another significance of colour was the notion of "deceiving through simplicity"<sup>1178</sup>. This notion means using colour to create an illusion of depth in the building forms represented, especially by including contrasting colours to separate the architectural form, or one of its elements, from its surroundings. Such a technique was also used to highlight the drama of the scene, or to suggest the significance of the architectural form represented, as well as to outline the internal coherence of the architectural form exposed<sup>1179</sup>. This method of colour indication was not a Muslim invention as it was also used in the West. In Western art, black and brown were used to imply that something is hollow such as a well or a cave. Black was also used for representing a dominant element of a painting, with adjoining areas painted black seeming to recede, while the parts between appear to precede<sup>1180</sup>. Deceiving through

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<sup>1176</sup> Sill 1975, p.29, 30.

<sup>1177</sup> Ettinghausen 1962, p.145.

<sup>1178</sup> Haldane 1978, p.14.

<sup>1179</sup> Grabar 1980, p.37.

<sup>1180</sup> Gombrich 1987, p.24.



simplicity creates either an illusion of something, or a false impression of depth. In relation to the former, Maqrīzī mentioned a competition that occurred during the time of Yāzūrī, the Vizier of the Fatimid Caliph Mustanşir between 1050 and 1058 A.D., between two painters Al-Qaşīr, probably an Egyptian, and Ibn Azīz, an Iraqi. Ibn Azīz painted a girl in a niche, using special colours to give an illusion that the girl was coming out of the wall by painting her in a red dress and the wall in yellow. In contrast, Al-Qaşīr drew the same scene but gave an illusion of the girl entering the niche, by painting the girl in a white garment against a black background<sup>1181</sup>.

From a theological point of view, colours in architectural representation play a role in unveiling other theological meanings and significance. Certain verses in the Qur'an stress the symbolic value of colour in manifesting signs for those who think and analyze what is seen. This is understood from the Qur'anic verse<sup>1182</sup>: "On the earth, he has fashioned for you objects of various hues: Surely in this there is a sign for prudent men"<sup>1183</sup>, as well as in the verse: "And whatsoever he hath created for you in the earth of diverse hues, lo! There is indeed a portent for people who take heed"<sup>1184</sup>.

After discussing the historical, artistic and theological background of colour, and its development to indicate significance in Muslim art, it is clear where the idea of using colour in architectural representation as symbols indicating significance originated. However, the significance of colour in architectural representation, I would argue, was used in a complex way. It was used as symbols that refer to various meanings and significance, and the symbolic meaning of these changes from one case to another according to the meaning of the architectural representation and its significance. Now, let us deal with examples of colour symbolism as an element of

<sup>1181</sup> Maqrīzī 1853, II, p.318; Ettinghausen 1942, p.116.

<sup>1182</sup> (Qur'an, Sura 16, verse 13).

<sup>1183</sup> Betsche 1978, p.42.

<sup>1184</sup> Betsche 1978, p.44.

composition in architectural representation, demonstrating how it reflects its significance, and how it substitutes the signature of its artist.

In the architectural representations on the walls of the Great Mosque of Damascus, a wide range of vivid colours was used in all hues and levels of saturation to unveil the meaning indicated from the scene, as a representation of a city new in form and different from all other cities on earth. However, in the representation of the buildings on the Ayyubid glass bottle and the two Mamluk glass beakers, the artist wanted to uncover the meaning of a religious blessing by the representation of the buildings painted mainly in four colours: white, red, yellow and blue. The choice of colours in the last two examples signifies the meanings behind their architectural forms. Since these scenes have many Christian features in the representation of their buildings and people, and because they are inspired from Christian models that represent seasons of the year, the colours of the architectural iconographies can be used to reveal Christian inferences adopted in Islamic art.

In Christianity, white was used as a symbol of God<sup>1185</sup>. The religious implication of white in Christianity seems to have been adopted later in Islamic art, but with a different meaning. White has an important Islamic meaning, which explains its relationship to the Islamic building representation on the Ayyubid glass bottle and the beakers. Burckhardt related that the Prophet Muḥammad had seen a vision of a large dome of white mother of pearl; accordingly, mother of pearl, with its white colour, became a symbol of the spirit (*Al-Rūḥ*). Furthermore, according to the saying of the Prophet Muḥammad: “the world was created from a white pearl, the sea shell enclosing the pearl is like the heart receiving the Divine utterance”, thus, white has a religious significance<sup>1186</sup>.

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<sup>1185</sup> Betsche 1978, p.52; Portal 1844, p.I, II.

<sup>1186</sup> Betsche 1978, p.67; Burckhardt 1967, p.98, 112.

In some examples, the significance of colour has been shown to rely mainly on the type of building represented, as well as the experience of the viewer. For example, the colours in the Qur'anic manuscript fragment of Sana'a, and the Fustāt manuscript fragment with a fortress wall were used to unveil a deep symbolic emotion. Reddish brown was used in both examples to indicate this meaning in two different ways. In the Qur'anic manuscript fragment of Sana'a, the reddish brown was used to indicate a strong religious feeling reflecting the religious nature of the scene by identifying the building shown as a Mosque, and by recalling a holy religious feeling in the viewer when looking at the architectural representation. However, in the Fustāt manuscript fragment, the same colour was used to raise another sensation that is not religious, namely the meaning of war and battles.

In other cases, colours were used to indicate the architectural structure of the building represented. For example, it was used to separate the different levels of each building, such as the ground floor from the upper one and the dome from its base, by painting a surface line which separates these levels with a dark colour. Accordingly, multiplication of colour was essential in Muslim manuscripts such as in the Mosque illustrations of the Sana'a Qur'an, distinguishing the area of the *Mihrāb* from the arcades on the sides<sup>1187</sup>. Moreover, the large transept arches were distinguished by being framed with a blue colour, instead of the red that was used for the walls elsewhere in the arcade. At the same time, the spandrels of the arches were indicated by being painted with a different colour. The background was recognized by a sky blue colour visible between the framing ornamented bands and the isolated columns, with gabled motifs giving the impression that this extended section was open towards the rear<sup>1188</sup>. The same idea of using colours to distinguish the building detail was

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<sup>1187</sup> Gage 1993, p.63.

<sup>1188</sup> Bothmer 1987, p.7.

continued in Persian art, as in the Jamī' Al-Tawārīkh manuscript in which architecture was decorated with patches of colours, each patch applied to a geometrical form of the architectural setting with a different density<sup>1189</sup>.

In other architectural representations, the singling out of the building material by colour identifies the type of building used. The buildings represented on the two Mamluk beakers, whose materials were plain masonry with no colours, indicate that they refer to specific building models well known in reality. These are the famous religious structures whose presence on the beakers is mainly to bless the owner, thus uncovering the significance of the exposed buildings. In contrast, in the manuscript of the Story of Bayāḍ wa Riyāḍ, the courses of the masonry in the enclosure wall around the garden were not singled out in material, but coloured in a soft red. If we consider such a method, whereby material is not being singled out, it reveals that the building representation shown is not a specific structure, but rather a general place where the events of the story happened. Subsequently, the significance of the architectural form represented in the way it agrees with the meaning of the text of the manuscript is confirmed. In addition, the buildings on the Ayyubid glass bottle do not refer to specific buildings, but to general types of structures to agree with the meaning of the scene showing seasons of the year. Accordingly, the artist represented the masonry in a brownish colour instead of using an uncoloured treatment.

However, we should recognize that colouring the material of an architectural representation in Islamic art does not always indicate a general type of building, but may instead refer to a different meaning that also plays a role in identifying its significance. Building representation in Muslim art focused on the colouring of one of its exterior details, namely its material<sup>1190</sup>. Accordingly, special colours sometimes

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<sup>1189</sup> Papadopoulos 1980, p.110.

<sup>1190</sup> Gage 1993, p.64.

indicated a particular material; for example, stripped masonry was created in art by the use of different alternating colours on the building courses<sup>1191</sup>. When considering the building courses of the fortress wall in the *Fuṣṭāṭ* manuscript fragment, the artist was obliged to use two different colours to refer to a special style of masonry building that is known as *Ablaḡ*, in which two colours were used in reality, as shown in the scene. Another example is in the *Maqāmāt* of Al-Ḥarīrī version in the British Library<sup>1192</sup>, dated to the first quarter of the fourteenth century, where the wall surrounding a window in an architectural representation (fol.50r) is patterned with white spirals and lines indicating a plaster surface<sup>1193</sup>. The most common type of material used for architectural representations in Islamic art is brick. In some cases, glazed brick was depicted through the use of a white outline surrounding pale blue bricks<sup>1194</sup>. A third example is the silver colour used for colouring the dome of the Buddha building form in the *Jāmi' Al Tawārīkh* manuscript. This is a reference to the crystal material described in the text to indicate the type of building represented<sup>1195</sup>.

The disappearance of a shadow and light effect was clearly recognizable in all early architectural representations, on various medium of Islamic art, until the end of Mamluk era. Consequently, the representation of the building forms on the metal bowl, the glass bottle, the two Mamluk glass beakers, and Muslim manuscripts did not display any attempt to use shade and light effects in their colours. The only exception to this rule is the representation of the mosaic decoration on the walls of the Great Mosque of Damascus, in which shade was used possibly due to two reasons: the non-Muslim influence in the production of these architectural schemes and the meaning of the architectural form.

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<sup>1191</sup> Haldane 1978, p.15.

<sup>1192</sup> (Add.22114).

<sup>1193</sup> Haldane 1978, p.15.

<sup>1194</sup> Haldane 1978, p.15.

<sup>1195</sup> Blair 1996, p.45.

Considering the first reason, this is a way of showing the disguised signature of the artist, who is supposed to be Byzantine, and following Byzantine colour techniques in his piece of work. The artist is representing a city that is viewed from a distance by all the Muslims in the Mosque. Representing the details of the architectural forms in the scenes of this city representation was not easy to present with mosaic decoration without the use of shadow and light. In Byzantine painting, the use of mosaics created a problem for the artist. In this art medium, the artist cannot mix different colours together to get a third colour, but instead he had to use coloured cubes of mosaics laid near each other to form the mosaic decorations on the walls of the Mosque which are supposed to be seen from afar<sup>1196</sup>. The illusion of three-dimensional space was therefore indicated through dark lines at the edges of each mosaic piece, creating effects such as contours, facial features, and drapery folds in Byzantine art<sup>1197</sup>. This feature of coloured mosaic decoration with its light and shade that appeared in the Umayyad period suggests that the terminology of colour in Islamic art was similar to that used in Byzantine art, and indeed inspired by it. In fact, this started as early as in the seventh century A.D. lustreware production in Egypt, followed by ninth century A.D. silk production in Persia. Even though colour symbolism in the Muslim world was inspired by non-Muslim arts, it appears to be clearly distinguishable owing to the development of culture that occurred with the rise of Islam in the seventh century A.D.<sup>1198</sup>. With reference to the second reason, shadow and light are artistic features that relate to life on earth; accordingly, it is also plausible to think that the reason behind the use of shadow and light in the Great Mosque of Damascus architectural decorative scheme unveils the significance of the

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<sup>1196</sup> James 1996, p.2.

<sup>1197</sup> James 1996, p.3.

<sup>1198</sup> Gage 1993, p.64.

building forms represented. In other words, it denies their purpose as buildings referring to Paradise.

With the exception of this last example, there arises the question of why in all other examples of architectural representation dealt with in this study did shades and light effects of colour disappear? The answer to this question acknowledges a theological meaning behind the architectural iconographies represented<sup>1199</sup>. The relation between light and divinity existed as a religious idea in Christianity long before Islam. Light and brightness are used to signify superior spirit, intelligence, divinity, and holiness in Christianity. In the Bible, light is used as a symbol of goodness and wisdom, while darkness is the personification of evil and ignorance<sup>1200</sup>. Following this notion, light and shadow seem to have been adapted to Islam. According to a saying of the Prophet Muḥammad: "God hides himself behind seventy thousands curtains of light and darkness; if they were taken away, all that his sight reaches would be consumed by the lightning of his countenance". These words show that the curtains are made of light, in that they hide the divine obscurity (God), and of darkness, in that they veil the divine light. Accordingly, the symbolism of curtains refers to the idea of colour as a white light and shadow, symbols of divinity in Islam. Therefore, it is inappropriate for artists to picture this divine character in art by representing a shadow and light effect in their work<sup>1201</sup>. Another Qur'anic verse<sup>1202</sup> relates light only to divinity<sup>1203</sup>. In architectural representation, in early as well as in later Islamic eras, walls in red brick or stone were sometimes represented with each brick shaded; therefore, having light and dark sides. This does not however contradict the divine nature of shadow and light as an Islamic principle. We should not

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<sup>1199</sup> Irwin 1997, p.196.

<sup>1200</sup> Sill 1975, p.30.

<sup>1201</sup> Betsche 1978, p.77; Burekhardt 1967, p.111.

<sup>1202</sup> (Qur'an, Sura 24, verse 35).

<sup>1203</sup> Betsche 1978, p.63.

understand the shading of bricks in this instance as a reflection of the idea of real light and shadow in nature, but rather as a stylistic method of representing building materials in a basketwork technique<sup>1204</sup>.

To summarize, it is clear that colour treatment in architectural representation was not merely for a decorative purpose, but was used to expose the form, type, significance and meaning of the architectural form presented. Moreover, it was used as a symbol in architectural representation, unveiling some theological, historical, and artistic meanings. This section also illustrated how colour symbolism in some examples played the role of a signature of the artist.

In the next section, the role of space will be examined. It is hoped to demonstrate that space is another element of composition used by artists in representing the meaning of the architectural forms exposed in Muslim buildings and art objects.

### **3.2.2 Concept of Space in Architectural Representation**

In addition to what has been discussed earlier, another element of composition plays an equally important role in clarifying the significance of architectural representations. In the following discussion, I will try to demonstrate that space treatment in Muslim art does not abide by the rules of the pre-Islamic era by which it was inspired. Even though the idea of using linear and angular perspectives originated in the pre-Islamic era, the study will show that it was developed in the Muslim era as a way to indicate the significance of the architectural representation shown. I will also explain how the study of various examples of architectural representation in Muslim art uncovers the fact that space treatment was used as one of the elements of composition in creating the architectural representation, and of indicating meaning in Islamic decoration.

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<sup>1204</sup> Adahl 1981, p.50.



In the following discussion, the study distinguishes between the various space treatments that were used with architectural representation such as the linear, central, and angular perspectives. I will try to demonstrate that what influences the choice of either type of perspective is the significance of the architectural representation.

### **3.2.2.1 Linear, Central, and Angular Perspectives**

Space in architectural iconographies on objects of art and architecture can be divided into two categories: the linear and the angular. The two perspectives are different in their nature: whereas in the linear perspective no attempt of depth was indicated, in the angular most of the points and angles of the building were exposed. Moreover, in the latter, the roof and flanking walls of the building illustrated are clearly visible since the building is usually exposed from three of its four sides.

#### **3.2.2.1.1 Linear Perspective**

Before giving examples from the first group, linear perspective, I would like to briefly introduce the historical background of such a technique of representation, which reveals how the idea that existed in the pre-Islamic era was adapted to Muslim art. Examples of linear perspective, or frontal plane treatment, existed in the Ancient Egyptian era, when pieces of furniture such as chairs and tables (fig.253) were represented as if seen only from a frontal view with no depth. This appears in the painting of the limestone stele of Neu-Waf (fig.254) that dates to the early eighteenth dynasty (now in the Metropolitan Museum of Art)<sup>1205</sup>. Historical evidence shows that the linear perspective can be also traced back to around 550 B.C., when representations of altars and parts of the architectural iconographies were depicted in either a strict profile or frontal view. An example is the amphora that is in the British

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<sup>1205</sup> Richter 1970, p.5.

Museum, dated 550 B.C.<sup>1206</sup>. Later, buildings were depicted without depth, as was the case in Greek art in the period of the seventh and most of the sixth centuries B.C. No attempt was made to show the sides of the buildings, as all are shown with a frontal view<sup>1207</sup>. For example, in a representation of a staircase in a building (fig.255) on an Ionian amphora in the Louvre Museum<sup>1208</sup>, dating to 570 B.C., the steps are placed on the side<sup>1209</sup>. The same applies to the house (fig.256) which is depicted in a frontal view on a vase, known as the Francois vase, showing *Thetis* sitting inside her chamber towards the end of the God's procession at her marriage to Peleus. The building with its columns is in a frontal view, and only one leaf of the door is shown to indicate that it is open<sup>1210</sup>. Linear perspective was practiced in the paintings on Greek vases, and at Pompeii and Herculaneum, showing some previous knowledge of this science<sup>1211</sup>.

When first adapted to Muslim art, linear perspective was not much favoured by the artists in the Muslim era. However, some architectural representations on Islamic art and architecture indicate that this type of perspective was practiced. Nevertheless, it was always accompanied by other minor attempts at presenting depth, whether in the architectural representation shown, or in the whole scene around it. Firstly, on architecture, for example, the Mosque Madrasa of Sultan Ḥasan provides a clear case in point. Some of the buildings represented on its portal were sculptured in a linear perspective to directly reveal the buildings (by identifying their characteristic sculptured features) as glamorous well known buildings, enabling us to compare them in glamour and fame to the Mosque Madrasa. The artist focused on the features he felt important enough to identify the types of buildings; thus, the second building in

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<sup>1206</sup> Edgerton 1975, p.18.

<sup>1207</sup> Richter 1970, p.17.

<sup>1208</sup> (E703).

<sup>1209</sup> Richter 1970, p.18.

<sup>1210</sup> Richter 1970, p.19.

<sup>1211</sup> Storey 1910, p.10, 11.

the vertical panel was shown from a linear perspective. Secondly, on some art objects, the linear principle was used to signify a general type of structure that does not reflect a specific architectural model in reality. It also releases other political, religious, and social implications. This applies to the architectural representations on the Umayyad metal bowl, the Ayyubid glass bottle, and others, which will be discussed in turn.

The religious significance of the architectural form on the Umayyad metal bowl is demonstrated by using the linear perspective to identify the general religious features of the building. Even though the roof and base of its fire temple form are represented with inward angles, indicating depth, the frontal view of the building suggests a linear perspective. Accordingly, it was not possible for the artist to show a great deal of the building plan. Therefore, there was no further need to concentrate on the plan of the building, as its form, and thus its meaning is understood from illustrating its fine architectural details using the linear perspective technique<sup>1212</sup>. The architectural representations on the Ayyubid glass bottle also do not suggest specific structures in reality, but rather refer to general models uncovering their significance in representing seasons of the year and religious blessings. The architectural forms on the bottle form a perfect example of the perpetuation of linear perspective with no impression of depth. Depth was traced elsewhere in the rest of the bottle's scenes, where various base lines for the other elements of the scenes were drawn<sup>1213</sup>.

Similarly, in the *Jāmi' Al-Tawārīkh* manuscript, a general type of structure was presented. Even though the style followed in representing this structure is different from the previous examples in that it has indications of depth within its linear perspective, it could be explained by its style of painting that is dissimilar to the previous ones. The illustration of the Buddha building is depicted with its frontal view, but with some signs of depth in its façade, identifying the type of the building

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<sup>1212</sup> Arnheim 1988, p.183.

<sup>1213</sup> Sauerländer 1987, p.100.

shown. The details of the roof of the building were indicated by the presence of part of a dome, while the flanking walls of the building were not shown. An illusion of depth was realized using the three columns in the frontal part of the building standing on a frontal plane, while on a receding plane stand the two grill windows of the structure. A glimpse of depth was also indicated elsewhere in the scene relying on the idea of using scale in depicting a small tree in the background of the scene, compared with the larger scale of the building in its front. Finally, in the manuscript of the Story of Bayāḍ wa Riyāḍ, the architectural representations were depicted from a linear perspective, because the meaning of the architectural forms shown refers to general types of structures. The building forms illustrated form part of the enclosure wall surrounding a garden with its towers represented in a simple way.

Before considering the angular perspective in Muslim art, and its various attempts to present depth in architectural representation, I will focus on another type of perspective, central perspective. It appeared as one of the variations of linear perspective. It plays a significant role in uncovering further meanings of architectural representations in Muslim art. Therefore, it is relevant to analyze central perspective and its role in architectural representations.

### **3.2.2.1.2 Central Perspective**

In defining the meaning of central perspective in architectural representation, it is necessary to consider the principal structural lines in the architectural form as a system of beams that issue from a focus within the picture space. The structural lines of the architectural representation are used to create a visual effect of rushing forward, breaking through the frontal plane of the picture<sup>1214</sup>. In the complete

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<sup>1214</sup> Arnheim 1984, p.294.

projection of two-dimensional space, the centre lies in the frontal plane; however, with increasing depth, the centre withdraws into the distance and lies in infinity<sup>1215</sup>.

Placing the architectural figure in the centre of the composition also uncovers an important psychological significance that helps to interpret the meaning of the whole decoration. In this position, this architectural image is at the centre of the world, while the other outer centres seem to have an effect on the primary one in the scene. The building representation became the focus of attention and its type and form were more easily identified. For example, in the metal bowl, the main concentration is on the architectural form, emphasizing its religious nature as a fire temple. The centrality in the metal bowl is important as it creates an optical projection of the building form portrayed, making the focus of the scene in the frontal plane<sup>1216</sup>.

In this idea of centralization, the focus was on placing the architectural forms illustrated in the central foreground, as seen in the mosaic decoration on the walls of the Great Mosque of Damascus (figs.1-10), and in the fire temple representation on the metal bowl. Before the Muslim era, such a centralization was known in Byzantine and Roman paintings<sup>1217</sup>. However, it has been recognized that the majority of the architectural representations in the West mainly occupied the background or the frame of the painting<sup>1218</sup>. Representing buildings in the background of the scene, although geometry can be used to eliminate the distance between the foreground and the background, this attitude of representation does not reveal the meaning and significance of the back buildings shown, except through the scene's frontal projection<sup>1219</sup>. Symbolically, in the West, the altar-pieces of medieval art create a

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<sup>1215</sup> Arnheim 1984, p.297.

<sup>1216</sup> Arnheim 1988, p.183.

<sup>1217</sup> Architecture on the foreground was achieved before the Muslim rule during the Byzantine period as in the wall frescoes of the Villas in Boscoreale that date to 30-40 B.C. in which the focus of the scenes was architectural representations.

<sup>1218</sup> Papadopoulo 1980, p.61.

<sup>1219</sup> Arnheim 1988, p.190, 191.

religious hierarchy by the arrangement of their subject matter. The principal figure is larger and centralized, surrounded by smaller secondary figures<sup>1220</sup>.

Turning now to the angular perspective, the following discussion will indicate that angular perspective was not used in Muslim art simply for decoration, but rather to reveal meanings and significance about each architectural form exposed.

### **3.2.2.1.3 Angular Perspective**

Angular perspective means that the angles of the buildings were either simply represented, or were shown through high horizon, overlapping, and double ground plane techniques that will be discussed in detail later. This technique was used in antiquity from 2000 B.C. when artists painted on the stone walls in the Minoan Palace in Knossos, Crete, architectural columns showing their interest and knowledge of form, and their ability to portray a sense of depth<sup>1221</sup>. Angular perspective was used in Muslim art in different techniques: namely, three dimensional space, high horizon, overlapping technique, double ground plane, and lateral expansion.

Although there is evidence of linear perspective in some architectural representations, it was not much favoured by artists of the Muslim era, with angular perspective replacing it on many examples of Muslim art. Firstly, on architecture, it has been established in the representation of architectural figures, as on the walls of the Great Mosque of Damascus (figs.1, 4, 6, 7, 10), that building iconographies attempt to indicate depth. This is because the architectural forms represented required a special treatment of space in them, as well as around them; a manifestation of an area or space that contains many elements, such as buildings, mountains, roads and subways, bridges, and rivers extending on different levels, and thus creating a three or more dimensional space. The space these architectural forms occupy was treated in an

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<sup>1220</sup> Arnheim 1984, p.295.

<sup>1221</sup> Ballinger 1969, p.11.

angular perspective to unfold the beauties of these buildings, indicating a political significance, that is to say ensuring the authority, power, and rule of the Muslim Caliph. The buildings reflect a three-dimensional plane of depth, as was traditionally practiced in Muslim art in the representation of a city or a town. Hence, small houses were depicted with an angle exposing their flanking sides and roofs, with windows and doors piercing these structures to indicate interior depth<sup>1222</sup>. On the Mosque Madrasa of Sultan Ḥasan, however, the building at the lower end of the panel of sculptured architectural figures, by the portal of the Mosque, was shown with a side view. It depicts the roof, façade, and one of the two flanking sides of the structure. Consequently, the second building is represented through a linear perspective, as it needed fewer details for its identification.

Secondly, on art objects, angular perspective was also traced in the representation of the fortress wall in the *Fuṣṭāṭ* manuscript fragment. Because of the political significance of this architectural representation, the representation of this Fatimid or Ayyubid fortress wall possibly refers to a specific building involved in the commemorated event. As a result, the artist decided to show as much of the building as possible. To ensure this, the building form of the fortress wall was shown with an angle at some parts, and curvilinear effects in other parts accordingly. The fortress wall can be seen from many angles. The next example is one of the two Mamluk glass beakers (figs.95-98), on which angular perspective was in use. Demonstrating their religious significance in casting a blessing over their owner, the building iconographies on the beaker are displayed in a way to expose most of their possible parts, identifying them as specific and not general building iconographies. On one of the two beakers (figs.95, 96), the buildings are shown from three of their four sides, displaying all their flanking walls, as an attempt to present depth. Because many

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<sup>1222</sup> Munro 1970, p.110.

building iconographies represented on the two beakers refer to religious structures, it seems that the artist chose real well known religious buildings, which he represented through an angular perspective and which appear on the first beaker. John Carswell considers these as representations of the Dome of the Rock and the Holy Sepulchre. However, the other building figures on the second beaker are represented through a linear perspective, probably to refer to them as general religious structures.

Space treatment in the Sana'a Qur'anic manuscript fragment is different from that in the previous examples. For example, indications of depth were shown in the Mosque iconographies of the Sana'a Qur'anic manuscript fragment to strengthen the religious significance of the architectural representations as places where the Qur'an is kept. Due exclusively to the artist's interest in representing some details of a general Mosque plan, the angular perspective is expressed through the earliest attempt of space perspective, a high horizon technique that creates overlapping planes. However, the verticality of the building iconographies in this example, and the frontal view of many parts of its façade and details, suggest a linear perspective. This implies that the artist was inclined to use linear perspective on a limited scale, probably to refer to a general plan of architecture rather than a specific known building that may be remembered when looking at the representation. The painting attempts to depict the height and depth of space as viewed from above, placing emphasis on the Mosque plans. It can clearly be observed that the Mosque figure dominates almost three quarters of the picture plane<sup>1223</sup>. In relation to the *high-horizon technique*, it is observed that through this technique, the central court of the second Mosque illustration is displayed. This technique was extensively used on later Islamic art, from the fourteenth century onwards. The introduction of the high horizon technique

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<sup>1223</sup> Jairazbhoy 1996, p.23.



was a new development in the rendering of space in any work of art, where the ground is seen as if from above<sup>1224</sup>.

Concerning the overlapping planes, depth was indicated in the Mosque arcades, which are represented in an overlapping position designating the deeper parts in the interior of the Mosque<sup>1225</sup>. Louise Ballinger identified the overlapping technique as follows: "Overlapping is one object in front of or overlapping another indicates a difference in spacing. It cuts off the complete form, leaving only a part. This may include a contour or freely drawn form or any irregular or even shape, complete in itself, that partially covers another shape"<sup>1226</sup>. Rudolf Arnheim also referred to the meaning of the overlapping technique as follows: "The overlapping technique is useful in creating a sequence of visual objects in the depth dimension when the spatial construction of the picture does not rely on other means of perspective"<sup>1227</sup>.

A study of the history of this overlapping technique shows that it was in use in antiquity. Margaret Hagen explained that overlapping was practiced in Ancient Egyptian art, noting: "overlapping gives the thinnest possible distance between two objects especially in the highly stylized version prevalent in Egyptian art"<sup>1228</sup>. She explains the use of such a technique in Ancient Egyptian art as follows: "The reason for using the overlapping technique was the function of the scenes. Recognizability was a primary concern of the Egyptian artist because the Egyptian art was the art of the tomb painting. Thus, the overwhelming impression gained from Egyptian art is of the clarity of the forms displayed. Accordingly, the emphasis in this art was on clarity

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<sup>1224</sup> James 1974, p.306.

<sup>1225</sup> Jairazbhoy 1996, p.23.

<sup>1226</sup> Ballinger 1969, p.22.

<sup>1227</sup> Arnheim 1974, p.251.

<sup>1228</sup> Hagen 1986, p.172.

of depiction of the subject matter if each object is to be depicted so it appears to be what it is as clearly as possible..."<sup>1229</sup>.

In order to use this *overlapping technique*, indicating planes of the picture space, certain rules have to be considered. Firstly, the outer walls, in other words the side and back walls of the building, disappear although the doorways of the building itself are represented. Secondly, these outer walls were replaced by a decorated frieze which formed a limit to the building, indicating its edges, as was the case in the Mosque representations in the Sana'a Qur'anic manuscript <sup>1230</sup>.

Other attempts to display an angular perspective were followed in the Schefer Maqāmāt of Al-Ḥarīrī manuscript. Here, indications of depth were recognized by exposing some of the details of the buildings in either their interior or exterior, reflecting their significance. This idea was demonstrated in the illustration (fig.168) of the second Maqāmāh (fol.5v) of the Schefer version of the Maqāmāt of Al-Ḥarīrī, signifying the type of building as a library, which conforms to the text of the manuscript. In this example, depth is referred to by showing small spandrels enclosing each of the shelf compartments where the books are kept<sup>1231</sup>. In another illustration from the same manuscript, the illustration (fig.169) of the Khan in the twenty-ninth Maqāmāh (fol.89), the same technique of depth treatment was employed. The building was shown with two side spandrels on its lower floor, indicating an entrance area, and giving an illusion of depth by showing the back wall of the lower floor receding in plane. In addition, the balcony on the upper floor of the Khan structure indicates depth by protruding on a plane behind which lies another plane occupied by the windows of the upper floor.

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<sup>1229</sup> Hagen 1986, p.172-175.

<sup>1230</sup> Grabar 1989, p.174.

<sup>1231</sup> Guthrie 1995, p.115, 116.

This technique of representing the details of a building to give an illusion of depth, or in other words, showing depth through exposing details of the building was not invented by Muslims, but was inherited from previous non-Muslim arts. In fact, the idea has a Byzantine origin, where some paintings expose the interiors of a room in a house. The space in these small rooms is limited, and is indicated by many architectural elements creating its limitations, such as the architectural details of the room, its roof, floor, walls, and ceiling. Even though the planes that carry these details in the paintings were close to each other, and each was dependent on the other, the artist had to organize them in a way to give an impression of depth, without spoiling the whole scene<sup>1232</sup>.

A further technique of angular perspective indicating depth in the architectural representation in Muslim art is the *double ground plan*. This is a method to indicate a two dimensional plane in architectural representation, identifying its type by the portrayal of two elevations, or two terraces above each other, to show that the two terraces are receding from the plane of the picture at an angle<sup>1233</sup>. In the Muslim period, this double ground plane, as a technique was recognized in the twelfth Maqāmah (fol.33) of the Schefer Maqāmāt of Al-Ḥarīrī (fig.126), where a tavern was represented. In order to identify the type of building and its function, the artist showed the making of wine on the lower floor, and showed people sitting and drinking wine on the upper floor. Similarly, the thirty-ninth Maqāmah (fol.122) of the same manuscript (fig.166) has a scene divided into two storeys that may explain the function of the building as being a private structure such as a palace.

There is to indicate that the double ground plane was used in pre-Islamic antiquity, but practiced with a different approach. In the Ancient Egyptian era, the

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<sup>1232</sup> Bunim 1970, p.137.

<sup>1233</sup> James 1974, p.317.

technique was practiced on human figures. Instead of representing two planes, where the activities of the scene may be represented, two rows of people were placed above each other (fig.257) to reflect their position as if being behind each other, but appearing in a frontal plane with no indication of depth<sup>1234</sup>.

A further technique that indicates depth in architectural representation in the Schefer Maqāmāt is the *Lateral expansion*. This is demonstrated in the Rylands version<sup>1235</sup> of the Maqāmāt of Al-Ḥarīrī, in the twenty-eighth Maqāmah (fols.89v, 90) (fig.258); and in the twenty-first Maqāmah (fols.61b, 62a) (fig.259) which represents the Mosque of Al-Rayy. Parts of the congregation in the illustration were extended to the opposite page, giving a complete idea about the type and function of the depicted building<sup>1236</sup>.

To sum up, the above discussed space treatment, in terms of the linear, central, and angular perspectives, demonstrated that the use of the architectural iconographies with respect to space was greatly developed to serve important functions which are specifically related to their significance<sup>1237</sup>.

In conclusion, this chapter has shown that the structural forms and elements of composition of the architectural iconographies were not merely for a decorative purpose, but rather were used by artists to focus on the significance of the architectural forms in architecture and on objects of art. This is in addition to uncovering further theological and artistic connotations behind their decorations that worked as disguised signatures of the artists. Therefore, understanding the significance of any architectural representation involves a full understanding of its artistic and stylistic viewpoints. By analyzing the ways in which the architectural iconographies were constructed, it was possible to recognize imitative architectural

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<sup>1234</sup> Richter 1970, p.6.

<sup>1235</sup> (Now in Rylands University Library Manchester MS Arabe 680).

<sup>1236</sup> James 1974, p.312, 313.

<sup>1237</sup> Jairazbhoy 1996, p.9.

forms that have similar and common features to those in their original models. Examples include the building iconographies by the portal of the Mosque Madrasa of Sultan Ḥasan, the building forms on one of the Mamluk glass beakers, and the building iconographies in the manuscript of the Story of Bayād wa Riyād. In contrast, imaginative forms have features which are not found on their real models, or generally in reality, and include examples such as the walls of the Great Mosque of Damascus, the Umayyad metal bowl, the Mosque illustrations in the Sana'a Qur'an, the building forms in the manuscripts of the Maqāmāt of Al-Ḥarīrī and the Jāmi' Al-Tawārīkh. Structurally related to both imitative and imaginative architectural iconographies is a third structural form, the representational, which includes both imitative and imaginative forms and expresses feelings, emotions, and expressions.

Similar analysis is applicable to the elements of composition which make up the structural forms of the architectural iconographies; specifically, the symbols, such as the interior elements including furniture and scene composition, and exterior elements including architectural elements, colour and building material in architectural representation. They add up to the final significance of the architectural representations depicted. Their function was demonstrated to uncover information about the type of the building used, whether it is religious or civil, Muslim or Christian.

The study also illustrated that another element of composition that contributed to the understanding of the meaning of architectural iconographies represented is the use of space. It was concluded that in the Muslim period the use of space mainly developed to serve the significance of the architectural forms depicted, rather than to fill the space of the scene. Linear and angular perspectives clarify the meaning of the architectural forms shown, and therefore uncover their hidden significance.

Various theological and artistic meanings were uncovered through aesthetic and stylistic analysis of the architectural forms on architecture and on art objects. The research has shown that different Islamic theological principles were behind the stylistic treatment of the architectural iconographies, further adding to their significance. Finally, it has been shown through the study that the historical background of the different stylistic ideas of the architectural forms were adapted to Muslim art from non-Muslim origins.

## Conclusions

The role of architectural representation in identifying the meaning of Islamic decoration has been discussed in terms of its description, origin, and significance for objects of art and architecture from the Muslim era, and we have tried to indicate the rule according to which architectural decorations bridge several genres. Information related to a range of Islamic architecture and art objects displaying architectural representations has been collected and organized to see whether its dissemination in various eras of the Muslim period might be gleaned for unveiling the rule identifying their significance. The architectural representations used in this study have been separated into two groups: those on architecture and those on objects of art. All of the architectural representations, including examples from non-Muslim sources, which by virtue of their subjects or scenes might be linked with those produced under the Muslim rule, have also been examined.

It has previously been suggested that architectural representations on Islamic architecture, as well as on objects of art, are not just for decoration, but also for relaying a particular significance. It has been demonstrated that there is a rule according to which we may identify the exact significance of each architectural representation, and have related that to the function of where it is represented. If it is a Mosque with both religious and political connotations in a capital city of the Muslim rule where architectural representations appear, as in the case of the Great Mosque of Damascus, the architectural representations reveal their significance in reflecting the sovereignty, power, and supremacy of the Muslim ruler, and thereby gain the loyalty of his people. It has been explained that this was referred to by representing a scene of the city of Damascus as reworked by the artist on the walls of the Mosque.

However, if it is a Madrasa where architectural representations are visible, as in the case of Sultan Ḥasan in Cairo, with a great educational as well as religious heritage, they are likely to present a different connotation, recalling comparable architectural models with similar educational and religious heritage in reflecting the educational importance of the Mosque Madrasa compared to its similar rival models in reality. As we have seen, the identity of these models was indicated by representing them as architectural iconographies decorating the portal of the Mosque Madrasa. It is also significant that the greatest Mosque of the city at its time, the Mosque Madrasa of Sultan Ḥasan, then, addresses another political connotation by commemorating the pious works the Sultan commissioned on the religious buildings of the venerated areas in the world, either by restoration or works of donation, represented in the architectural decorative scheme of the Madrasa.

In contrast, if the building was a mausoleum, for example that of Al-Zāhir Baybars, it is impossible to see the architectural decorations on its walls, which closely resemble those on the walls of the Great Mosque of Damascus, as anything but an extreme demonstration of Paradise, a reward for the deceased, and a reminder to the visitors of the mausoleum of this meaning. This is linked on many levels with the life and achievements of the deceased, granting him a wish of Paradise as represented on the walls of his mausoleum. Interestingly, we encounter another different significance of architectural representations in another mausoleum, that of Gazur Gah. Assuming, as we have, that the function of the building determines the significance of its architectural representations, it is possible that the function of this mausoleum, as a previous Sufi shrine, gives a new dimension to the meaning of its architectural decorations. Though the architectural representations show similarity to those on the walls of the Great Mosque of Damascus, and those on the walls of the mausoleum of Baybars, they do not signify any political connotation or recall scenes



of Paradise. In contrast, they form a short biography of the Prophet Mūḥammad and his companions, presenting his battle life, and addressing the Islamic principle of Jihad with the reward of Paradise in return.

This study has led to additional findings. It has been demonstrated that Islamic architecture has an influence on Islamic art objects in terms of the significance of architectural representation. We have observed that, as in Islamic architecture, the significance of architectural representations on Islamic art objects is determined in accordance with the function of where they are depicted, whether it is on metalwork, glasswork, or even in a manuscript.

Through investigating the significance of architectural representation on metalwork, it appears that the functional use of various metal vessels as offering devices of food and drink explains the meaning of their decorative system of architectural forms. They offer various wishes of health, happiness, victory, and blessings to the owner of the vessel. This was transmitted through the symbolic amalgamation and dissolving of these wishes into the contents of the vessel, which were meant to live and persist as long as the vessel was in use. For example, the Umayyad metal bowl, with its religious building surrounded with a representation of the garden of Paradise, conveys a religious significance, namely the wish of a religious blessing and of the fruits of Paradise, offered to the owner of the vessel while using it. On another metal vessel, the twelfth century metal plate, its building representation of either a castle or palace is of political significance, offering a wish of everlasting victory and safety to the owner of the vessel. The appearance of this type of decoration, architectural form, in the context of glasswork was not intended to detract from its association with the function of the glass object bearing it, as containers of drinks yielded from fruits of the different seasons of the year offered to the owner of the vessel. It appears that, by the inclusion of scenes of humans and

agriculture, the architectural representation wished to demonstrate the seasons of the year as its significance. Manuscripts bear witness to the role of their function and the role of the meaning of their text in unveiling the significance of their architectural representations. Five manuscript examples have been studied. The *Fuṣṭāṭ* manuscript fragment has an architectural representation that addresses a political meaning, the siege of a fortress. In another example, the Sana'a Qur'anic manuscript fragment, the two architectural forms signify the place where the Qur'an is kept, which agrees with the function of the manuscript itself. Unfortunately, these two manuscript fragments do not have a text to compare with; however, other examples of manuscripts with their complete texts, including the *Maqāmāt* of Al-Harīrī, the *Jāmi' Al-Tawārīkh*, and the *Ḥadīth* (Story of) Bayāḍ wa Riyāḍ, confirm the relationship between the function of the manuscript and the meaning of its text with the significance of its architectural representations. In order to demonstrate this, we have studied in detail the texts of these manuscripts, and compared them to their illustrated architectural representations. Thus, it is clear to see why the function of the object of art plays such an important role in identifying the significance of its architectural representation, and why it is such a potent device in understanding the meaning of the whole decoration.

While analyzing the various features of architectural representations, and their relation to their significance, it was possible to exemplify how architectural representations are disguised signatures of the origin, religion, and artistic background of their artists, and demonstrates that these were reflections of the buildings the artists were familiar with by origin. For example, in the Great Mosque of Damascus, architectural representations show various Byzantine features produced by the artist who was probably Byzantine himself. He was possibly Christian, as he represented Christian building iconographies. It can also be argued

that the artist of the Mosque Madrasa of Sultan Ḥasan, who represented buildings with Gothic and Christian features, was Christian. This feature, the signature of artists by elements in their architectural forms on Islamic buildings, is also applicable to Islamic art objects. The building representation on the Umayyad metal bowl was a representation of the Sasanian fire temple, since the artist was probably of Sasanian background. By reflecting their own religious identity, the artists who produced architectural representations on the Ayyubid glass bottle and the two Mamluk glass beakers were shown to be Christian due to the Christian features on their building forms. It has also been demonstrated that manuscripts carried a variety of signatures of the artists who illustrated them with architectural representations. The buildings in the Maqāmāt of Al-Ḥarīrī refer to building traditions from Iraq, unveiling the origin of the artist, while those in the Jāmi' Al-Tawārīkh carry Chinese features, uncovering the Chinese origin of their artists, and the artist who illustrated the architectural representations in the Ḥadīth Bayāḍ wa Riyāḍ was likely to be from Spain, or had a Hispano-Islamic artistic background, due to the varied Spanish features that appeared.

The importance of the artist in the Muslim world conforms to our findings of posting their signatures on their architectural representations. The Muslim community had a great respect for artists, who used to acquire an honorable status. In the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries A.D., two of the daughters of an architect, known as the Al-Ṭūlūnī family, successively married Sultan Barqūq. This indicates that through such respect, the artist could be granted a degree of freedom in imagining his own creation of architectural forms to reflect personal information about himself. Further proof of this is that in some cases the members of the ruling

class were identified as architects, indicating the importance and honor of such a profession in the Muslim era<sup>1238</sup>.

Artists had a very important status in society as they also contributed to the development, or decline, of art in the Muslim era. In the fourteenth century A.D., Maqrīzī related the decline of the metalwork industry to the death of a large number of artists in the crisis caused by the Black Death or Plague. On this occasion, Maqrīzī stated: "As for the...artisans, wage workers, porters, servants, grooms, weavers, laborers and their like, their wages multiplied many times over. However not many of them remain, for most of them died. A worker of this type is not to be found except after strenuous searching"<sup>1239</sup>.

Artists, in representing their disguised signatures through their architectural representation, transformed it into a Muslim garb addressing significance used within the traditions of Islamic art and architecture, and conformed to its rules. Hence, similar connotations and significance appeared on architecture and later inspired art objects, but with different features, and in a variety of contexts. Here we are also aware of the relative importance of the meanings and significance dealt with in architectural representations, which were originally non-Muslim but adopted in Muslim art and adapted to agree with the meaning of Islamic art and architecture. This was achieved in the thesis by studying the origin of various ideas and themes that worked as an inspiration to artists who represented architectural representations. Some of these ideas date to the Ancient Egyptian era, others to the Greek, Hellenistic, and Byzantine eras, and others to the Christian era.

For the purpose of this study on the significance of architectural representations on Islamic architecture and art objects, and after dealing with the historical and cultural aspects of the architectural representations, the focus has been

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<sup>1238</sup> Lewcock 1978a, p.130.

<sup>1239</sup> Maqrīzī 1940, p.75.

placed on a stylistic analysis of these architectural iconographies. This is in the belief that by examining the stylistic, some essential points about the meaning of architectural forms might be highlighted, which would then illuminate the question of their significance in Islamic decoration. Artists working under Muslim rule unveiled the significance of architectural representations by relying on their artistic features. It was found that three structural forms were in use at different times to refer to the significance of architectural iconographies: imitative, imaginative, and representational. On the one hand, artists used imitative architectural forms to refer to the buildings represented: for example, by the portal of the Mosque Madrasa of Sultan Ḥasan, the Mamluk glass beakers, and the manuscript of Ḥadīth Bayāḍ wa Riyāḍ, in which a great degree of imitation of real models was maintained in uncovering the meaning of the architectural form.

On the other hand, artists chose imaginative architectural forms in the Great Mosque of Damascus, the Umayyad metal bowl, the Ayyubid glass bottle, the Sana'a manuscript fragment, and the Maqāmāt of Al-Harīrī to successfully transmit their significance. It is striking that in all these architectural examples, the artist tried to make his architectural forms representational by making it expressive of a specific feeling or emotion, all of which suggests that the emotions and feelings reflected by the architectural form are not those of the artist, but rather of the architectural form, which is expressive in itself and has some qualities and characteristics of a religious, political, or secular significance. It has also been shown that the origin of imitative, imaginative and representational forms of architectural iconographies is based in Islamic art and theology, and was used to unveil further hidden meanings and significance.

The study also incorporated the elements of composition that formed the structure of the architectural representation in unveiling its significance. Firstly, that

symbolism in architectural representation has played an important role in identifying the type of the architectural form represented. Interior details, such as furniture and scene composition have been used in all the presented examples of art and architecture, and worked to address the religious, political, and secular significance of the architectural forms. Exterior details were also recognized to have played a role in showing the meaning of the architectural form. These include: first, architectural details that include religious symbols, gardens and domes, and ventilation devices; second, material; and third, colour. It seems most likely that these were used by artists in all architectural representation to indicate a specific significance that contributed to the uncovering of the whole meaning of the architectural form. Secondly, the concept of space in architectural representation with its linear, central and angular perspectives has been treated by artists in ways revealing the significance of the architectural representation in each case.

In closing, in light of all these considerations, it seems likely that architectural representation gained such popularity in Muslim architecture and art objects as a result of the importance of architecture in the Muslim world and theology that grew over time. We may recall our reference to this importance of architecture by one of the *Hadiths* of the Prophet Muḥammad in which it was mentioned that anyone who constructed a Mosque will acquire a house in Paradise “For him who builds a Mosque, God will build a home in Paradise”<sup>1240</sup>.

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<sup>1240</sup> Jairazbhoy 1972, p.8.

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# **The Role of Architectural Representations in the Context of Islamic Decoration**

**Volume Two-Figures**

**A Thesis Presented By  
Gehan Samir Ali Ibrahim**

**In Partial fulfilment of the requirements  
For the degree of Doctor of Philosophy**

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Department of History of Art and/ or Archaeology,  
London University**

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# Figures



a.



b.

Fig.1 Representation of houses, mosaic decoration, the Great Mosque of Damascus, 706-715 A.D. a. A group of houses piled on top of each other on the left hand side. (After Brend 2001, fig.6, p.23). b. Details of figure 1a. (After Enderlein 2000, p.60).



a.



b.

Fig.2 Scenes of houses, mosaic paintings, the Great mosque of Damascus, 706-715 A.D. a. Representation of houses in the Barada panel.(After De Lorey 1933-34, pl.58). b. House scenes on the back wall of the West Riwāq. (After Syria Website. "The Umayyad Mosque Photo Gallery" Online. <http://Syriagate.com>. Accessed 24<sup>th</sup> of April 2003).





a.



b.

Fig.3 Houses with gabled roofs, mosaic decoration, the Great Mosque of Damascus, 706-715 A.D. a. (After the author). b. Details of figure 3a. (After the author).



