

## ON THE Umayyad DATING OF THE DOUBLE GATE IN JERUSALEM

The continuing debate among those who have studied the Double Gate in Jerusalem revolves around the historical and structural vicissitudes the original Herodian structure underwent in the years following the destruction of the Second Temple. It is commonly agreed that the Herodian structure, set into the southern peribolos of the Temple Esplanade (fig. 1), is still attested from the exterior by the huge stones of the eastern and western doorposts on the entrance to the Double Gate—both stones belong to the remaining string course of the southern wall of the Temple Esplanade (fig. 2[a]).<sup>1</sup> The existence of the original floor level and the remains of the original gate foundations, which are some 0.20 m below the preserved original threshold, lends support to the original-Herodian theory regarding the doorposts of the Double Gate. The same is true of the intermediate gate pier, built of huge ashlars with drafted margins, and of the two monolithic lintels with their drafted margins posed above the two doorways—the eastern lintel cracked at a later stage.

Everything surviving above the string course of the southern façade is held to be of a later date, as are also the two decorated archivolts affixed to the ancient façade of the gate, partly concealing the earlier lintels. Today, it is generally accepted that these archivolts date from the Umayyad period and are associated with the decorations of those of the Golden Gate.<sup>2</sup>

The interior of the Double Gate, it has been claimed, is based largely on the original Herodian layout.<sup>3</sup> The only obvious Umayyad constructions, in this view, are the pairs of disparate columns flanking the inner side of the doorways,<sup>4</sup> added to reinforce the support for the Umayyad al-Aqsa mosque built above, presumably required by the cracking of the ancient lintel under the burden of this structure.<sup>5</sup> The columns and their capitals are all reused, according to this view,<sup>6</sup> whereas the four flat domes with their supporting arches and the central column

from which they spring, as well as their respective decorations, must be Herodian in origin; the Umayyads had only to restore the largely preserved Herodian structure, exploiting a considerable portion of the ancient masonry found *in situ*, and reusing decorative elements extracted from the debris of the destroyed Herodian gate.<sup>7</sup>

This original-Herodian theory has been repeatedly advocated since the nineteenth century by various European scholars. It was first raised by Fergusson and Willis (1847), followed by Conder (1879), Watzinger (1935), and Corbett (1952). Like Mazar, Bendov, Ritmeyer, Gibson, and Jacobson, they all held that the extant structure of the Double Gate largely follows the Herodian scheme, constructed to correspond with the layout of Herod's Royal Stoa.<sup>8</sup> They also supported the same notion with regard to the interior decorations.

It is the Herodian origin of the present interior that we wish to contest. We would like to propose that, like the archivolt on the southern façade, the inside of the Double Gate and the decorations are an Umayyad creation, presumably from 'Abd al-Malik's time. This argument is prompted by the few existing vestiges of Kufic script still partly visible on the west-facing upper surface of the northern pier in the hall, which from the first were believed to be associated with the Umayyads.<sup>9</sup>

Thorough fieldwork at the site, with the full cooperation of the waqf authorities,<sup>10</sup> led to the study of the archaeological evidence. The analysis of its metrology and masonry was carried out by Doron Chen and the analysis of the architectural decorations by Raya Shani. These investigations, combined with the existing Kufic vestiges studied by Shani in the light of historical evidence, confirmed our hypothesis that the double-vaulted vestibule and the domed hall were built almost entirely by the Umayyads and were newly decorated by them, with a monumental inscription added to commemorate their ambitious enterprise.