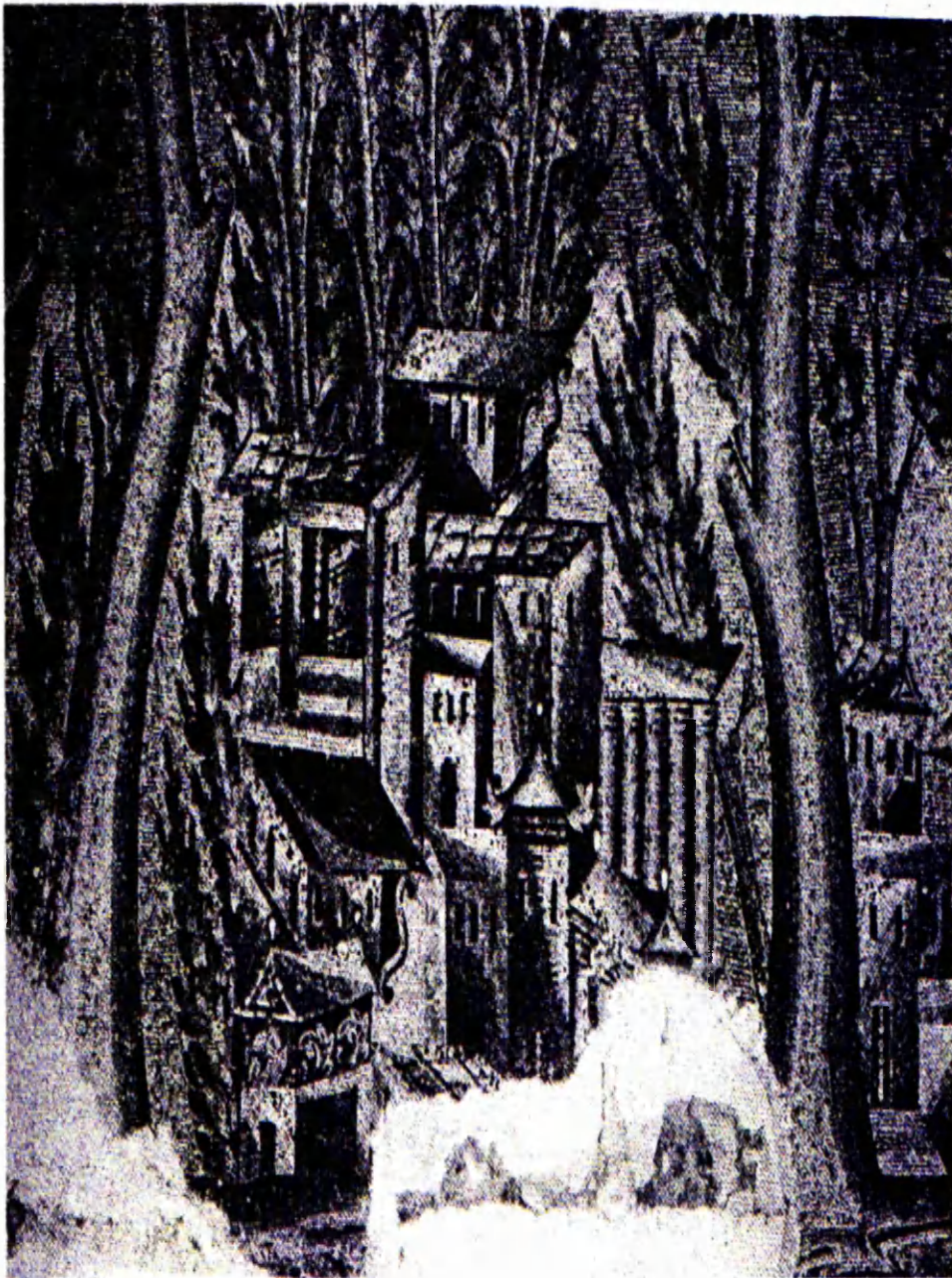
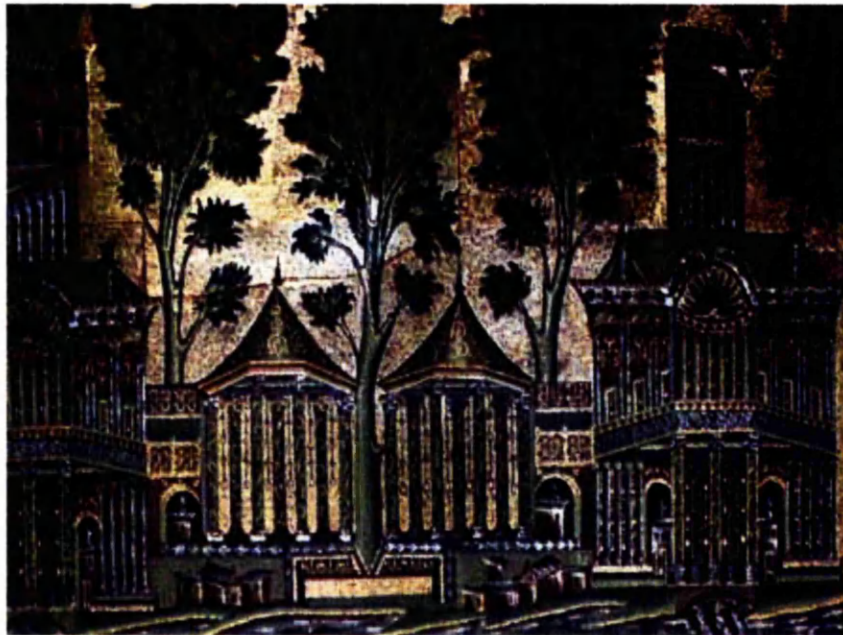


Fig.4 Houses with terraces, mosaic decoration, the Great Mosque of Damascus, 706-715 A.D. (After De Lorey 1933-34, fig.2).





Fig.5 Façade of the courtyard transept, mosaic decoration, the Great Mosque of Damascus, 706-715 A.D. (After Enderlein 2000, p.81).



a.



b.

Fig.6 Arched gateway, wall mosaics with architectural landscape, the Great Mosque of Damascus, 706-715 A.D. a. (After Kitzenger 1980, fig.21, p.157). b. Details of figure 6a. (After Bloom 1997, fig.13, p.34).





Fig.7 Buildings with a semi-circular ground plan, mosaic decoration, the Great Mosque of Damascus, 706-715 A.D. (After Ettinghausen 1962, p.24).

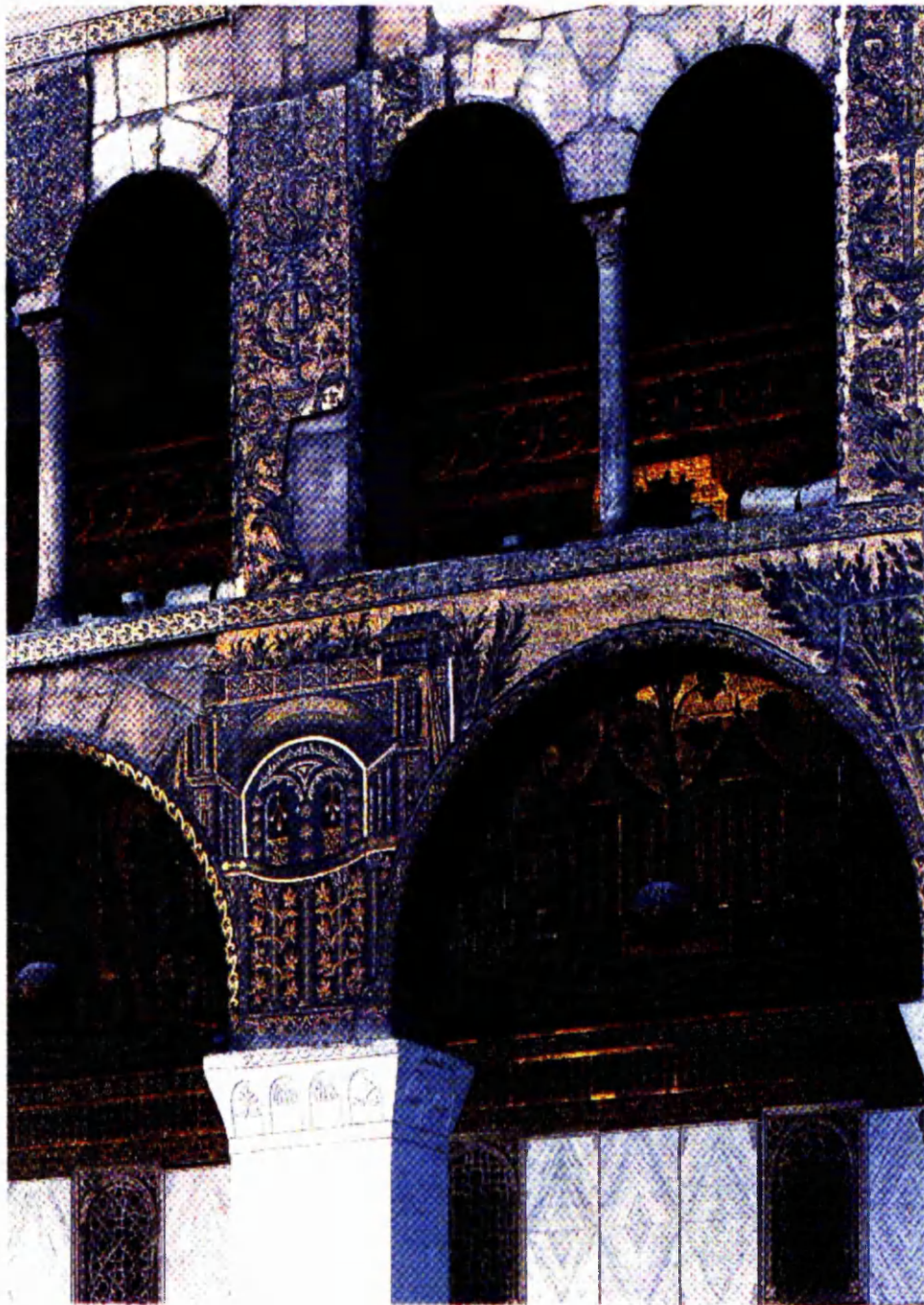


Fig.8 A building representation with a suspended precious stone, mosaic decoration, the Great Mosque of Damascus, 706-715 A.D. (After Enderlein 2000, p.80).



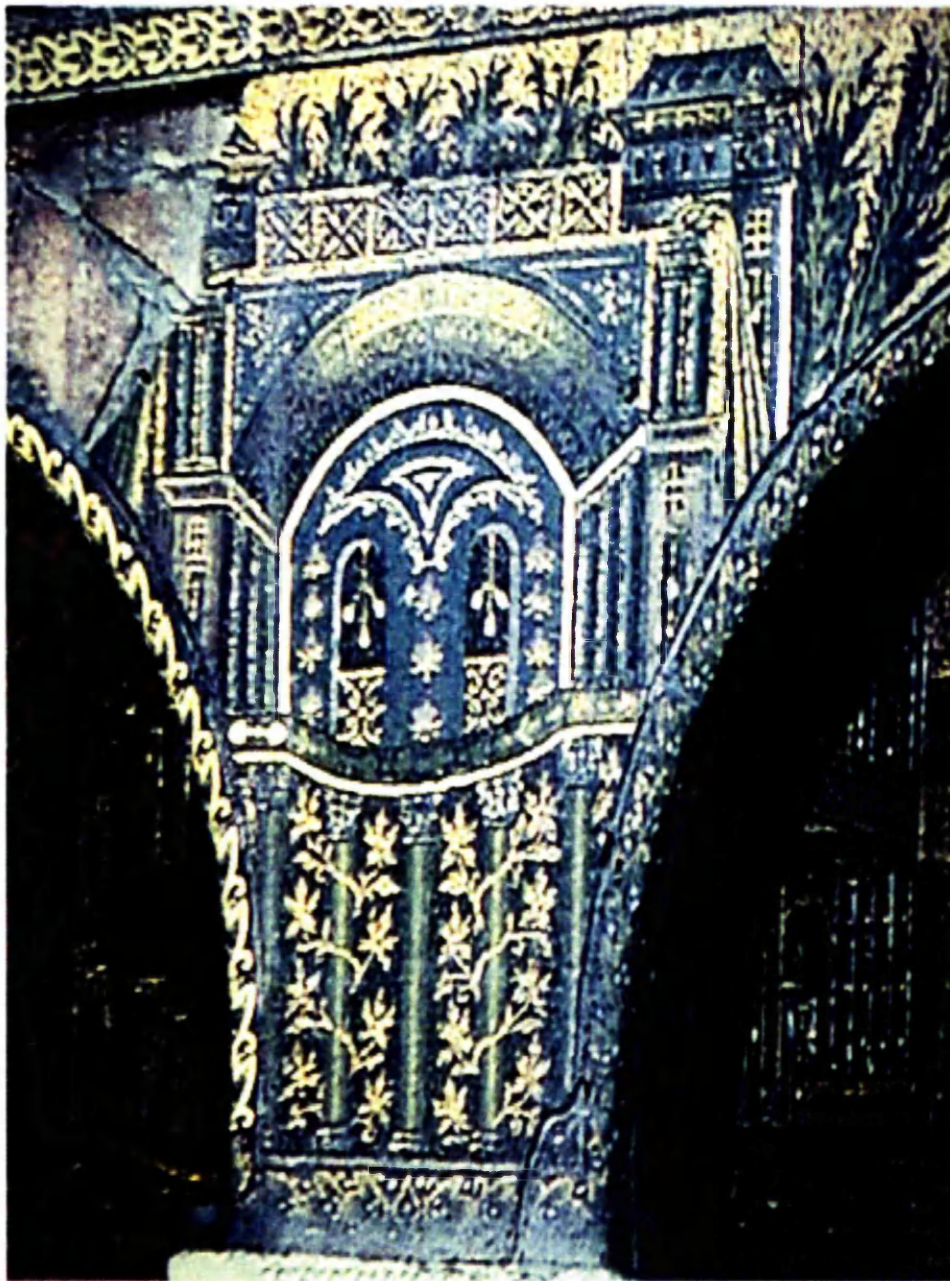


Fig.9 Details of figure 8, mosaic decoration, the Great Mosque of Damascus, 706-715 A.D. (After Syria Website. "The Umayyad Mosque Photo Gallery" Online. <http://Syriagate.com>. Accessed 24<sup>th</sup> of April 2003).



Fig.10 A building iconography with non-Classical proportions, mosaic decoration, the Great Mosque of Damascus, 706-715 A.D. (After Ettinghausen 1977, p.27).



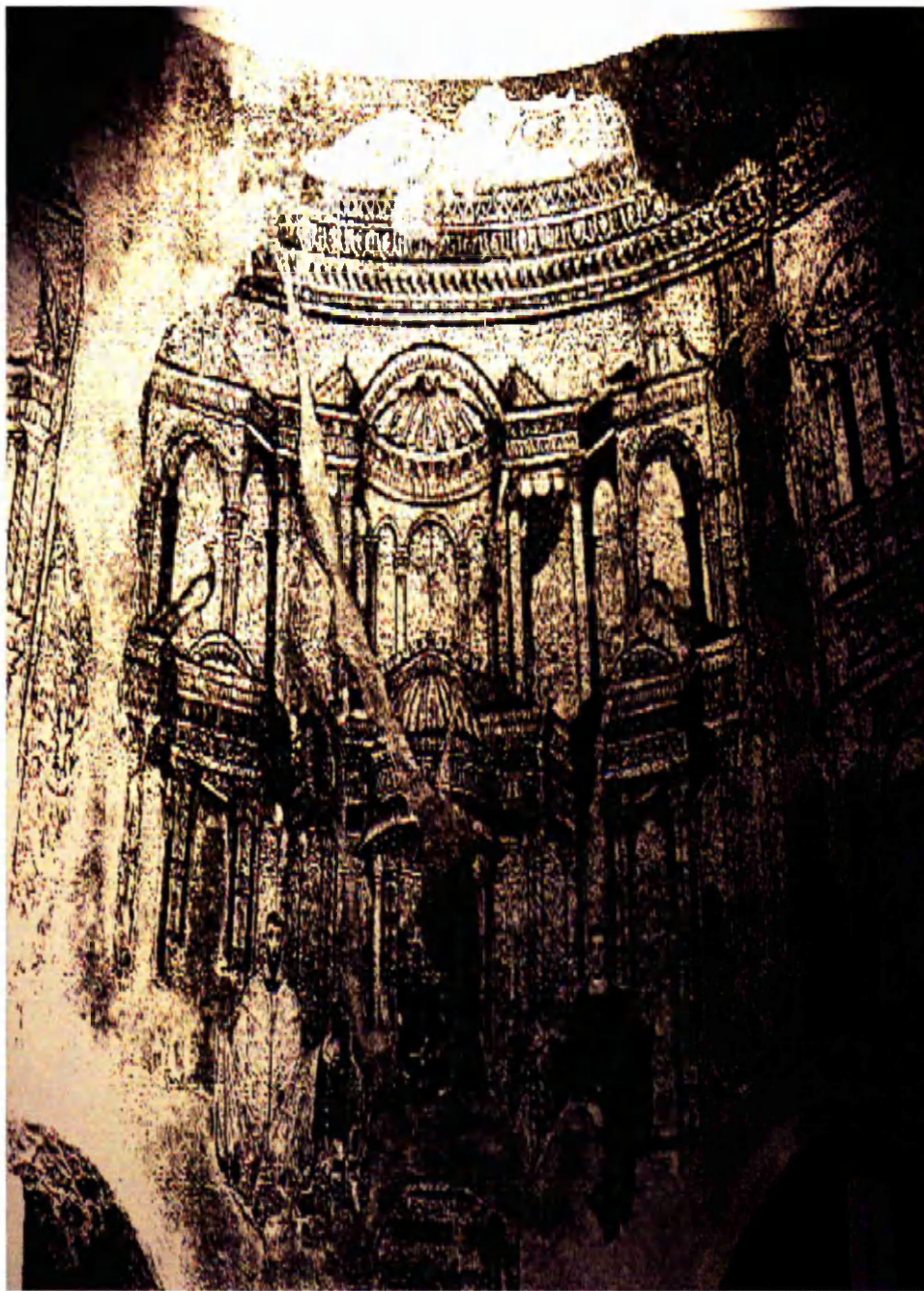


Fig.11 Cathedral of Saint George in Salonica, Greece, fifth-sixth century A.D. (After Grabar 1992, fig.162, p.157).



Fig.12 A Fresco from Boscoreal first century B.C. (After Metropolitan Museum Website. "BoscorealePaintings". Online. <http://www.metmuseum.org/collections/view1zoom.asp?dep=13&full=0&mark=1&item=03%2E14%2E13a%2Dg>. Accessed the first of January 2004).





Fig.13 Church of Santa Maria Maggiore, Rome, mosaic decoration, fourth-fifth centuries A.D. (After Gage 1993, fig.42, p.66).



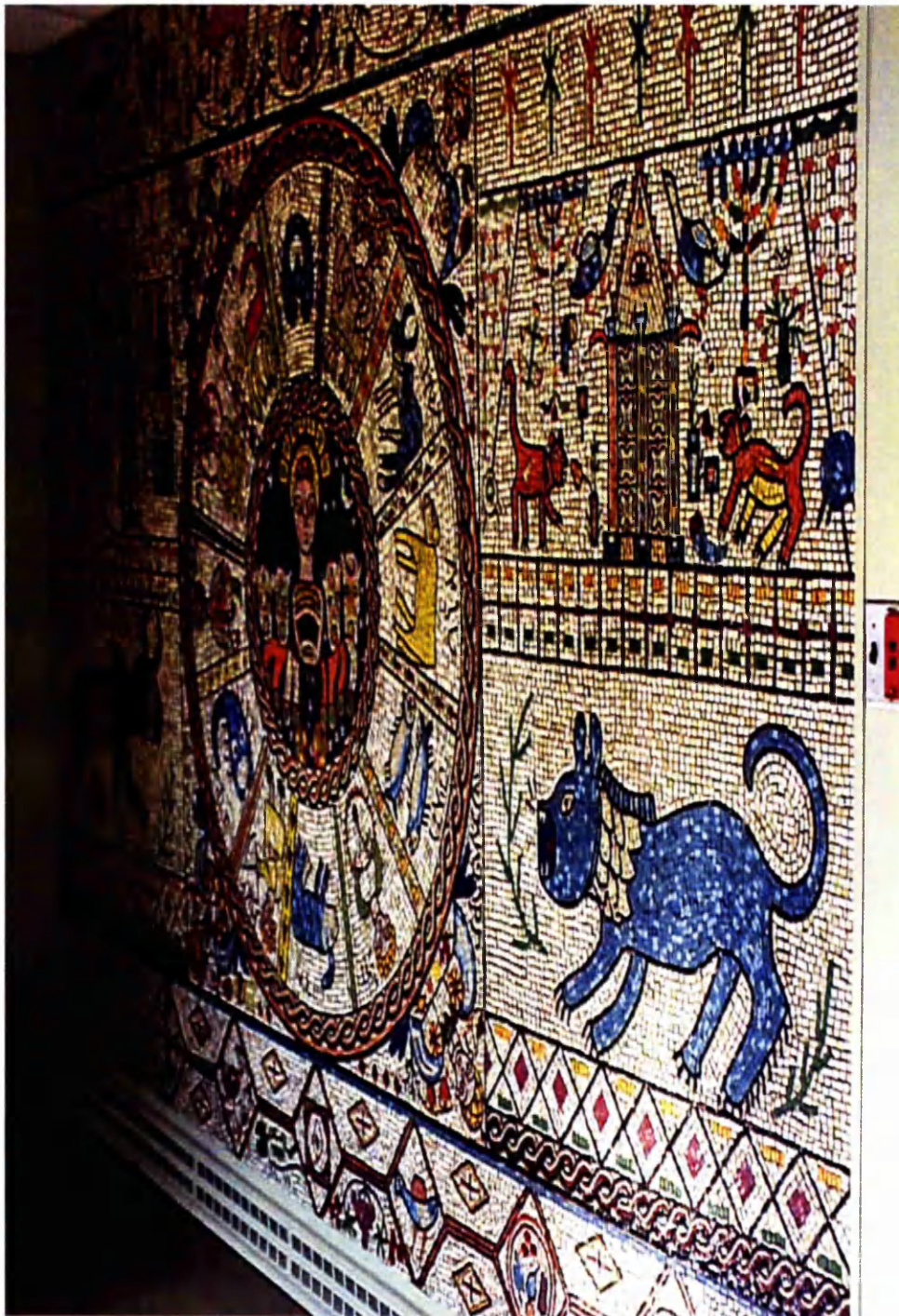


Fig.14 Beth-Alpha Synagogue floor mosaic, 518-27 or 565-78 A.D. (After Kitzinger 1965, p.9).



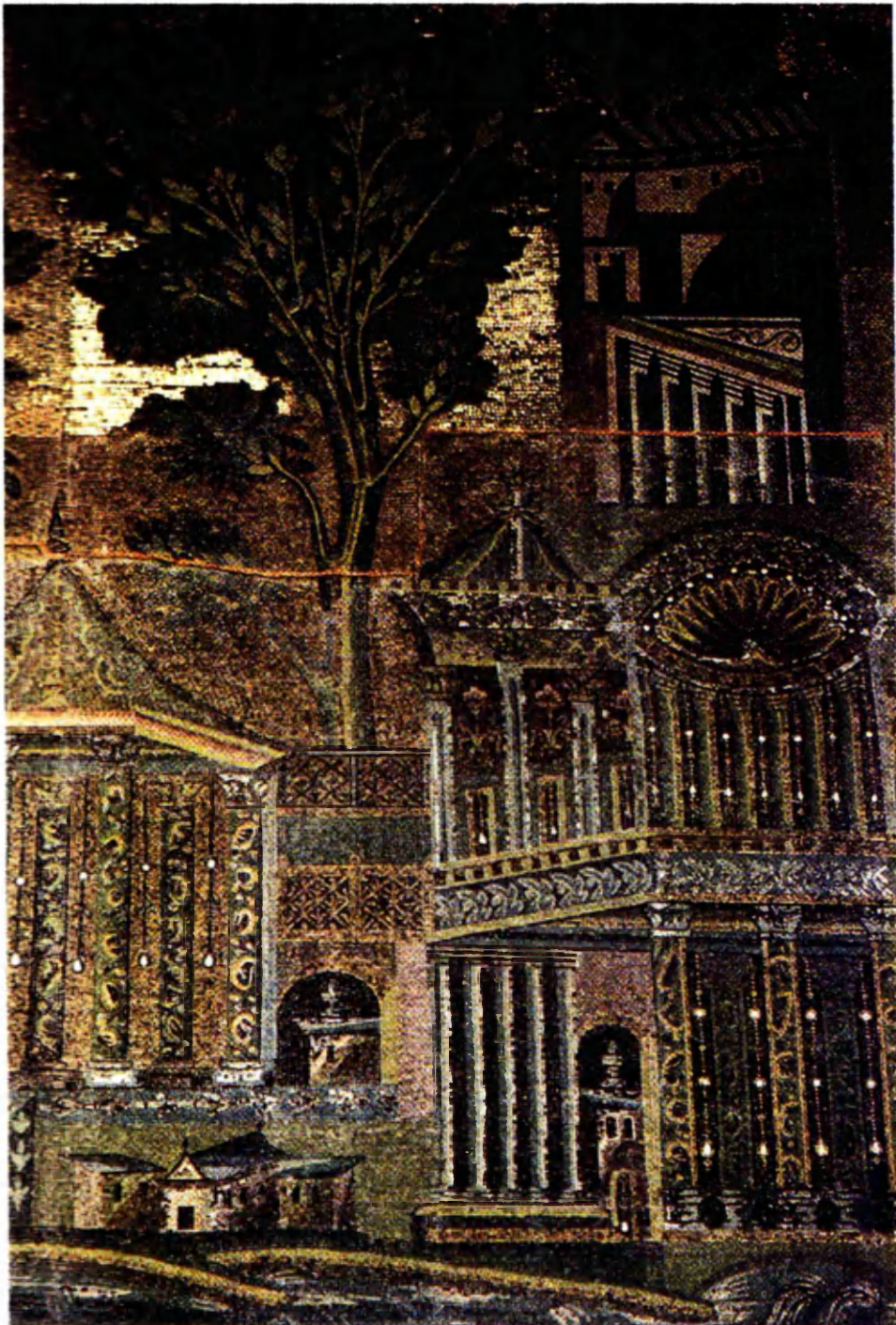


Fig.15 Christian building iconography, mosaic decoration, the Great Mosque of Damascus, 706-715 A.D. (After Irwin 1997, fig 42, p.60).





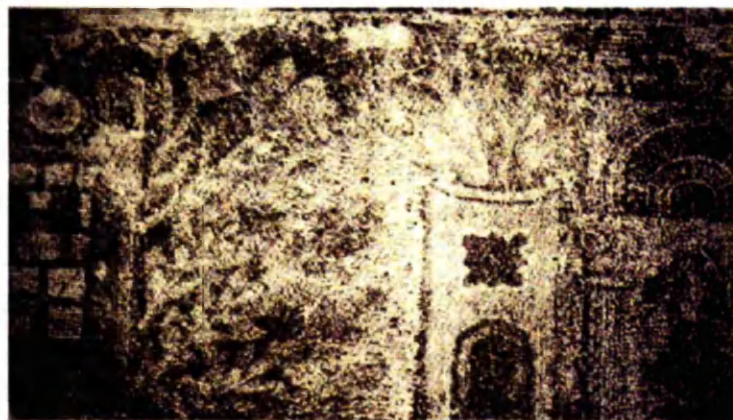
Fig.16 A building iconography with Christian features, mosaic decoration, the Great Mosque of Damascus, 706-715 A.D. (After De Lorey 1933-34, fig.d).



a.



b



c.

Fig.17 Architectural iconography with Muslim features, mosaic decoration, the Great Mosque of Damascus, 706-715 A.D. a. A mosque with a dome and a base of a minaret. b. entrance and court of the above edifice. c. square and round towers. (After Creswell 1979, I/I, figs.420, 422, 424).





a.



b



c.

Fig.18 Architectural representation with Muslim features, mosaic decoration, the Great Mosque of Damascus, 706-715 A.D. a. arcade. b. tower with chevron decoration. c. arcades and tower with interlaced ornaments. (After Creswell 1979, I/I, figs. 421, 423, 425).

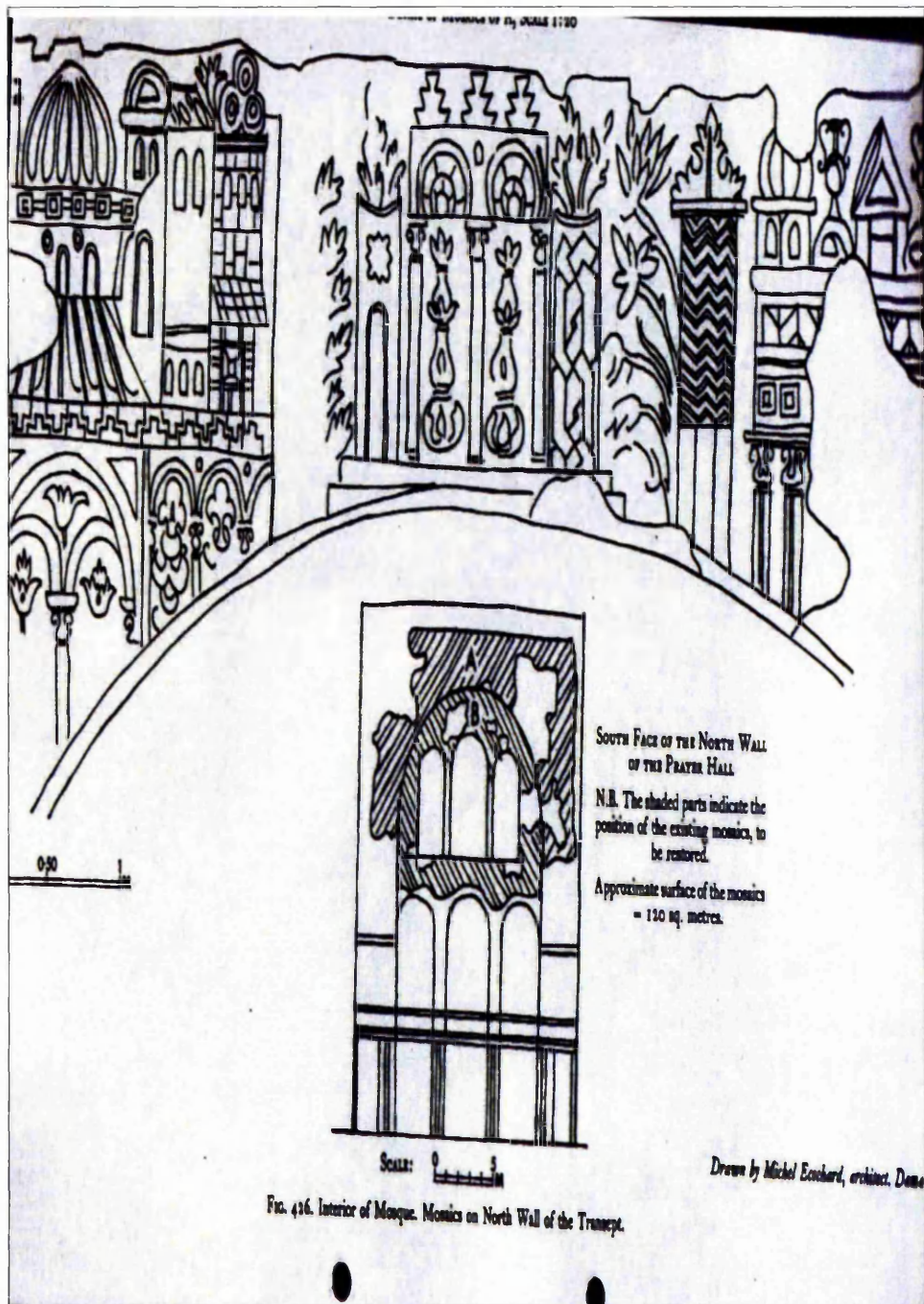


Fig.19 Reconstruction of buildings with Muslim features, mosaic decoration, the Great Mosque of Damascus, 706-715 A.D. (After Creswell 1979, I/I, fig. 426).



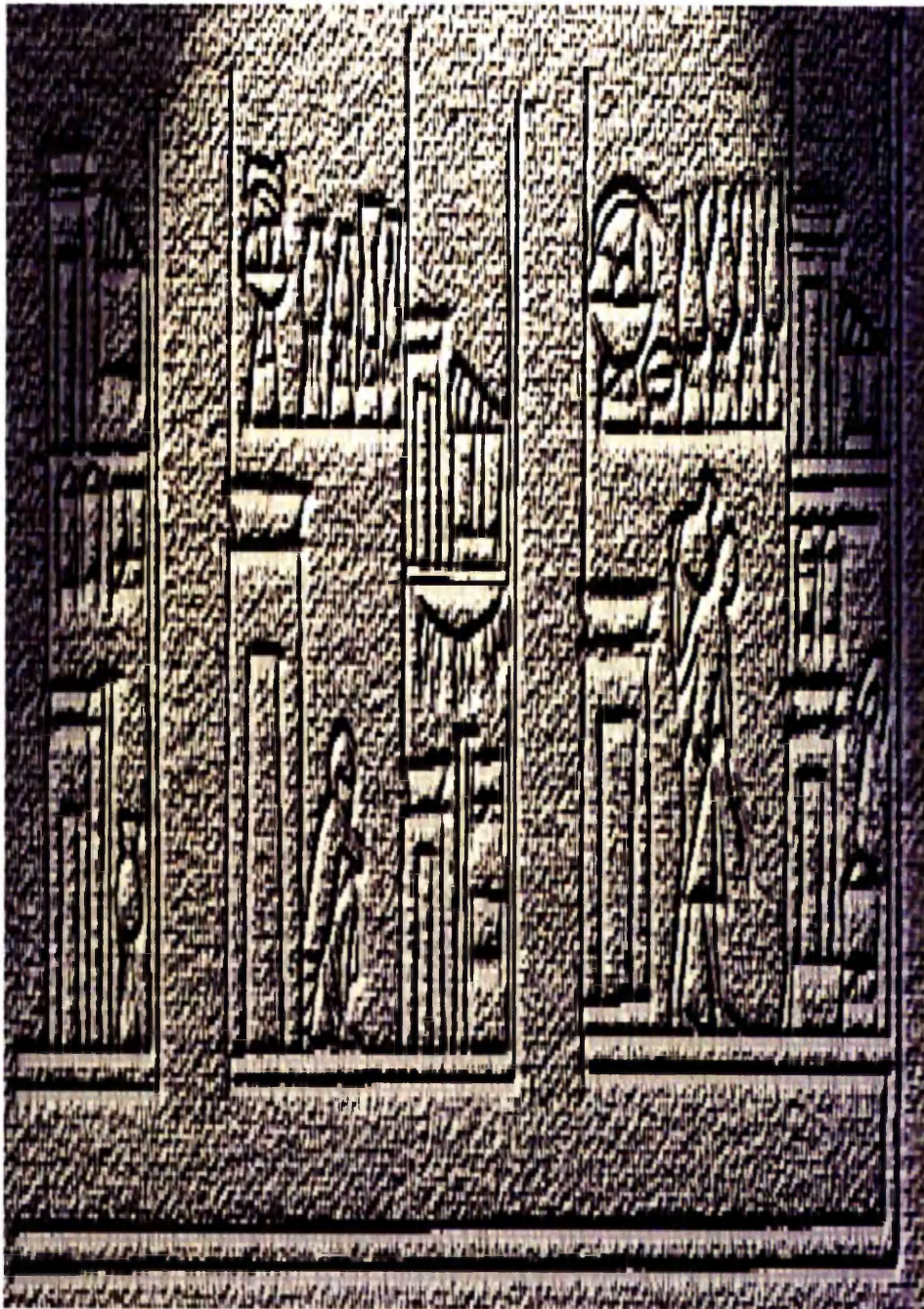


Fig.20 City representation, wall paintings, the tomb of Horemheb 1570-1070 B.C. (After Wilson 1997, fig.47, p.122).





Fig.21 City representation, mosaic decoration, Ma'daba map, Jordan. sixth century A.D. (After Ling 1998, fig.70, p.99).





Fig.22 Jerusalem and the Damascus gate, details of Ma'daba map, Jordan. sixth century A.D. (After Ma'daba Website. "Around the World in Asia, Jordan Madaba mosaics". Online.[http://www.traveladventures.org/continents/asia/madaba\\_mosaic02.shtml](http://www.traveladventures.org/continents/asia/madaba_mosaic02.shtml). Accessed the 15<sup>th</sup> of January 2004).





Fig.23 Jericho and other cities, details of the Ma'daba Map, Jordan. sixth century A.D. (After Ma'daba Website. "Around the World in Asia, Jordan Ma'daba Mosaics". Online. <http://www.traveladventures.org/continents/asia/madabamosaic03.shtml>. Accessed the 15<sup>th</sup> of January 2004).



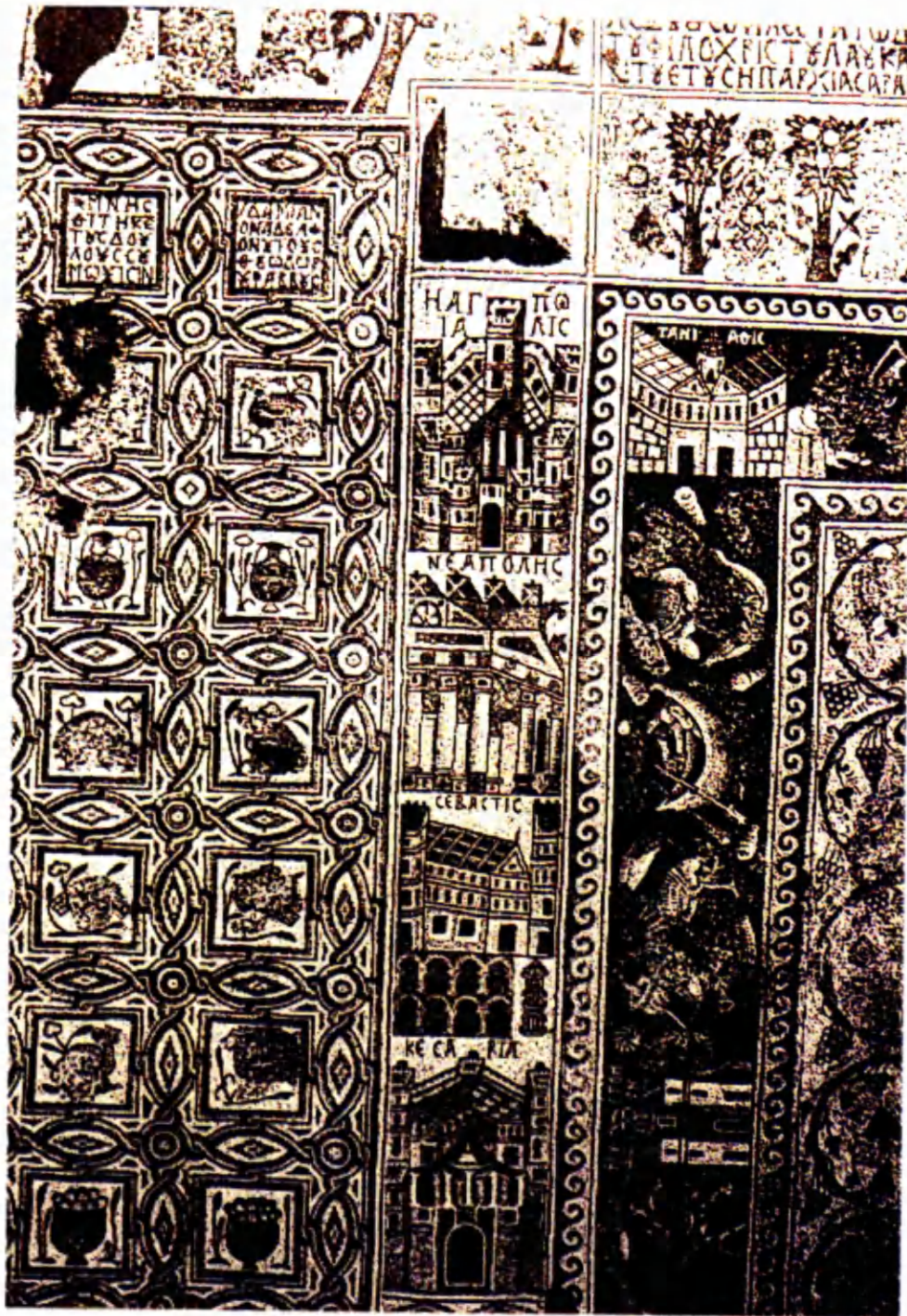


Fig.24 City representation, Umm Al-Rassas mosaics, Jordan, 750 A.D. (After Grabar 1992, fig.157, p.181).





Fig.25 Representation of a boat, mosaic decoration, the Great Mosque of Damascus, 706-715 A.D. (After Syria Website. "The Umayyad Mosque Photo Gallery" Online. <http://Syriagate.com>. Accessed 24<sup>th</sup> of April 2003).





Fig.26 City representation, a manuscript fragment, Metropolitan Museum of art, Inv. No. Acc. No.1971.237.5. (After Grube 1995, fig.43).



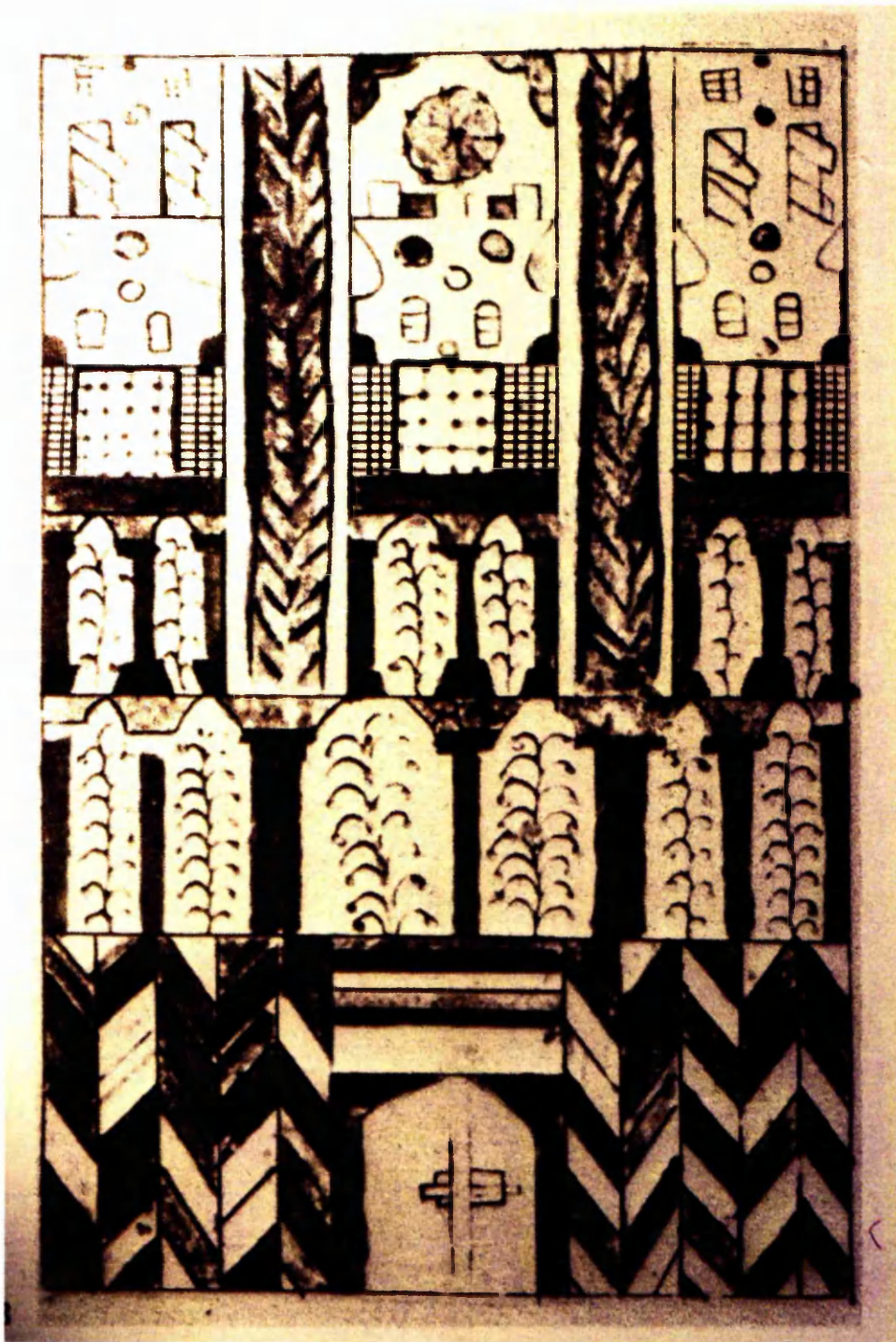


Fig.27 Representation of a city, manuscript of "The Order of the World and its Wonders" or (*Qānūn Al-Dunyā wā 'Ajā'ibihā*), 1563 A.D. Library of the Topkapi Saray Museum in Istanbul, Revan 1638, fol.30r. (After Haldane 1978, fig.13, p.56).

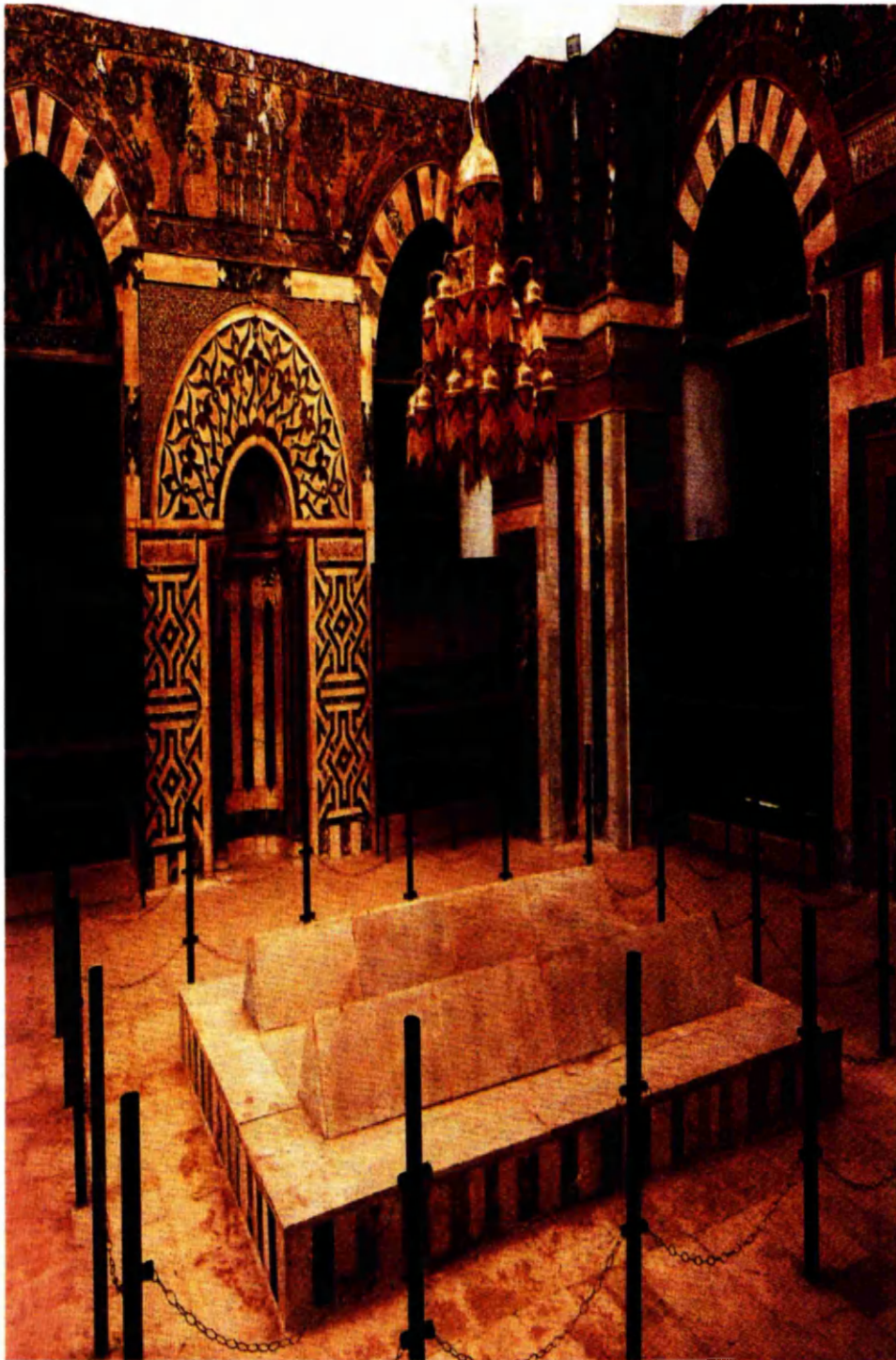


Fig.28 Architectonic representations, Mausoleum of Baybars, Damascus, 1227-1281 A.D. (After Meinecke-Berg 2000, p.192).





Fig.29 Architectural representations, vertical panel, Mosque Madrasa of Sultan Ḥasan, Cairo, 1356-1360 A.D. (After the author).



Fig.30 Building iconography at the bottom of the vertical panel, Mosque Madrasa of Sultan Ḥasan, Cairo, 1356-1360 A.D. (After the author).