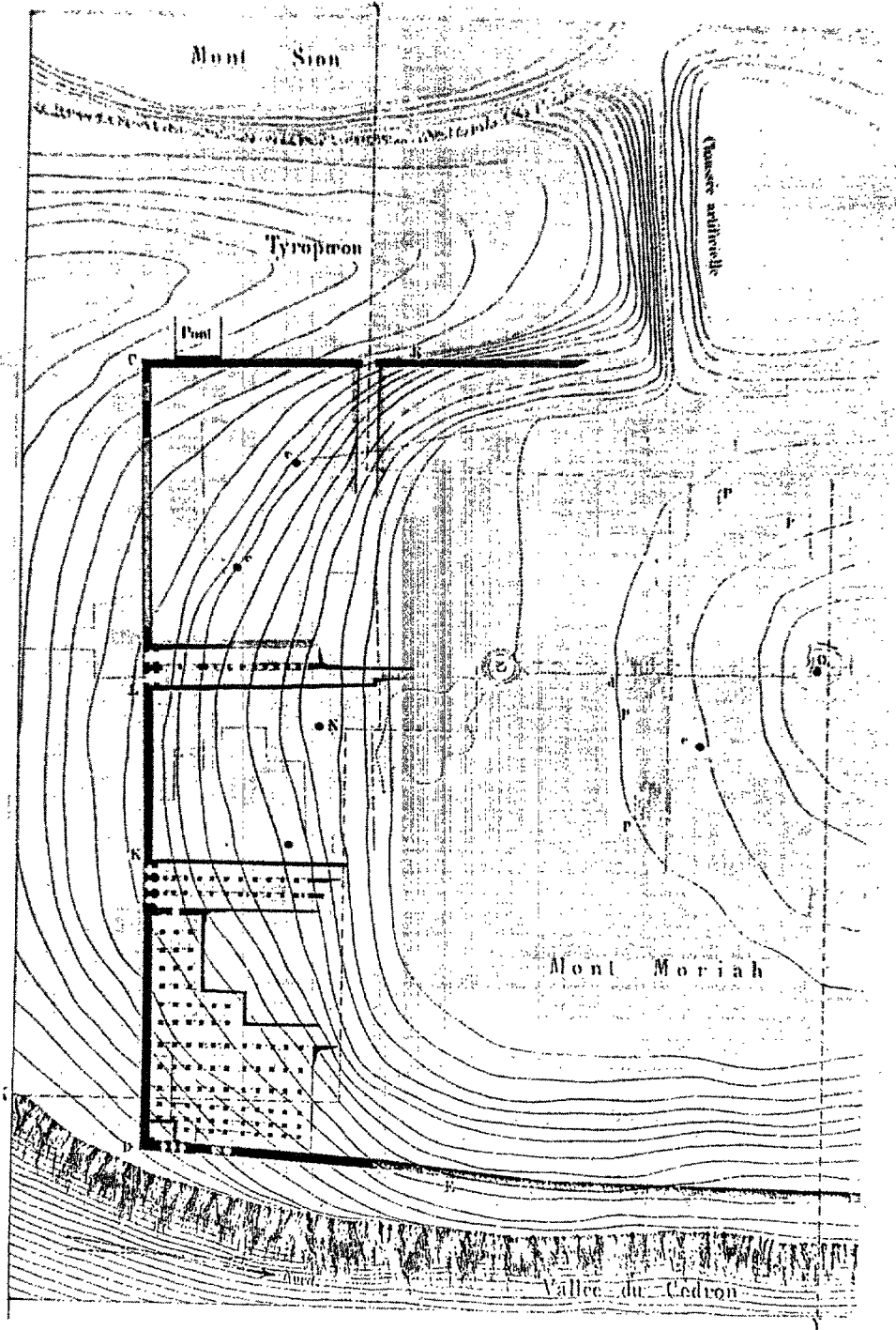


Fig. 1. Jerusalem. Plan of the southern part of the Haram. (Plan: from de Vogüé, *Le Temple de Jérusalem*, pl. XIII).

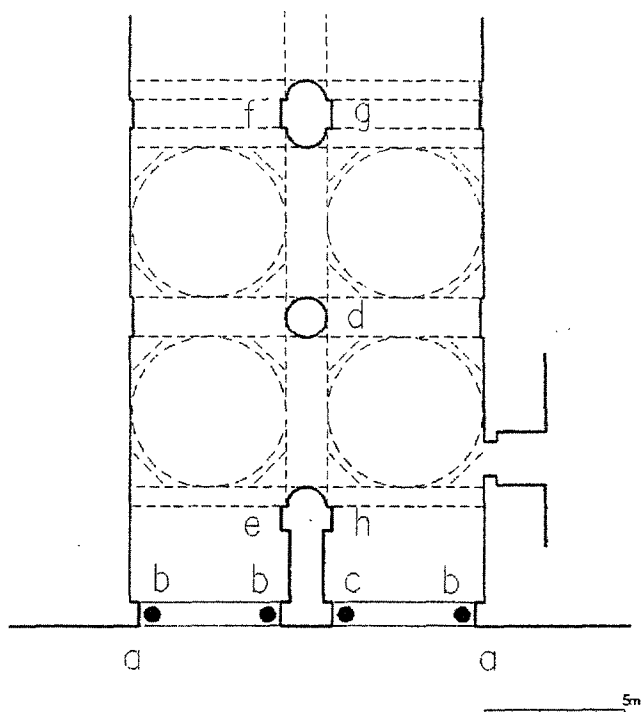


Fig. 2. Double Gate. Plan annotated with the location of decorative and other features.

#### EPIGRAPHICAL AND HISTORICAL EVIDENCE

The interior of the Double Gate displays vestiges of two epigraphic friezes which might shed some light on its history. The remnants appear on the northern pier, along the double-register cornice-like friezes, each 1 m long, which crown the two lateral pilasters of the northern pier from which arches spring towards the eastern and western lateral walls (fig. 2 [f-g]). The east-facing frieze was recently plastered over<sup>11</sup> but had earlier shown traces of two horizontal strips, 0.22 m apart, molded on the lower register, with scanty, almost illegible, remnants of letters. The inscription on the lower register of the frieze on the opposite, western surface of the northern pier—again between two horizontal molded strips 0.22 m apart—is more easily seen (figs. 2[f], 3). Although poorly preserved, the inscription seems to be in a simple Kufic script, the letters 0.13 m high,<sup>12</sup> with double border strips above and below. It might be possible to decipher the contents, if one could do some tracing work on

the inscription. This, however, would require further research at the site, which is unfortunately not feasible at present.

A possible argument that these are Umayyad vestiges is the simple style of their Kufic lettering. It is true that the same style persisted for almost another century, right into the early Abbasid period. However, historical evidence shows that after an earthquake on 18 January 749,<sup>13</sup> the Umayyad constructions along the southern wall of the Haram were abandoned to stone and lime contractors who built ovens in the vicinity of the royal complex.<sup>14</sup> This would mean that during the early Abbasid period the southern entrance to the Haram was no longer significant, and the Umayyad construction of the Double Gate was therefore not restored until much later, when the Kufic script was totally different in style.<sup>15</sup>