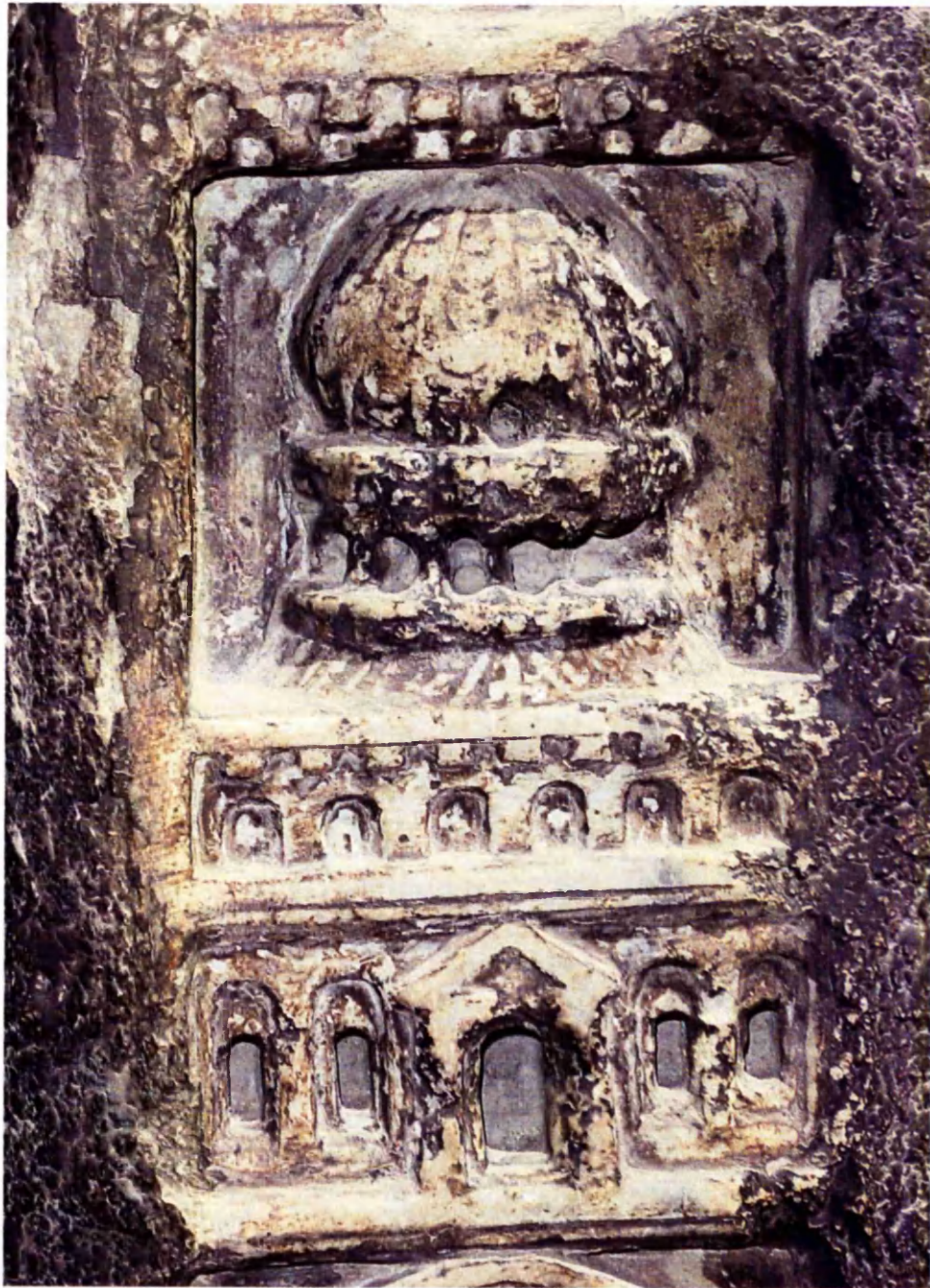


Fig.31 Building iconography in the middle of the vertical panel, Mosque Madrasa of Sultan Ḥasan, Cairo, 1356-1360 A.D. (After the author).





Fig.32 Building iconography, top of the vertical panel, Mosque Madrasa of Sultan Ḥasan, Cairo, 1356-1360 A.D. (After the author).



Fig.33 Architectural representations, pointed arched buildings, vertical panel, Mosque Madrasa of Sultan Ḥasan, Cairo, 1356-1360 A.D. (After the author).





a.



b.



c.

Fig.34 Byzantine churches, floor mosaics. a. Representation of a church, Church of Saint Lot and Procopius, Northeast intercolumnar panel. b. Acropolis Church, Ma'in, Esbunta. c. Ma'in, the topographical border, drawing: C. Florimont. (After Piccirillo 1993, figs.209, 299, 308-310).



a.



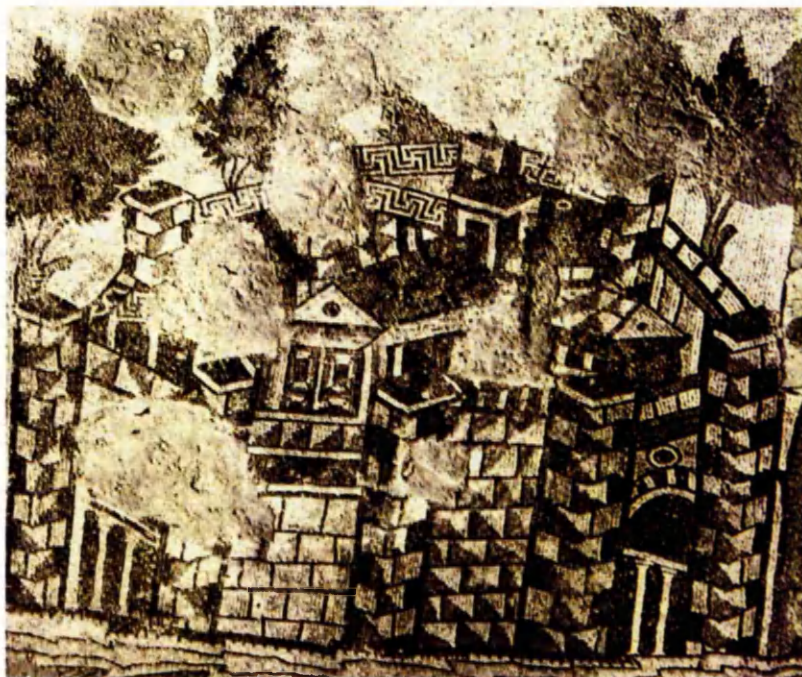
b.



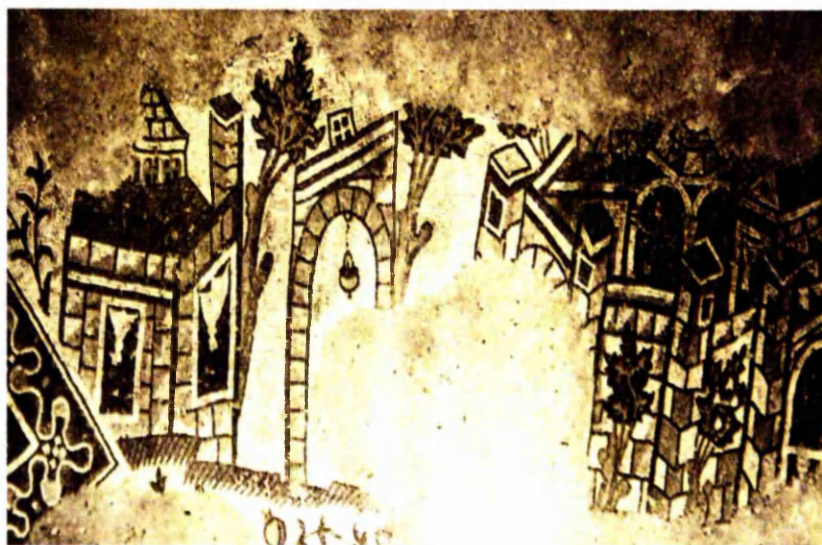
c.

Fig.35 Representation of churches, Byzantine mosaics. a. Umm Al-Rassas, Church of the Lions, Kastron Mefaa, Photo: M. Mandel. b. Umm Al-Rassas Church of Saint Stephen-Ma'daba c. Gerasa, Church of Saint John, Alexandria.(After Piccirillo 1993, figs.337, 348, 504).





a.



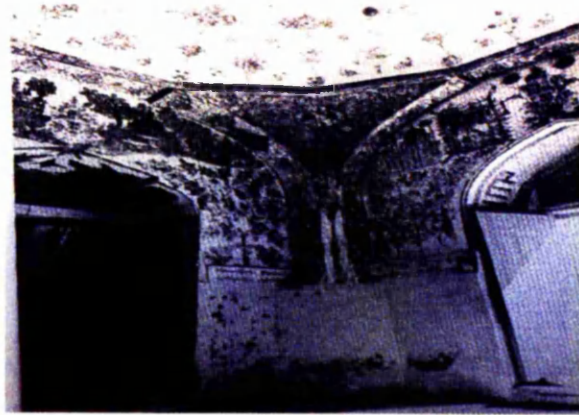
b.

Fig.36 Representation of churches, Byzantine mosaics, Gerasa, Church of Saint John, a.city plan photo: Yale University. b. sanctuary near a walled town. Photo: Yale University. (After Piccirillo 1993, figs.543, 545).





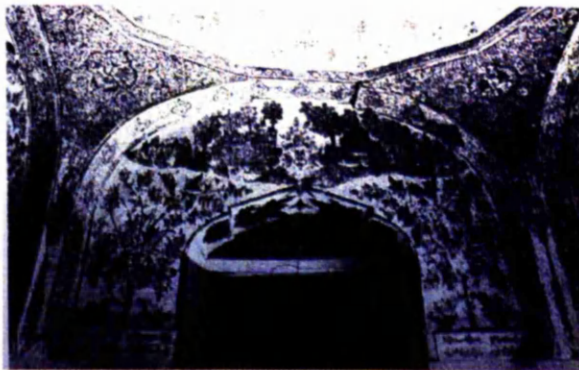
Fig.37 Candlestick of Shādī Ibn Shīrkūh, donated to the Mosque of Aḥmad Ibn Ṭūlūn, Cairo, 696A.H./1297A.D. Islamic Museum of Cairo. (After Wiet 1932, pl.XXX).



a.



b.



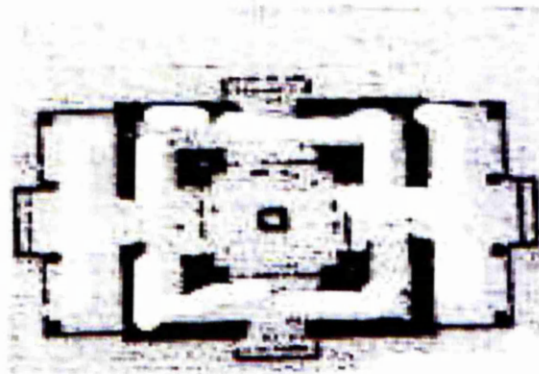
c.

Fig.38 Architectonic representations, shrine of Gazur Gah, Heart, fifteenth century A.D. a. representation of holy places like Mecca, Medina, Uḥūd mountain and the tomb of Ḥamzah, b.,c. Representation of palaces and houses (After Golombek 1969, figs. 11, 14, 13).

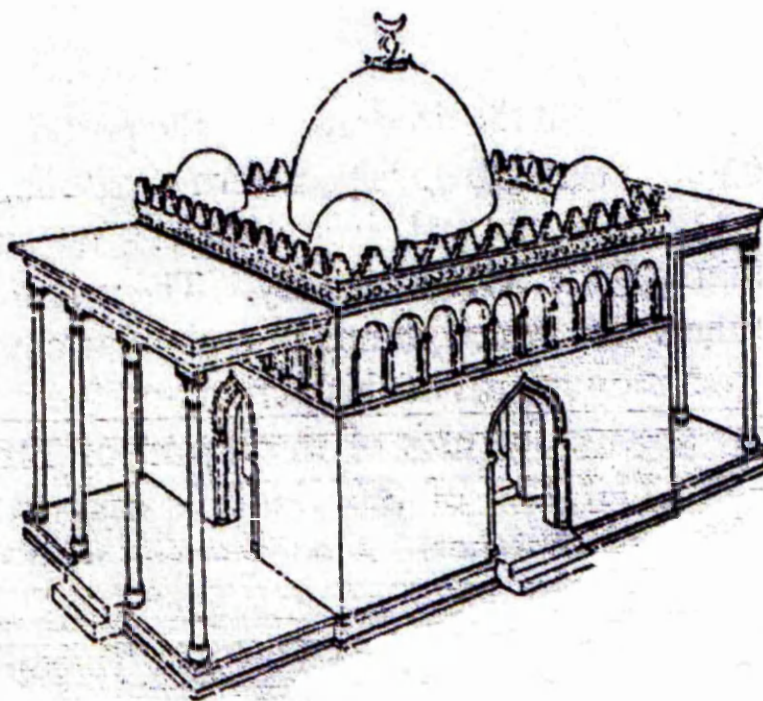




Fig.39 Bronze Umayyad metal bowl. Staatliche Museum of Berlin, Inv. No. I.5624. (After Staatliche Museen 2001, p.27).



a.



b.

Fig.40 Reconstruction of architectonic form, Umayyad metal bowl. a. view from above. b. side view. (After Erdmann 1967, fig.161 a, b).



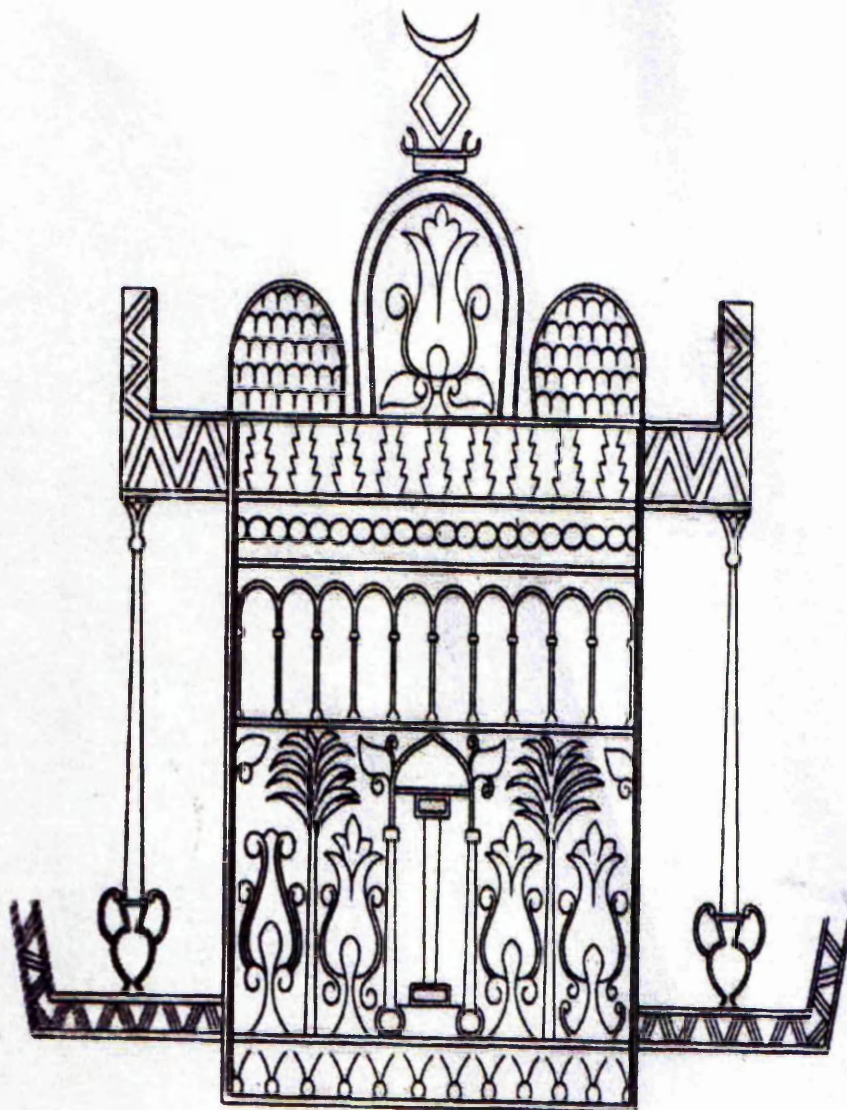


Fig.41 Iconographical details, building represented in the centre of the bowl, Umayyad metal bowl. (After Pope 1933, fig.2, p.78).

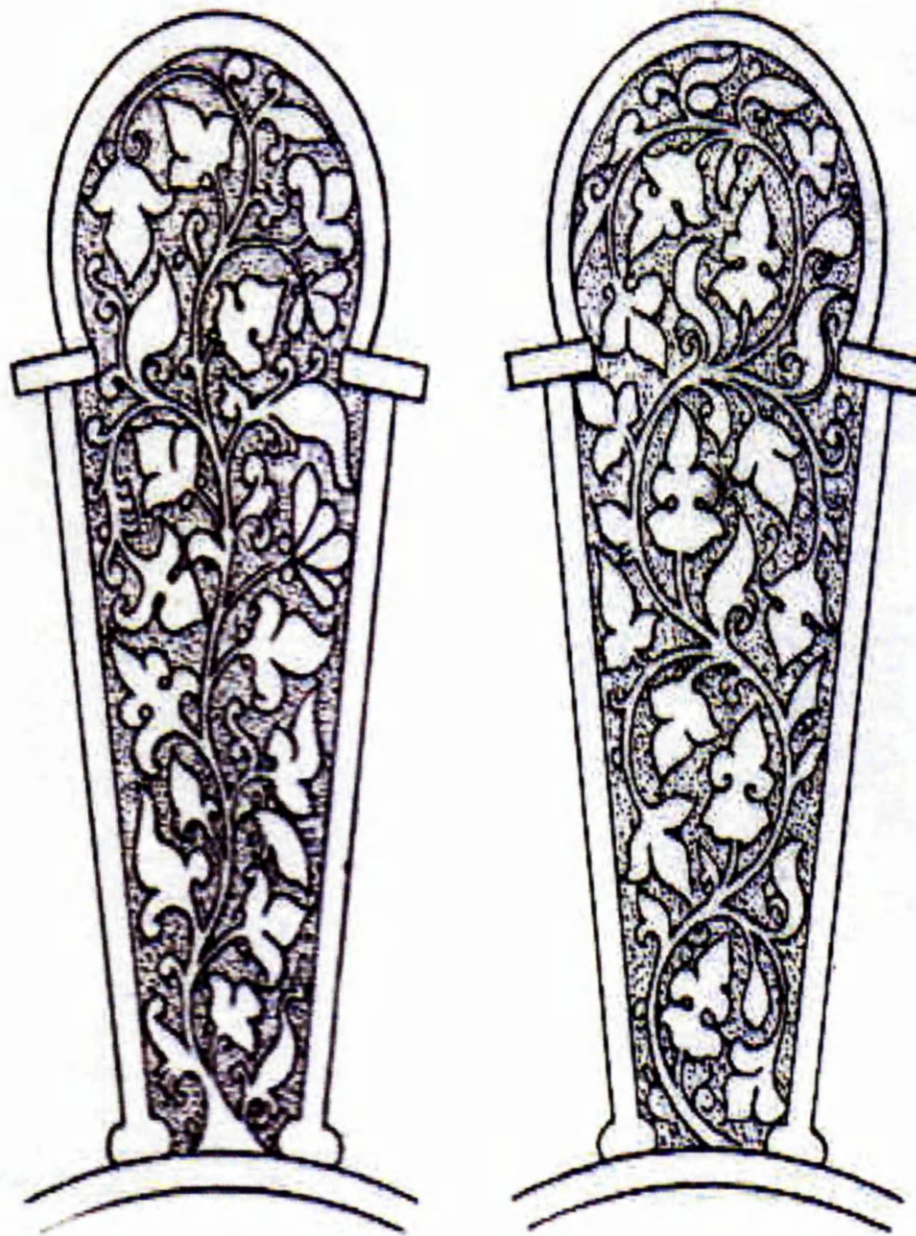


Fig.42 Horseshoe-arched floral decorations, palmettes with five lobes, the Umayyad metal bowl. (After Pope 1935, fig.1, p.75).



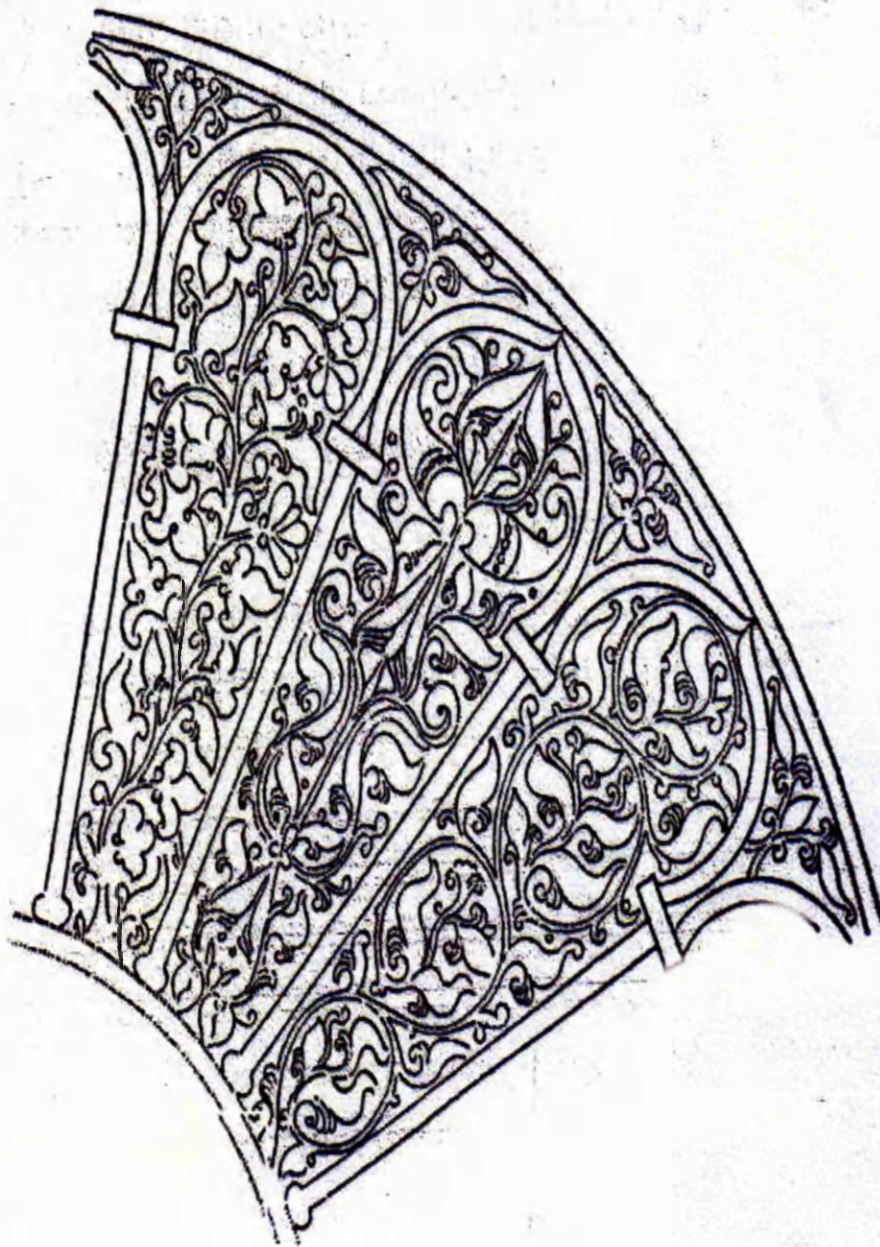
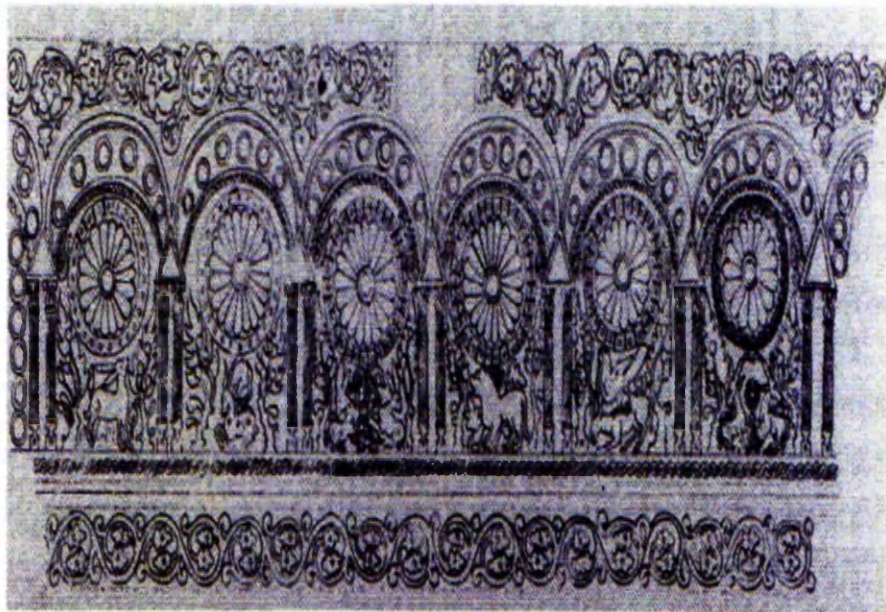


Fig.43 Details from bronze bowl, Staatliche Museum, Berlin, floral motifs in radial arcade with two pointed arches. (After Reuther 1977, II, fig.139, p.511).



Fig.44 Decorative arcade with Sasanian effects, metal ewer of Marwān II, Syria, Iran or Egypt, eighth century A.D. Islamic Museum in Cairo. (After Papadopoulou 1980, fig.77).





a.



b.

Fig.45 Decorative floral arcades comparable to those on the Umayyad metal bowl. a. Decorative arcade engraved on the Umayyad metal ewer of Marwān II, eighth century A.D., b. Similar decorative arcade carved in marble, Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem, seventh century A.D. (After Baer 1998, figs.97-98, p.78).

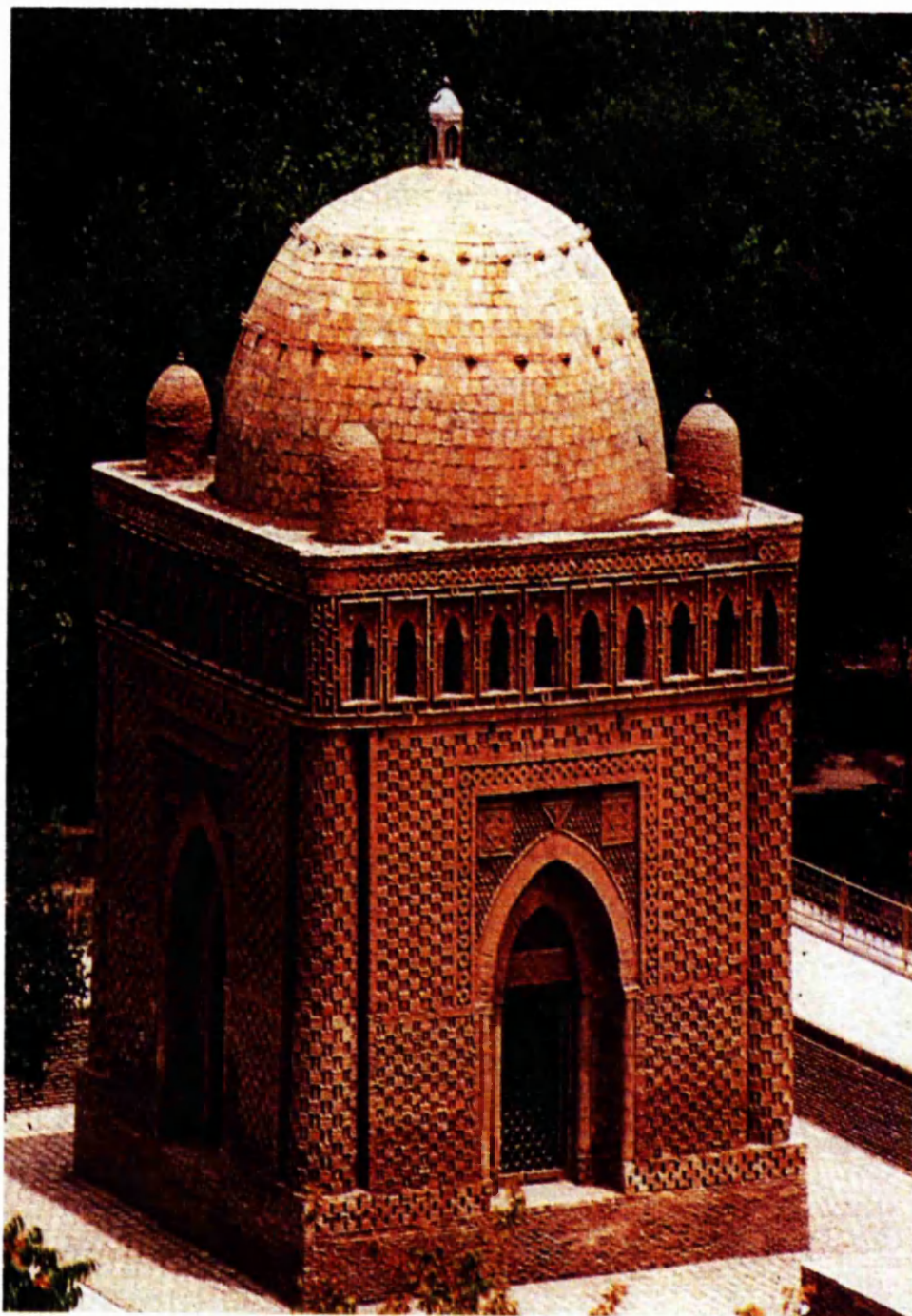


Fig.46 Mausoleum of 'Ismā'il the Samānīd in Bukhārā. (After Blair 2000b, p.115).





Fig.47 Opaque white glazed metal bowl, Iraq, ninth or tenth century A.D. Khalili Collection. (After Irwin 1997, fig.65, p.83).



Fig.48 Ninth century bowl, Iraq. Staatliches Museum Für Volkerkunde in München. (After Blair 2000a, p.121).



Fig.49 Tenth century glazed earthenware dish, Iran or Transoxiana, Louvre Museum. (After Blair 2000a, p.121).





Fig.50 Twelfth century bowl, Iran or Afghanistan. (After Allan 1986, p.125).



Fig.51 Ayyubid basin with Christian figures standing in an arcade, Syria or Egypt, 1240 A.D. Freer Gallery of Art (After Irwin 1997, fig.181, p.217).



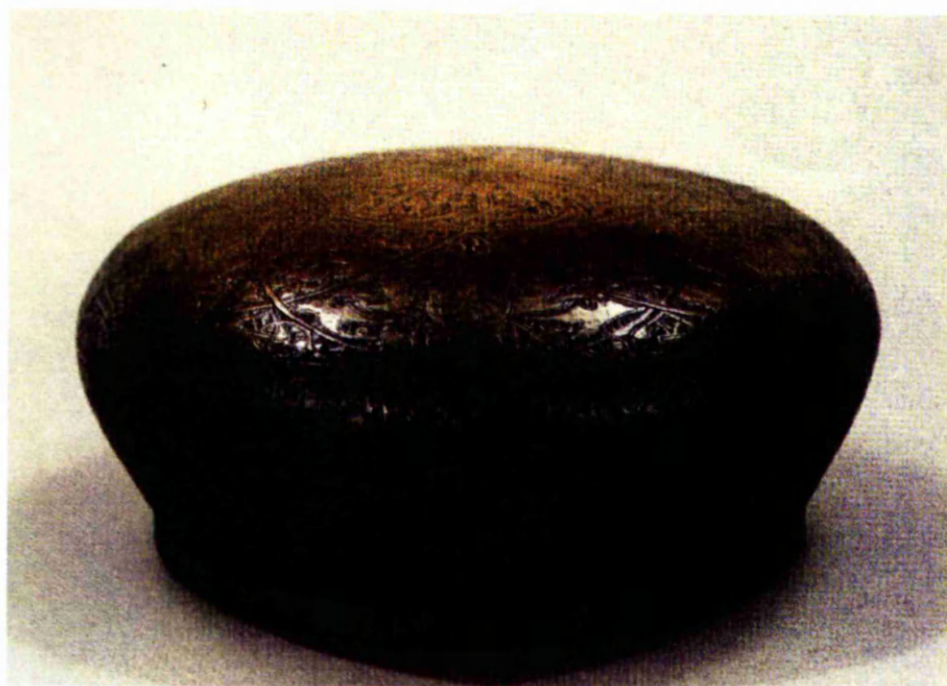
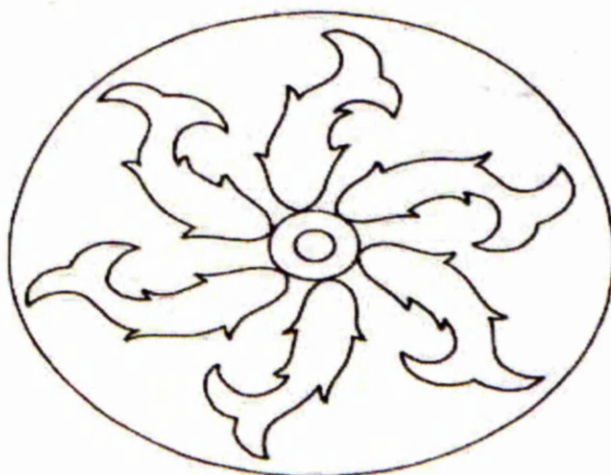


Fig.52 Fourteenth century bowl, Egypt or Syria, 1300-1340 A.D.  
(After Allan 1986, p.87).





a.

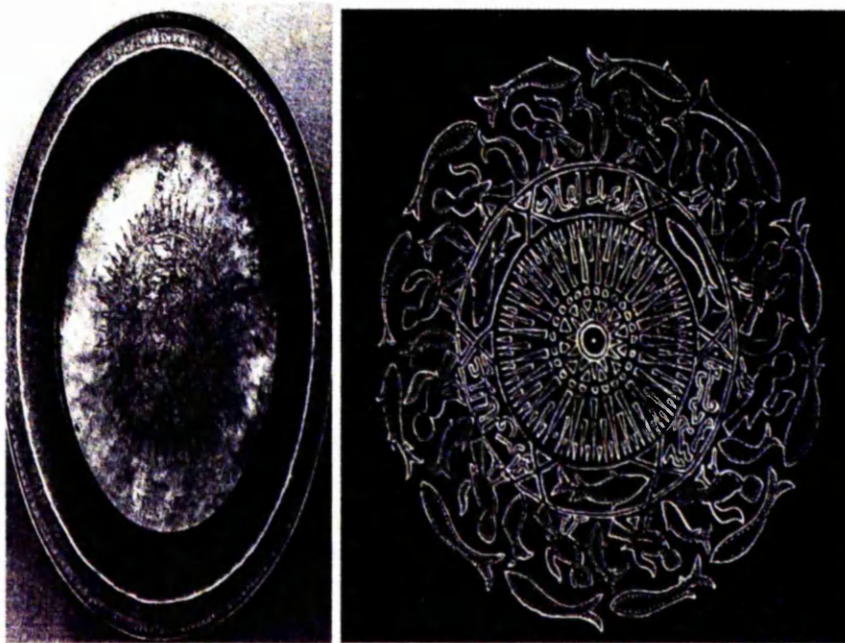


b.

Fig.53 Fourteenth century metal bowl, Egypt or Syria, 747 A.H./1346-7 A.D. a. Exterior of the bowl, b. Interior side of the bowl. (After Allan 1982, p.98).



a.



b.

Fig.54 Fishpond representation, Modena bowl, 705 A.H./1305 A.D. a. Exterior, b. Interior with a fish pond in the centre of its base. Galleria Estense in Modena, Italy. (After Baer 1968, pl.1, p.16, 17).





Fig.55 Fishpond representation, interior base, Baptistry of Saint Louis, fourteenth century. Louvre Museum, Inv.no.L.P.16. (After Baer 1968, fig.9, p.21).



a.



b.

Fig.56 Baptistry of Saint Louis, fourteenth century, Louvre Museum, Inv.no.L.P.16. a.Exterior of the basin, b. Interior of the basin with a fish pond representation. (After Atil 1981, p.76-77, 79).



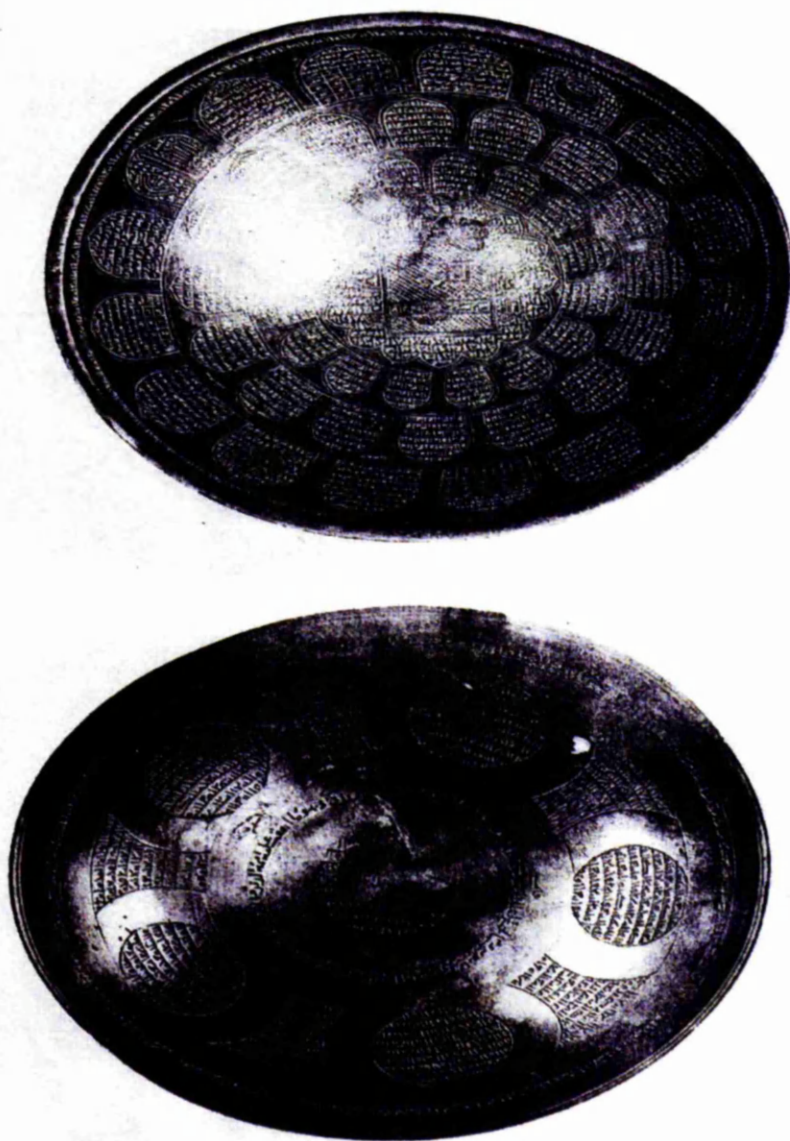


Fig.57 Sixth century magical bowl, 580 A.H./ 1185 A.D. Islamic Museum in Cairo. (After Wiet 1932, cat.no. 3862, p.54).

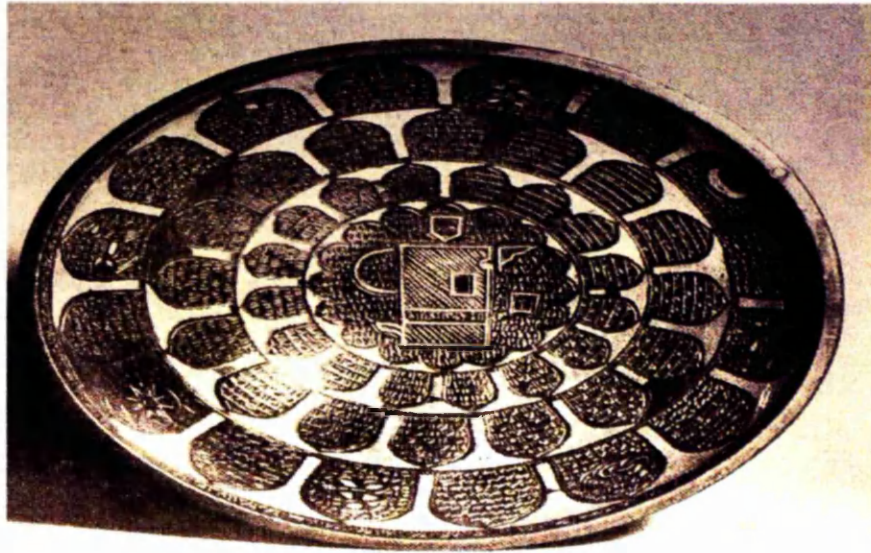


a.

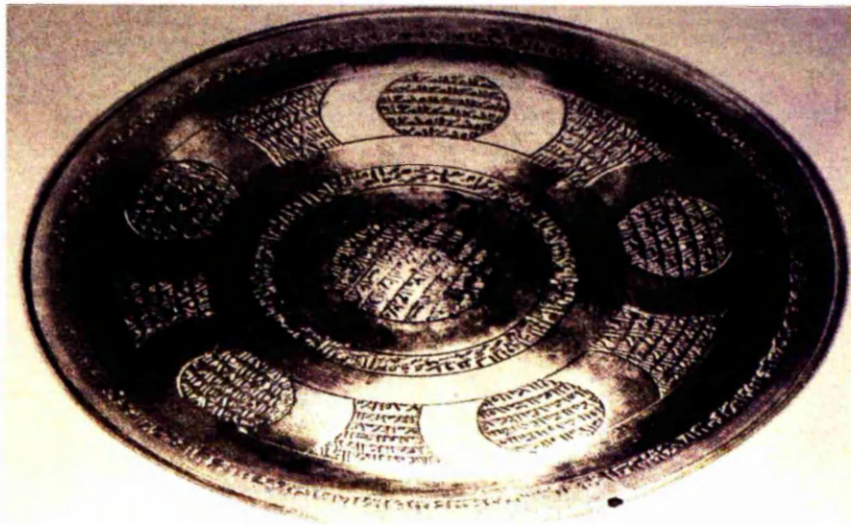


b.

Fig.58 Twelfth century magical bowl, Syria, made for Maḥmūd Ibn Zankī, 1147-74 A.D. or to 565 A.H. /1169-1170 A.D. a. exterior of the bowl b. Interior of the bowl. Khalili Collection (After Micheau 2001, p.211).



a.



b.

Fig.59 Magical bowl, Syria, thirteenth or fourteenth century A.D.  
 a. interior side with a representation of the Ka'bah, b. exterior of  
 the bowl. Islamic Museum in Cairo. (After Wiet 1932,  
 cat.no.6906, fig.6a,b, p.22,23).



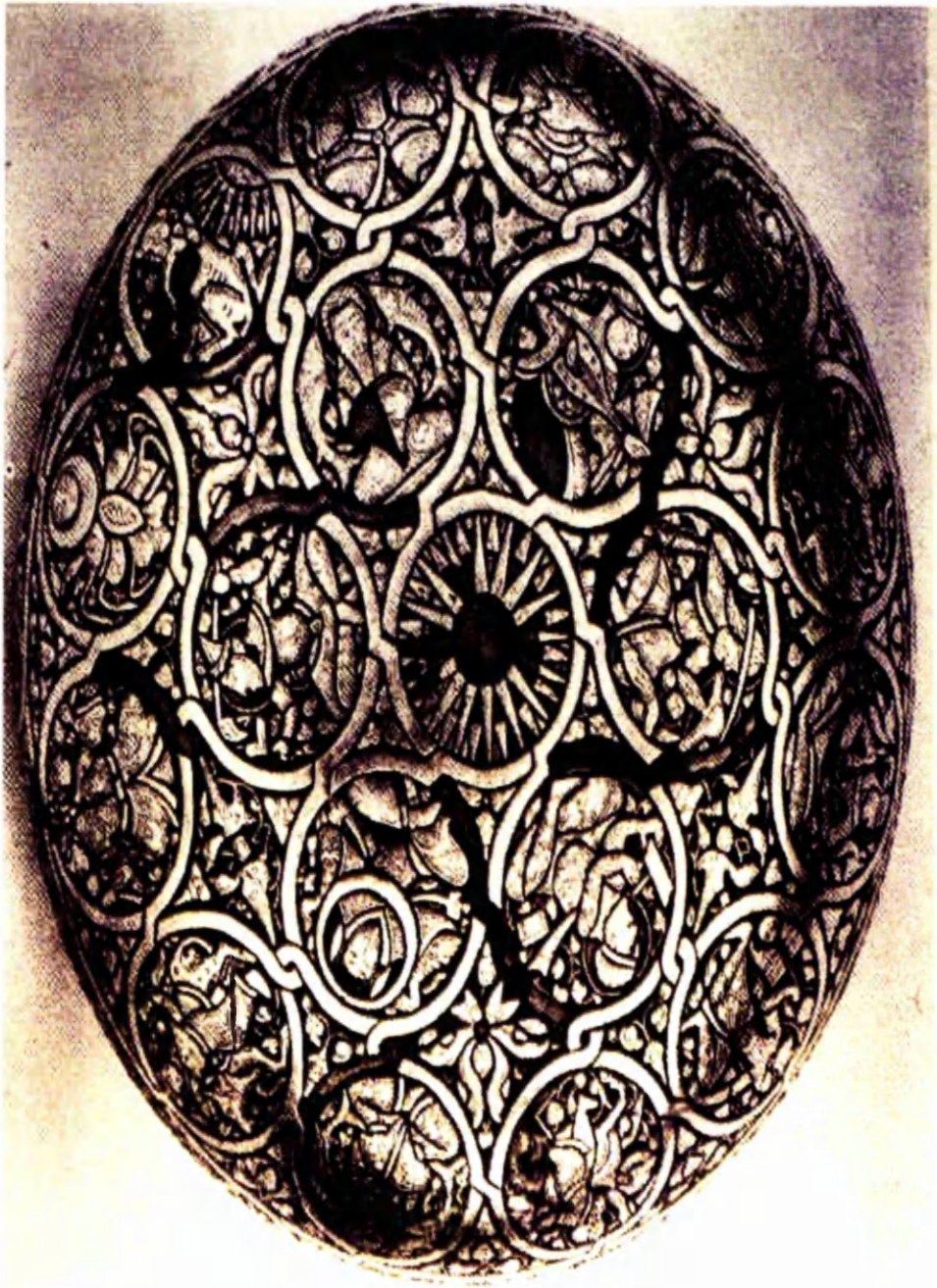


Fig.60 Medallions with celestial figures, base of a Mamluk bowl, late thirteenth-early fourteenth century A.D. Museo Nazionale del Bargello 364c., Firenze (After Baer 1986, fig.211, p.260).





Fig.61 White-Bronze Bowl, Jerusalem. Courtesy L. A. Mayer Memorial, Jerusalem, (Inv. No. LAMM, M 178-71). (After Baer 1986, fig.79, p.102).

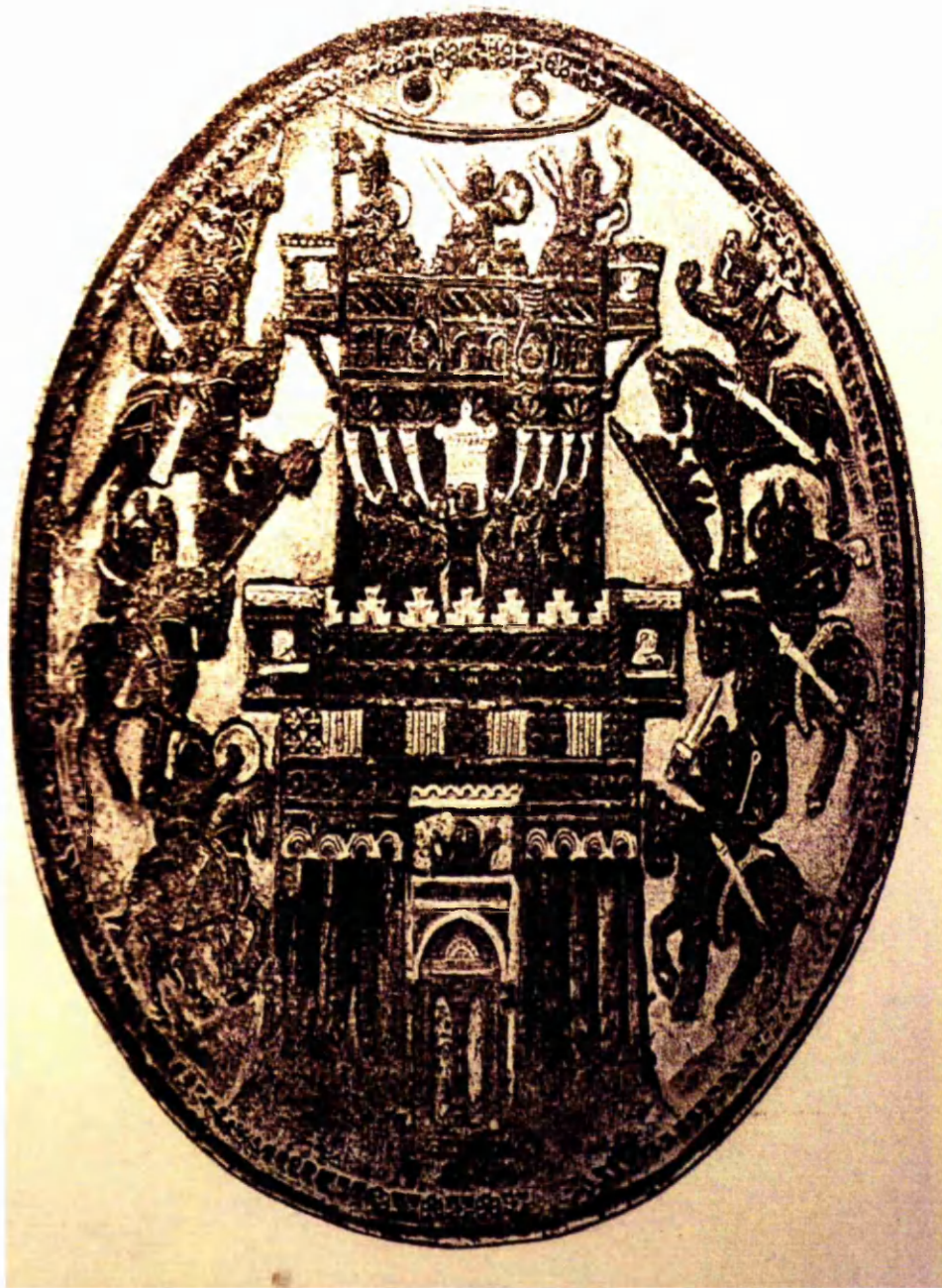


Fig.62 Representation of a fortress, twelfth century metal plate, Hermitage Museum, Leningrad. (After Sarre 1922, p.105).