Another argument is the historical evidence mentioned in Ibn Kathir's *al-Bidāya wa-l-Nihāya fi'l-Ta'rikh* that two gates were built in Bayt al-Maqdis under 'Abd al-Malik, one bearing a dedicatory inscription honoring the caliph and the other with a similar inscription, honoring al-Hajjaj b.Yusuf, who was in charge of both gates.<sup>16</sup> Elad has already suggested that the two gates may have been placed in the wall encompassing the Haram rather than in the city wall "since according to the writings of the mid-tenth century geographer, al-Muqaddasi, 'Abd al-Malik apparently repaired and renovated the Haram walls."<sup>17</sup> A further suggestion by Elad is that the two gates mentioned by Ibn Kathir might refer to the extant structures of the Gate of Mercy (the Golden Gate), and the Gate of the Prophet (the Double Gate).<sup>18</sup> If so, the inscription in the Double Gate—itsself so important in the general context of the new building program on the Haram—could in fact be the one mentioned by Ibn Kathir as carrying the caliph's name.<sup>19</sup> We suggest, moreover, that this dedicatory inscription was originally circular, starting from the western and ending at the eastern doorway of the south end of the Double Gate. The beginning of the inscription would then be on a west-facing frieze running along the southern pier, either from its beginning or from above the inner pilaster attached to it (fig. 2[e]). Moving northwards, the visitor could read the inscription along the west-facing frieze attached to the northern pier (fig. 2f), and, circling the pier, continue to the parts inscribed on the east-facing frieze

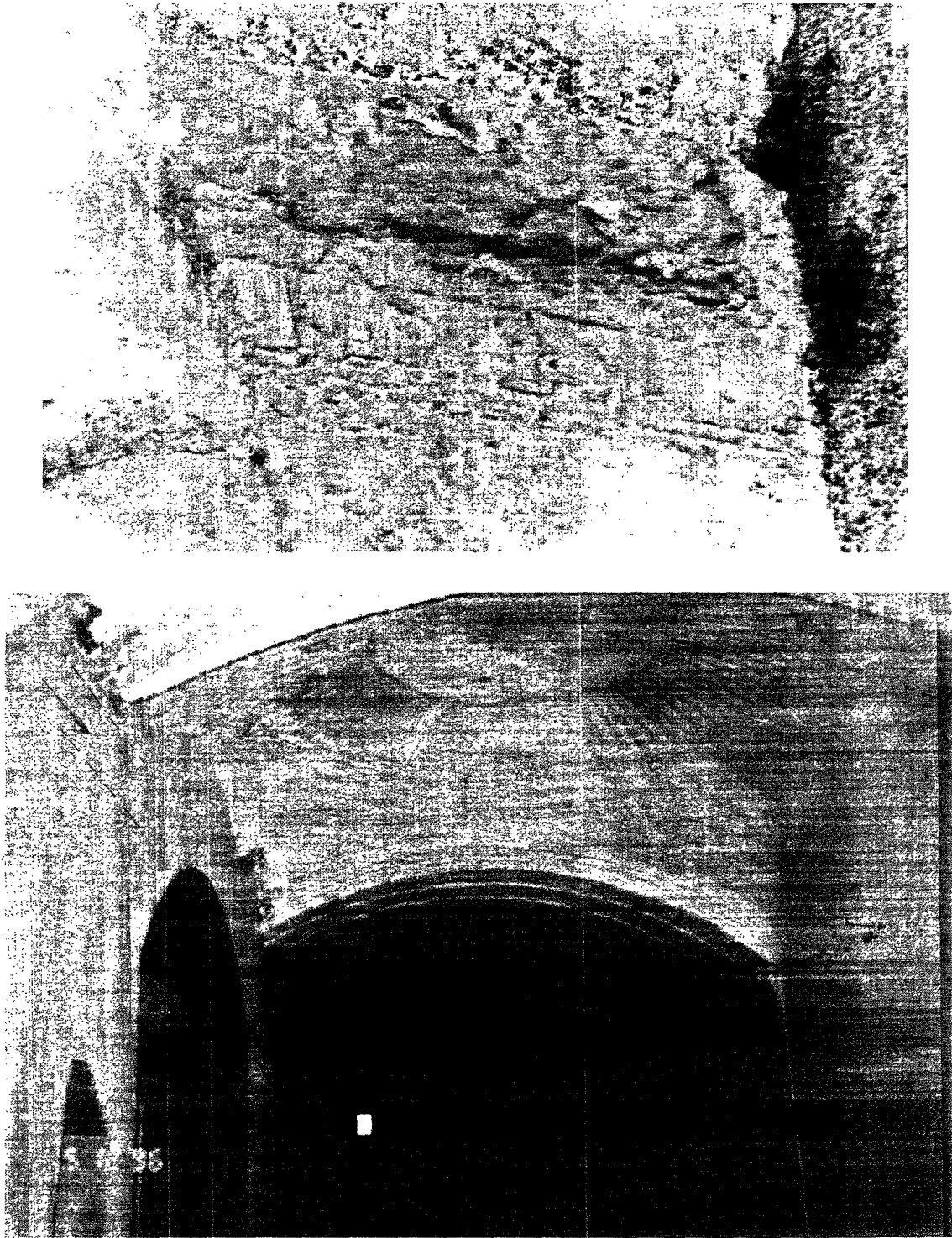


Fig. 3. Double Gate. (top) Kufic inscription on west-facing frieze on top of northern pier of hall. (Photo: Barukh Rimon); (bottom) View from northwest. (Photo: courtesy 'Isam 'Awwad)

of the northern pier, finally reaching the frieze on the southern pier (fig. 2[g-h]).

In order to be readable, the inscription must have had a source of light. Light was also needed for illuminating the elaborately decorated domes—the highlights of the interior of the gate. There were two possible sources of light: through the southern gateway, still partly intact, and through a northern gateway which, as in the Golden Gate, originally faced an open forecourt.<sup>20</sup> Either one would have allowed the visitor's gaze to be directed upwards to wander over the entire space. Leaving the hall from its northern gateway, he would then reach an open forecourt and finally be led by flights of steps up to the sacred monuments standing on the esplanade.

#### ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVIDENCE

The archaeological evidence also shows that, although founded on earlier Herodian remains, the extant structure of the Double Gate was designed and built by the Umayyads. If this is so, the decorations made for a new structure also cannot be Herodian, and in fact arguments against the original-Herodian theory have been offered by various scholars, who claimed that the existing four domes, with their supporting arches, pilasters, and central column, should be dated to a later phase.<sup>21</sup> According to this argument as represented by Williams (1849), de Vogüé (1860), Pierotti (1864), Wilson (1866), Schick (1887), and Jeremias and Schneider (1942), the Herodian phase in the present structure can be discerned only in the twin doorways with their monolithic lintels and in the lowest courses of the side walls, built of ashlar with drafted margins. Misled by the belief that al-Aqsa stood on the site of Justinian's Nea church, the proponents of this theory argued that the Double Gate in its present form was built as an undercroft for it.<sup>22</sup> But when in the late 1960's the Nea church was discovered on the southeastern slopes of the western hill and the Byzantine theory for the double passage was thus proved wrong, scholars for no apparent reason began to expound the theory that the extant structure was Herodian, even if partly restored.<sup>23</sup>

Based on the archaeological evidence, the Herodian foundations of the side walls are visible, but only on the lower courses of the eastern wall, where they con-

sist of large stones in the typical Herodian *bossé* technique (fig. 4). The upper parts of the same wall, all laid with mortar, seem to be entirely post-Herodian. In fact, it was shown by the supporters of the post-Herodian Byzantine theory (Williams, de Vogüé, and Pierotti) that the upper parts of the two walls were reworked in a manner that removed the bosses of the original Herodian ashlar, thereby leaving each of the slightly projecting pilasters, capped by profiled capitals, to receive a transverse arch.<sup>24</sup> This would mean, of course, that the two side walls, newly built above the Herodian layers, were constructed in part with reused Herodian ashlar of moderate dimensions and that the original *bossé* dressing of these stones had been carefully flattened to leave the face as smooth as possible. This was evidently done in order to create flat surfaces to be interrupted by broad, slightly protruding pilasters capped by profiled capitals, from which the supporting arches of the domes might spring (fig. 4). It would seem, then, that the rustic surface of the stones used earlier for the two lateral walls of the original Herodian structure was smoothed to bring them into harmony with a new program based on a new aesthetic that rendered the appearance of massive rustic walls unsuitable.<sup>25</sup> The ancient stones were altered to enhance the manneristic system used to articulate the rhythmic rather than the structural aspects of the hall's domed space.

The half-columns adjusted to the southern and northern piers and the column in the center of the hall must have been added at the same time and for the same purpose. In fact, as de Vogüé remarks, the squat central column with its lack of base may indicate that it was reused and not part of the original layout of the Herodian structure.<sup>26</sup> It was presumably during this phase, then, that the various arches were constructed to connect with this central column and to be covered by the four shallow domes. These four domes could only have been added after all the components of the supporting system were fully in place and ready to carry the weight from above. Since the supporting components are shown to be post-Herodian, one must conclude that the same is true of the domes built over them. In fact, the mere post-Herodian date of the upper parts of the hall can also be easily confirmed by the various arguments raised by Williams, Pierotti, and de Vogüé, even if associated by them with the Byzantine period.<sup>27</sup> Finally, the

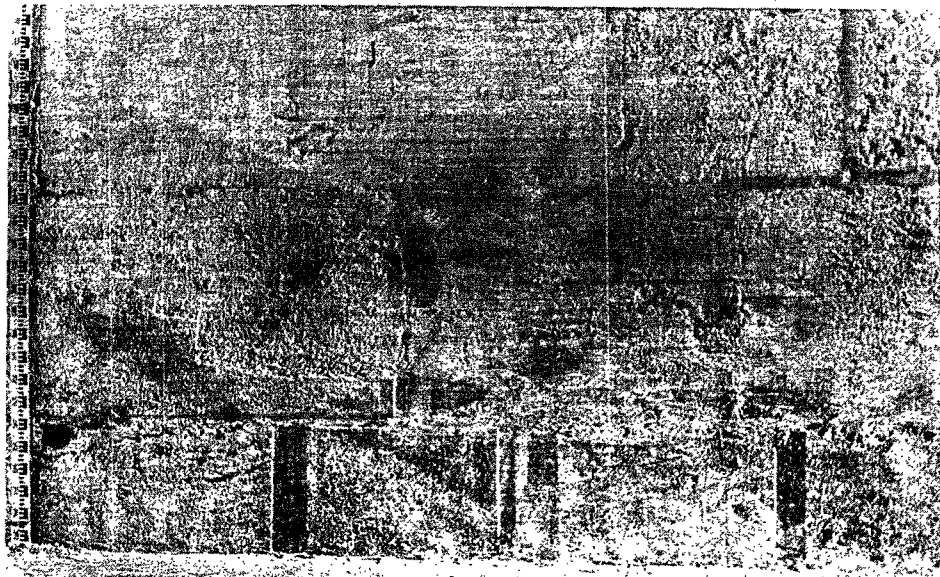
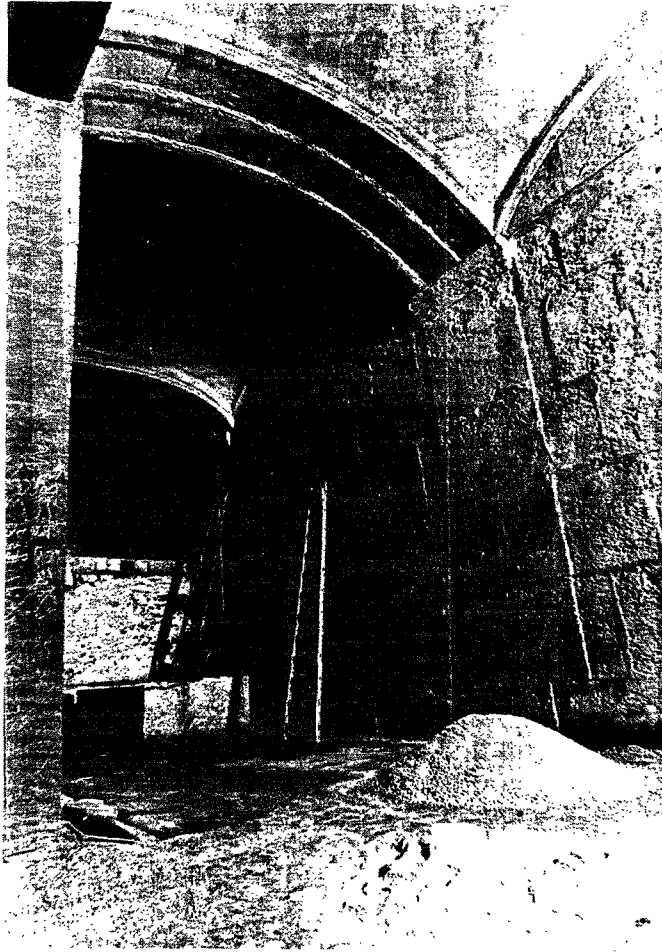


Fig. 4. Double Gate. (a) Eastern wall viewed from southwest; (b) Eastern wall. Lower courses of stones in *bossé* with margins. (Photos: courtesy 'Isam 'Awwad)

architectural layout of the Double Gate shows the same design as that of the Umayyad Golden Gate (see nn. 20 and 30), which could be a further indication that it was reconstructed during the Umayyad period. In both cases, the walls are smooth and similarly articulated by broad, slightly protruding pilasters capped by profiled capitals, from which the supporting arches of the domes spring. True, the triangular pendentives of the domes covering the Double Gate are set in plane whereas the pendentives of the Golden Gate have a curvature concentric with the dome, as observed by Corbett.<sup>28</sup> However, this cannot be taken as an indication of date, since both systems had been in use concurrently at least since the late Roman and throughout the Byzantine period.<sup>29</sup> Hence, even if differing from the pendentives used in the Umayyad Golden Gate, the Double Gate need not necessarily be a Herodian structure. Rather, one can contest the Herodian theory, and suggest instead that the four shallow domes of the Double Gate, including their pendentives, were built and decorated by the Umayyads. Whether the domes of the Golden Gate were built first and those of the Double Gate later, or the other way round, one cannot say, since the structure of the pendentives in both gates does not add to our understanding of their absolute and relative chronologies.

#### METROLOGY AND MASONRY

The metrological system and planning procedures used to design the Double Gate can be determined from the dimensions of the lateral doorway into the hall of the gate, the dimensions of the four domes in the hall, and the dimensions of the vestibule and the doorways which lead into the gate from the south. The outer width of the side doorway in the Double Gate is 1.85 m, significantly only one centimeter less than the width of the side doorway in the Golden Gate of 1.84 m.<sup>30</sup> This fact by itself is conclusive proof of the close link between the designs of the Double Gate and the Golden Gate. The measured length of 1.85 m equals 6 Bethlehem feet (BF, one BF equals 0.3089 m). This, too, is of cardinal importance, since the length of 6 BF figures as the planning module in the designs both of the Dome of the Rock and of the Golden Gate.<sup>31</sup> We can thus conclude that all three

buildings belong to the same—the Umayyad—period.

The inner width of the side doorway in the east wall of the Double Gate measures 1.55 m, or 5 BF, i.e., 1.544 m (fig. 5). The doorpost of the same doorway is ca. 0.46 m wide,<sup>32</sup> that is 1.5 BF (0.463 m). The width of the east wall was recently measured at 2.21 m, equal to 7.5 Roman feet (RF)<sup>33</sup> or 0.2957 m (2.218 m), rather than 7 BF (2.162 m). Hence, one may conclude that the foundations of the east wall of the gate, commensurate with the Roman unit of measurement, predate the Umayyad doorway set into that wall.

The archaeological evidence tallies well with the metrological findings, especially since one can still observe, towards the northern end of the east wall close to the pilaster opposite the north pier in the hall, the lowest visible courses of stones dressed in the typical Herodian *bossé* technique with margins (fig. 4). These courses were apparently hidden by a staircase which was subsequently removed.<sup>34</sup>

The west lateral wall of the gate is, according to Warren,<sup>35</sup> 10 feet, 6 inches (3.20 m) wide, or 10.5 BF (3.24 m), or 7 times 1.5 BF, rather than 11 RF (3.253 m). The length of 1.5 BF, actually a cubit, is also commensurate with the module of the plans of the Dome of the Rock and the Golden Gate, since 6 BF equals 4 times 1.5 BF. Thus we can also attribute the building of that wall to the Umayyad period.

According to Pierotti, his chronological distinctions notwithstanding,

The east wall is formed of oblong blocks, all of moderate dimensions and laid with mortar. The stones are well squared and smoothed by the hammer, without the least trace of rustic work; the surface of the wall is smoothed and perpendicular to the ground and cannot be considered anything but Roman masonry. The west wall differs somewhat from the above in the form of its materials; these are large blocks of stone resembling in their size those attributed to the Herodian age. On some, the rustic work remains; on others there are only slight traces of it, and after very minute and careful examination, I think that there has been an attempt to destroy it on all, with the intention of smoothing the face of the wall: these blocks are all laid with mortar but not arranged in regular courses; and the wall is perpendicular to the ground.<sup>36</sup>