Fig.63 Details of the architectonic iconography, twelfth century metal plate, left hand side. Hermitage Museum, Leningrad. (After Marschak 1986, fig.210).



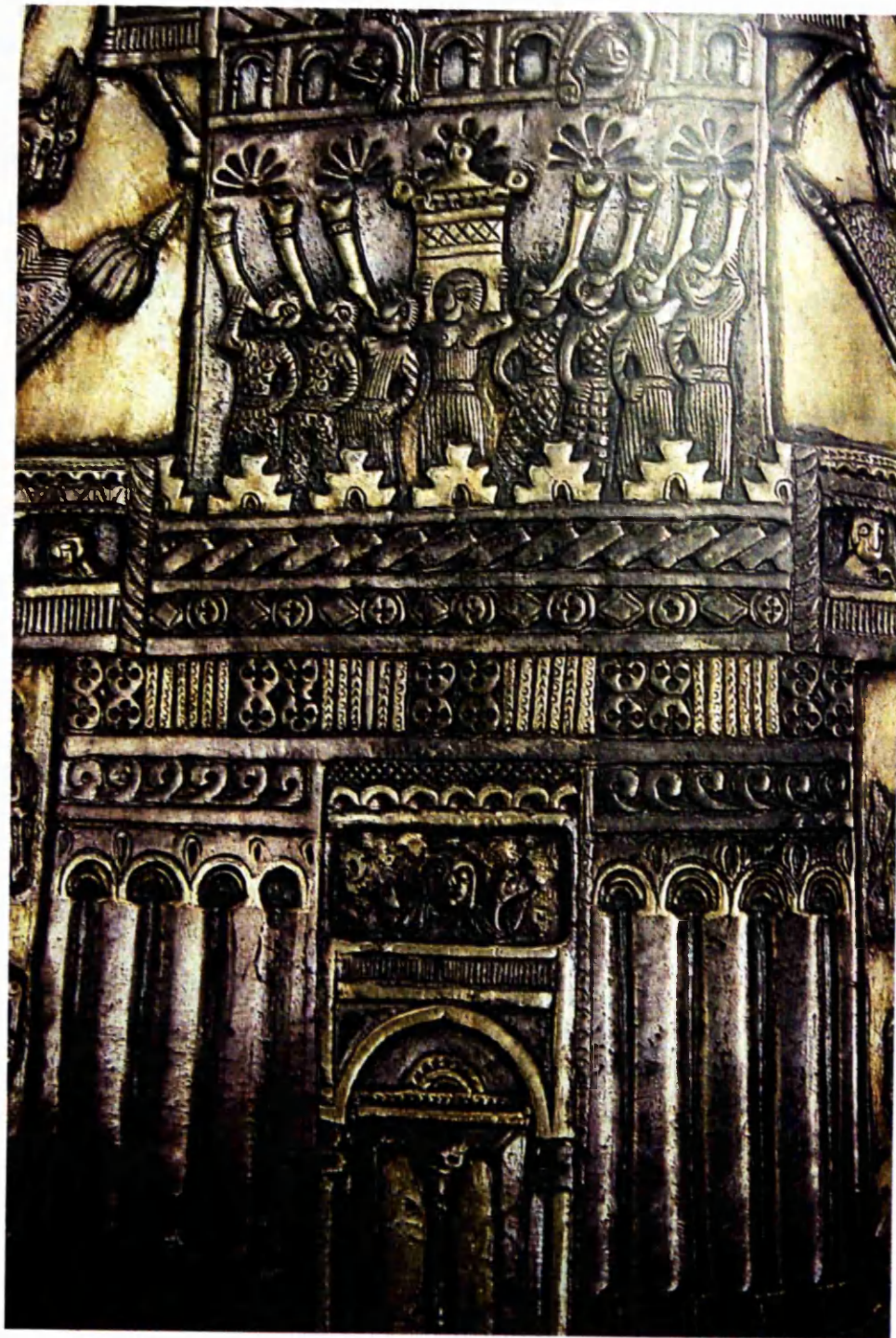


Fig.64 Details of building iconography, central part, twelfth century metal plate, Hermitage Museum, Leningrad. (After Marschak 1986, fig.211).



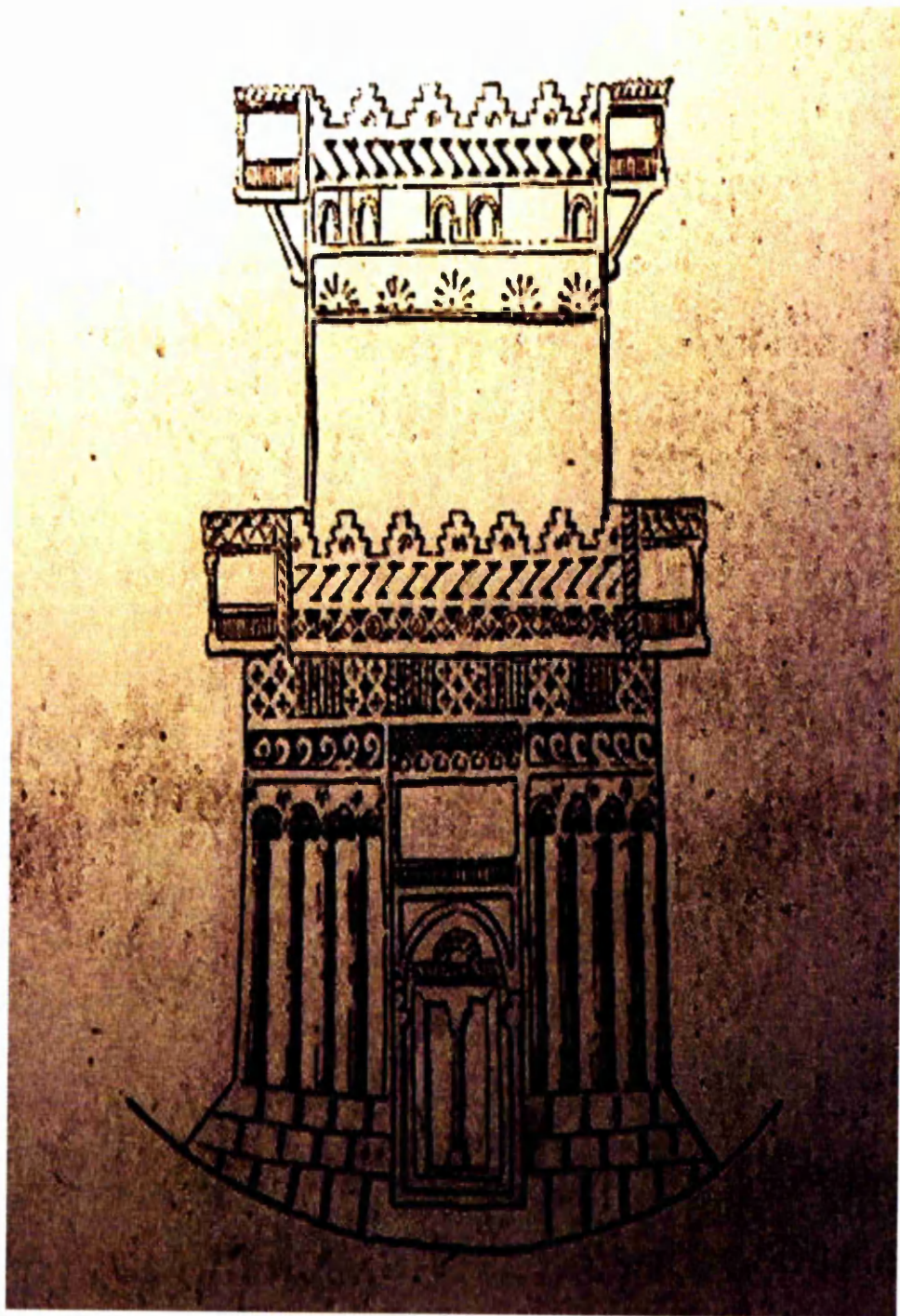


Fig.65 Details of figure 64, architectural details, twelfth century metal plate, Hermitage Museum, Leningrad. (After Sauvaget 1940-41, fig.3, p.34).



Fig.66 Representation of Christian scenes, Ayyubid glass bottle, Syria, twelfth century A.D, Furusiyya Arts Foundation, Vaduz, Leichtenstein. (After Carboni 2001a, p.29).





Fig.67 Building iconography, Ayyubid glass bottle, Syria, twelfth century A.D., Furusiyya Arts Foundation, Vaduz, Leichtenstein. (After Carboni 2001c, p.244).



Fig.68 wine jar with an illustrated Christian figure, Jawsaq Al-Khāqānī, palace of Al-Mu'taṣim, 836-39 A.D., Sāmarrā'. (After Irwin 1997, fig.87, p.111).





Fig.69 Christian imagery, basin of Al-Şālih Najm Al-Dīn Ayyūb, Egypt or Syria, 1240 A.D., Freer Gallery Collection. (After Atil 1985, cat.no.18, p.137).



Fig.70 Harvesting of grapes, Ayyubid glass bottle Syria, twelfth century A.D, Furusiyya Arts Foundation, Vaduz, Leichtenstein.. (After Carboni 2001a, p.29).





Fig.71 Gathering of dates, people picking dates, Ayyubid glass bottle, Syria, twelfth century A.D., Furusiyya Arts Foundation, Vaduz, Leichtenstein. (After Carboni 2001c, p.243).



Fig.72 Ploughing of the soil, Ayyubid glass bottle, Syria, twelfth century A.D, Furusiyya Arts Foundation, Vaduz, Leichtenstein. (After Carboni 2001a, p.28).





Fig.73 Female figure pouring a drink from a bottle, Sasanian iconography, fragmentary Fatimid vessel, Islamic Museum in Cairo, Inv.no.14987. (After Meinecke-Berg 1999, fig.6, p.352).

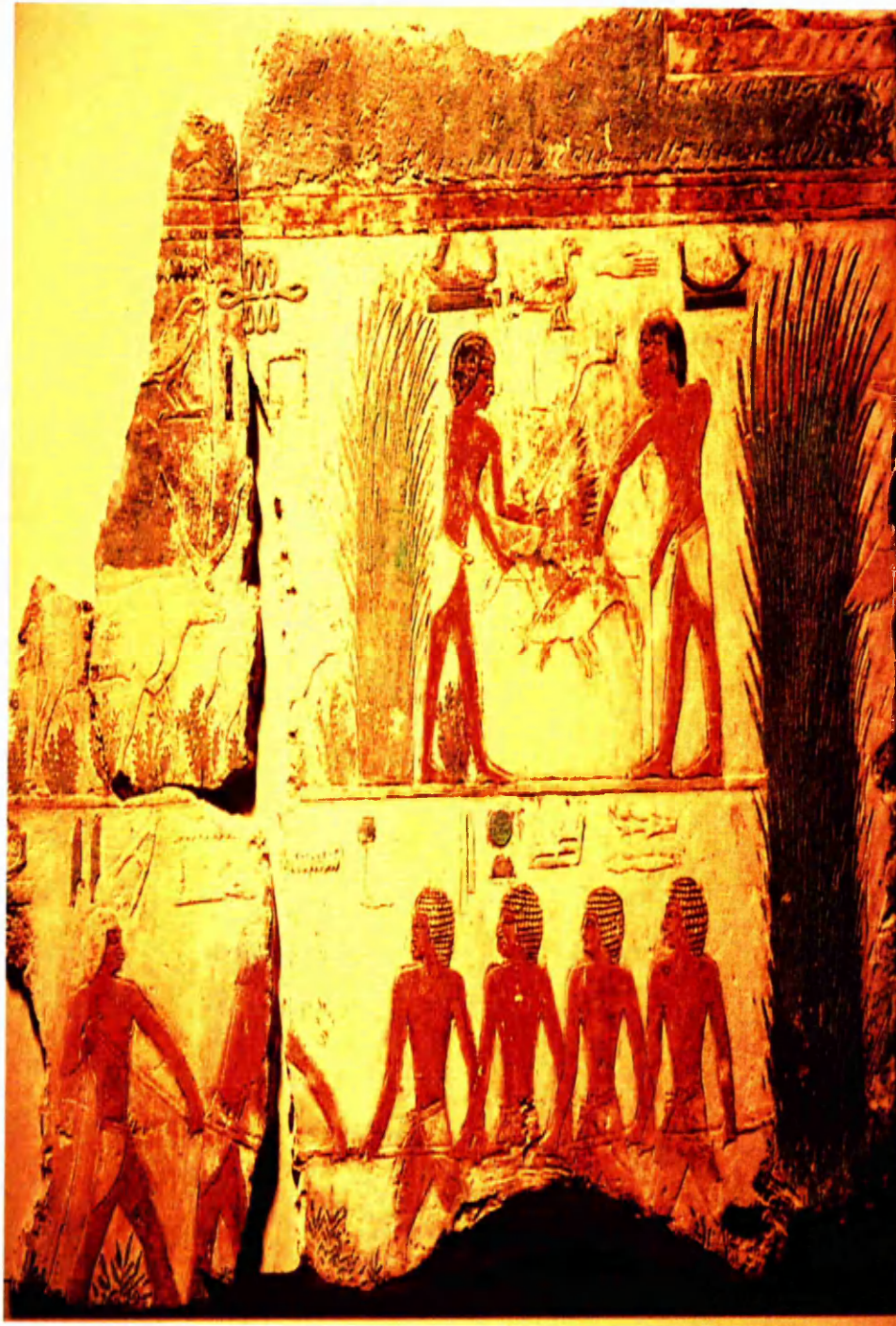


Fig.74 Representation of the seasons of the year, painted limestone fragment of relief, sun temple of King Neusera, Abū-Ghurūb, fifth dynasty. (After Robins 1997, fig.58, p.64).





Fig.75 Representation of the seasons of the year, zodiacal cycle, Beth Alpha mosaic pavement, sixth century A.D. (After Sukenik 1932, pl.X)





Fig.76 Human figures engaged in various activities, representation of the months of the year, Carolingian calendar, ninth century A.D. (After Comet 1992, pl.3).





Fig.77 Hunting of birds, representation of the month of February, Calendar of Gérone, 1000 A.D. (After Comet 1992, pl.5).





Fig.78 Catching of serpents, representation of March, calendar of Gérone, 1000 A.D. (After Comet 1992, pl.5).





Fig.79 Representation of Labour, month of April, calendar of  
Gérone, 1000 A.D. (After Comet 1992, pl.5).





Fig.80 Representation of fishing, the month of June, calendar of Gerone, 1000 A.D. (After Comet 1992, pl.5).





Fig.81 Representation of spring, Kitāb Al-Bulhān Manuscript. 784-813 A.H./1382-1410 A.D. Bodleian Library, Oxford. (After Rice 1954, pl.2, fig.a).





Fig.82 Representation of autumn, Kitāb Al-Bulhān manuscript.  
784-813 A.H./1382-1410 A.D. Bodleian Library, Oxford. (After  
Rice 1954, pl.3, fig.a).



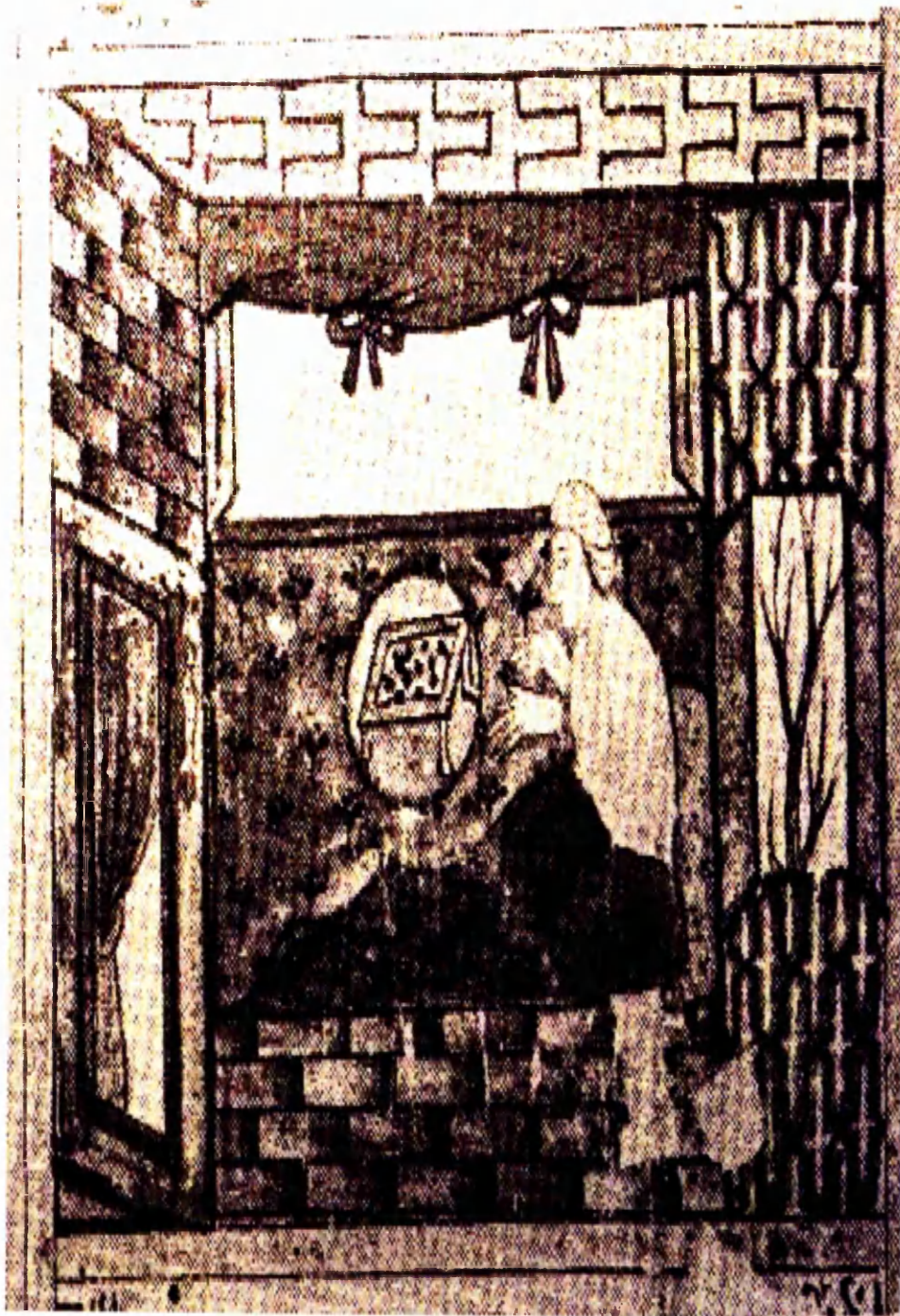


Fig.83 Representation of winter, Kitāb Al-Bulhān manuscript.  
784-813 A.H./1382-1410 A.D. Bodleian Library, Oxford. (After  
Rice 1954, pl.3, fig.b).



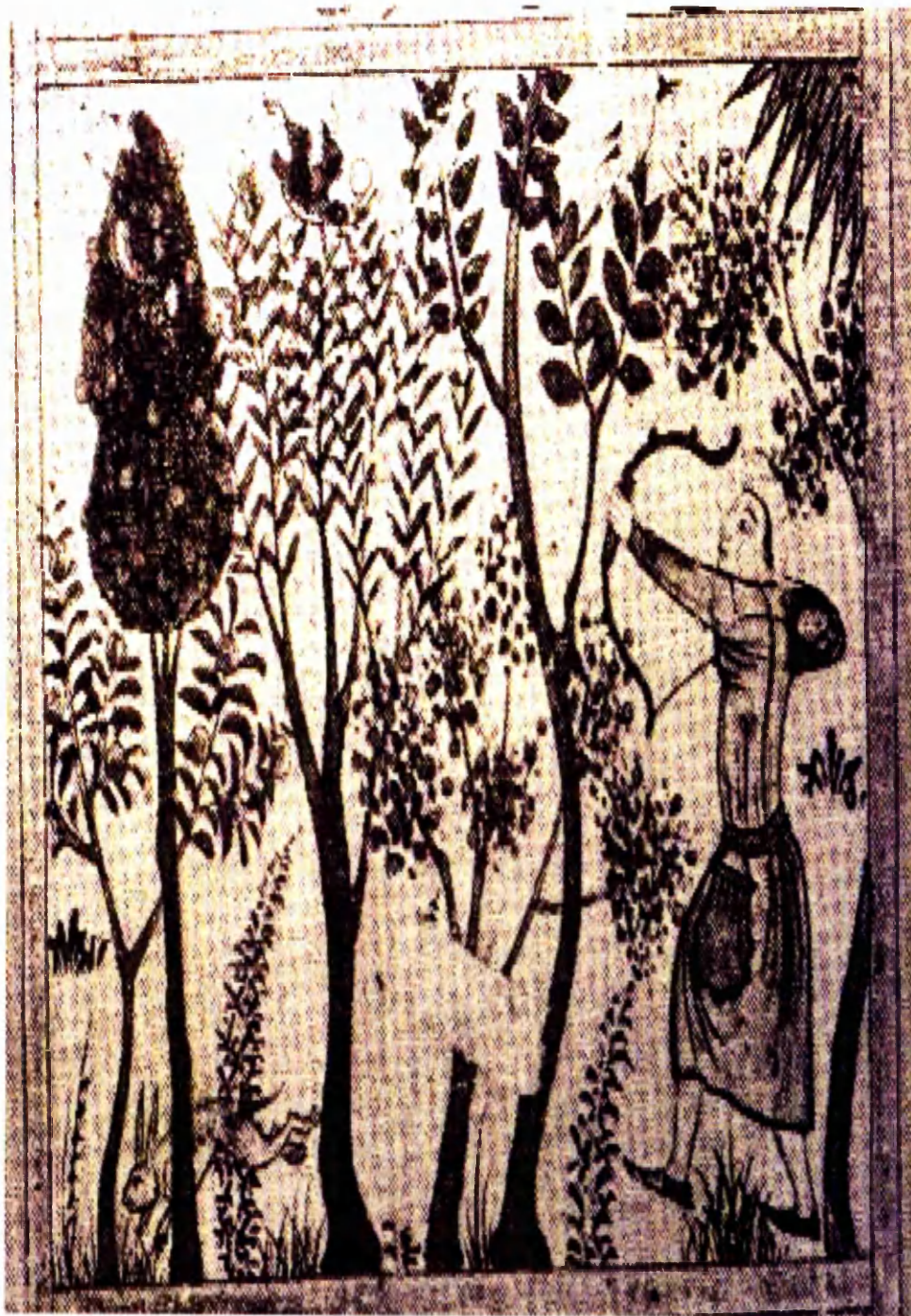


Fig.84 Male figure hunting birds in the garden, representation of summer, Kitāb Al-Bulhān manuscript. 784-813 A.H./1382-1410 A.D. Bodleian Library, Oxford. (After Rice 1954, pl.2, fig.b).





Fig.85 Sowing seeds in a field, representation of winter, mosaics of Saint-Roman-en-Gal, third century A.D. (After Comet 1992, pl.1).



Fig.86 Transportation of rocks, seasons and months of the year, mosaics of Saint-Roman-en-Gal, third century A.D. (After Comet 1992, pl.1).





Fig.87 Scene of the sacrifice to the Lares, mosaics of Saint-Roman-en-Gal, third Century A.D. (After Comet 1992, pl.1).



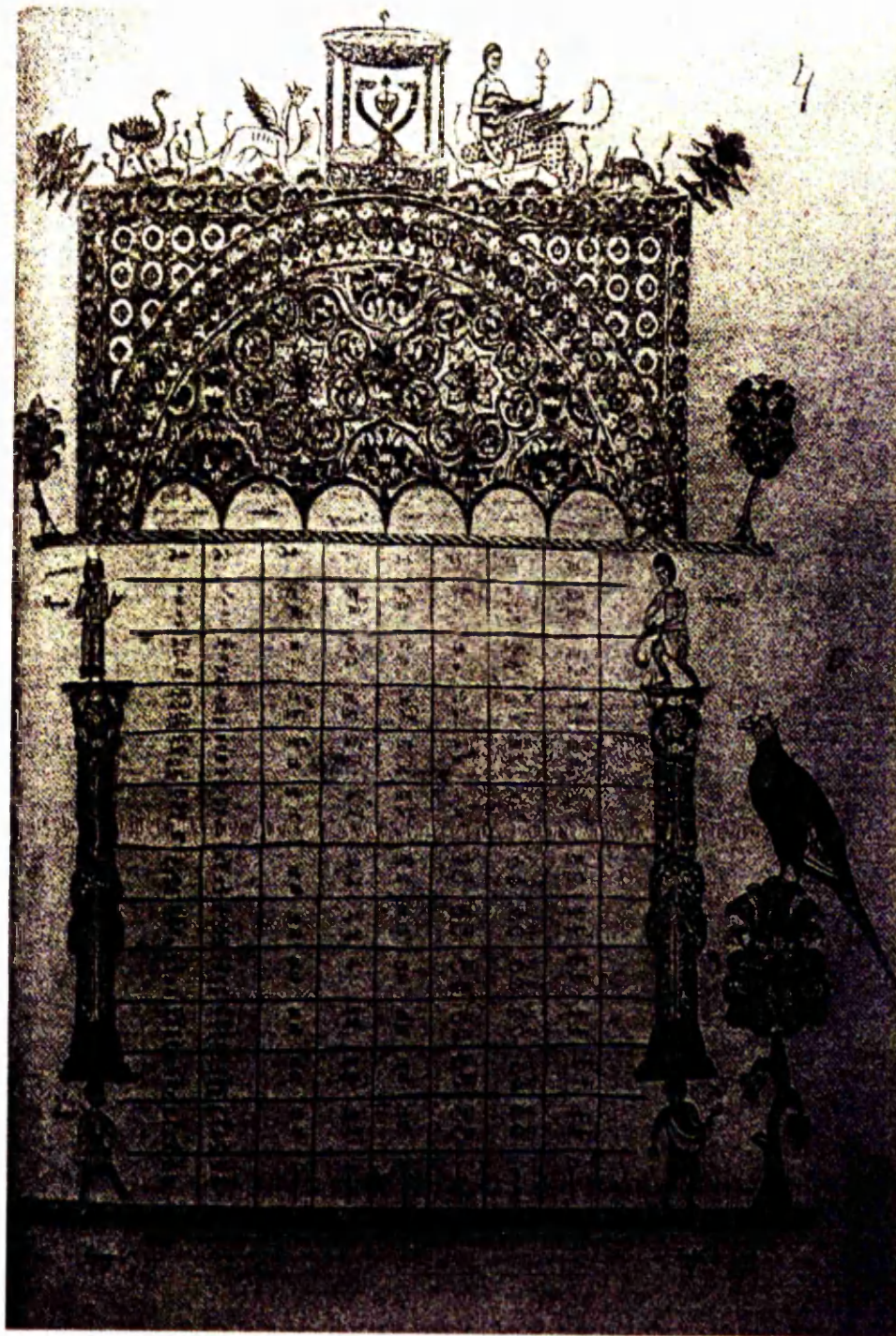


Fig.88 The months of May, June, October, and November, manuscript of *Evangiles de Vani*, 1184-1213 A.D. (After Rice 1954, fig.3).





Fig.89 Representation of the months of the year, twelfth century manuscript, Vatican Library GR.746, fol.48v. (After Rice 1954, fig.4).



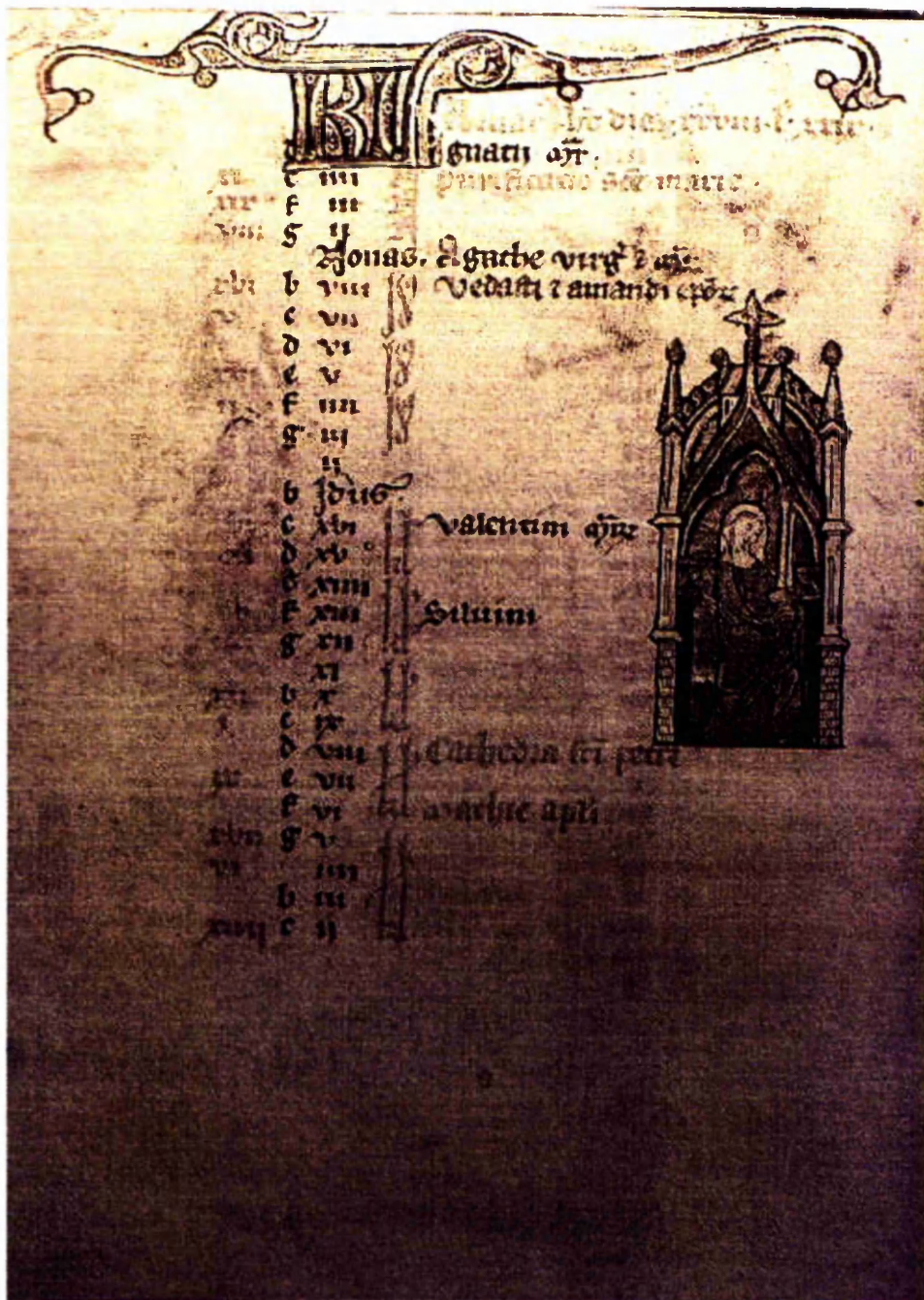


Fig.90 The month of February, thirteenth century calendar, Candlemas Psalter, end of the thirteenth century, Northern France. Pierpont Morgan library MS M79, fol.2v. (After Henisch 1999, fig.7.13).





fol.48r



fol.47r



fol.41r



fol.49v



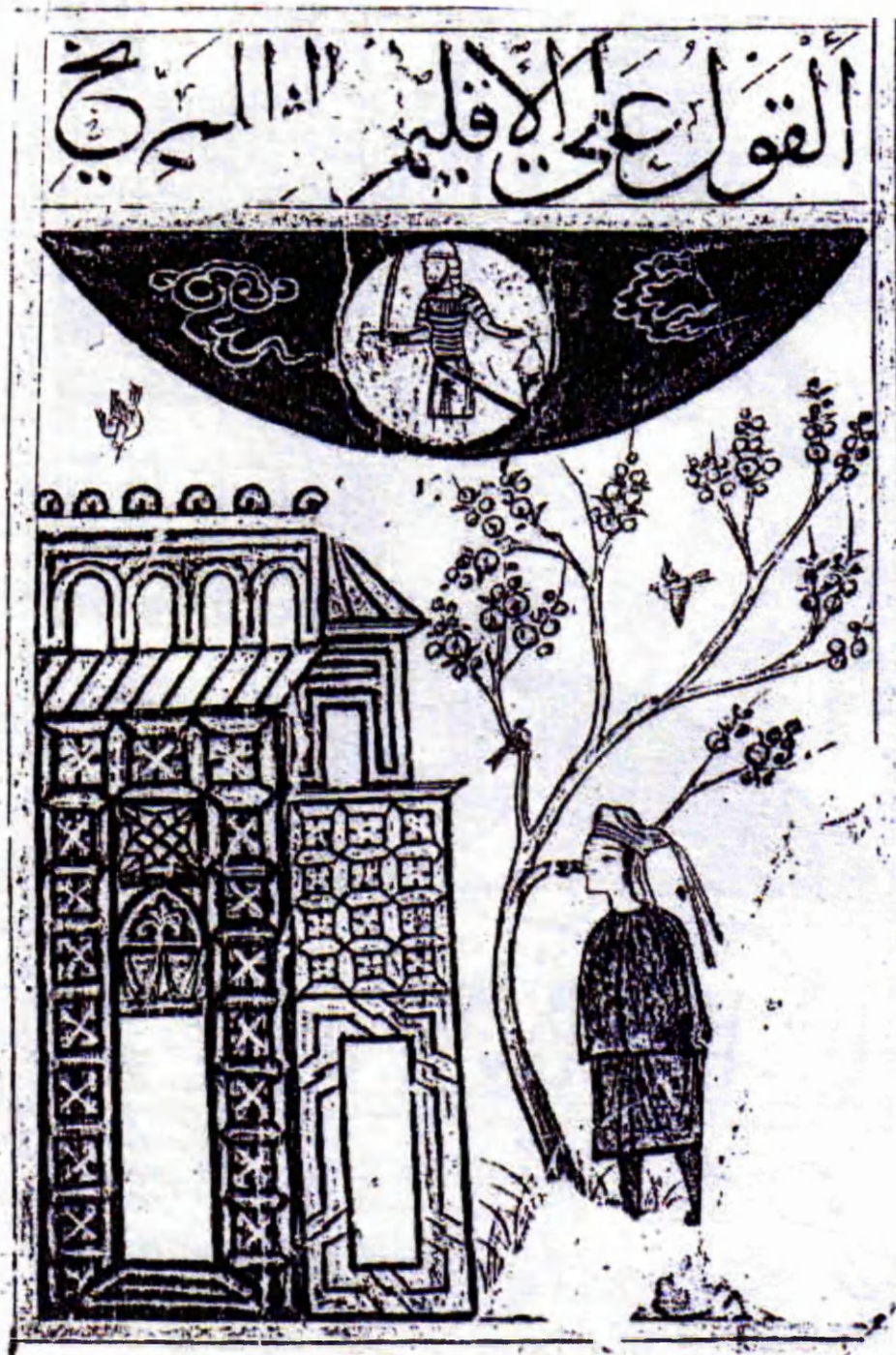
fol.49r



fol.48v

Fig.91 Representation of high buildings, climes, manuscript of Kitāb Al-Bulhān, 784-813 A.H./1382-1410 A.D. Bodleian Library, Oxford. (After Rice 1954, pl.5).





fol.47v

Fig.92 Third clime, manuscript of Kitāb Al-Bulhān, 784-813 A.H./1382-1410 A.D. Bodleian Library, Oxford. (After Rice 1954, pl.6, fig.a).





Fig.93 Hunting with a falcon, the month of October, the Anglo-Saxon calendar, second quarter of the eleventh century, fol.7v. (After British Library Website. "Anglo Saxon Calendar". Online.<http://www.imagesonline.bl.uk/britishlibrary/controller/t/extsearch?text=anglo+saxon+calendar&&idx=1&startid=4265>. Accessed 28th January 2006).



Fig.94 Different types of beakers. (After Kenesson 1998, p.46).





Fig.95 Architectonic representation, the Baltimore Mamluk glass beaker, 1260 A.D. Baltimore, Walters Art Gallery, Inv. no. 46.17. (After Atil 1981, p.126).



Fig.96 Details of figure 95, architectonic representations on the Mamluk glass beaker, 1260 A.D. Baltimore, Walters Art Gallery Inv. nos. 46.17. (After Atil 1981, p.125).





Fig.97 Architectonic representation on the Baltimore Mamluk glass beaker, 1260 A.D. Baltimore, Walters Art Gallery Inv. no. 46.18. (After Atil 1981, p.127).



Fig.98 Details of figure 97, architectonic representations on the Mamluk glass beaker 2. 1260 A.D. Baltimore, Walters Art Gallery Inv. nos. 46.18. (After Atil 1981, p.144).



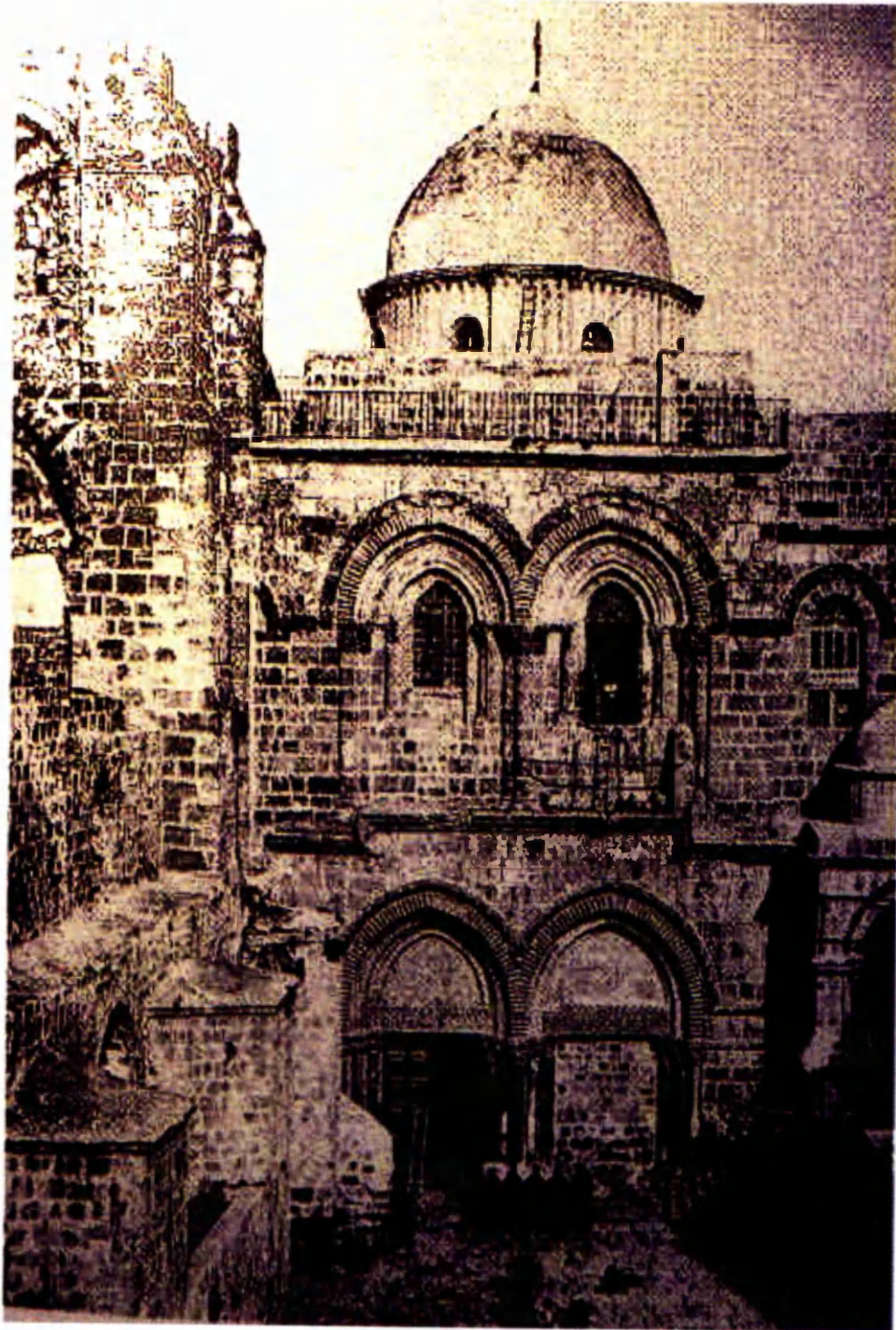


Fig.99 The façade of the Holy Sepulchre. (After Carswell 1998, fig.15.6).





Fig.100 The Entry of Jesus to Jerusalem, a sixth century manuscript. (After Landay 1974, p.40).





Fig.101 Jesus Preaching at the Gates of Antonia, a sixth century manuscript. (After Landay 1974, p.40).



Fig.102 Christ with Abt Menas, manuscript illustration, Bāwīt, sixth or seventh century, Louvre Museum, Inv.no.X5178. (After Galavaris 1981, pl.XXVIIIa).





Fig.103 Saint John the Baptist. Paris manuscript (Copte 13),  
Damietta, 1180 A.D., fol.7. (After Buchthal 1940a, fig.45).



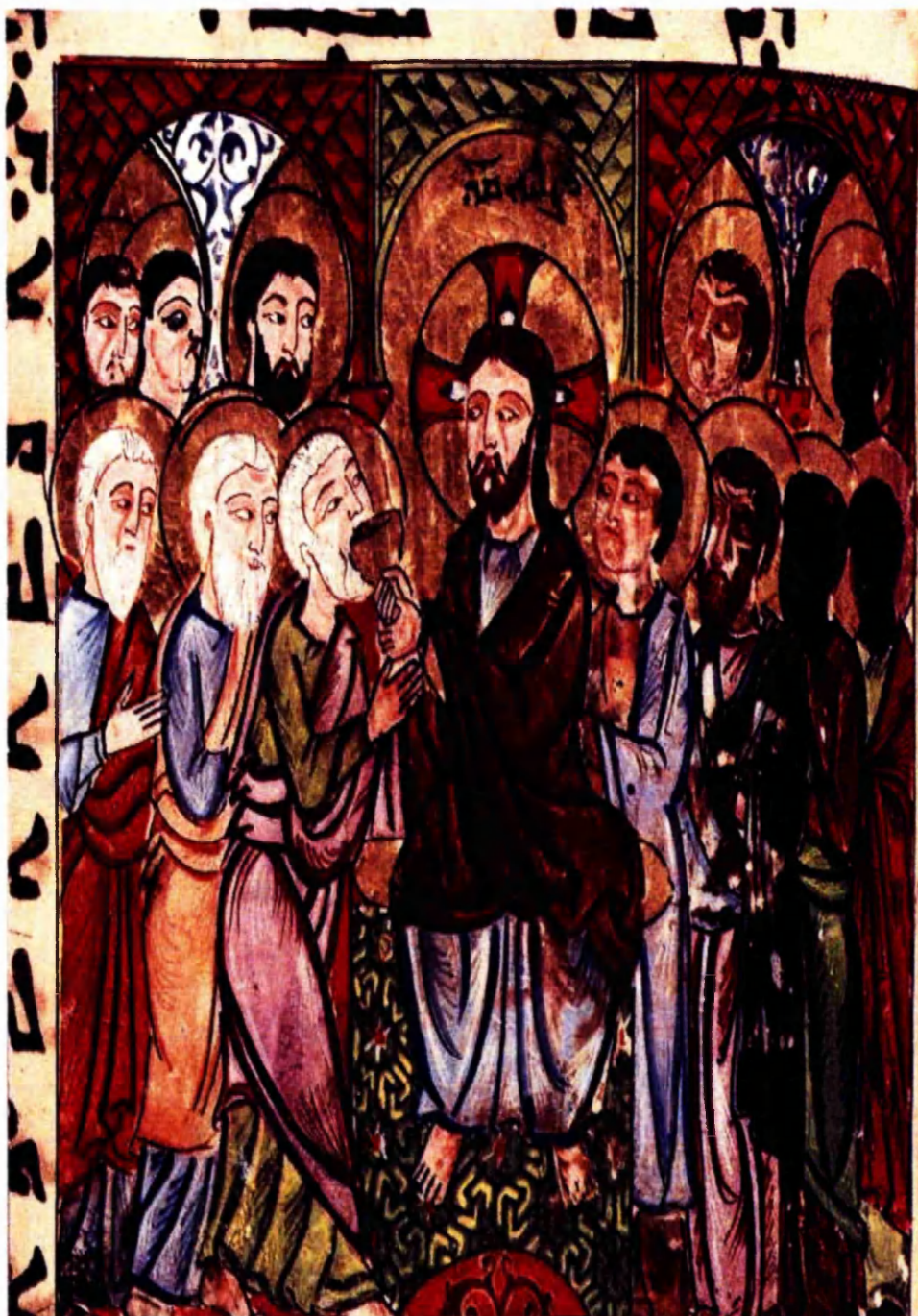


Fig.104 The Communications of the Apostles, Iraq (Moşul), 1216-1220 A.D. Syriac. British Library Inv. no. Add. 7170. fol.141. (After British Library Website: "Manuscripts". Online. <http://www.ibs001.colofirstnet.net.uk/britishlibrary/controller/subjectidsearch?id=10411&idx=1&start=25>. Accessed the 12<sup>th</sup> of May 2003).





Fig.105 Two authors: Alanus de Insulis (Magister Alanus) and Petrus Cantor in a debate, manuscript illustration, Germany, 1227-1246A.D., British Library, Inv. no. Add. 19767. (After British Library Website. "Manuscripts". Online. <http://www.prodigy.bl.uk/illcat/tours/Add19767.htm>. Accessed 17<sup>th</sup> of May 2003).



Fig.106 Monks and nuns clad in their garments, manuscript illustration, calendar of the Book of Hours, 1240 A.D, British Library, Inv. no. Add. 49999. (After British Library Website. "Calendar of the Book of Hours".Online.<http://prodigi.bl.uk/illcat/tours/Add49999.htm>. Accessed 19<sup>th</sup> of June 2003).





Fig.107 The monk before the judge, Kalilah wa Dimnah Manuscript, 1230 A.D., Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, Inv. no. 3465, fol.55. (After Buchthal 1940a, fig.28).





Fig.108 The Monk and His Guest, *Kalilah wa Dimnah*, 1230 A.D., Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, Inv. No. 3465, fol.89v. (After Buchthal 1940a, fig.41).





Fig.109 The thieves and the monk, Kalilah wa Dimnah, 1230 A.D., Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris Inv. No. 3465, fol.101. (After Buchthal 1940a, fig.44).





Fig.110 Representation of saints, calendar icon from September to November, the Monastery of Saint Catherine, Sinai, eleventh century A.D. (After Galavaris 1981, pl. XXVIa).



Fig.111 Himatite amulet, St. Prokopios, early Byzantine period, British Museum in London. (After Maguire 1996, fig.103, p.121).





Fig.112 Bronze amulet, the Kelsey Museum of Archaeology  
Inv. no.26115. (After Maguire 1996, fig.104-105, p.122).



Fig.113 Bowl with a figure of a saint, North Africa (Egypt). The Kelsey Museum of Archaeology Inv. no.20024. (After Maguire 1996, fig.118, p.131).





Fig.114 Saint holding a cross, bowl fragment, North Africa, Istanbul Archaeological Museum, Inv. no.561. (After Maguire 1996, fig.120, p.132).



Fig.115 Lusterware bowl signed by Sa'd, first half of the twelfth century. Victoria and Albert Museum. (After Rice 1991, fig.91, p.92).





Fig.116 Ceiling painted panel, Cappella Palatino, Palermo, middle of the twelfth century. (After Ettinghausen 1962, p.48).



Fig. 117 Figure of Solomon, enameled glass bowl, Damascus, 1270-1280 A.D, Mayer Museum in Jerusalem. (After Hasson 1998, fig.11.3).





Fig.118 Pilgrim flask (Pilgrim's ampulla), scenes from the life of Jesus Christ. (After Kitzinger 1980, fig.15, p.152).





Fig.119 Christian imagery, bronze pilgrim flask inlaid with silver, Syria, mid-thirteenth century, Freer Gallery of Art, Inv. no.41.10. (After Gladiß 2000, p.205).



Fig.120 Pilgrim flask, fourteenth century, British Museum,  
Inv.no.OAI 869.1-20.3. (After Carboni 2001c, p.248).





Fig.121 Details of the fourteenth century pilgrim flask, British Museum, Inv.no.OAI 869.1-20.3. (After Carboni 2001c, p.248).



Fig.122 Male figure sitting and holding a beaker, frontispiece, the *Maqāmāt* of Al-Ḥarīrī Manuscript, The National Library, Paris, Ms. No. 5847. (After Hoffmann 1999, fig.111.87b, p.31).





Fig.123 Scenes of the royal court, frontispiece, Kitāb Al-Diryāq (Book of Antidotes) manuscript, mid-thirteenth century A.D. (After Ettinghausen 1962, p.91).





Fig.124 Representation of a prince holding a beaker, fresco, an aristocratic dwelling, Old Cairo, eleventh century A.D., Islamic Museum in Cairo, Inv. no.12880. (After Meinecke-Berg 1999, fig.4, p.350).





Fig.125 A prince holding two beakers, Fatimid lustre-painted plate with the signature of Ja'far, Islamic Museum in Cairo, Inv.no.13478. (After Meinecke-Berg 1999, fig.2, p.350).





Fig.126 A tavern displaying the episodes of wine making, the Schefer Maqāmāt of Al-Harīrī, 1237 A.D., twelfth Maqāmah, fol.33. (After Ukasha 1992, p.67).



Fig.127 Two thirteenth century Syrian beakers of a nesting set.  
(After Carboni 2001b, fig.86a, p.330).



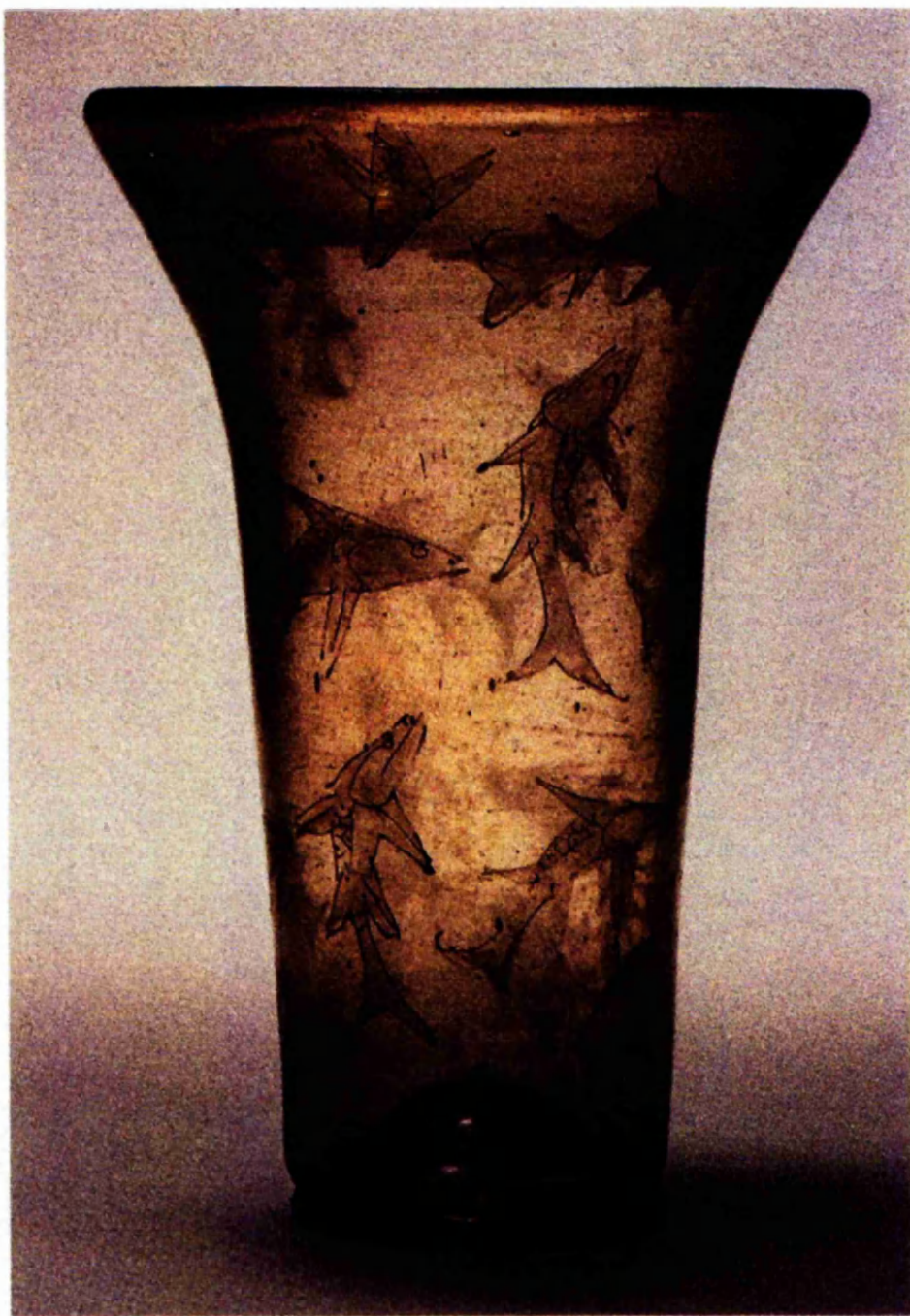


Fig.128 Thirteenth or fourteenth century beaker with fish decorations, Quft, Upper Egypt, British Museum in London, Inv. no. 1879 5.22 68. (After Carboni 2001a, p.192).



Fig.129 Minai ceramic beaker with architectonic representations, Painted pottery beaker Iran (Rayy), early thirteenth century, the story of Bizhen and Manizheh. Freer Gallery of Art in Washington. (After Grabar 2000a, fig.10, p.42).





Fig.130 Representation of building iconography, the upper band on the Minai beaker. (After Guest 1942-1943, fig.1).



a.



b.

Fig.131 "Bizhan Slaughters the Wild Boars of Irmān", a.The Īnjū'id Shāhnāma (1341 A.D.), b.The Gutman Shāhnāma. (After Swietochowski 1994, p.76, fig.22, p.100).



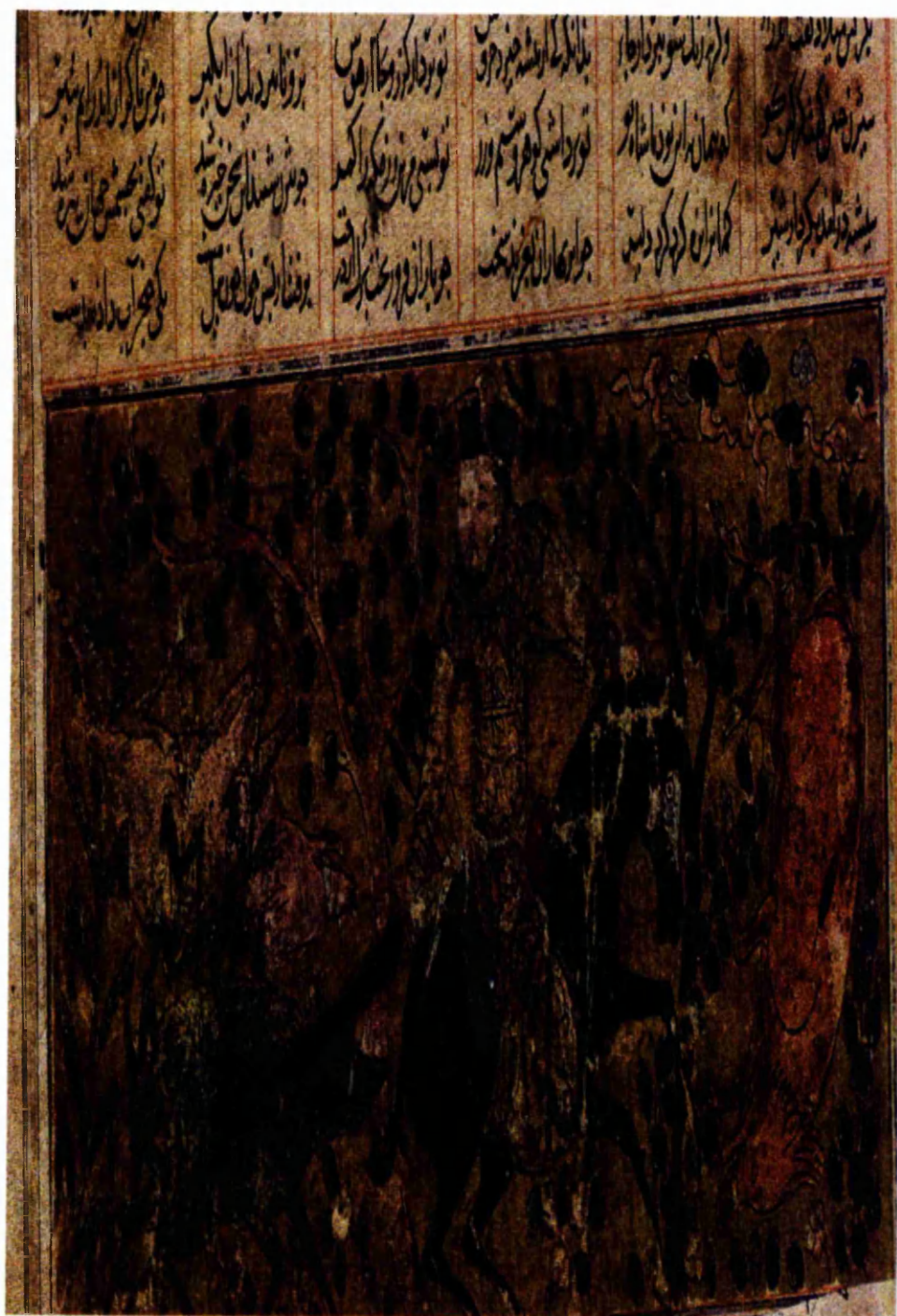


Fig.132 "Bizhan Slaughters the Wild Boars of Irmān", the Small Shāhnāma, 1300 A.D. (After Swietochowski 1994, p.77).



Fig.133 Representation of a building, manuscript fragment with an animal fable scene, Islamic Museum in Cairo, Inv. No. 13192. (After Grube 1995, no.23).





Fig.134 Representation of a building, manuscript fragment with two seated personages. Louvre Museum, Paris. (After Grube 1995, p.74).



Fig.135 Two tombs under a tree, manuscript fragment, Fayyūm, ninth or tenth century A.D., The National Library, Vienna, PER Inv. Chart. Ar.25612. (After Arnold 1929, pl.I).





Fig.136 Manuscript fragment with a mausoleum interior, Syria, twelfth or thirteenth century A.D., the Collection of Hans P. Kraus. (After Grube 1972, pl.III).



Fig.137 Representation of a battle between Arabs and knights, fortress wall on a paper fragment, Fustāt, twelfth century A.D., British Museum, Department of Prints and Drawings, Inv. no. 1938.3-1201. (After Eddé 2001, cat.no.62, p.94).





Fig.138 Glazed pottery fragment from Mahdiyyah and Şabra Manşūriyyah, Tunisia, tenth-eleventh century A.D. (After Contadini 1998a, fig.6, p.11).



Fig.139 One side of the frontispiece of Sana'a Quranic manuscript fragment. (After Piotrovsky 2000, cat.no.36, p.16).





Fig.140 Mosque iconography on the frontispiece of Sana'a Quran. (After Grabar 1992, pl.16).

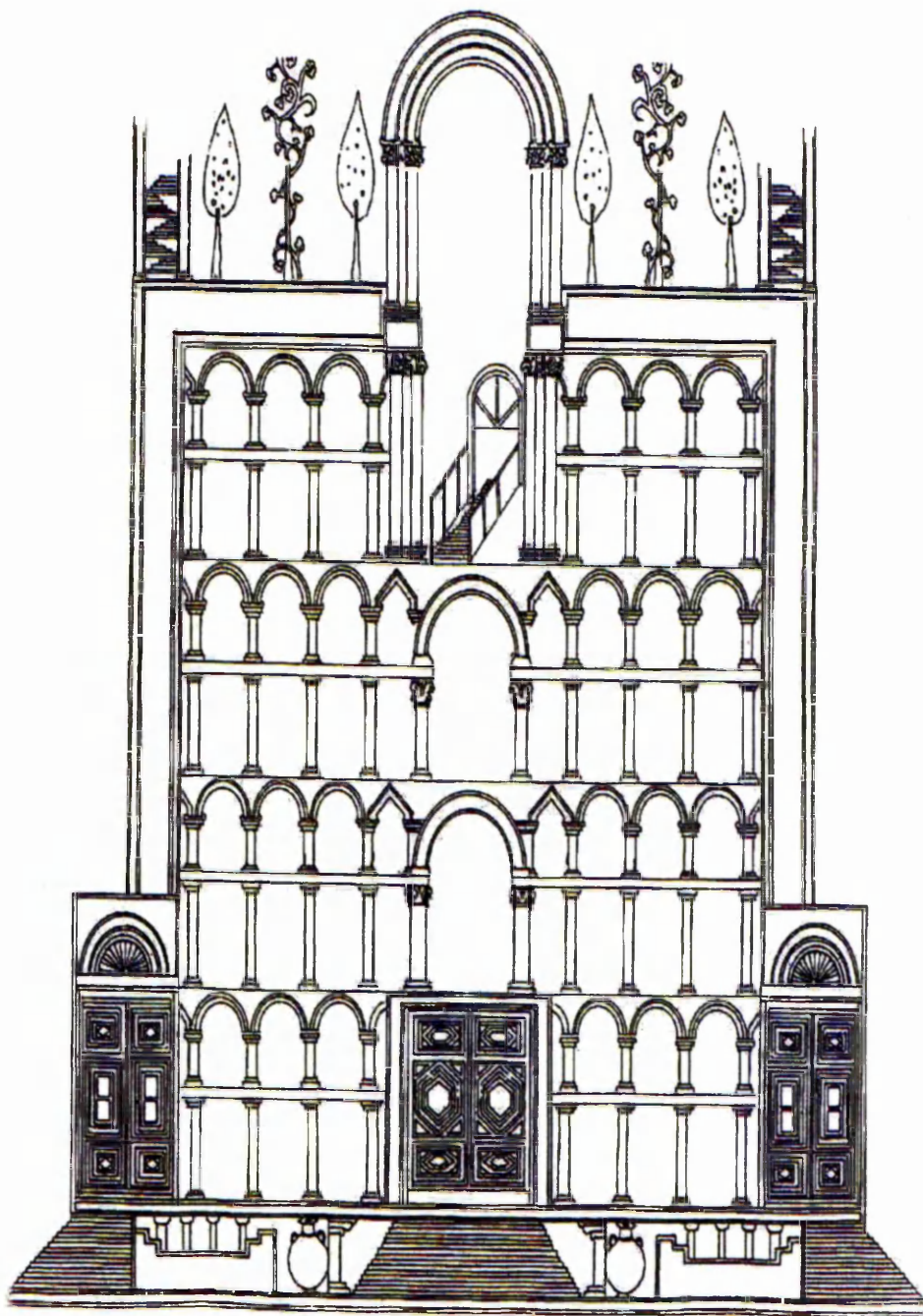


Fig.141 Reconstruction of the architectonic iconography in fig.140. (After Grabar 1992, fig.127, p.158).





Fig.142 Mosque iconography on the frontispiece of Sana'a Quran. (After Grabar 1992, pl.16).

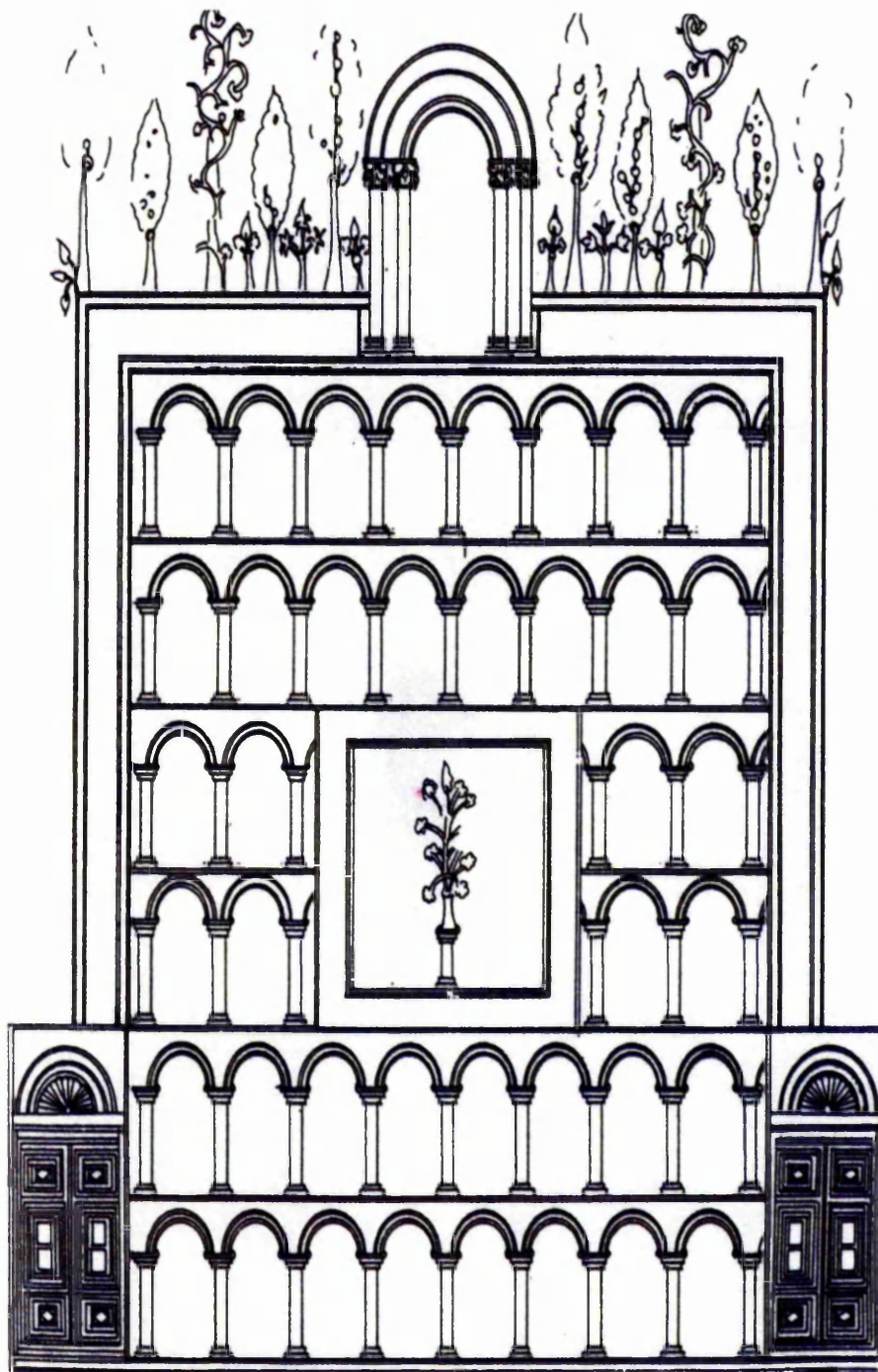
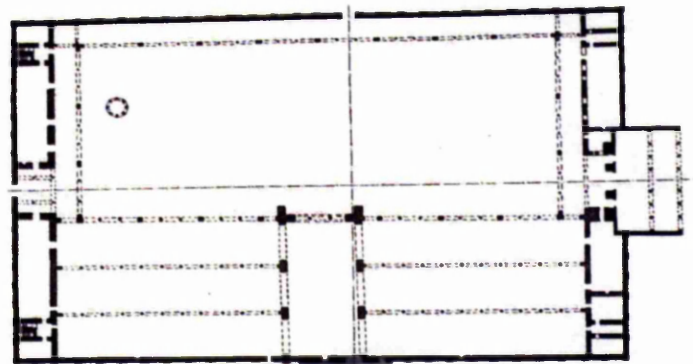


Fig.143 Reconstruction of the architectonic iconography in fig.142. (After Grabar 1992, fig.128, p.159).

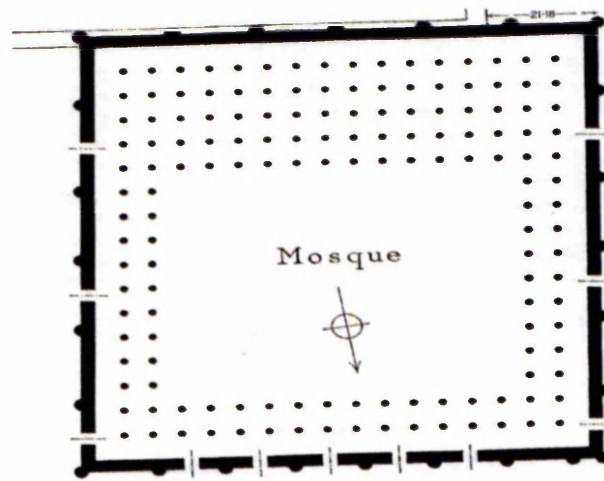




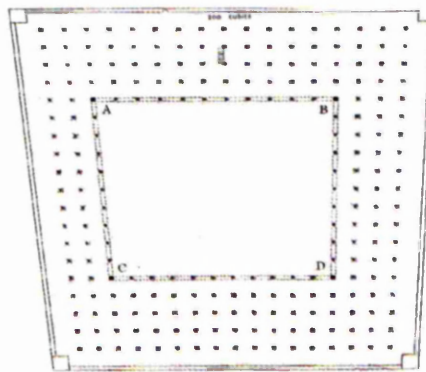
Fig.144 Mid-twelfth century version of the Homilies of Gregory of Nazianzus. (After Cutler 1999, fig.III.101).



a.



b.



c.

Fig.145 Mosque plans share architectural elements with Sana'a Mosque illustrations, a. Damascus, b. Medina, c. Kūfah. (After Creswell 1979, I/I, figs. 89, .74, 16, p.172, 146, 47).

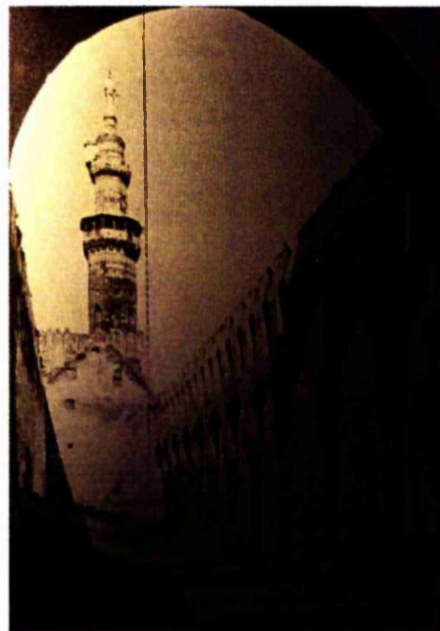




a.



b.



c.

Fig.146 The Great Mosque of Damascus after and before the fire of 1893. a. Before the fire, sanctuary looking South-East. b.& c. the Sanctuary after the fire, (Van Berchem's photographs). (After Creswell 1969, I/I, pl. 62, 62A).

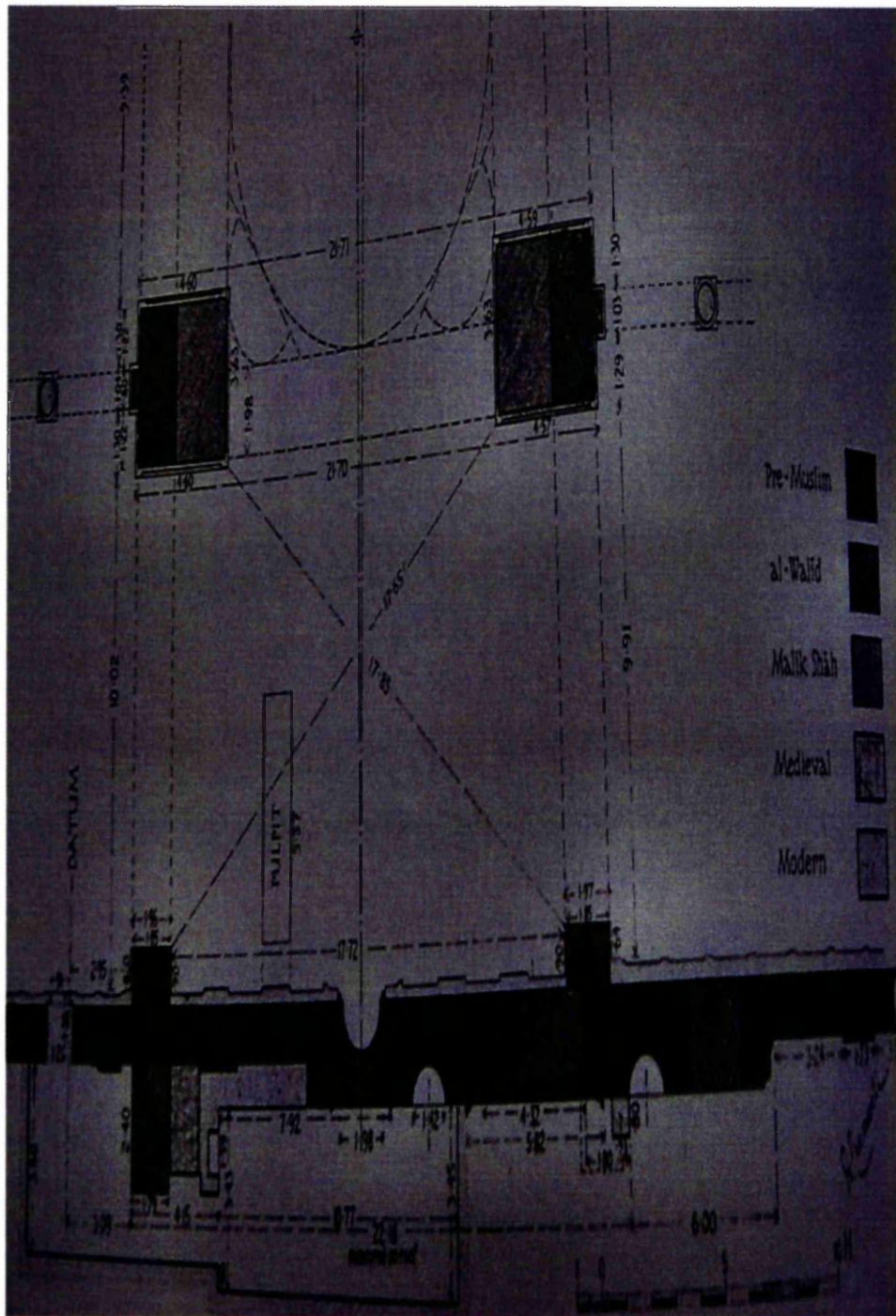


Fig.147 Plan of triple entrance in South wall, Great Mosque of Damascus. (After Creswell 1979, I/I, fig.81, p.158).



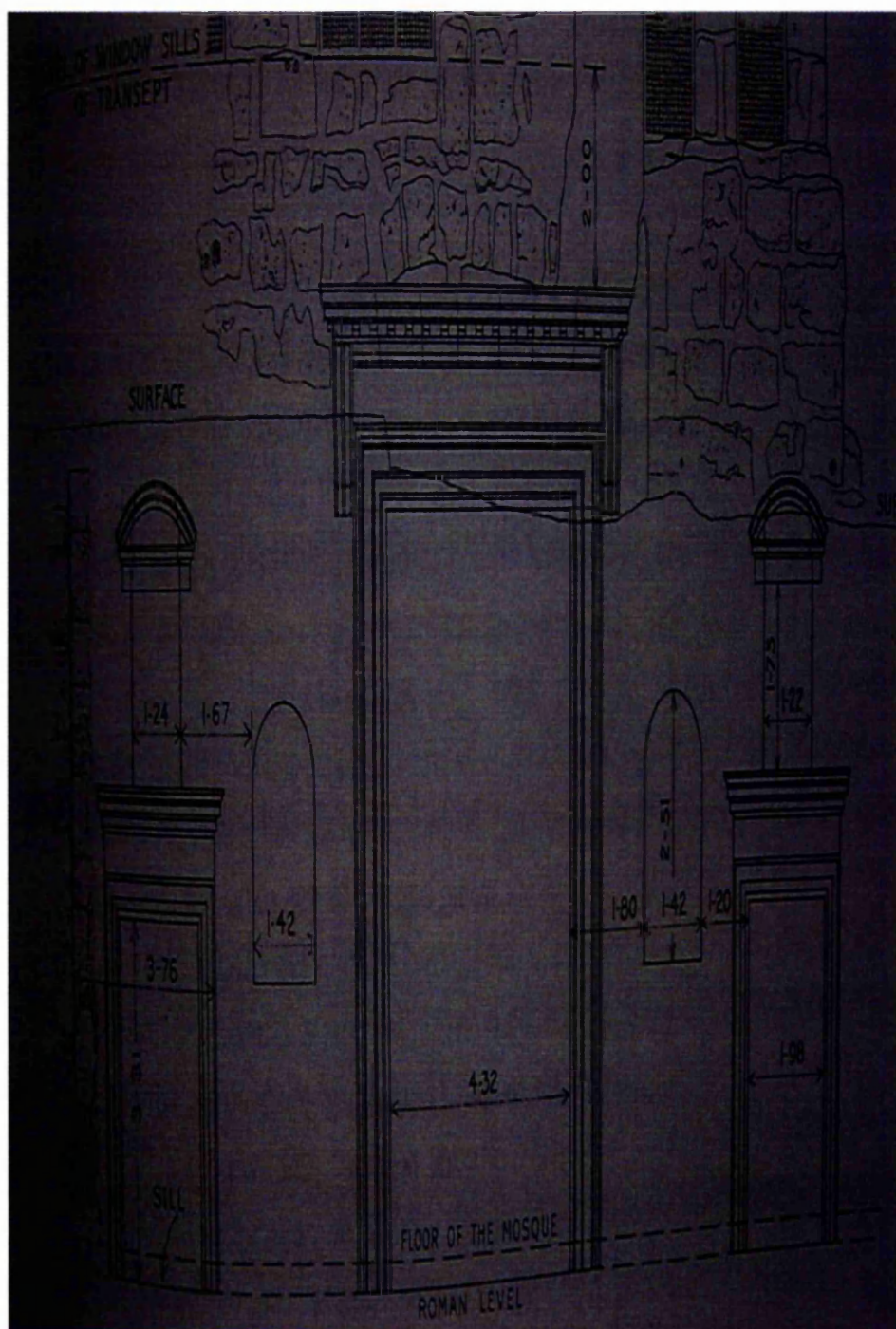


Fig.148 Details of triple entrance in the South wall, Great Mosque of Damascus. (After Dickie's memoir with corrections). (After Creswell 1979, I/I, fig.82, p.159).

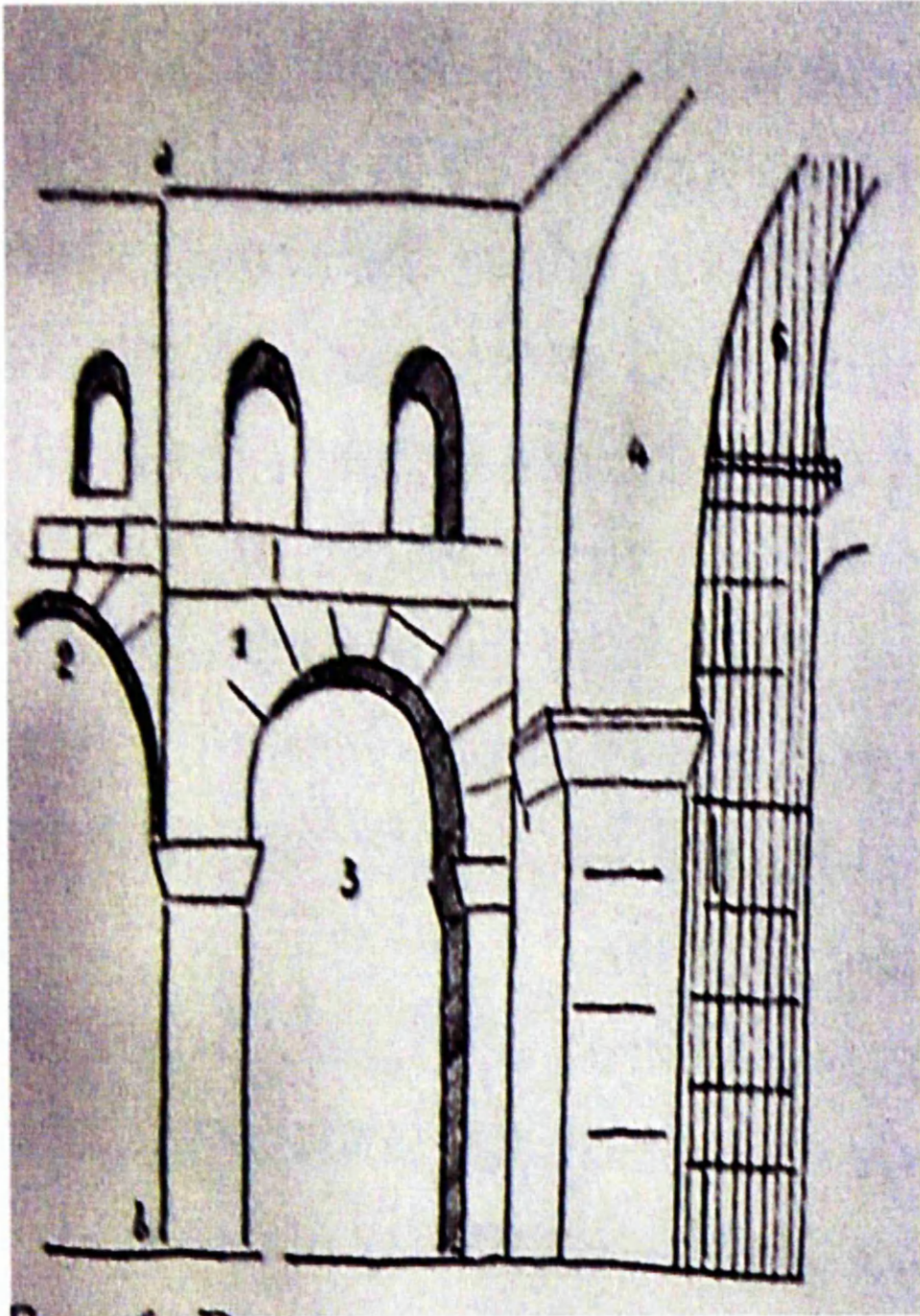
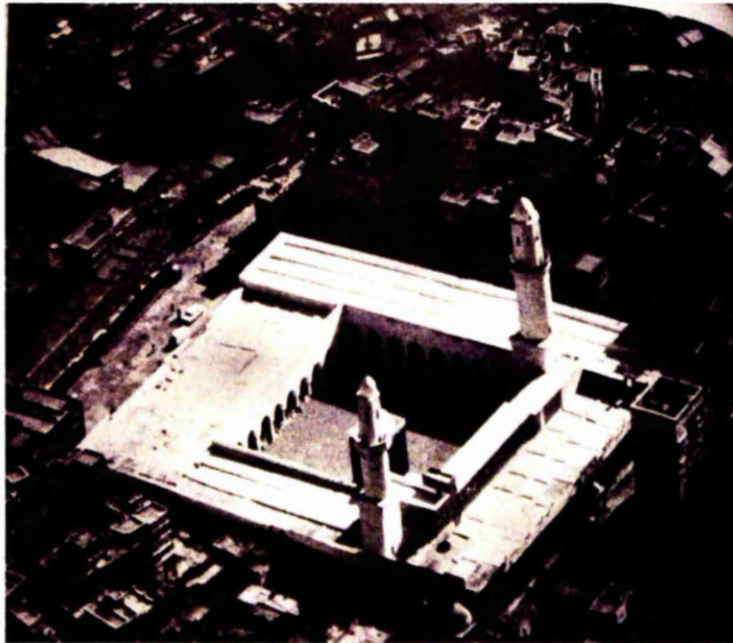
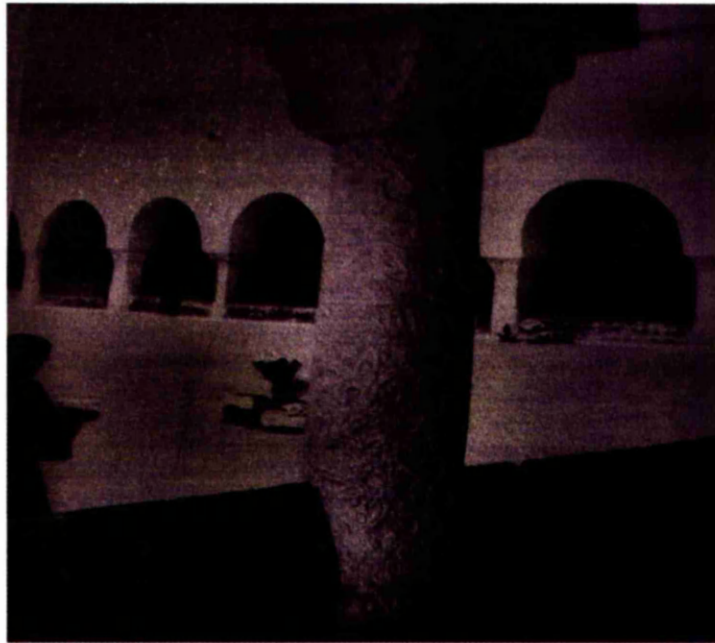


Fig.149 Arch of West transept from within, Great Mosque of Damascus. Sketched by Van Berchem after the fire of 1893 A.D. (After Creswell 1979, I/I, fig.96, p.186).



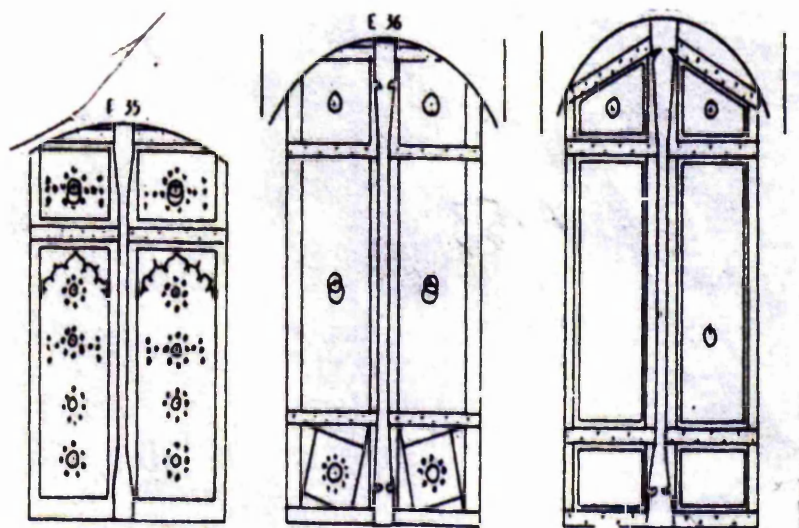


a.

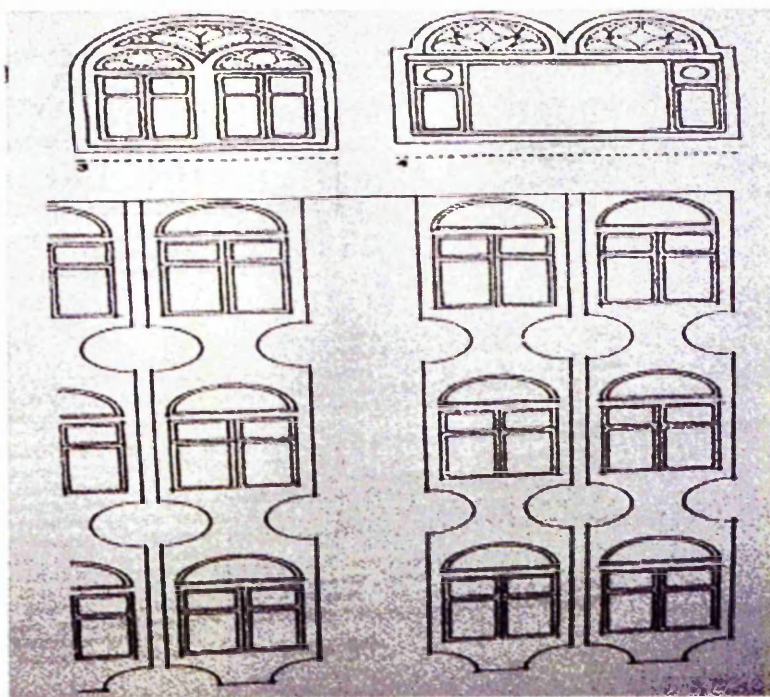


b.

Fig.150 Great Mosque of Sana'a. a. The Great Mosque seen from the air. b. Internal courtyard with a Christian or early Islamic capital and shaft. (After Lewcock 1986, figs.6, 27).



a.



b.

Fig.151 Architectural elements in Sana'a ancient mosques. a. Mosque doors. (After Bonnenfant 1987, p.52). b.Windows and doors. (After Grandguillaume 1995, I, fig.20, p.225).

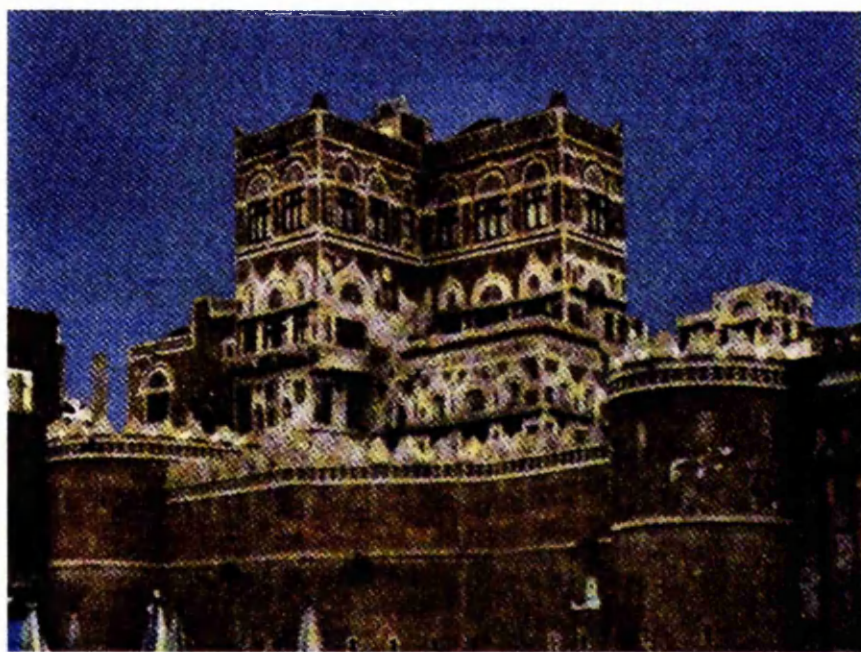




Fig.152 Alabaster top lights, centre of the *Qiblah* wall, Great Mosque of Sana'a. (After Lewcock 1986, fig.4, p.34).



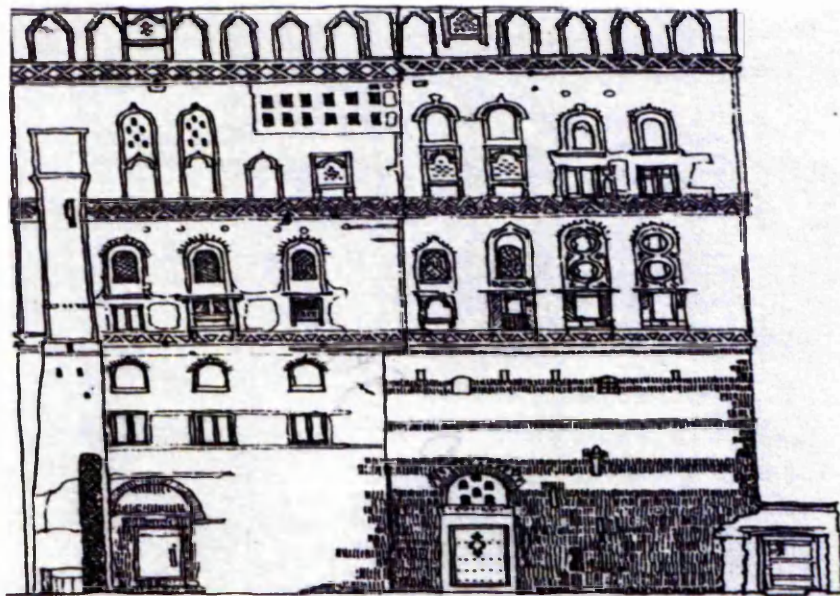
a.



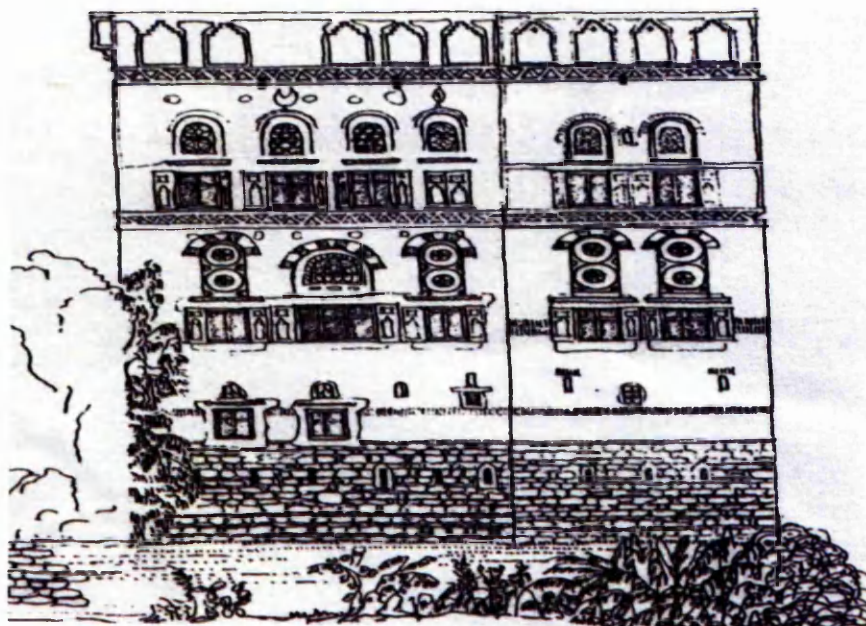
b.

Fig.153 a.,b. Exterior façades of old houses in Sana'a. (After Al-Melify 2003, p.36,38).





a.



b.

Fig.154 a., b. Exterior façades of old houses in Sana'a. (After Bonnenfant 1987, p.96).



Fig.155 Illuminated title with architectural features, eighth century Qur'an, Egypt. (After Milstein 1999, fig.6, p.435).





Fig.156 Joshua Rotulus and the Angel in front of Jericho, manuscript illustration, fifth or sixth century A.D. Vatican library V.Palat.Gr.431. (After Diehl 1910, fig.118, p.234).



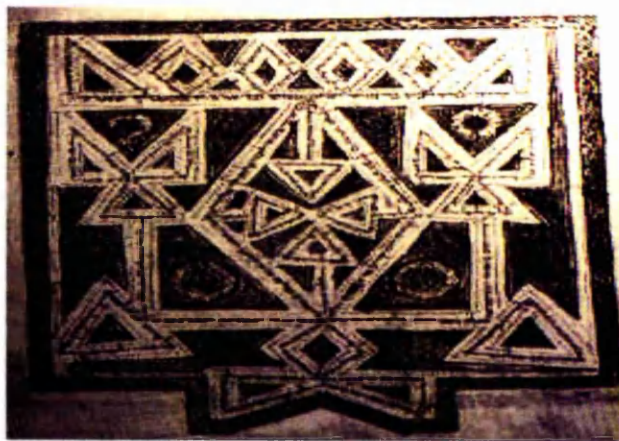


Fig.157 Architectural representations on the border, Massoretic illumination on a page of a complete Pentateuch, tenth century, St. Petersburg, 929 A.D., Karaite synagogue of Old Cairo NL.R., Firk. Hebr. II B.17. (After Milstein 1999, fig.3, p.434).





Fig.158 Illustration of the temple and its implements, earliest dated Pentateuch 929 A.D., St. Petersburg. (After Milstein 1999, fig.III.95, p.33).



a.



b.



c.

Fig.159 Architectural elements, illuminated pages in a Bible, copied in Cairo in 1008 C. St. Petersburg, (a. fol.475v, b.fol.476v, c.fol.477r). (After Milstein 1999, figs. 8,9,11, p.437).





Fig.160 Schematic plan of the Messianic temple, fragment in St. Petersburg Bible, 1008 A.D. copied in Cairo. (After Milstein 1999, fig.III.94, p.437).