Since the very fact that the stones in the west lateral



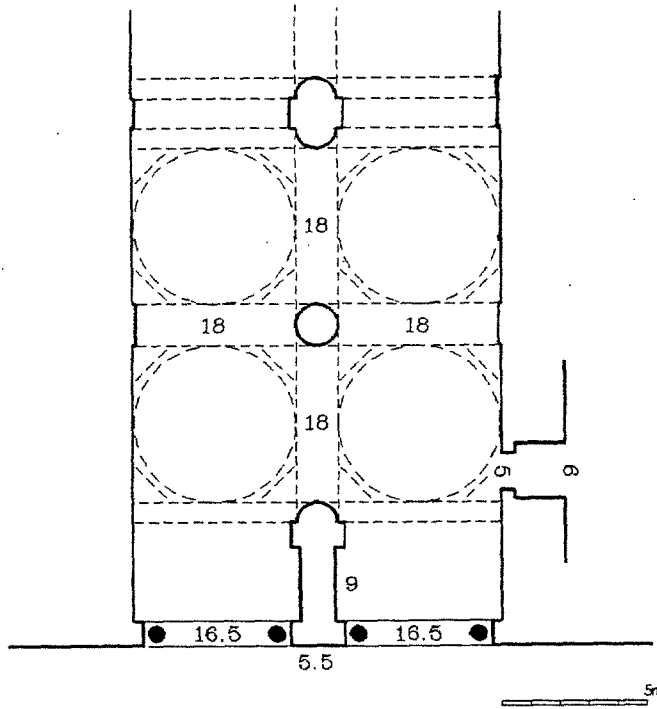


Fig. 5. Double Gate. Plan annotated in Bethlehem feet.

wall were laid in mortar argues for a post-Herodian date for the major portions of this wall because in Herodian masonry stones in *bossé* technique were always laid without mortar (see n. 24), the natural conclusion is that the ceiling these walls support is definitely not Herodian work.

The diameter of the central column in the hall (fig. 5) measures, according to Ritmeyer,<sup>37</sup> 4 feet, 9 inches (1.45 m), that is, about two-thirds of the width of the east wall of the gate. This dimension closely corresponds to the length of 5 RF, or the length of 2 Roman paces (RP), each pace equivalent to 2.5 RF, that is, 1.478 m. Accordingly, we may conclude that the central column predates the Umayyad period.<sup>38</sup>

By calculating the width of the Double Gate from the edges of the pilasters on the lateral walls along the east-west axis of the hall, we get twice 18 BF (11.12 m), rather than twice 7.5 RP (11.09 m), or twice 19 RF (11.237 m), for the spans of the arches which carry the domes, plus 5 RF (1.478 m), for the diameter of the central column. Thus we arrive in terms of Byzantine feet at 12.598 m (12.65 m measured on the site), or in terms of Roman paces 12.567 m and, in

terms of Roman feet, 12.715 m. The length of 12.598 m is practically the same as the span of Robinson's Arch (12.60 m measured on the site), which would suggest that the pilasters on the lateral walls of the present gate stand on the foundations of the earlier, Herodian edifice.

It is possible that the Herodian Gate on the same site was actually built as an underground passage, such as those inside Warren's and Barkley's gates, covered by vaults constructed like the vault of Robinson's Arch (see n. 25). The spans of Robinson's Arch and of the Double Gate are the same (42.5 RF; that is 17 RP, or 12.567 m), and the lateral walls in the Double Gate are massive enough to carry a vault, since the east lateral wall of the gate alone is 7.5 RF (2.218 m) wide. The remains of such a vault are in fact visible on the same level in the so-called Solomon's Stables to the east of the Double Gate (fig. 1).<sup>39</sup>

The remaining parts of the hall of the Double Gate (fig. 5) indicate Umayyad planning. Thus, the axial longitudinal distance between the central column and the north pier in the hall flanked by two engaged columns measures, according to Ritmeyer,<sup>40</sup> 18 feet, 6 inches (5.63 m). The distance from that pier to the south pier is, according to Ritmeyer,<sup>41</sup> 18 feet, 4.5 inches (5.60 m). The dimensions 5.63 m and 5.60 m closely correspond to the length of 18 BF (12 times 1.5 BF; or 5.56 m), rather than 7.5 RP (5.54 m), or even 19 RF (5.62 m), a dimension close to the measured dimensions but utterly meaningless in terms of the design. By contrast, the length of 18 BF equals 3 modules 6 BF long, the modules which were used in the design of the plans of the Dome of the Rock and of the Golden Gate. In addition, it is very difficult to conceive that the longitudinal sequence in the earlier Herodian Gate would progress along the north-south axis by 5 RF (for the diameter of the central column), plus twice the fractionate dimension of 18.75 RF (for the would-be Herodian arches), which would equal 42.5 RF (12.567 m). Yet, one can easily obtain the same result at any time simply by placing a Herodian column in the middle of the 17 RP-wide passage of the gate. But it is only by excavating the site that one could possibly resolve this problem.

As for the vestibule of the gate (fig. 5), Ritmeyer<sup>42</sup> measured its depth at 16 feet, 9 inches (5.105 m) between the inner southern pier, flanked by an en-



gaged column, which divides the vestibule into two compartments, and the outer edge of the doorpost. This measurement corresponds to 16.5 BF (11 times 1.5 BF), which equal 5.097 m, rather than 17 RF (5.027 m), or 6.5 RP (4.805 m). The recess in the south pier which divides the vestibule was recently measured at 2.75 m, that is 9 BF (6 times 1.5 BF), which equal 2.78 m, rather than 9 RF (2.661 m), or 3.5 RP (2.587 m). We were also able to measure the width of the doorways which lead into the gate. They are 5.10 m wide, again 16.5 BF, the same dimension as the depth of the vestibule. The outer face of the south pier set between the doorways and built without the use of mortar for large roughly dressed stones in the Herodian *bossé* technique, measures, according to Schick,<sup>43</sup> 1.70 m (5.5 BF), which equals 1.699 m, rather than 5.5 RF (1.626 m), or 2.5 RP (1.848 m).