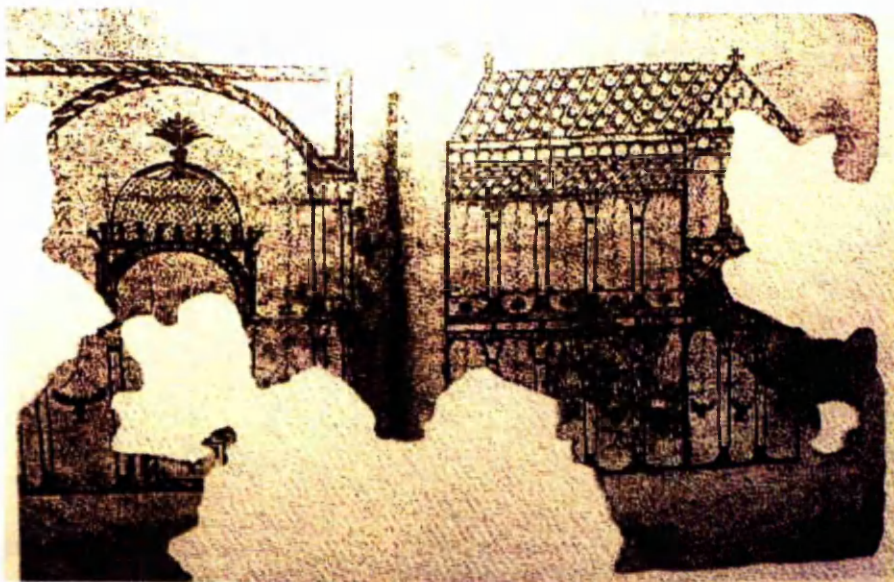


Fig.161 Four Gospel parchment manuscript, Saint Matthew sitting at a writing desk, eleventh-twelfth century A.D. Now in the Greek Patriarchal Library, Jerusalem, fol.5v, Codex 31. (After Hatch 1931, pl.XXI, p.78).



Fig.162 Saint Luke sitting at a writing desk, manuscript illustration, headpiece of the Book of Acts, eleventh-twelfth century A.D. Now in the Greek Patriarchal Library, Jerusalem, fol.113, Codex 47. (After Hatch 1931, pl.XLV, p.103).





a.



b.

Fig.163 Architectural representations in Gospels, a. Arabic Gospel Book, b. Frontispiece of a Gospel Book in Arabic Mt. Sinai, Eleventh or twelfth century A.D. (After Grabar 1992, fig.136, p.166).



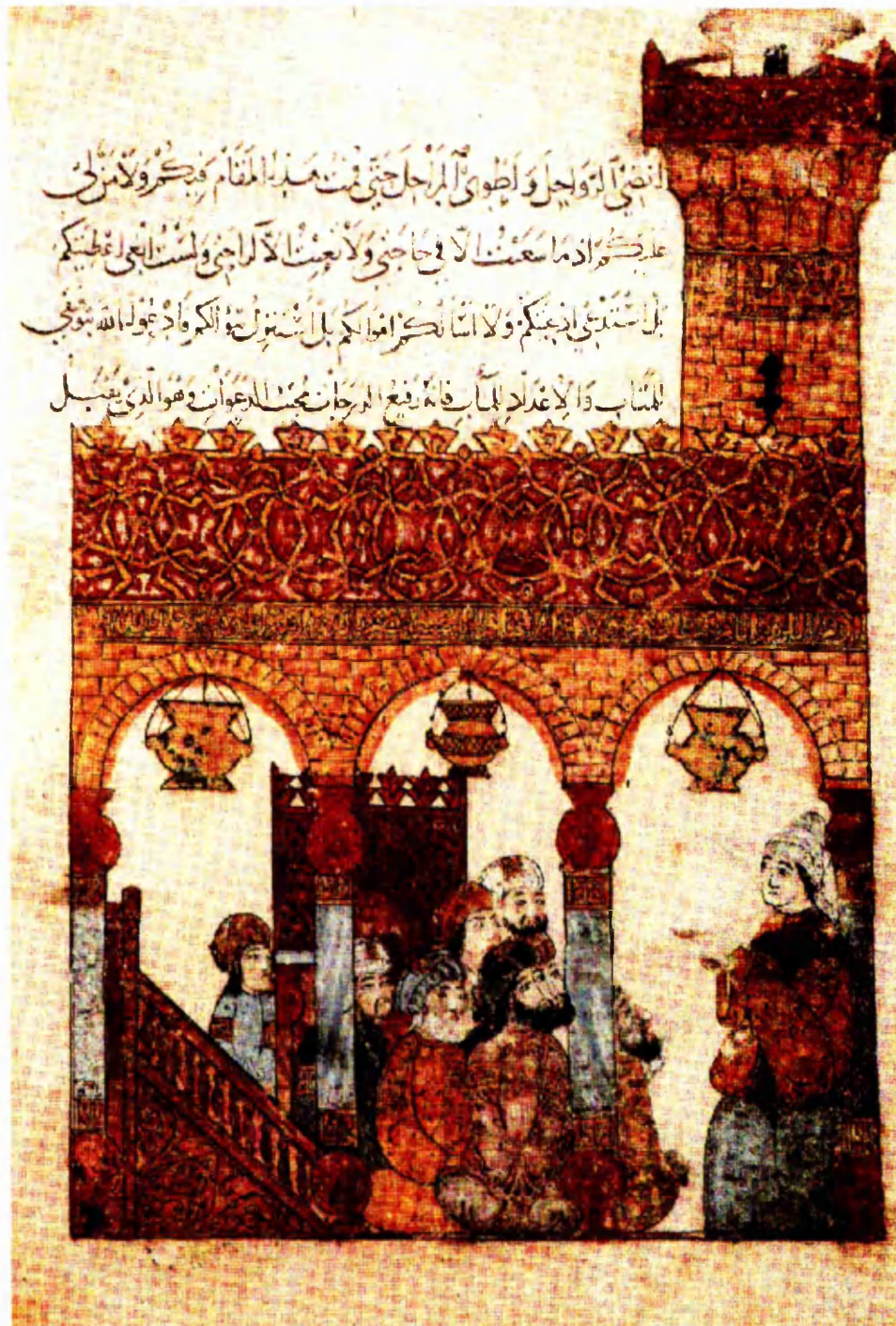


Fig.164 Representation of the Mosque of Baṣrah, the Maqāmāt of Al-Harīrī, Harīrī Schefer, 1237 A.D., fiftieth Maqāmah, fol.164. (After Ukasha 1992, p.151).





Fig.165 Representation of a palace, the Maqāmāt of Al-Harīrī, Harīrī Schefer, 1237 A.D., thirty-ninth Maqāmah, fol.120. (After Ukasha 1992, p.126).





Fig.166 Representation of an interior of a palace, the Maqāmāt of Al-Harīrī, Harīrī Schefer, 1237 A.D., thirty-ninth Maqāmah, fol.122. (After Ukasha 1992, p.127).









Fig.168 Representation of a Library in Basrah, the Maqāmāt of Al-Harīrī, Harīrī Schefer, 1237 A.D., second Maqāmah, fol.5v. (After Ukasha 1992, p.39).



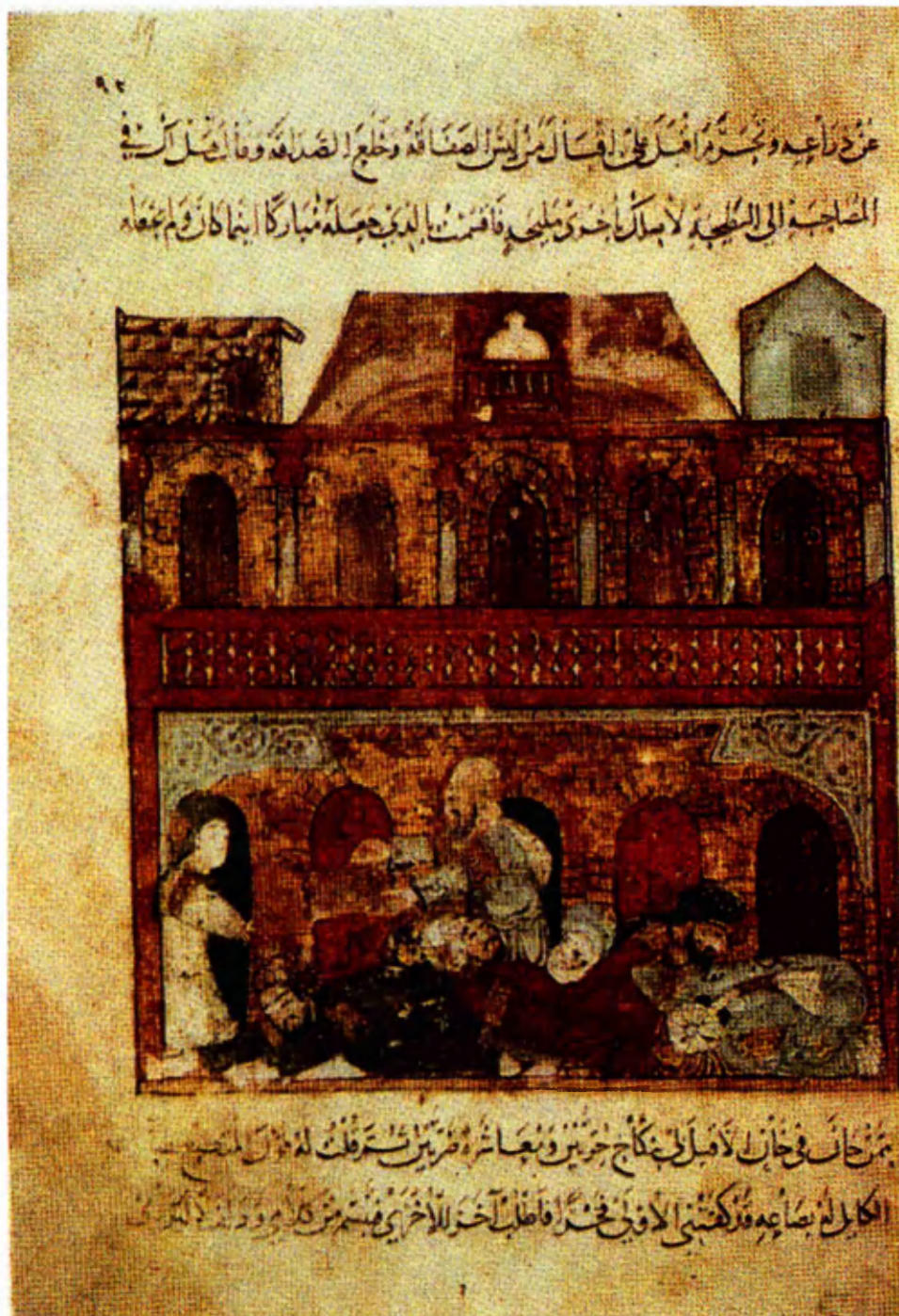


Fig.169 Representation of a Khan, the Maqāmāt of Al-Harīrī, Harīrī Schefer, 1237 A.D., twenty-ninth Maqāmah, fol.89. (After Ukasha 1992, p.105).





Fig.170 Representation of a Shop, the Maqāmāt of Al-Harīrī, Harīrī Schefer, 1237 A.D., forty-seventh Maqāmah, fol.156. (After Ukasha 1992, p.147).









Fig.172 Representation of a Market, the Maqāmāt of Al-Harīrī, Harīrī Schefer, 1237 A.D., thirty-third Maqāmah, fol.105. (After Ukasha 1992, p.116).





Fig.173 Representation of a village, the Maqāmāt of Al-Harīrī, Harīrī Schefer, 1237 A.D., forty-third Maqāmah, fol.138. (After Ukasha 1992, p.135).





Fig.174 Representation of the Mosque of Samarqand, the Maqāmāt of Al-Harīrī, Harīrī Schefer, 1237 A.D., twenty-eighth Maqāmah, fol.48. (After Ukasha 1992, p.104).





Fig.175 Representation of a house, the Maqāmāt of Al-Harīrī, Harīrī Schefer, 1237 A.D., fifth Maqāmah, fol.13v (After Ukasha 1992, p.47).



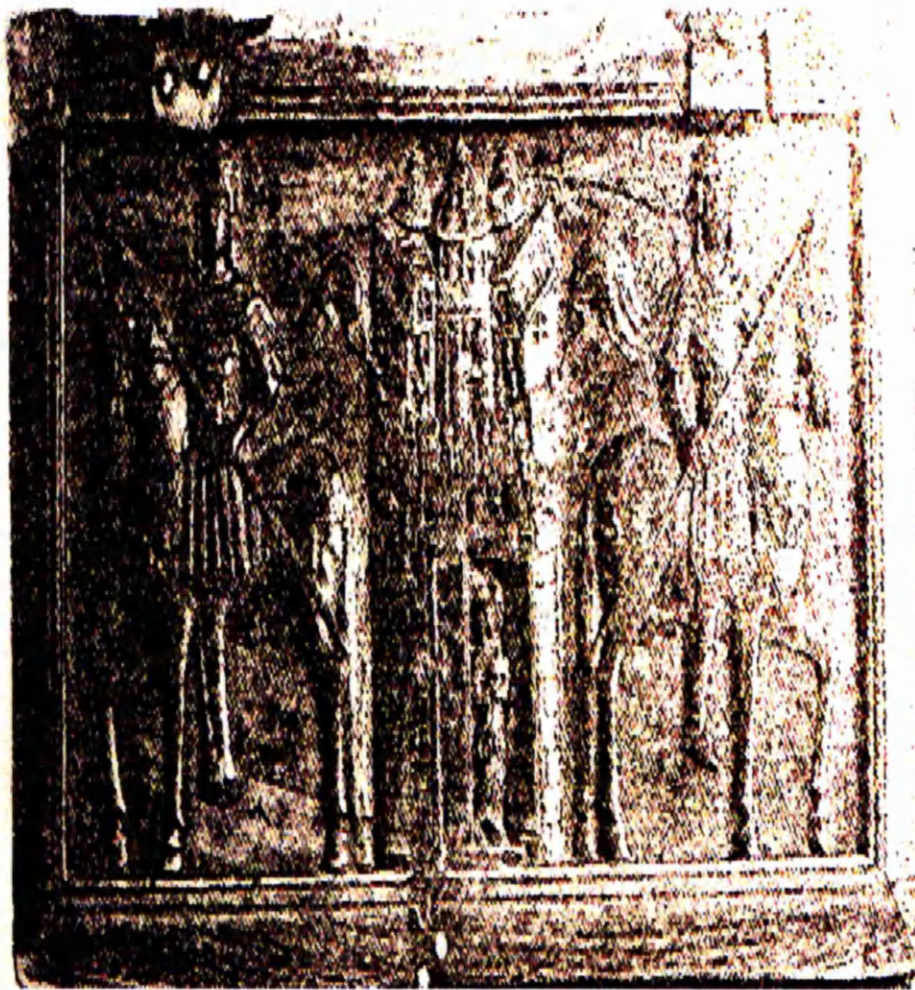


Fig.176 Ivory casket from Troyes, representation of a fortress with a human figure at the door. (After Diehl 1910, fig.306, p.615).





Fig.177 Representation of the Mosque of Barqa'īd, the Maqāmāt of Al-Ḥarīrī, Ḥarīrī Schefer, 1237 A.D., seventh Maqāmah, fol.18v. (After Ukasha 1992, p.53).





Fig.178 Representation of the Mosque of Al-Rayy, the Maqāmāt of Al-Harīrī, Harīrī Schefer, 1237 A.D., twenty-first Maqāmah, fol.58. (After Ukasha 1992, p.89).





Fig.179 Exterior Representation of a Mosque in Morocco, the Maqāmāt of Al-Harīrī, Harīrī Schefer, 1237 A.D., sixteenth Maqāmah, fol. 42. (After Ukasha 1992, p.76).





Fig.180 Representation of a Mosque in "Maḥallat Banū Ḥaram", the Maqāmāt of Al-Ḥarīrī, Ḥarīrī Schefer, 1237 A.D., forty-eighth Maqāmah, fol.158. (After Ukasha 1992, p.148).





Fig.181 Representation of a house, the Maqāmāt of Al-Harīrī, Harīrī Schefer, 1237 A.D., fiftieth Maqāmah, fol.166. (After Ukasha 1992, p.152).





Fig.182 Representation of Dīwān of Mukātabāt in Al-Marāghah, the Maqāmāt of Al-Harīrī, Harīrī Schefer, 1237 A.D., sixth Maqāmah, fol.16. (After Ukasha 1992, p.49).



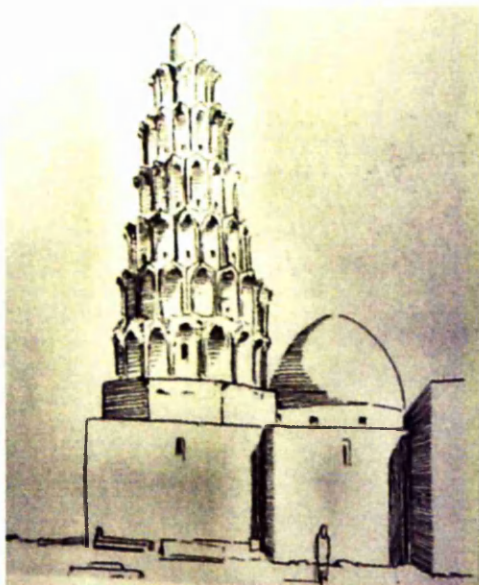


Fig.183 Representation of a house, Maqāmāt of Al-Harīrī, Harīrī Schefer, 1237 A.D. fifth Maqāmah, fol.12v. (After Ukasha 1992, p.46).





Fig.184 Representation of a house, the Maqāmāt of Al-Harīrī Manuscript, Iraq, 1230 A.D. Abū Zayd visits a house in Kūfah, earliest detailed description of the interior of the Islamic house, fifteenth Maqāmah, fol.47. (After Petherbridge 1978, fig.28, p.185).



a.



b.



c.



d.

Fig.185 Mausoleums in Iraq. a.Zubayr, Old Baṣrah, tomb of Ḥaṣan Al-Baṣrī, b.Susa, tomb of Daniel, c.Baghdad, tomb of Sitt Zubaydah, d.Island of Kharg, tomb of Imāmzāde Mir Muḥammad. (After Herzfield 1942, figs.68,69,63&64).



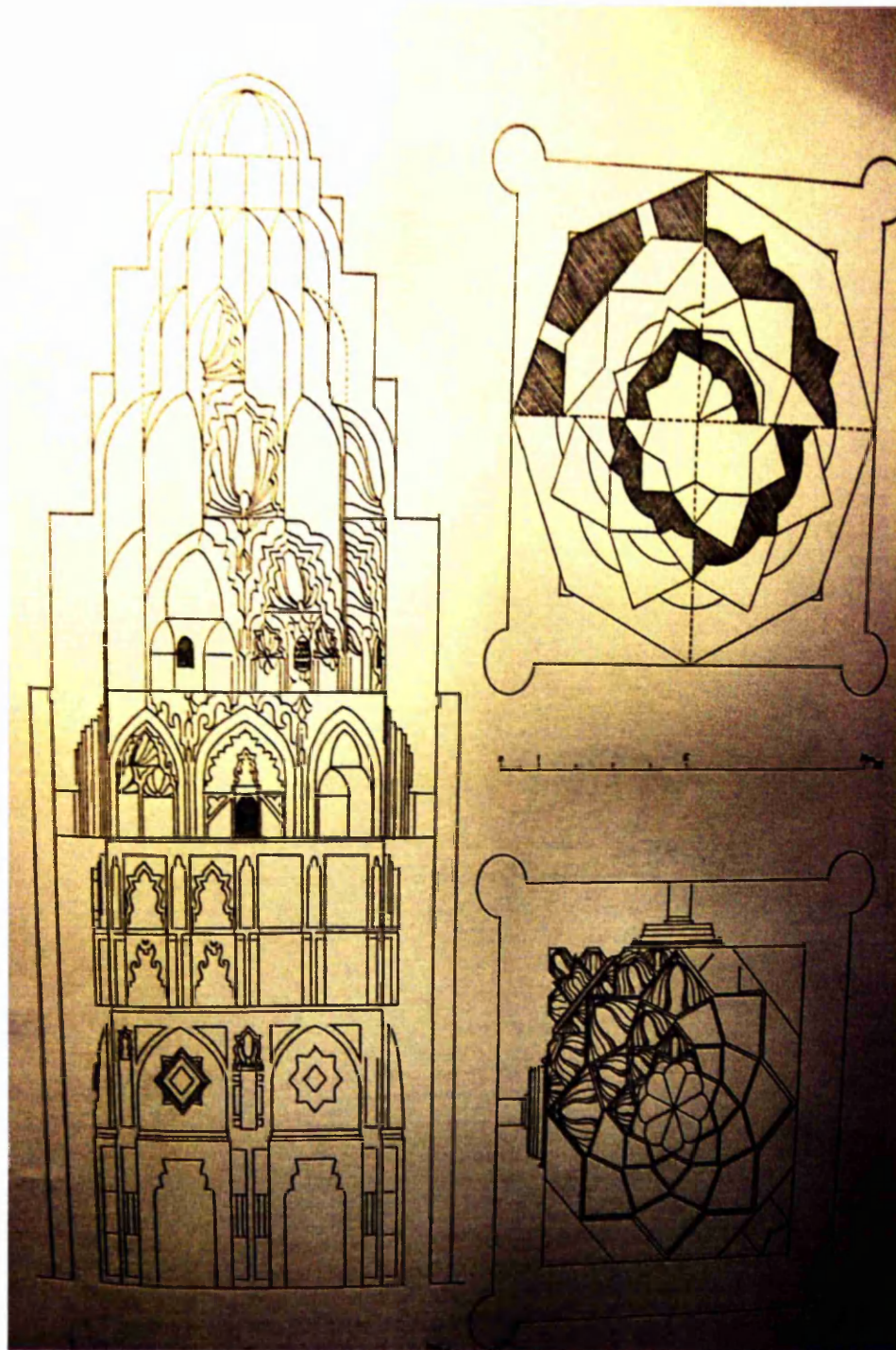


Fig.186 Imām Dur, tomb of Muslim Ibn Kuraysh, Sāmarrā'.  
(After Herzfield 1942, figs.14, 15).



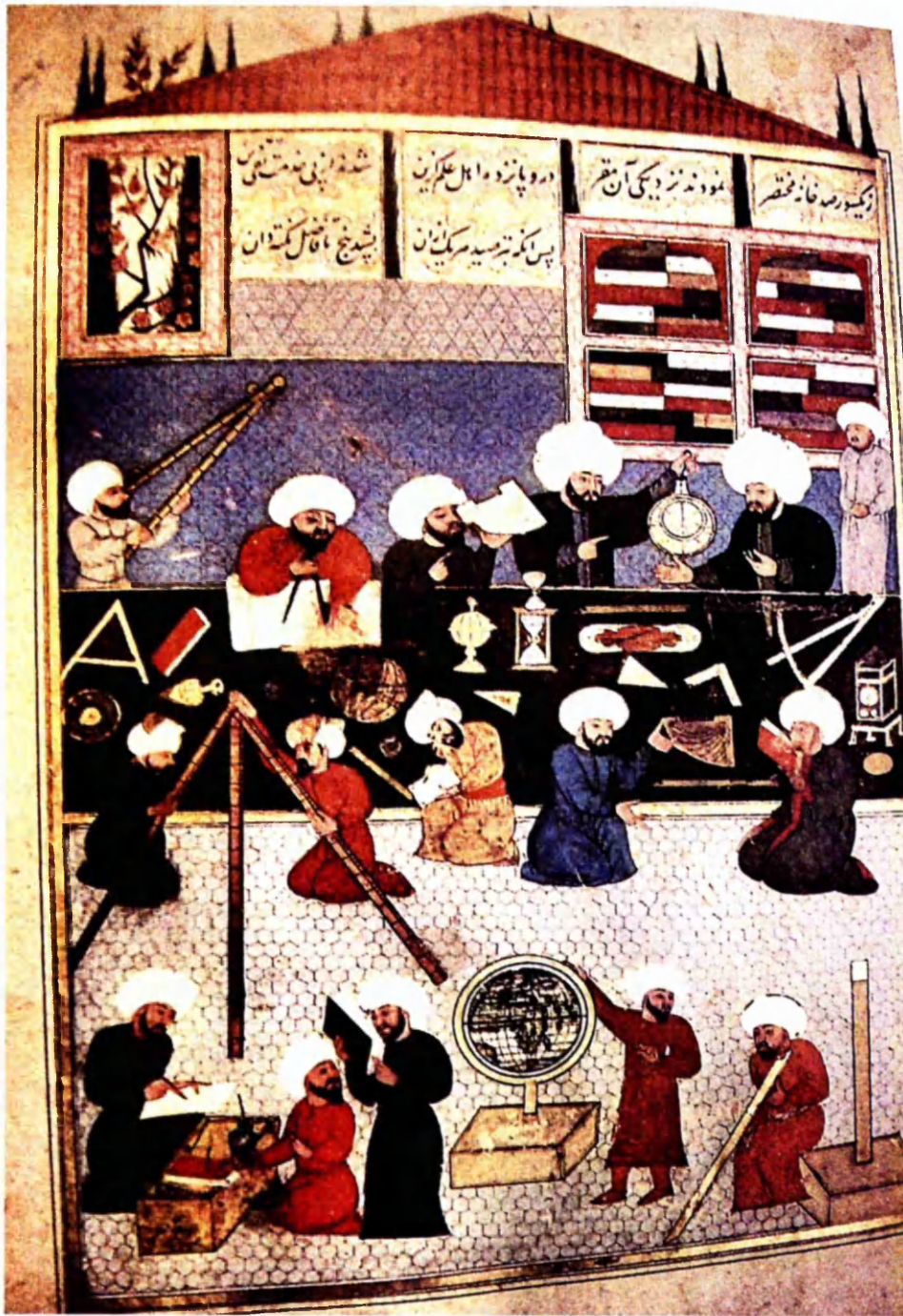


Fig.187 Representation of a library, Taqī Al-Dīn and other astronomers working in Istanbul, manuscript of the Book of the King of Kings [Shāhanshāhi-nāmah], tenth A.H./sixteenth century A.D. University Library in Istanbul Ms no. FY1404. (After Nasr 1976, pl.65, p.113).



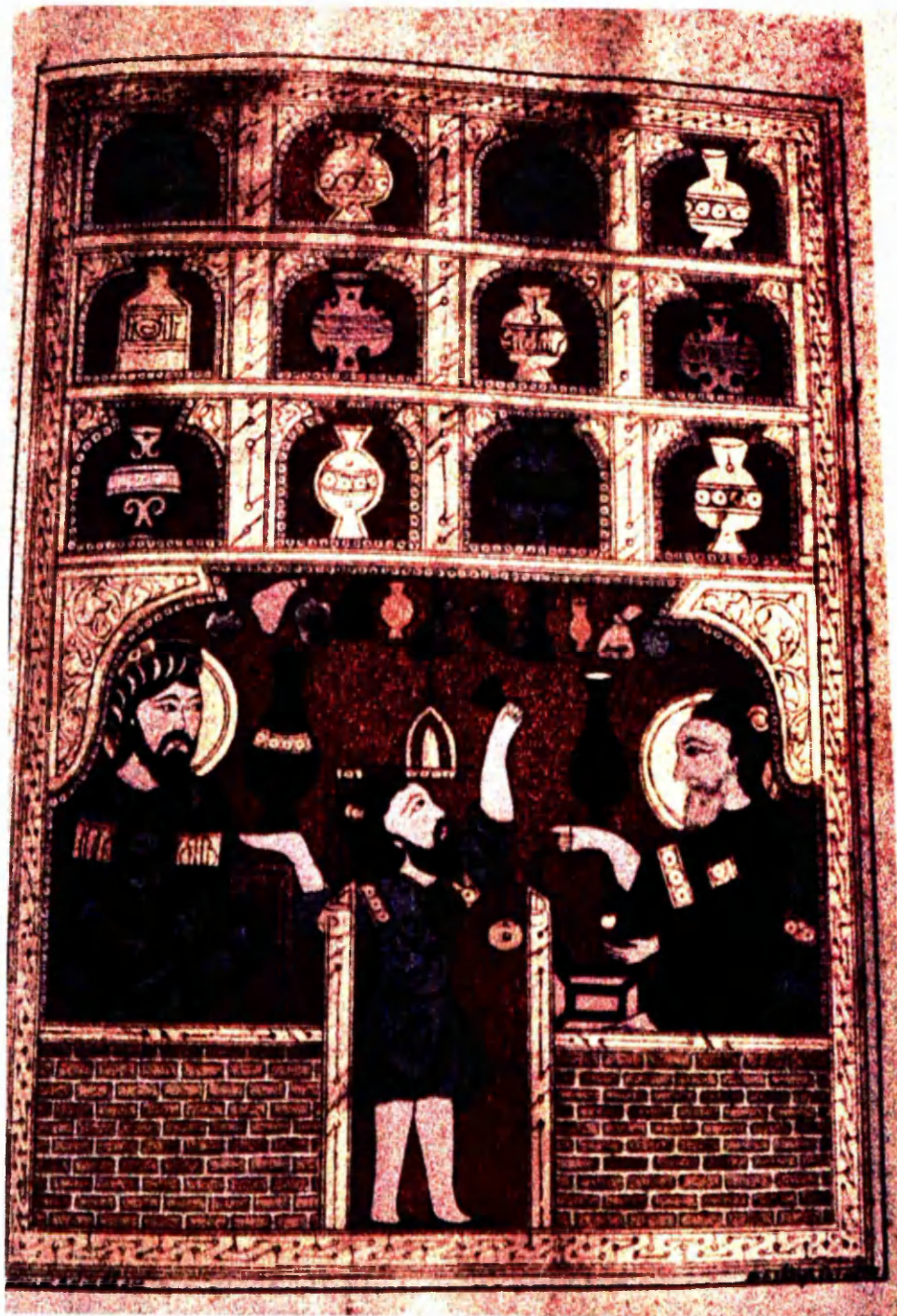


Fig.188 Illustration of a shelving setting, manuscript of De Materia Medica, Baghdad, 1224 A.D. Istanbul, Suleymaniye Library, Aya Sofya Muzesi MS. 3703, fol.2r. (After Brandenburg 1982, p.16).

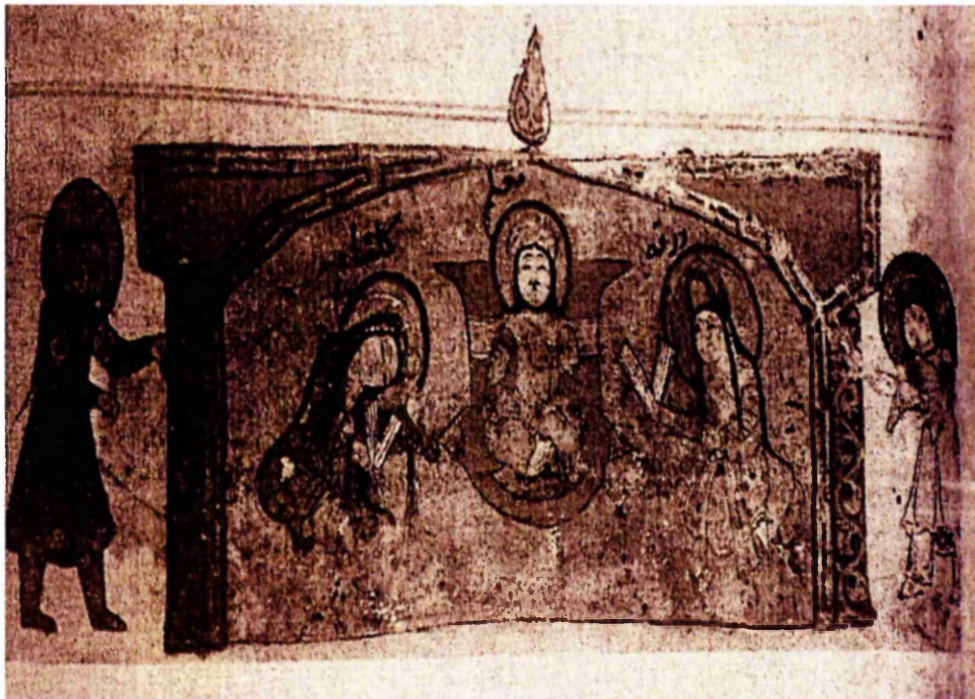


Fig.189 Representation of a Madrasa, manuscript of Varqa and Gulshah, end of the twelfth century-beginning of the thirteenth century, Topkapi Saray Museum H841, p.4v. (After Baer 2001, fig.1, p.90).





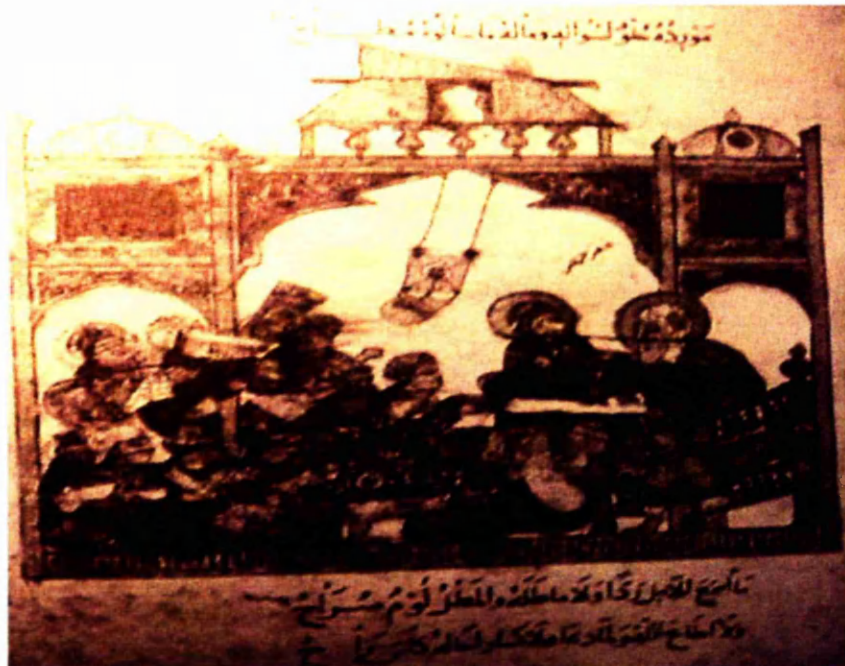
a.



b.

Fig.190 Meeting at a school of children, lustre-decorated opaque white-glazed plate, (Rayy Monumental Style), Persia, last quarter of the twelfth century. a. the plate, b. details of a. David Collection in Copenhagen no.50/1966. (After Hayward 1976, cat.no.344).





a.



b.

Fig.191 Representation of a Madrasa, Maqāmāt of Al-Harīrī manuscript, a. Leningrad version, Abū Zayd in a school in Aleppo (Ḥalab). (After Baer 2001, fig.4, p.30). b. Istanbul version, fol.192. (After Grabar 1963, fig.38).



Fig.192 Laīlā and Majnūn at school, Nizāmī Khamsah manuscript, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. (After Chelkowski 1975, pl.50).





Fig.193 Illustration of Lailā and Majnūn at school, Nizāmī Khamsah manuscript, Shiraz, 848A.H./1445 A.D., John Rylands Library, Manchester, Pers. Ms. 36, fol.107r. (After Baer 2001, fig.5, p.94).

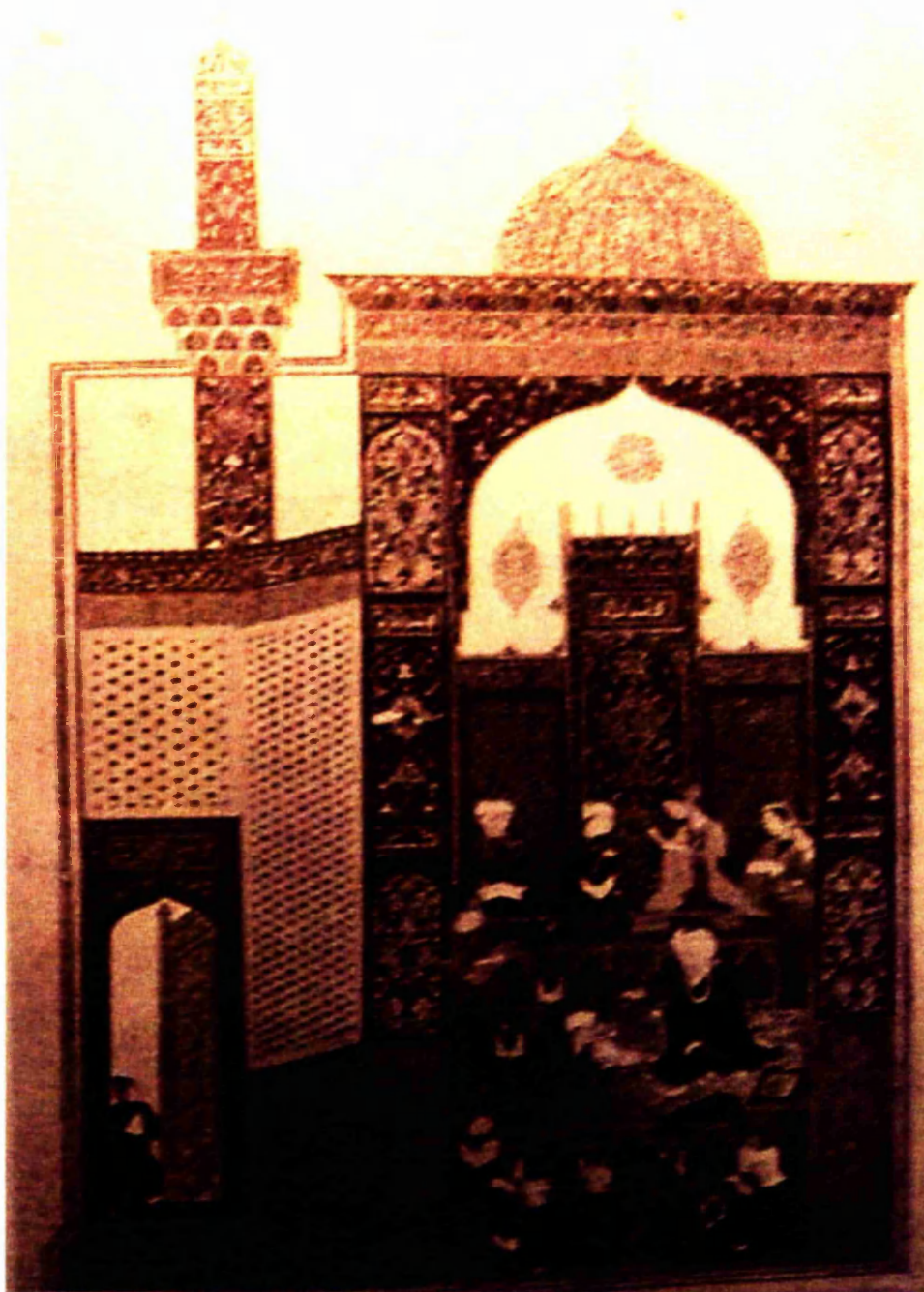


Fig.194 Representation of a Kuttāb, Lailā and Majnūn at school,  
 Nizāmī Khamsah manuscript, Baghdad, 866  
 A.H./1461 A.D. Topkapi Saray Library in Istanbul H761,  
 fol.106r. (After Baer 2001, fig.6, p.95).





Fig.195 Strainer on a tripod, physician preparing medicine, a pharmacy, De Materia Media of Dioscorides, Abbasid school, 1222 A.D. (After Brandenburg 1982, p.16).





a.

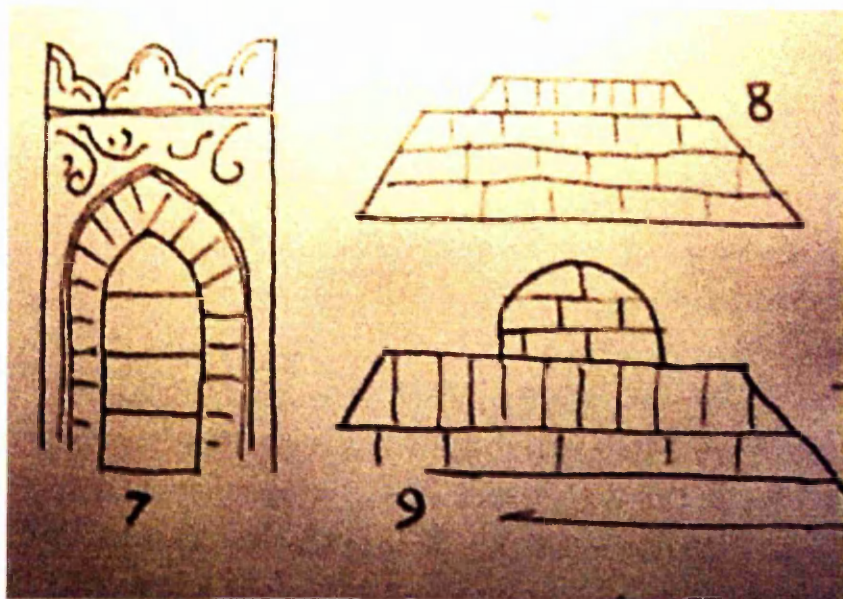


b.

Fig.196 Illustrations of tombs, the Maqāmāt of Al-Harīrī manuscript, Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, no.3929, fols.26r, 26v. a. Al-Ḥārith among the tombs b. Abū Zayd addressing the mourners. (After Rice 1959, pl.IV, IVb).



a.



b.

Fig.197 Illustration of tombs, the Maqamat of Al-Harīrī, Harīrī-Schefer, 1237 A.D. a. A cemetery, the eleventh Maqāmah, fol.29v. (After Ukasha 1992, p.61). b. South Mesopotamian shape of tombs. A reconstruction of the type of tombs shown in fig.197a. (After Rice 1959, p.219).





Fig.198 Illustration of tombs, the Maqāmāt of Al-Harīrī, 619 A.H./1222 A.D, Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, no. 6094, fol.33v. (After Rice 1959, pl.VI).





Fig.199 Illustration of tombs, the Maqāmāt of Al-Harīrī, 737A.H/1337A.D, Oxford Marsh 458, fol.23r. (After Rice 1959, pl.VIIa).



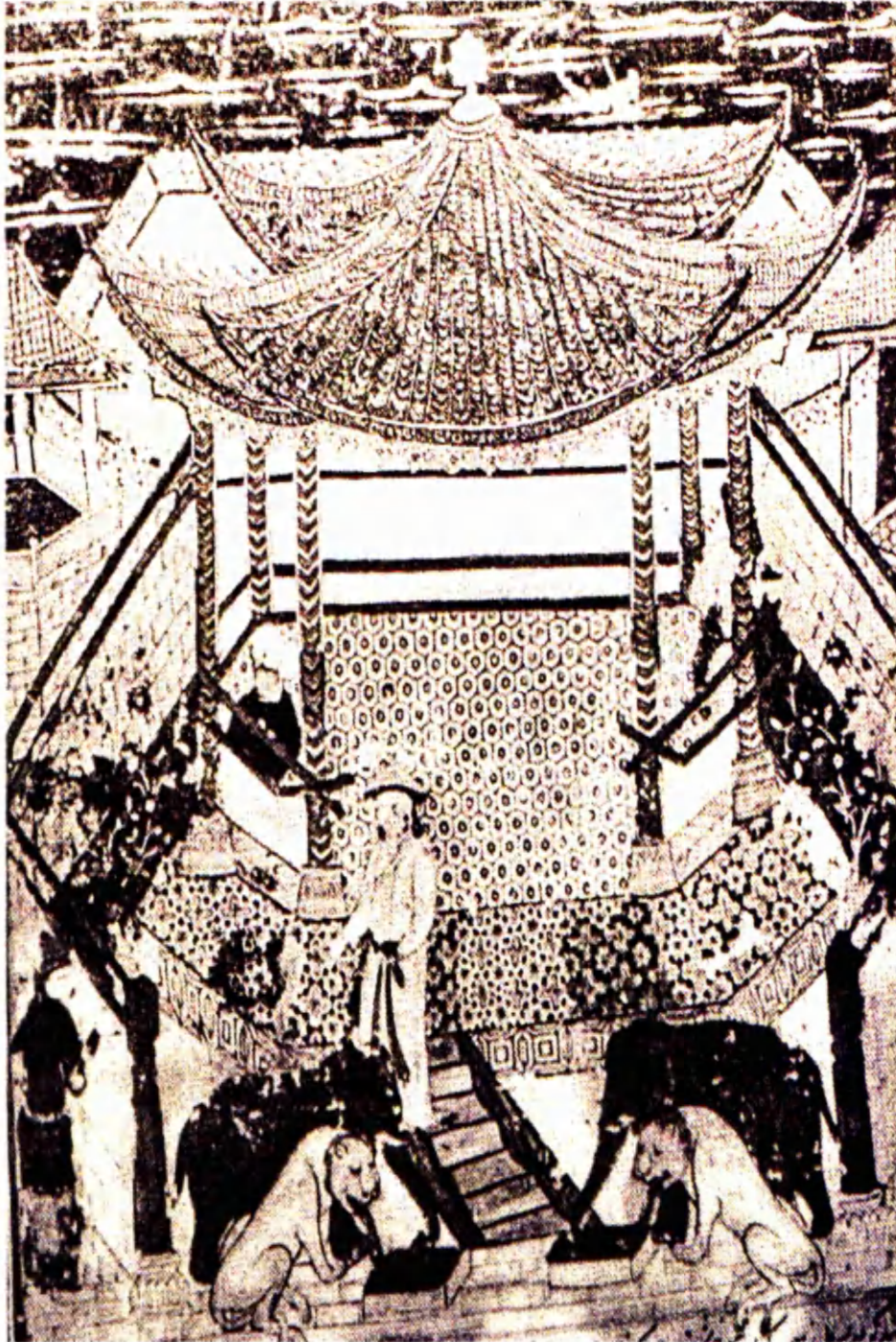


Fig.200 *Frāshī* pavilion, Qarāqurum, *Jāmi' Al-Tawārīkh* manuscript, fifteenth century, 1430 A.D., Asiatic Society of Bengal, fol.21v. (After Gray 1954, fig.14).



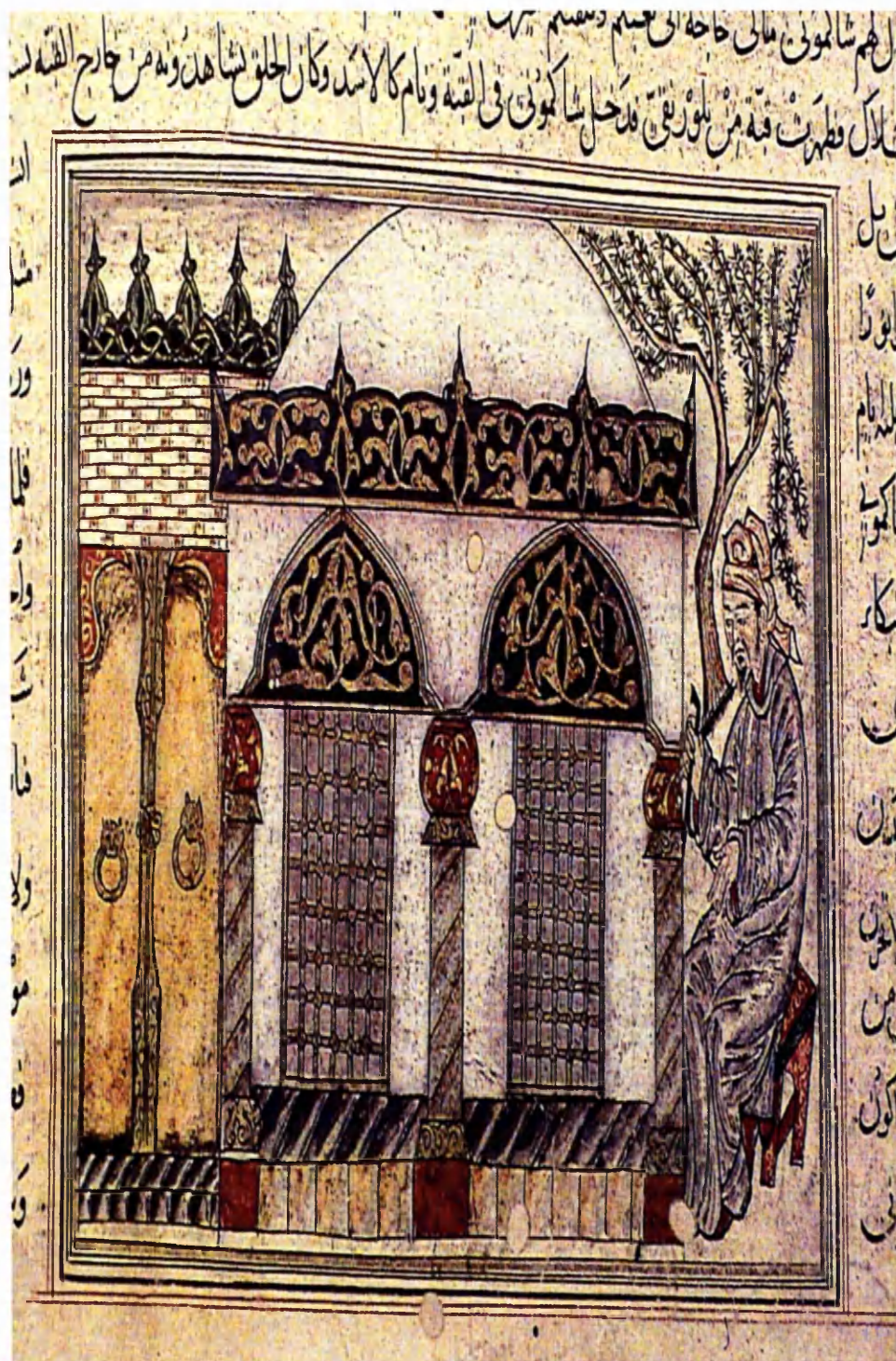


Fig.201 Buddha domed building, Jāmi' Al-Tawārīkh manuscript, 1314-1315 A.D., Khalili Collection, fol.37v. (After Blair 1995, p.K27).