The western doorpost of the western doorway of the gate and the ensuing surface of the wall of the esplanade towards the west are built of flat-chiseled reused stones except for the lowest course built of much larger stones in typical Herodian *bossé* technique—that is, in the same manner as the eastern doorpost of the eastern doorway of the gate and the ensuing surface of the wall of the esplanade, towards the east (fig. 2[a]).

The massive lintels set on the doorposts of the doorways leading into the vestibule are 5.5 m long and almost 2 m wide.<sup>44</sup> They thus overlap the doorposts, which are 5.10 m apart, as little as 0.20 m on each side. No architect could possibly have approved such a structurally unsound arrangement, and in fact the lintel over the eastern doorway into the gate is cracked and hidden behind the attached decorative archivolt. In order to support such massive lintels the Umayyad builders surely had, first, to set the supporting columns in the doorway, then to add the imposts, and only then to install the lintels over the doorpost (fig. 6). This done, the massive relieving arches above the doorways of the Double Gate, which look like the relieving arch over the lintel of the side doorway inside the hall (fig. 7), were built in order to protect the fragile construction beneath and to divert from the doorways of the gate the heavy thrust of the upper courses of the southern peribolos. Conder<sup>45</sup> already noticed that “both the pier [the central pier between two doorways] and the lintel have marginal drafts, but the general appearance of the en-

trance leads to the conclusion that it is a reconstruction out of old material of comparatively recent date.” Corbett,<sup>46</sup> aware of the fragility of the construction of the entrances to the gate, tried to narrow the width of the doorways by assuming flat lining stones on either side of the twin openings, like the lining stones seen on the west doorway of the nearby Triple Gate or those on the central doorway of the Athenian Propylea. No trace of the lining stones has been found in the Double Gate, however, nor could they possibly have performed any structural function. As clearly seen in a photograph published by Corbett,<sup>47</sup> most lining stones at the Athenian Propylea had simply peeled off, a cardinal fact that apparently escaped Corbett’s attention.

Finally, the systematic use of the Bethlehem foot and the planning module of 6 BF used in the Dome of the Rock and the Golden Gate, as well as the post-Herodian masonry with mortar apparent in the lateral walls, renders conclusive proof for an Umayyad date for the Double Gate. It is probable that the plans of all three buildings on the esplanade came from the royal workshop of ‘Abd al-Malik.

#### DECORATIVE EVIDENCE

In reviving the anti-Herodian theory, confirmed by the archaeological and metrological evidence, one is led to the reasonable conclusion that the carved stonework decorating the upper surfaces of the double passage cannot be taken a priori as Herodian in origin. This applies to the stone carvings decorating the domes as well as to the capital of the central column, itself added to the hall only later, and to the profiled “capitals” of the broad, slightly protruding pilasters from which the supporting arches of the domes spring. True, these are all partly based on classical models, which may explain previous observations made by scholars that these stone carvings were an original Herodian creation. However, once it is accepted that the upper parts of the hall are post-Herodian, it is hardly possible to claim that all their decorative elements were taken and reworked from Herodian debris. Besides, classical elements continued to survive in later periods, though often dominated by non-classical concepts.

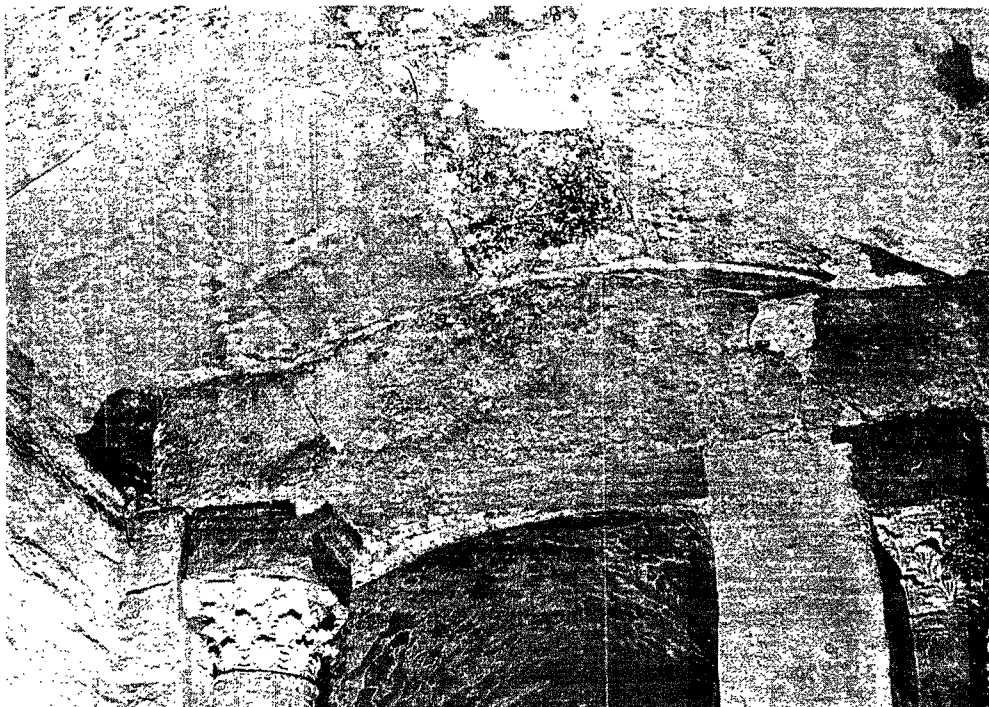


Fig. 6. Double Gate. West doorway, vestibule. Viewed from the north. (Photo: courtesy 'Isam 'Awwad)