Fig.202 Bayāḍ in a house, Story of Bayāḍ wa Rayāḍ manuscript. (Ḥadīth Bayāḍ wa Rayāḍ), thirteenth century A.D., Morocco or Spain. (After Nykl 1941, p.35).





Fig.203 Bayād lying unconscious at the river, Story of Bayād and Rayāḍ. (Ḥadīth Bayād wa Rayāḍ.), thirteenth century A.D., Morocco or Spain, folio19 r. (After Ettinghausen 1962, p.127).



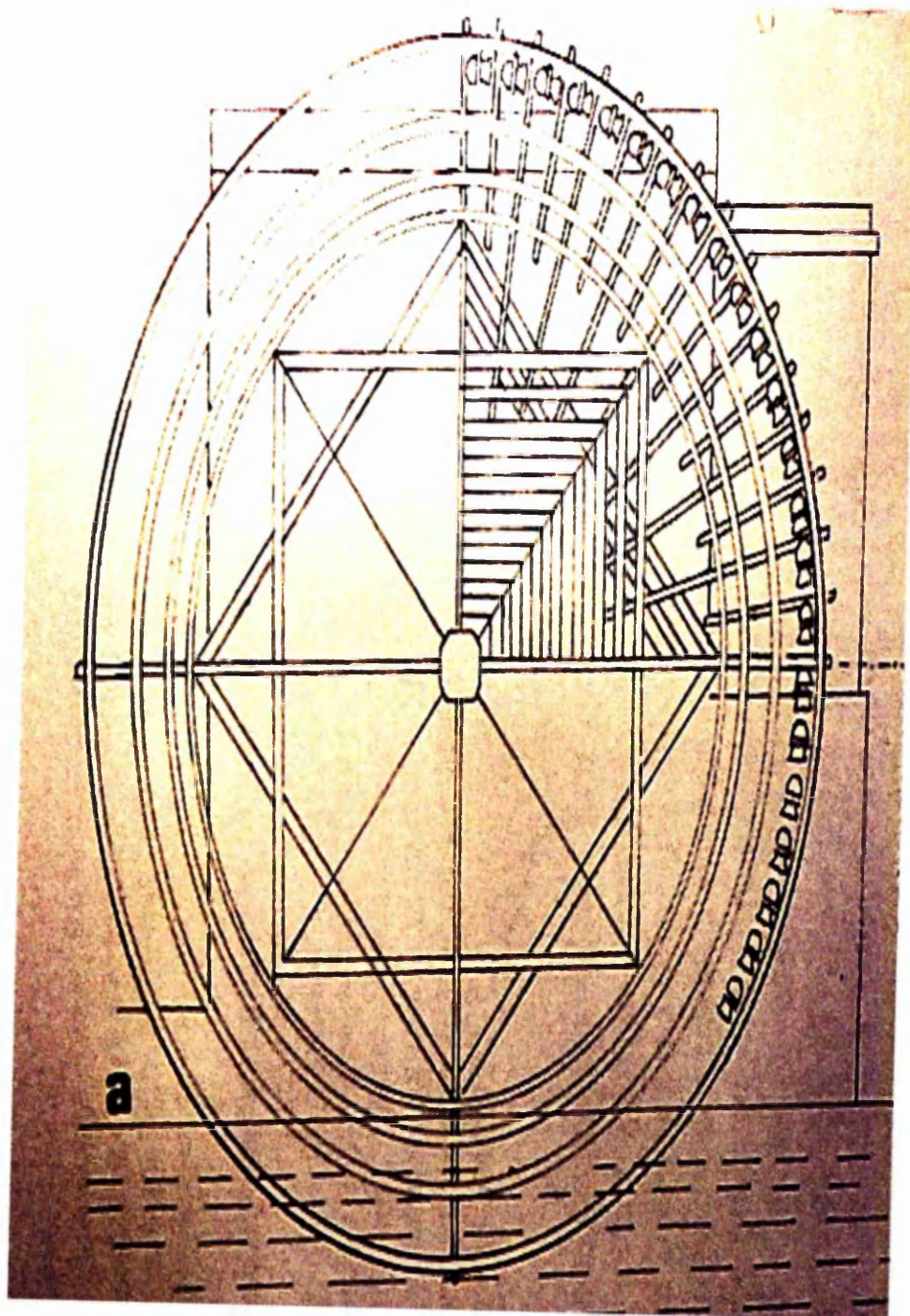


Fig.204 Waterwheel (*Sāqiya*) of the Albolafia, Cordova. (After Maldonado 1990, I, fig.313a).



Fig.205 Tower of the *portal*, Alhambra, Spain. (After Arie 1973, pl.VIIIb).





Fig.206 Roof of the Mosque of Cordova. (After Burckhardt 1976, fig.2).



Fig.207 Tower of the Peinador, Alhambra, Spain. (After Irving 1992, p.192-193).



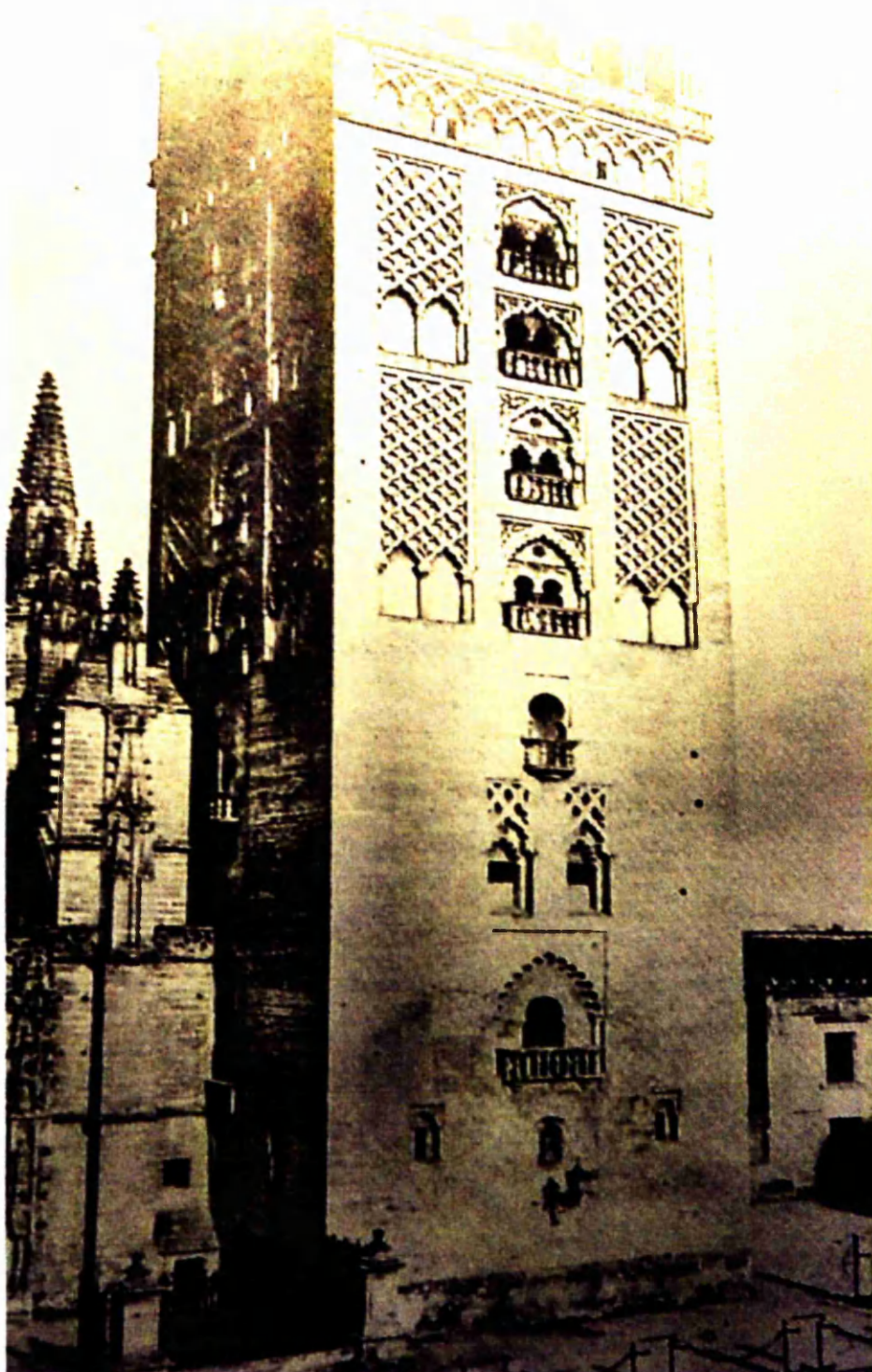


Fig.208 Façade of the Giralda, Costado Levante, Seville, Spain.  
(After Vilá 1983, II/III, pl.b).

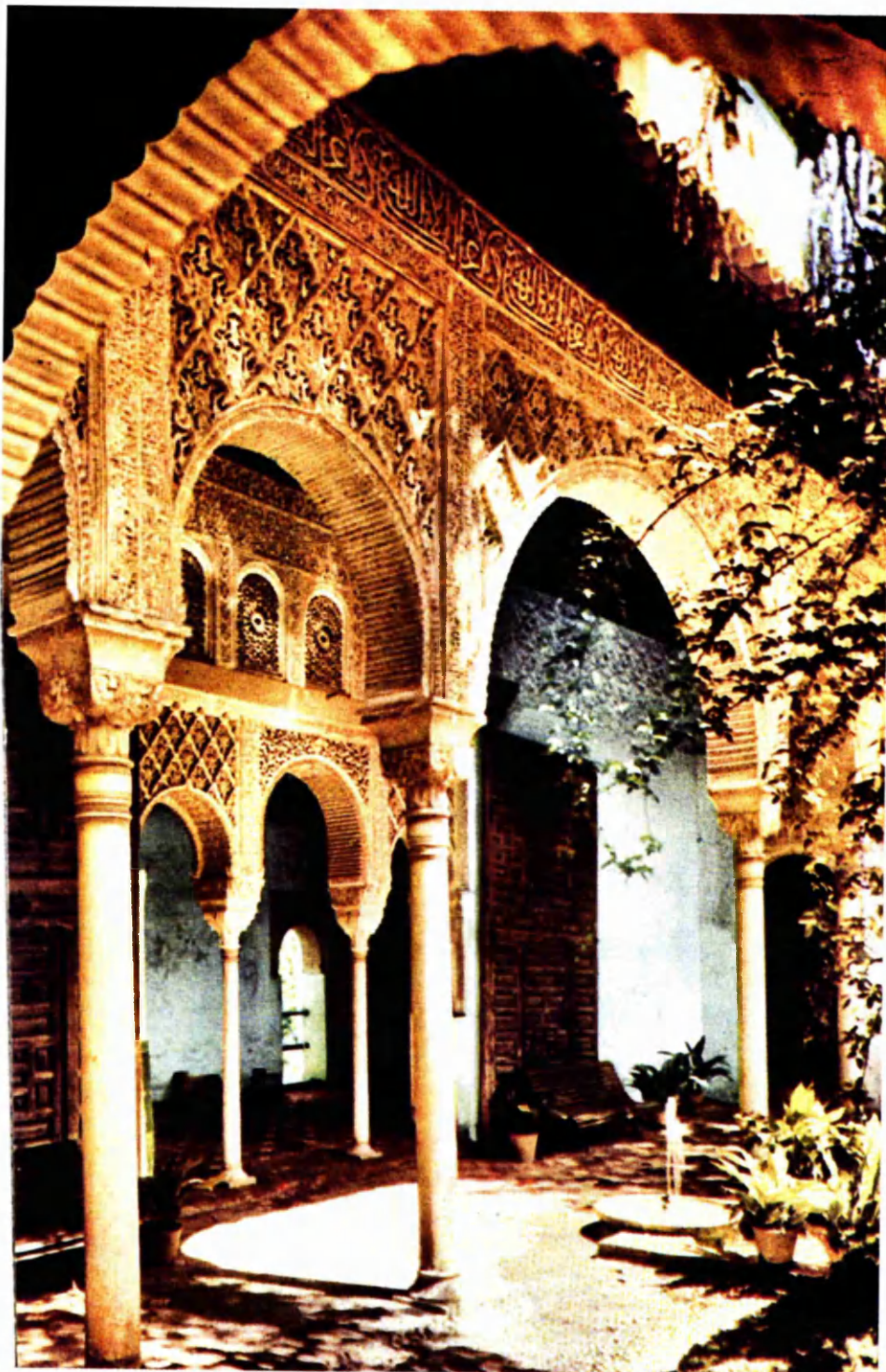


Fig.209 Façade of the North porch of the Acequia's patio, Alhambra, Spain. (After Irving 1992, p.128-129).





Fig.210 Bayāḍ singing and playing the 'ūd before the lady and her handmaidens, Story of Bayāḍ wa Riyāḍ (Ḥadīth Bayāḍ wa Riyāḍ), thirteenth century, Morocco or Spain, folio10r. (After Ettinghausen 1962, p.129).





Fig.211 Shamūl delivers a letter from Riyāḍ, Story of Bayāḍ wa Riyāḍ (Ḥadīth Bayāḍ wa Riyāḍ), thirteenth century, Morocco or Spain, fol.17r. (After Ettinghausen 1962, p.126).



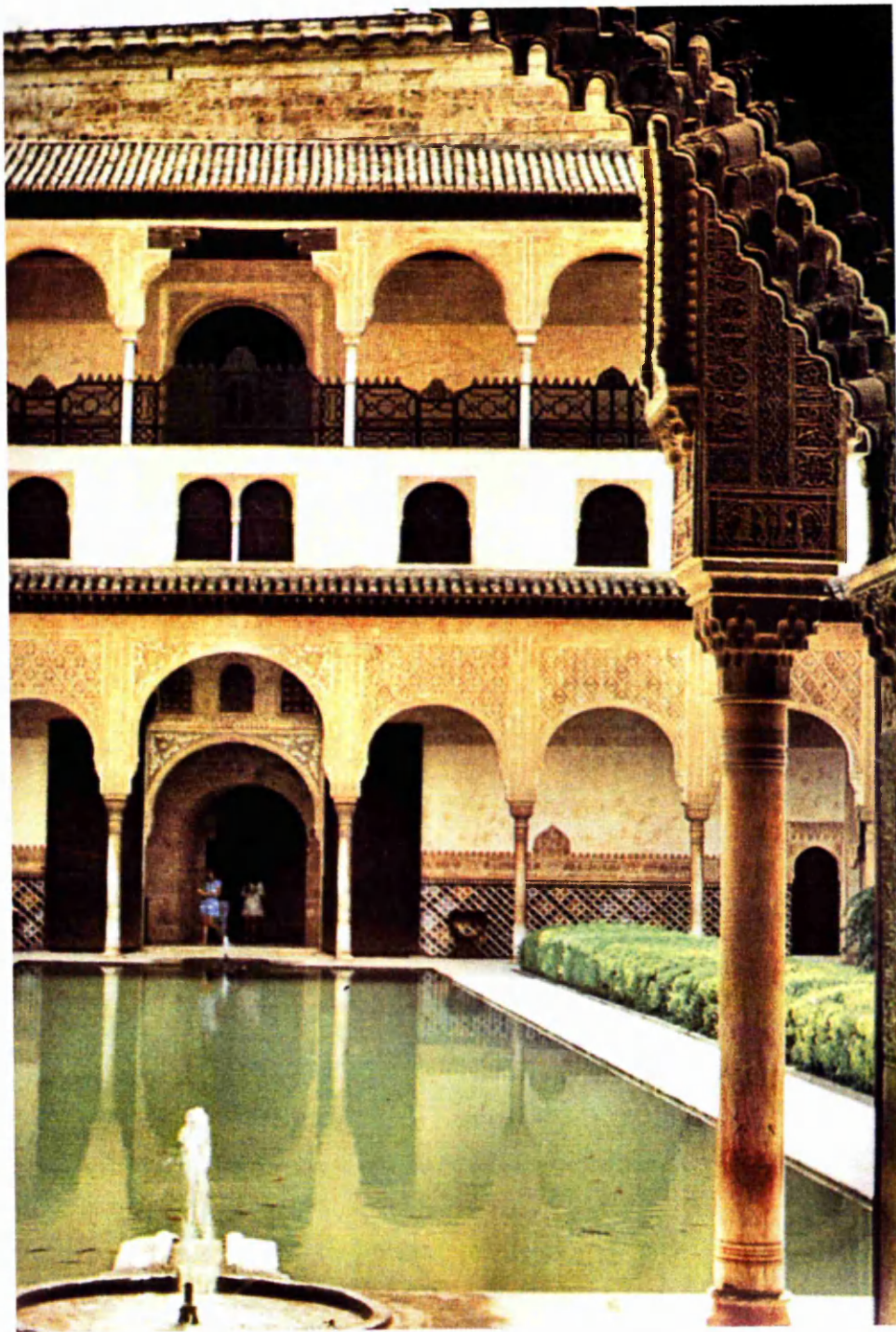


Fig.212 Patio of the Arrayanes, Alhambra, Spain. (After Irving 1992, p.192-193).





Fig.213 Partial view of the Albayzin, Spain. (After Irving 1992, p.128-129).



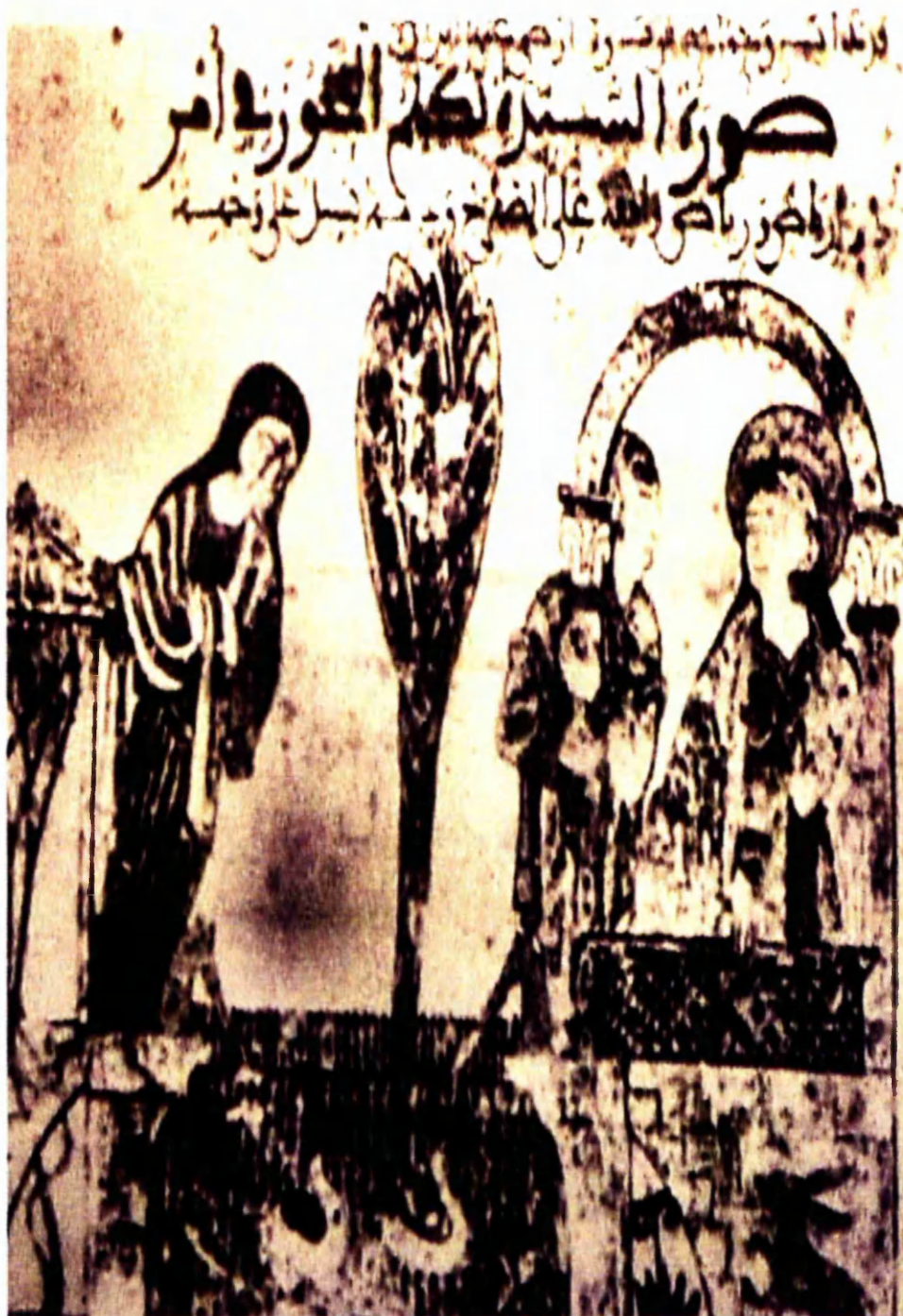


Fig.214 Bayāḍ wa Riyāḍ in a garden setting with animals, Story of Bayāḍ wa Riyāḍ (Ḥadīth Bayāḍ wa Riyāḍ), thirteenth century Morocco or Spain, fol.14r. (After Maldonado 1990, I, fig.273c).

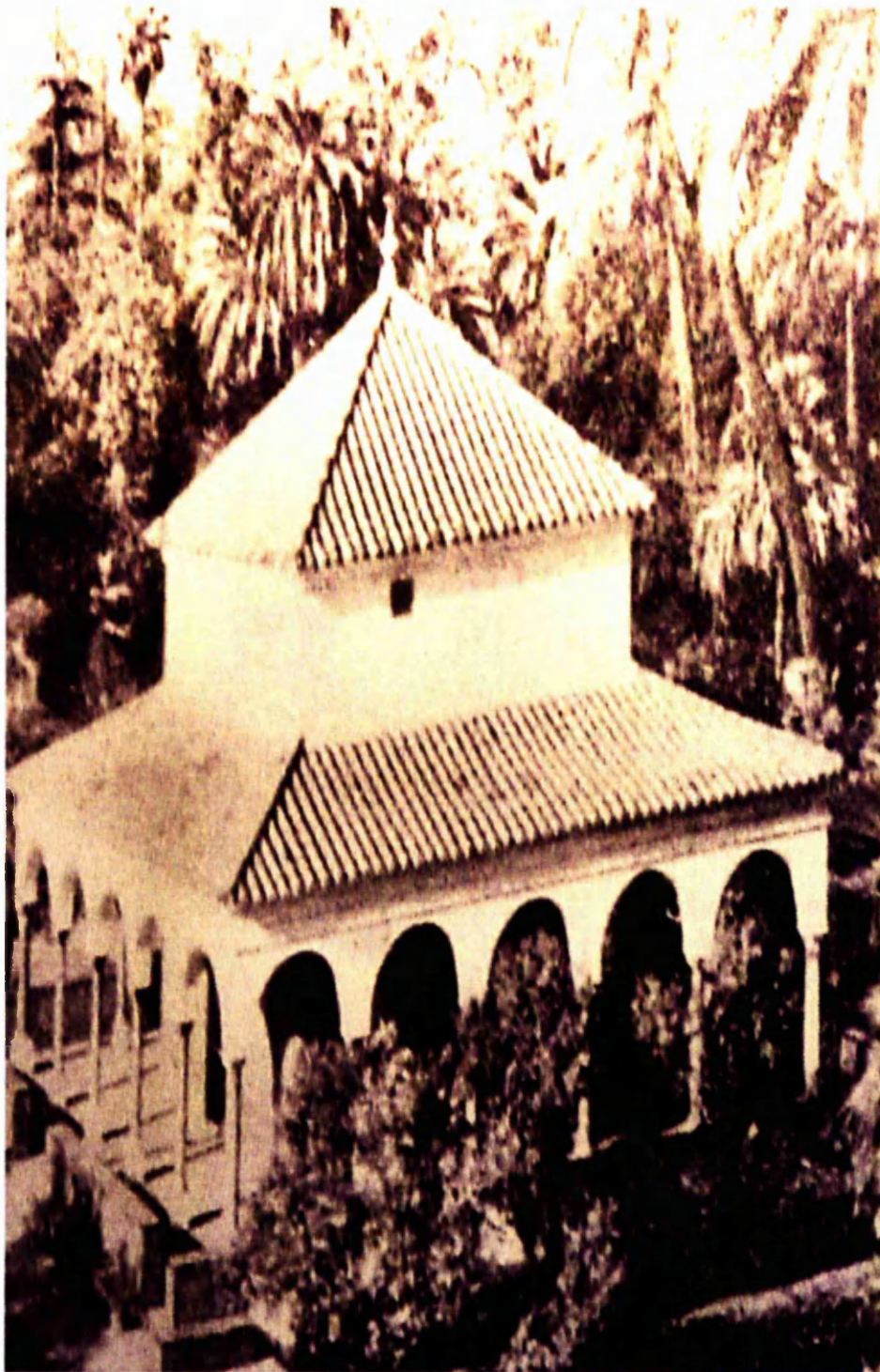


Fig.215 Spain, garden of Alcoba of Alcazar in Seville. (After Maldonado 1990, I, fig.273).



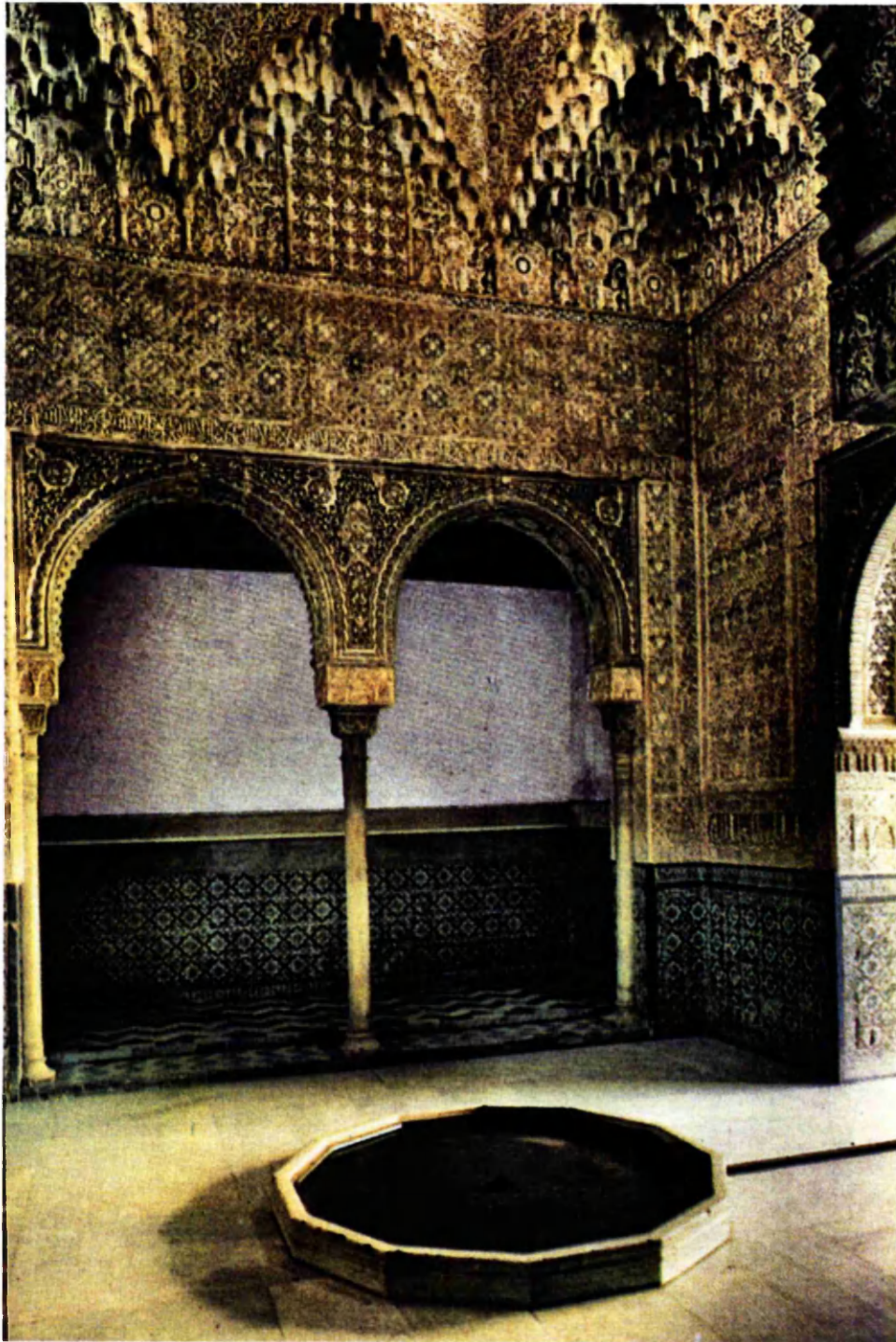


Fig.216 Hall of Abencerrages, Patio of the Lions, Alhambra, Spain. (After Irving 1992, p.128-129).



Fig.217 Entrance to the *Mihrāb*, Mosque of Cordova, Spain.  
(After Calvert 1906, p.10).





Fig.218 Chapel of the *Mihrāb*, Cordova Mosque, Spain. (After Calvert 1906, p.147).

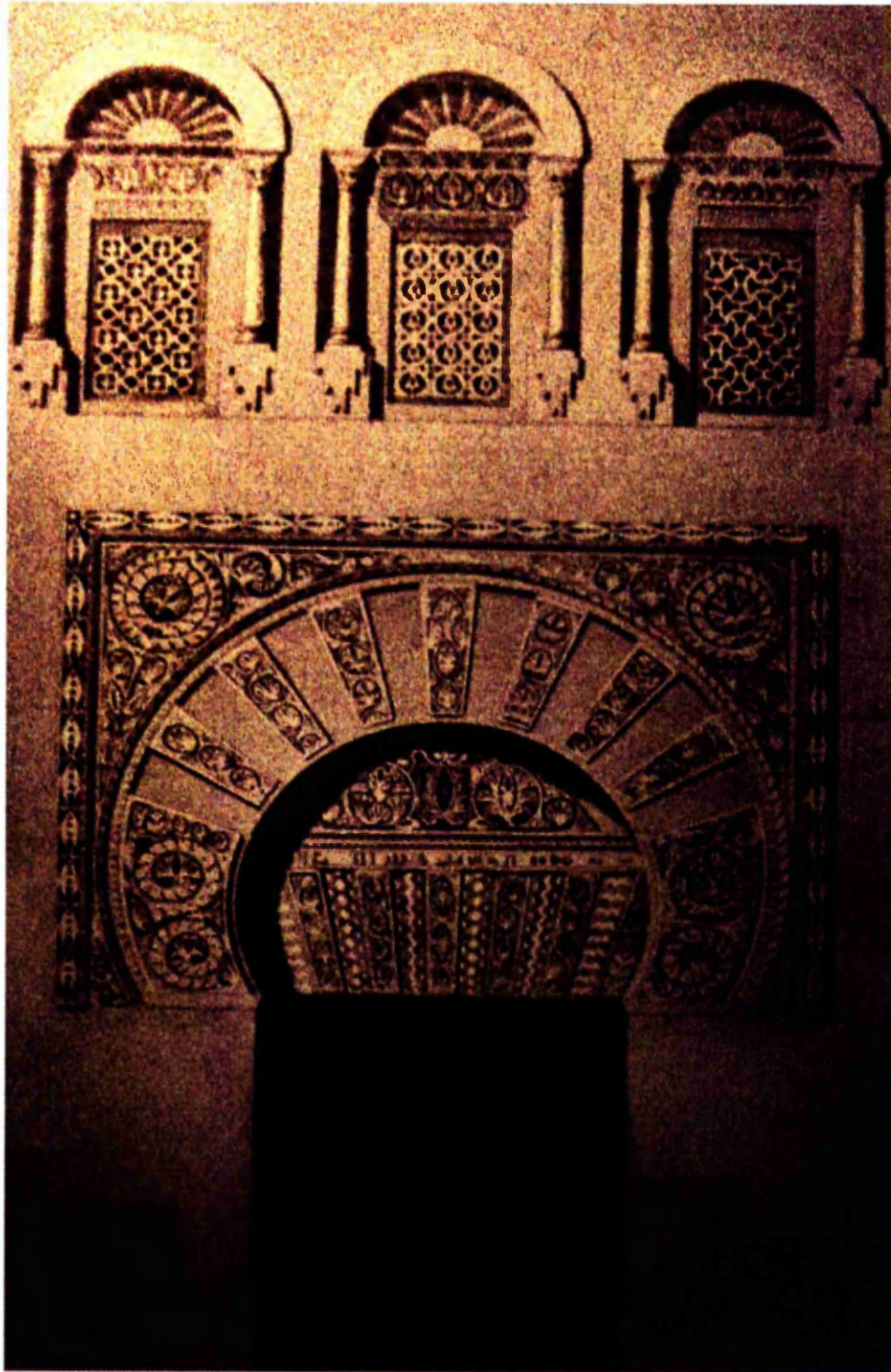


Fig.219 Gate in one of the lateral sides of Cordova Mosque, Spain. (After Calvert 1906, p.99).





Fig.220 Dormitory of the King, Alcazar, Seville. (After Calvert 1906, p.333).



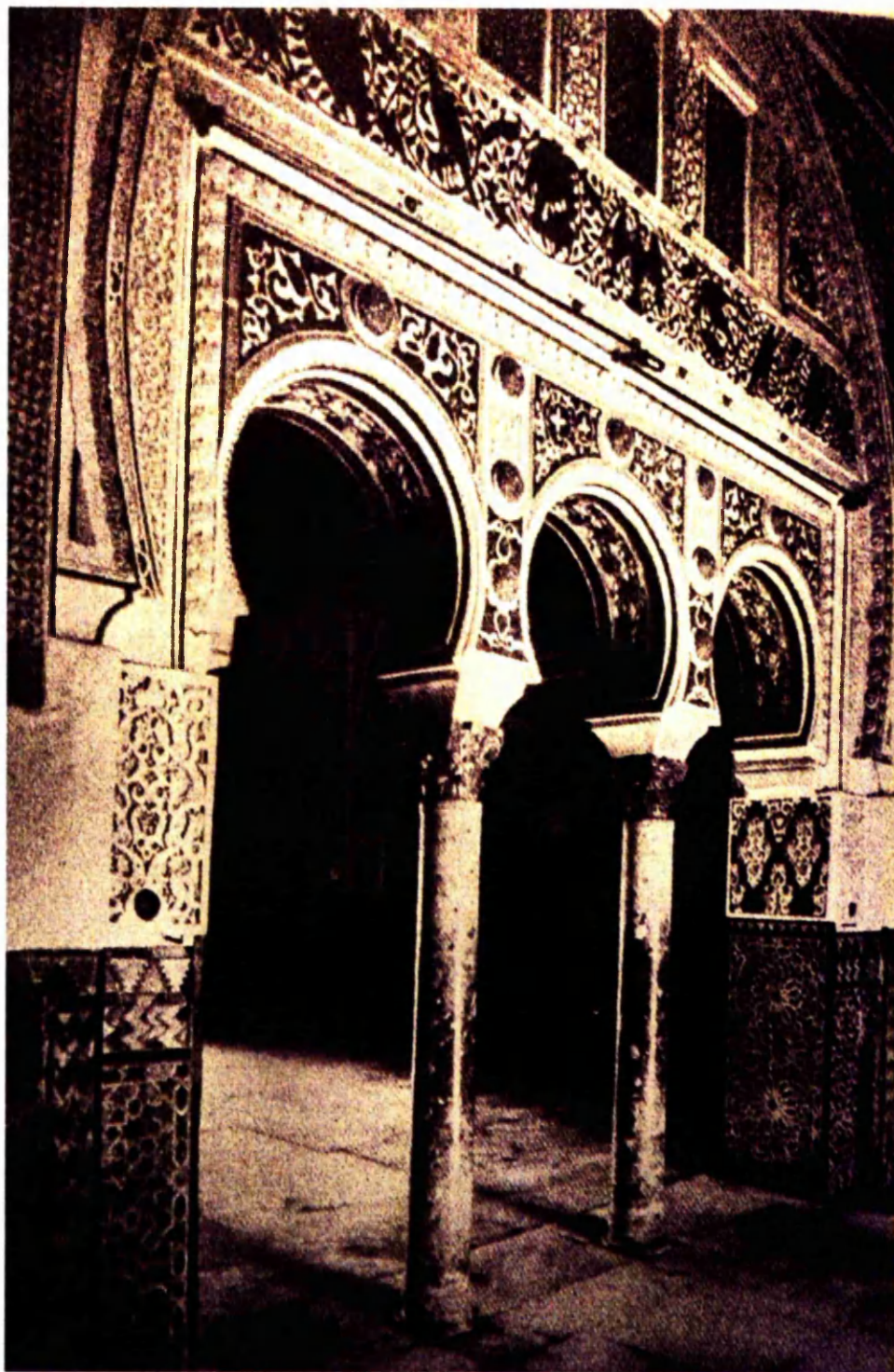


Fig.221 Area of the columns where Fadrique was murdered, Alcazar. (After Calvert 1906, p.345).

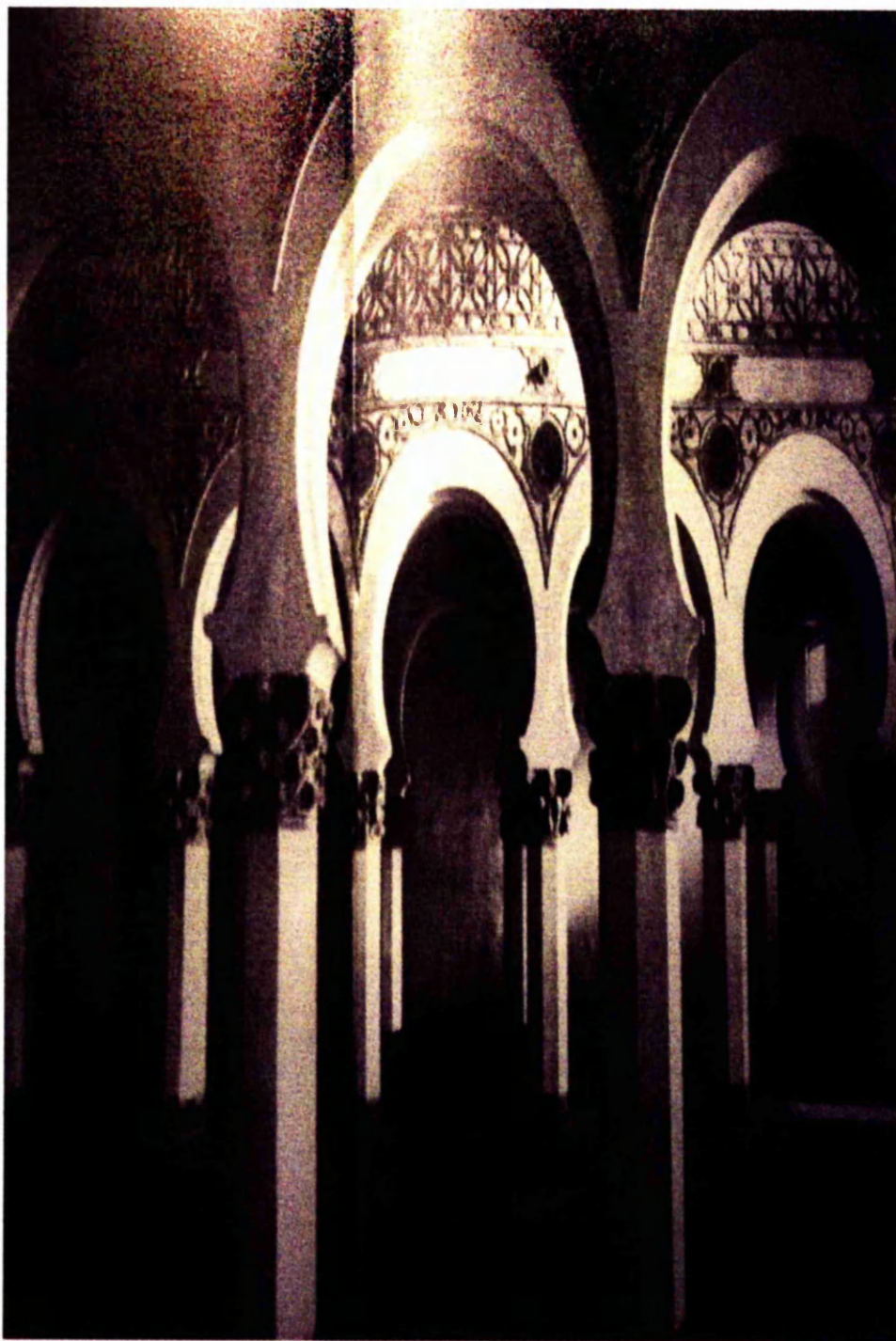


Fig.222 Santa Maria La Blanca, Toledo, Spain, 1200 A.D.  
(After Burckhardt 1976, fig.10).



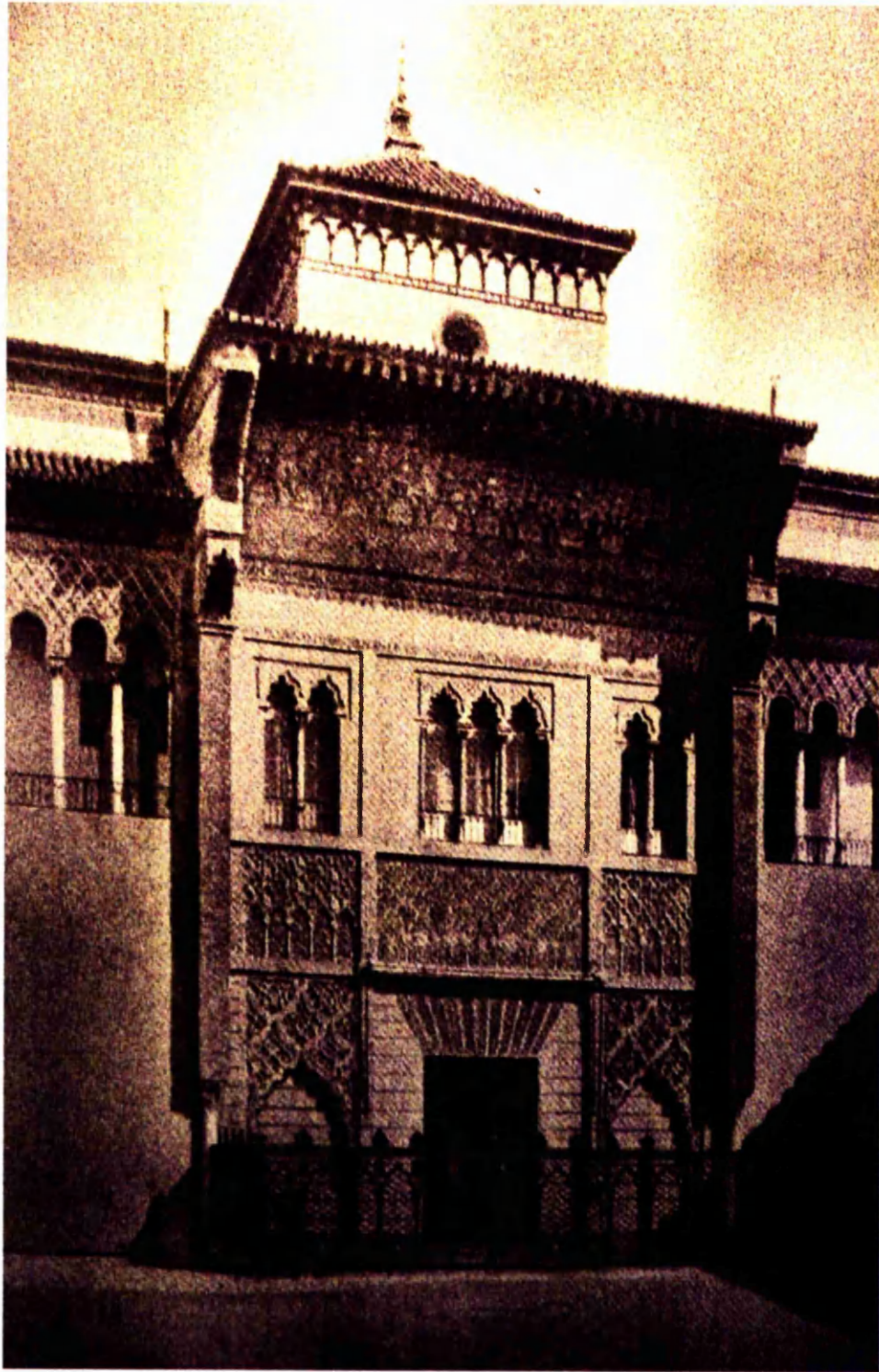


Fig.223 Walls of the façade of Alcazar, Seville. (After Calvert 1906, p.249).



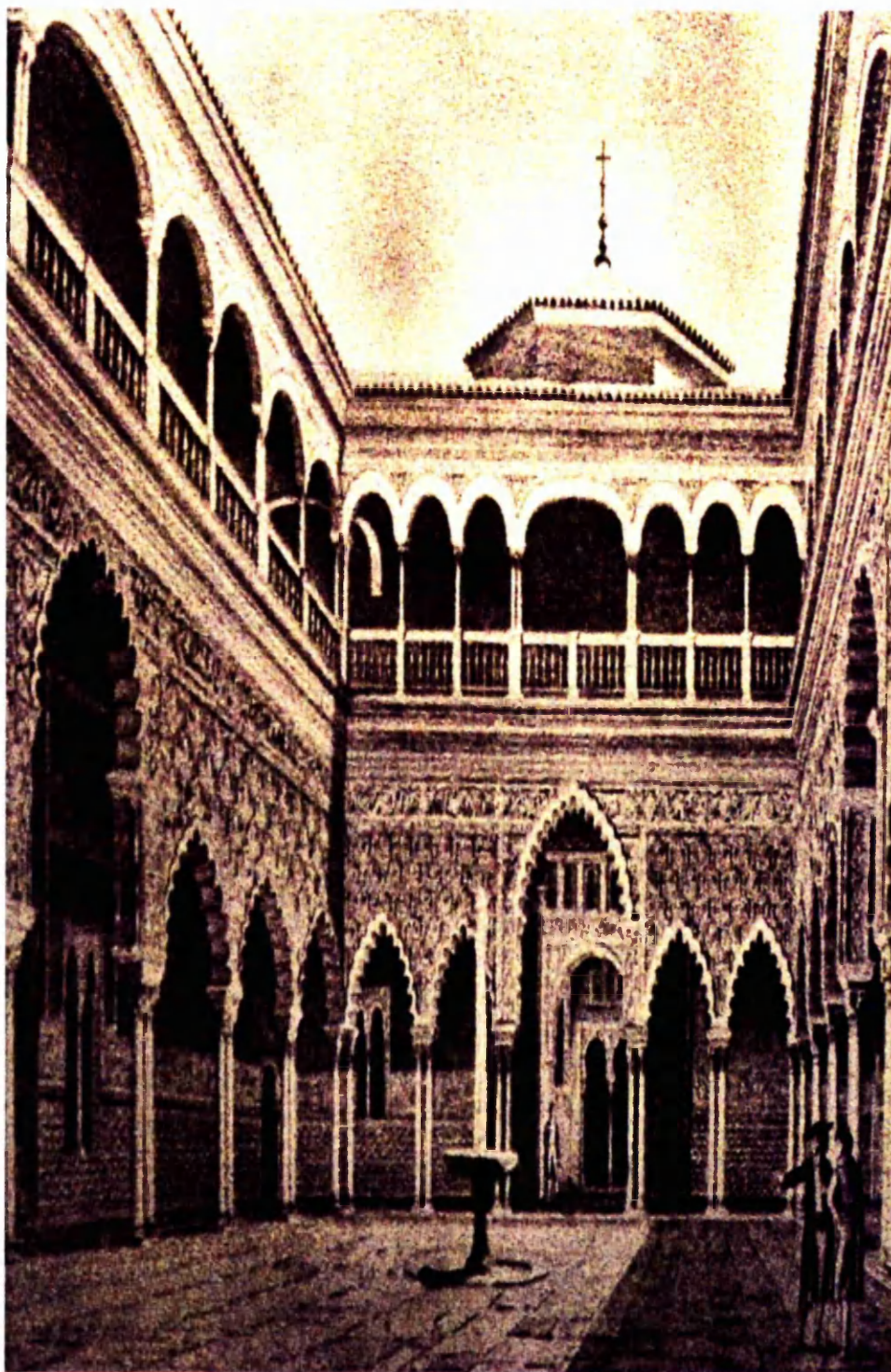


Fig.224 Interior Court of Alcazar, Seville. (After Calvert 1906, p.255).



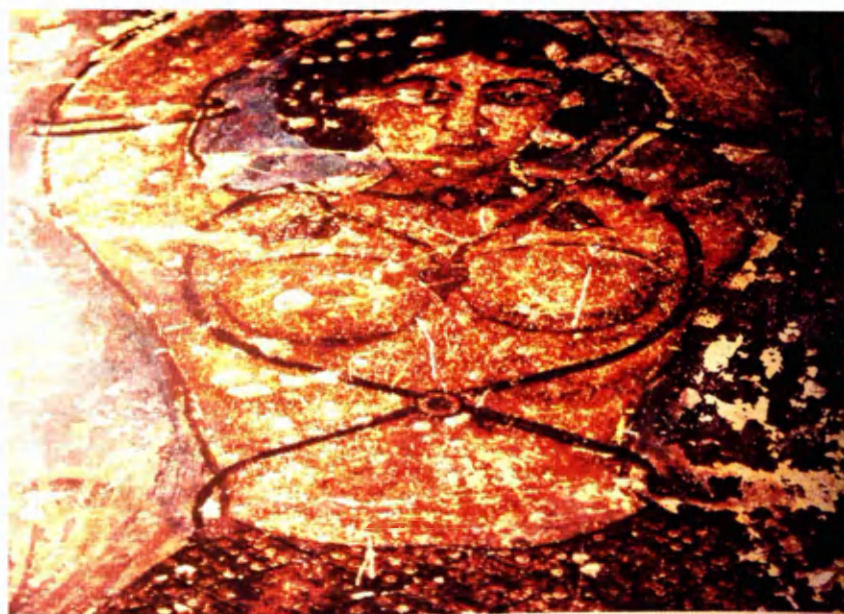


Fig.225 Riyāḍ plays and sings to the lady on the 'ūd, the Lady in a golden headdress sits below a tower whose window is screened with *mashrabiyyah* work, Story of Bayāḍ wa Riyāḍ. (Ḥadīth Bayāḍ wa Riyāḍ), thirteenth century, Morocco or Spain. (After Brend 2001, fig.39, p.64).





a.

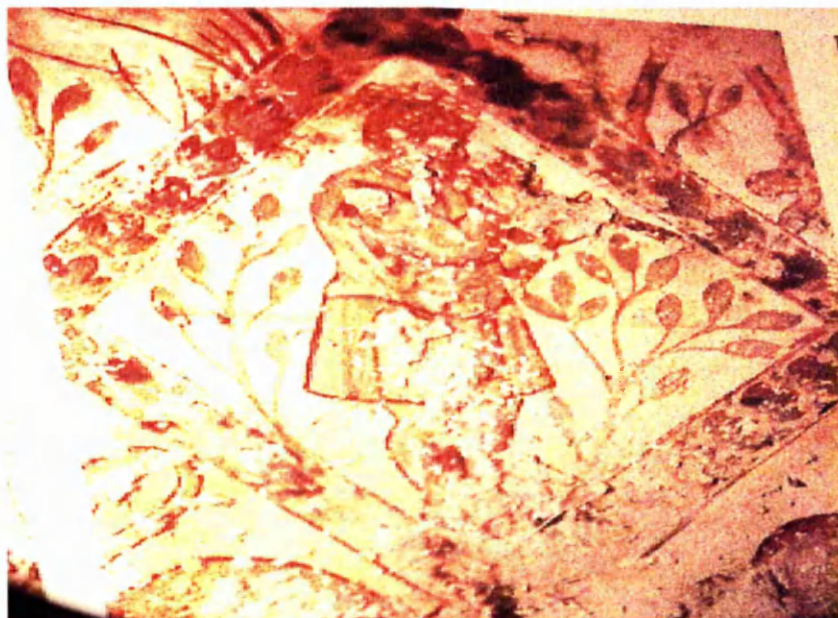


b.

Fig.226 Realistic representation of human figures, scenes of Quṣāyr 'Amrah, Jordan, 724-743 A.D. a, details of a dancing figure Northeast of the Great hall. b, torso of a feminine figure over the interior of the central arch of the Great hall (After Almagro 1975, figs.23, 93, p.51, 141).



a.



b.

Fig.227 Animal and human figures as entertainers, "Tepidarium", scenes of Quṣāyir 'Amrah, Jordan, 724-743 A.D. (After Almagro 1975, figs.61,62y, p.91).

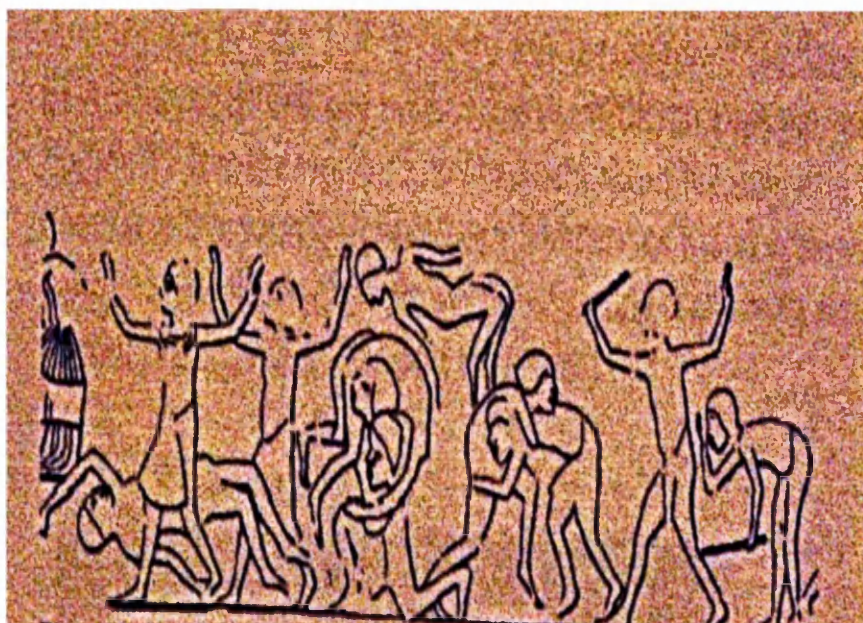




Fig.228 Representation of a cockfight, Fatimid lustre painted pottery bowl, Egypt, eleventh or twelfth century A.D. (After Baer 1999, p.28).



a.



b.

Fig.229 Wrestling scenes, Ancient Egyptian art, a. the tomb of Tyanen, 1410 B.C., b. relief of the rock cut tomb of Meryre II, 1355 B.C.(After Wrestling in Ancient Egyptian Art Website.“Wrestling Scenes on the Walls of Tombs”.Online.[http://www.motherofhumanity.com/Nijart% 20Webs/archives%20article%203.htm](http://www.motherofhumanity.com/Nijart%20Webs/archives%20article%203.htm). Accessed 24<sup>th</sup> November 2005).





Fig.230 Wrestling scene, Fatimid lustre painted pottery. (After Baer 1999, fig.III.77, p.28).





Fig.231 A figure of a man carrying a bucket on his back, Fatimid lustre painted pottery. (After Baer 1999, fig.III.80, p.28).

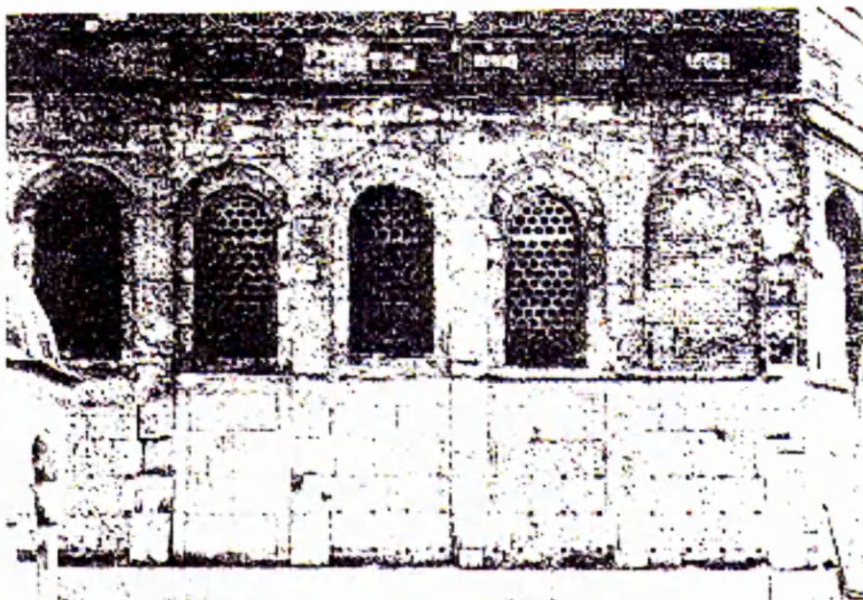


Fig.232 A figure of a kneeling man in front of a cheetah, Fatimid lustre painted pottery. (After Meinecke-Berg 1999, fig.III.66, p.24).





a.



b.

Fig.233 Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem, similarities to the building sculptured by the entrance of the Mosque Madrasa of Sultan Hasan. Photo captured by Creswell in 1937. a. General view from the South-West, b. Masonry of North-West side laid bare in 1937. (After Creswell, I/I, figs.a,b, pl.I).

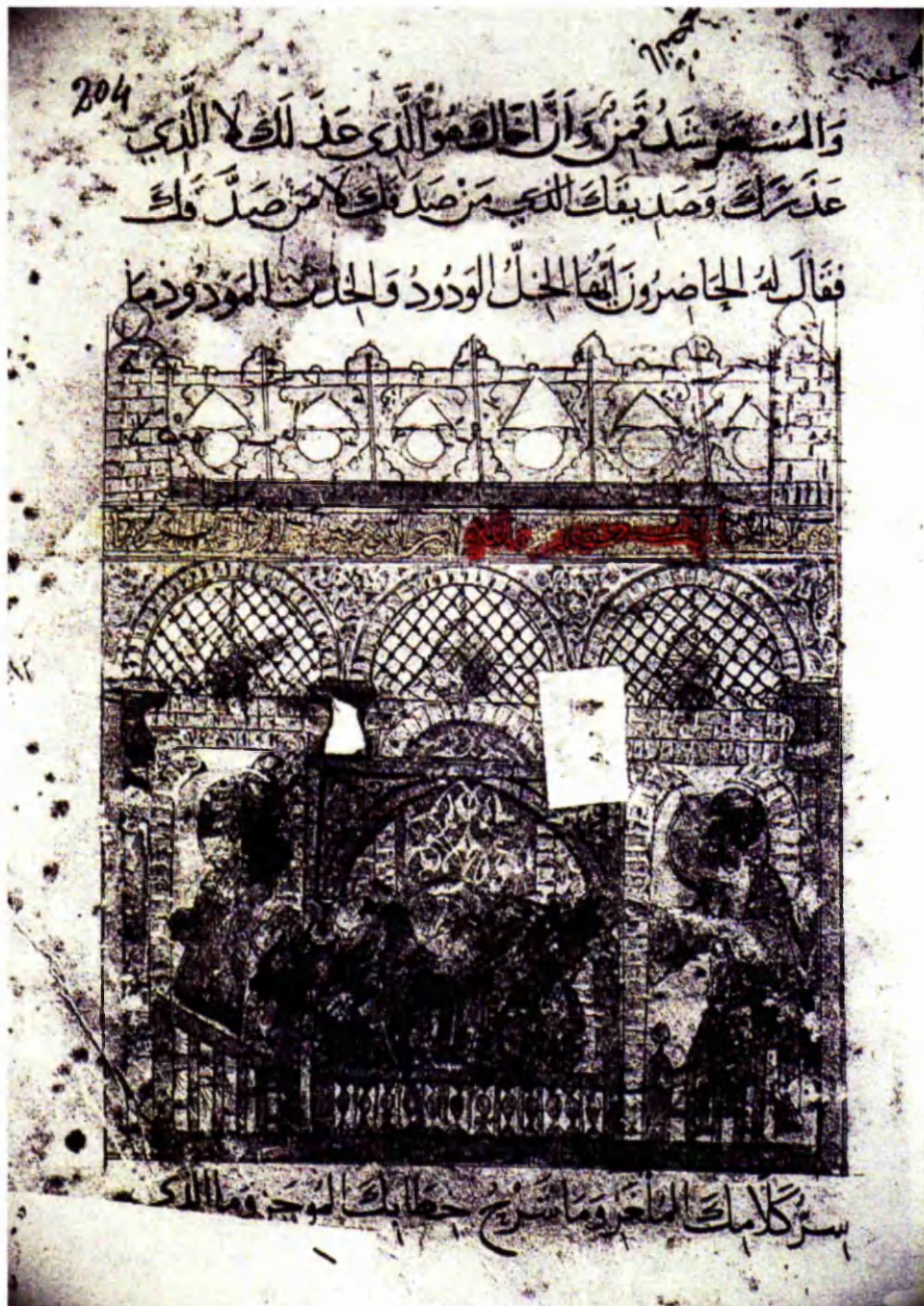


Fig.234 Scene of a Mosque with inscription of the Caliph Al-Musta'şim as marked in red, the Maqāmāt of Al-Ḥarīrī, Istanbul version, fiftieth Maqāmah, fol.204. (After Grabar 1963, fig.40, pl.20).





Fig.235 Scene of a Salon Al-Mubashshir, Mubashshir Mukhtār Al-Ḥikam wa Maḥāsin Al-Kalim (The Choicest Maxims and Most Priceless Sayings), Syria, first half of the thirteenth century, fol.24v. (After Papadouplu 1980, fig.583, p.461).



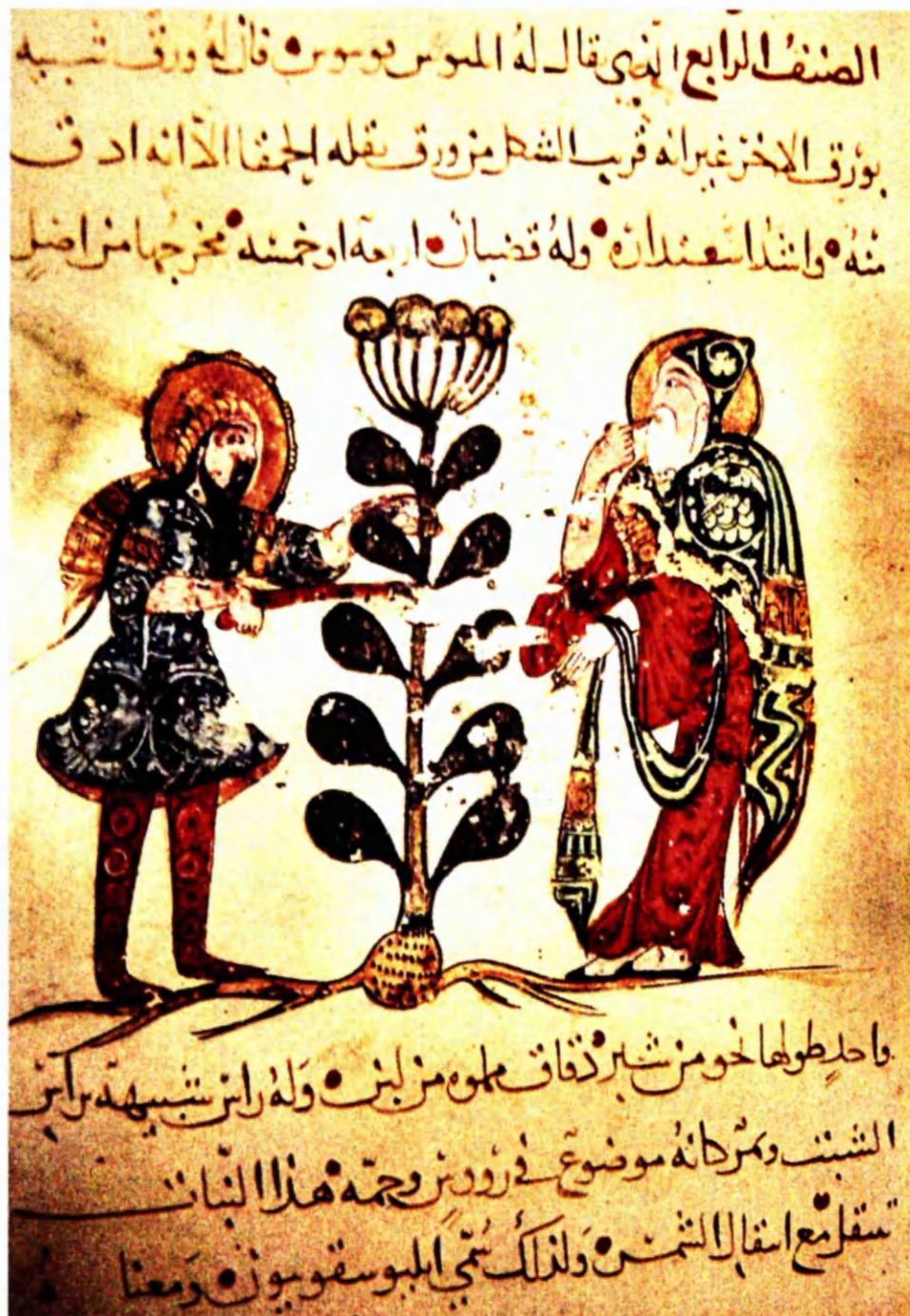


Fig.236 Physician and attendant with heliotrope, physician points his hand towards a plant, the second puts his hand in his mouth, De Materia Medica manuscript, Iraq, 1224 A.D. (After Atil 1975, p.55).





Fig.237 Preparation of medicine from a flower of the wild vine,  
De Materia Medica manuscript, Iraq, 1224 A.D. (After Atil  
1975, p.56).





Fig.238 The Physician Erasistratos with an associate, De Materia Medica manuscript, Iraq, 1224 A.D. (After Atil 1975, p.58).



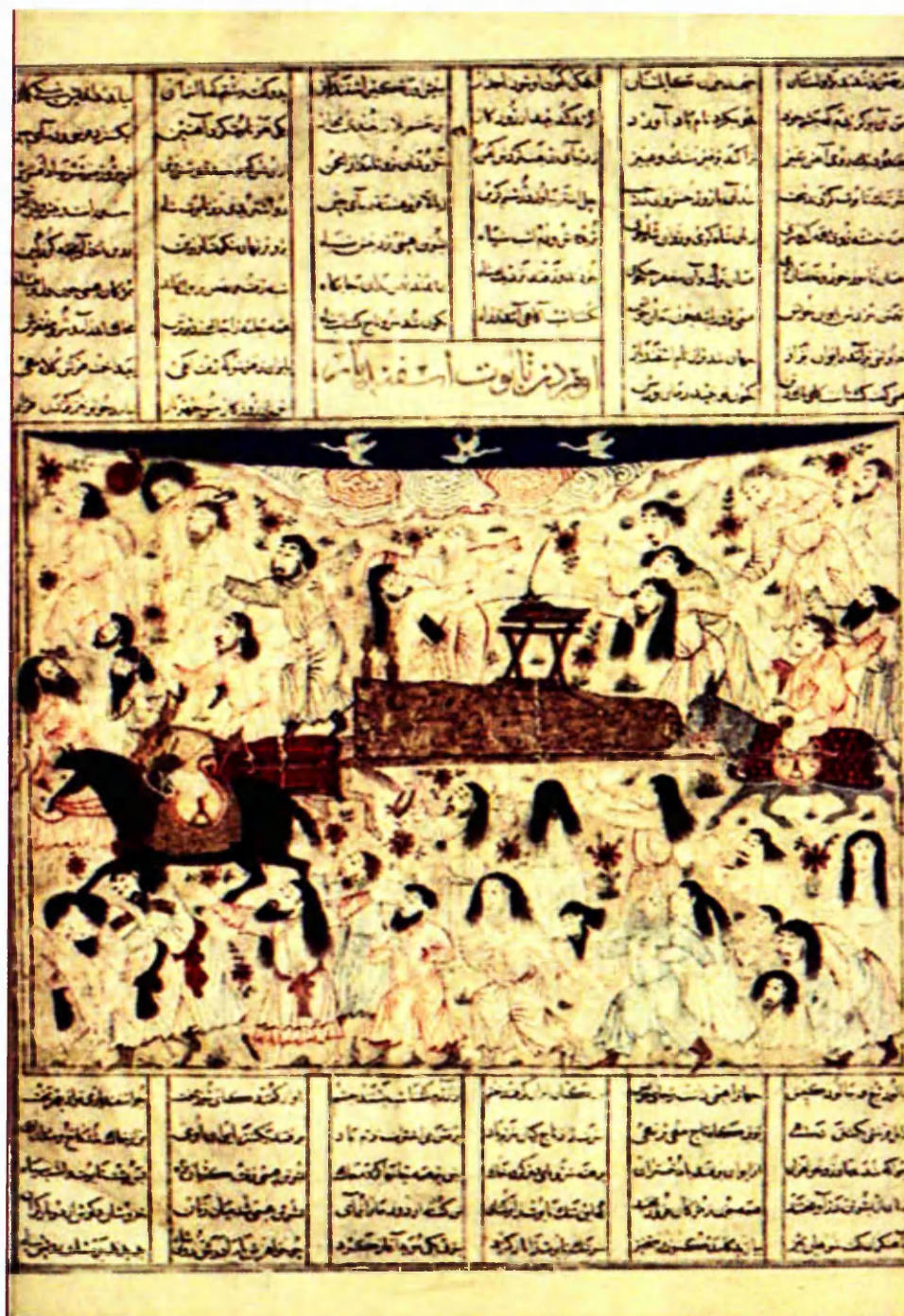


Fig.239 The bringing of Isfandiyar's bier, Demotte Shāhnāmāh manuscript, 1330-40 A.D., illustration no.22. (After Grabar 1969, cat.no.22).





Fig.240 The Lion-Gazelle floor mosaics, audience chamber of the bathhouse, Khirbat Al-Mafjar, Jordan, 724-743 A.D., Israel. (After Ettinghausen 1962, p.39).





Fig.241 Scene of the six Kings, West wall of the reception hall, painting now destroyed, Quṣāyir 'Amrah, Jordan, 724-743 A.D., copy made in 1901 by A. L. Mielich. (After Ettinghausen 1962, fig.2, p.190).





Fig.242 The Maqāmāt of Al-Ḥarīrī manuscript illustration, 1337 A.D., the Nationalbibliothek, Vienna no.A.F.9, twenty-sixth Maqāmah, fol.87v. (After Ettinghausen 1962, p.149).





Fig.243 Frontispiece painting, Moṣul, thirteenth century A.D.  
(After Grube 1972, pl.IVa).



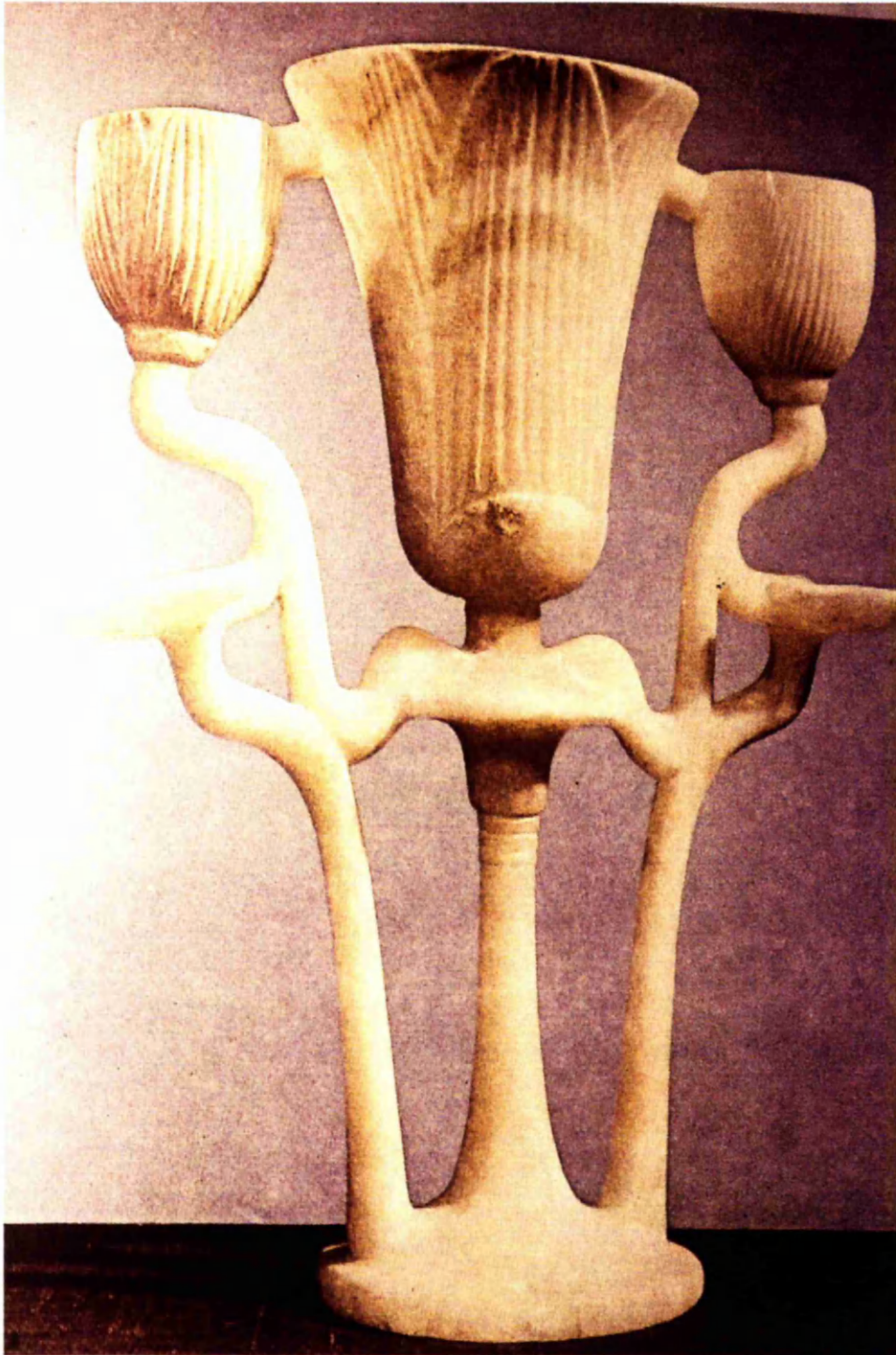


Fig.244 An alabaster lamp in the shape of three lotus flowers, tomb of Tutankhamen, eighteenth dynasty. (After Desroches-Noblecourt 1969, fig.XXIIIa, p.107).





Fig.245 Alabaster lamp in the form of a cup, chalice-like cup, tomb of Tutankhamen, eighteenth dynasty. (After Carter 1963, II, pl.XLVI, p.227).

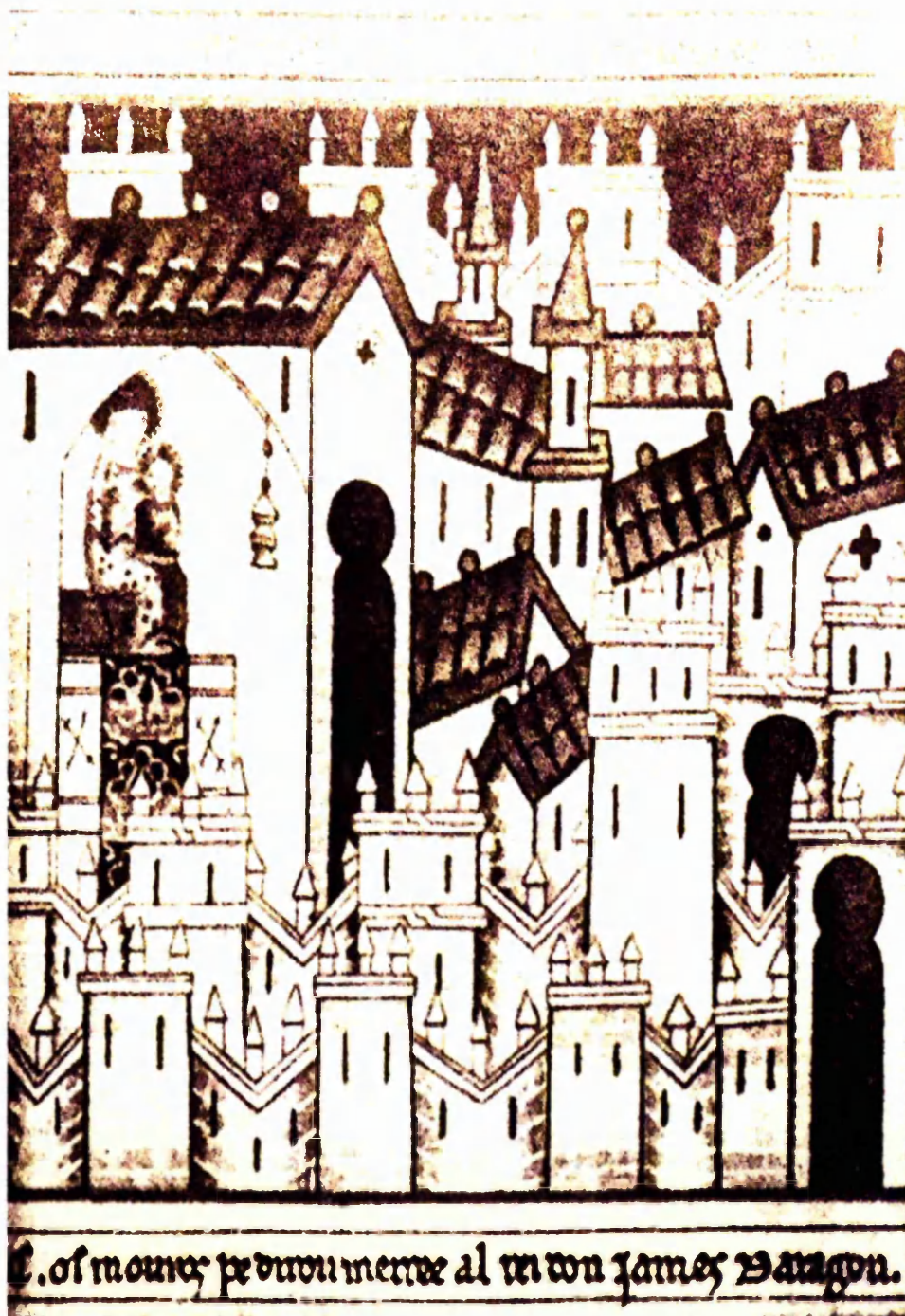


Fig.246 Painting of a lamp suspending from the roof of a church. (After Museo de la Muralla Arabe de Murcia 1966, fig.57).





Fig.247 Representation of a *Minbar* with geometrical decorations, the *Maqāmāt* of Al-Ḥarīrī, Istanbul Version, 1242-1258 A.D., fol.70. (After Grabar 1963, fig.12, p.16).





Fig.248 Ambon, Christian pulpit from Saqqara, the monastery of Saint Jeremias, sixth or seventh century A.D. (After Gabra 1993, fig.5, p.64).



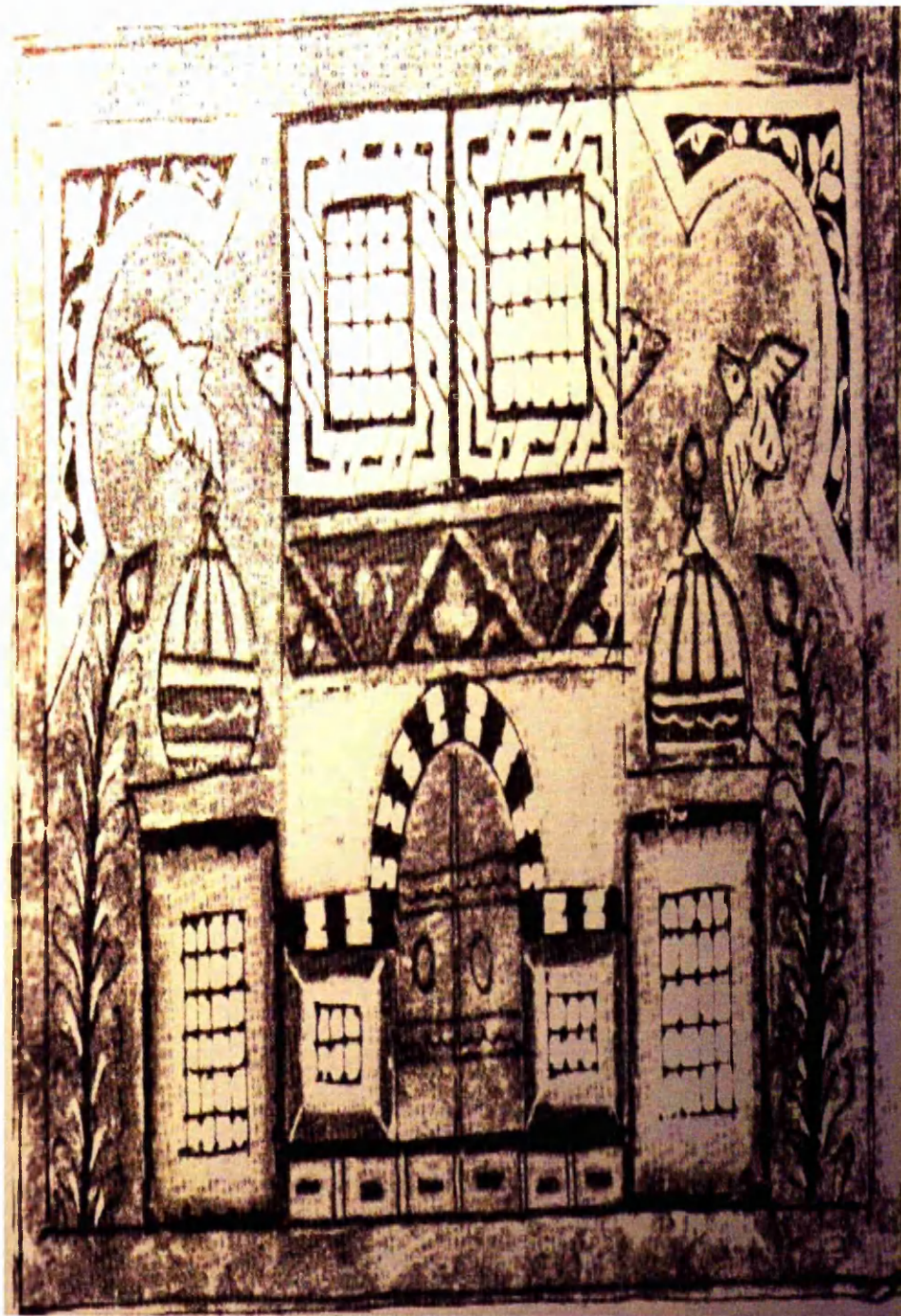


Fig.249 Representation of a building iconography with Mamluk features, illustration of the bird bat, *Kaṣḥf Al-Asrār* or "Disclosure of the Secrets" manuscript, Syria or Egypt, mid fourteenth century, fol.27r. (After Haldane 1978, fig.11, p.53).





Fig.250 Abū Zayd meeting the narrator at Nisibin, the Maqāmāt of Al-Ḥarīrī, first quarter of the fourteenth century, fol.50r. (After Haldane 1978, fig.26, p.69).





Fig.251 Abū Zayd meeting Al-Ḥārith in a building with a sliding roof, the Maqāmāt of Al-Ḥarīrī Manuscript, Syria, 1323 A.D., British Library, no. 7293, fol.80r. (After Haldane 1978, pl.22, p.64).



Fig.252 Illustration of a tomb building exposing the material of the surface of the building, the Maqāmāt of Al-Ḥarīrī, Leningrad, eleventh Maqāmah, fol.65. (After James 1974, fig.4, p.317).



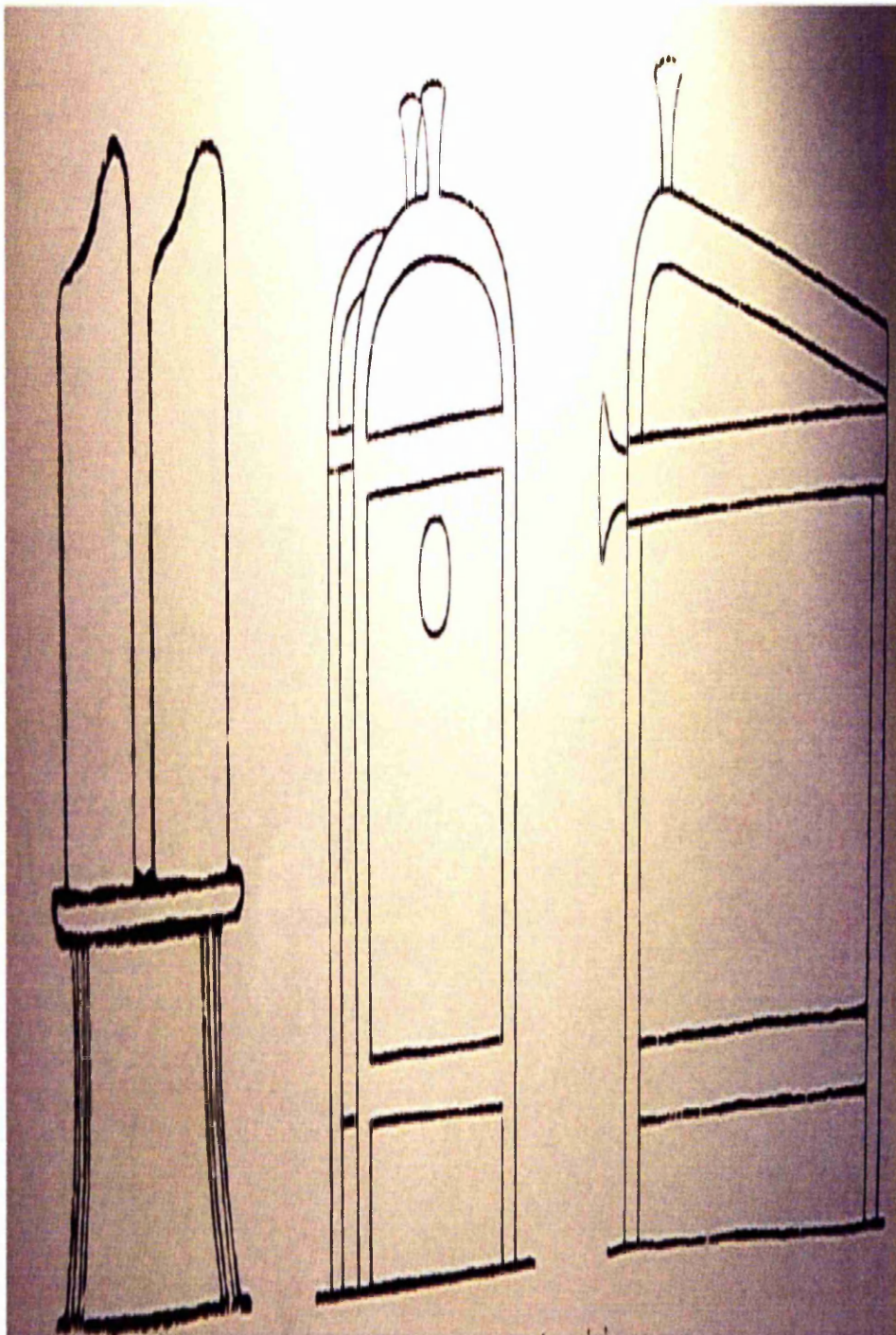


Fig.253 Representation of chairs and tables, Ancient Egyptian Art, New Kingdom Paintings. (After Richter 1970, figs. 13-15).



Fig.254 Painted lime stone stele of Neu-Waf, early eighteenth dynasty. (After Richter 1970, fig.1).

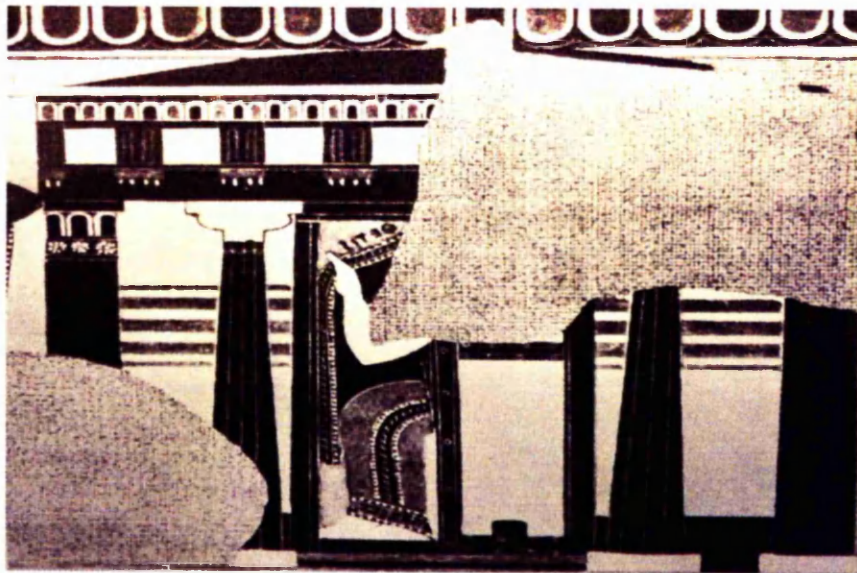




Fig.255 Ionian Amphora representing a staircase in a building with its steps placed on the other side, 570 B.C. the Louvre Museum, Inv.no.E703. (After Richter 1970, fig.69).



a.



b.

Fig.256 The Francois vase in Florence, a black figure crater, 570 B.C. Attributed to Ergotimos and Kleitias, Chiusi, Italy. a. *Thetis* sitting inside her chamber. (After The Florence Museum Website, "The Francois Vase" Online. <http://www.willamette.edu/~pkabealo/francois%20Vase.html>. Accessed 10<sup>th</sup> of December 2005). b. details of a. (After Richter 1970, fig.71).





Fig.257 Double ground plane, representation of two rows of people on top of each other, New Kingdom painting. (After Richter 1970, fig.12).

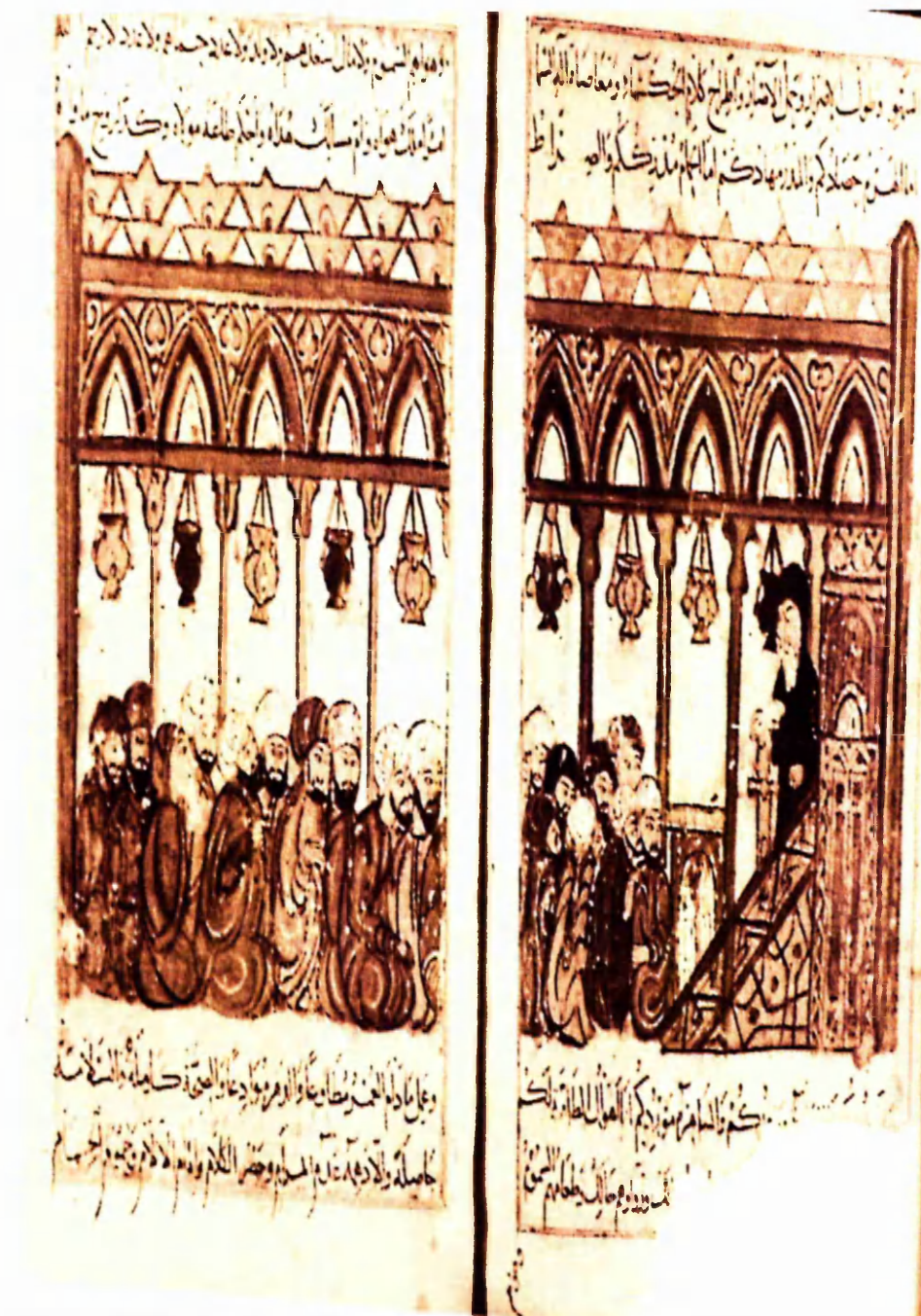


Fig.258 Expansion over two pages, Abū Zayd disguised as a preacher in the mosque of Samarqand, the Maqāmāt of Al-Ḥarīrī, Egypt or Syria, tenth/ sixteenth century, the twenty-eighth Maqāmah, fols. 89v, 90. (After James 1977, fig.29, p.44).



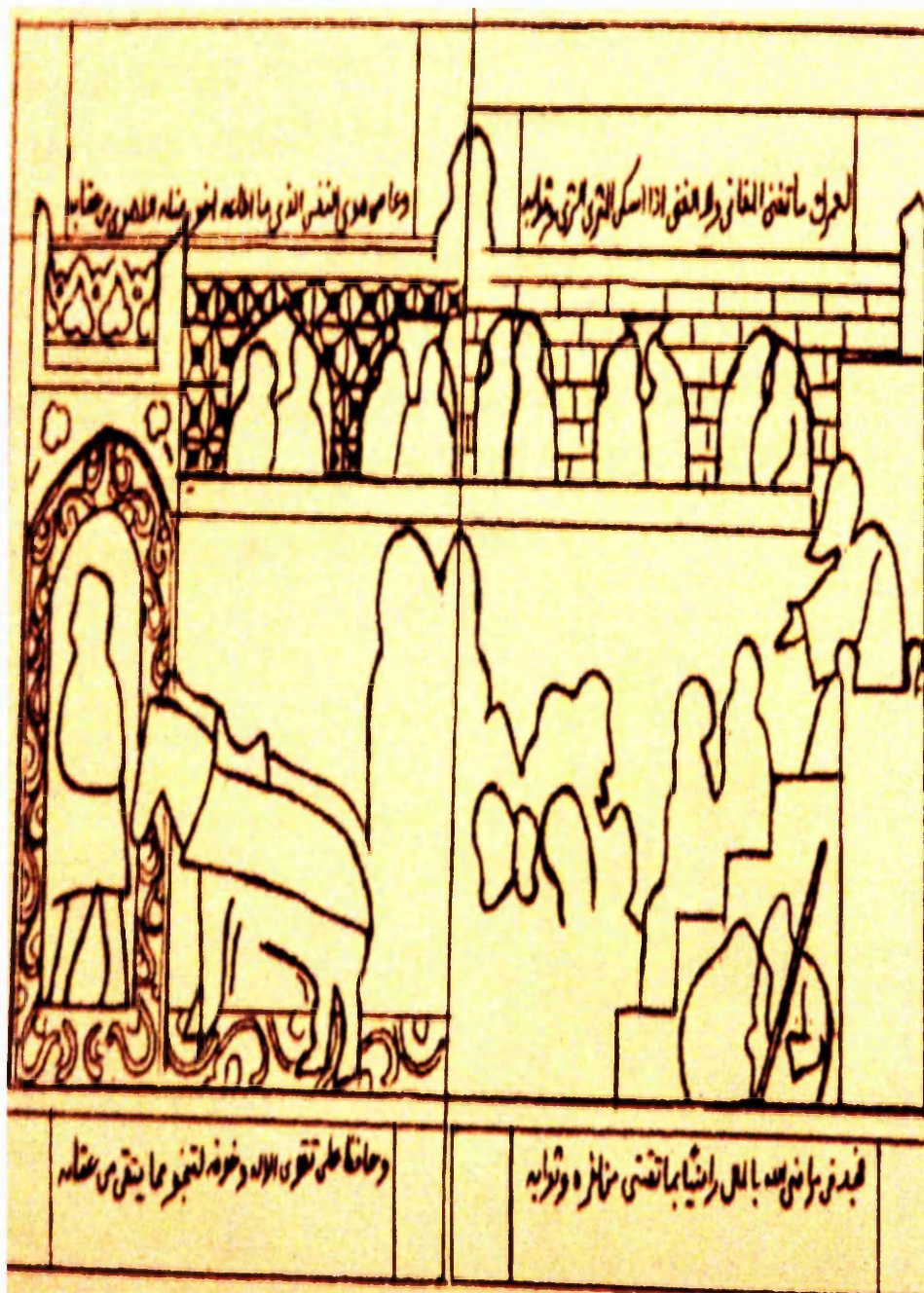


Fig.259 Representation of the mosque of Al-Rayy, another example of the illustrative expansion over two pages, the manuscript of the Maqāmāt of Al-Ḥarīrī, thirteenth century, Rylands version Ar.680, the twenty-first Maqāmah, fols. 61b, 62a. (After James 1974, fig.3).