Fig. 7. Double Gate. East wall of the hall. Lateral doorway, looking from west. (Photo: courtesy 'Isam 'Awwad)

*The pendentives.* The pendentives supporting the domes of the Double Gate are all made of a single triangular stone set in plane and have two types of decoration. The first type is the traditional shell motif composed of fluted carvings. It is still visible on the pendentives of the southwest dome, and is also suggested in another drawing of de Vogüé as having originally occurred on the southeast dome as well (fig. 8). Although a classical motif, a nonclassical dating is argued here because of its overflow above the triangular stone of the pendentive. Still perceptible, for that matter, are the upper edges of the fluted design which produces the shell-like motif at the four corners of the southwest dome; they extend above the pendentive stone onto the first ring of the dome (fig. 9). Similarly, the vegetal compositions of the second type, still visible on the pendentives of the northwest dome, clearly extend onto the surface of the first ring, thus integrating into the concentric scheme which governs the scrolling stems on this ring

(fig. 10). In both cases, then, the carvings on the triangular surfaces of the pendentives are only a part of a general decorative scheme which relates to the curvature of the dome, forming a compositional whole based on a concentric rhythm which surrounds the central disk of the crown.

This kind of arrangement, in which the decorative aspect extends beyond the confines of the restricted architectural surface allotted to it, is foreign to the classical style. One may compare it, for example, with a survival from the Herodian period in Jerusalem: the pendentives of a flattened domed roof above the principal square chamber of a tomb which was cut out of the bedrock at the mouth of the Hinnom Valley, probably designed for a priestly family.<sup>48</sup> There, each of the triangular surfaces at the four corners displays a single vegetal motif, an acanthus stem, growing along the diagonal axis but without extending beyond its triangular border.<sup>49</sup> In the northwest dome of the Double Gate the classical code was thus left

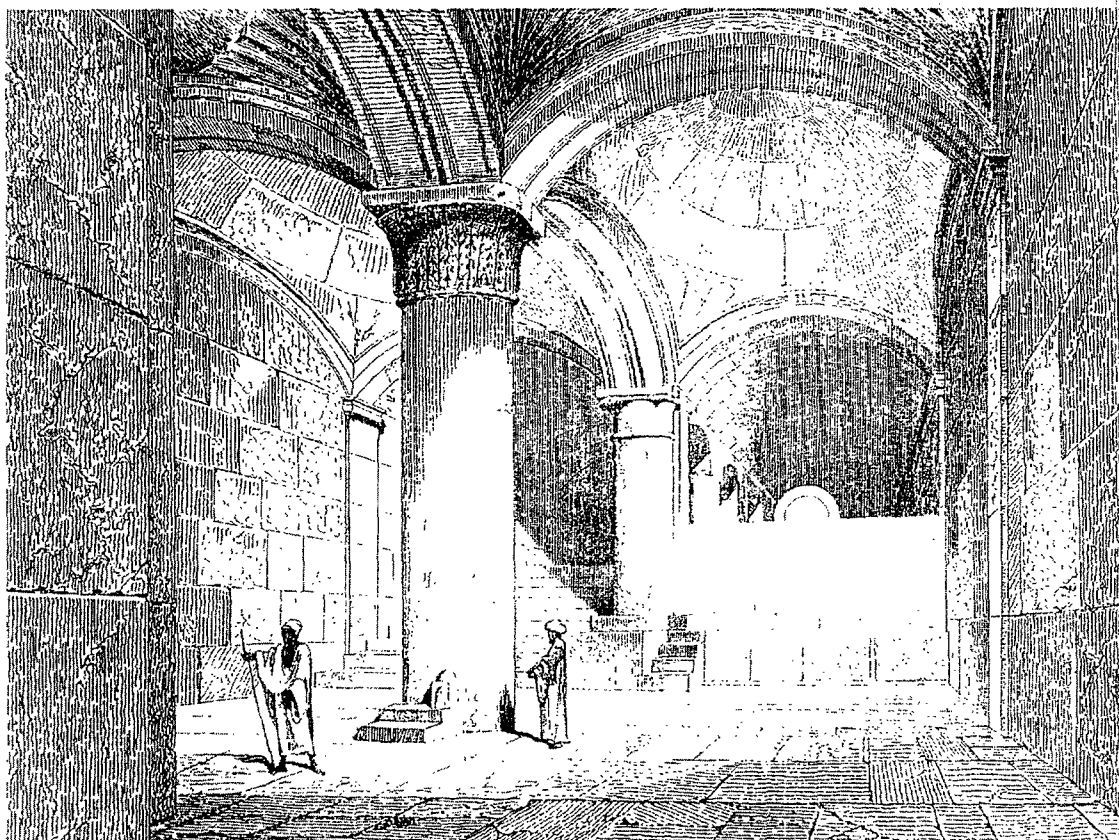


Fig. 8. Double Gate. Drawing of hall viewed from southeast by de Vogüé. (Drawing: from de Vogüé, *Le Temple de Jérusalem*)



Fig. 9. Double Gate. Upper edges of the fluted design which produces the shell-like motif at the four corners of the southwest dome, extending above the pendentive stone onto the first ring of the dome. (Photo: courtesy 'Isam 'Awwad)

behind; for the uninterrupted convolution of a complex vegetal design, which starts at the pendentives filling their entire surface, further integrates in unclassical style with the undulating scrolls that surround the fluted circle in the dome (fig. 10).<sup>50</sup> Illuminating in this respect is the conceptual difference between Herodian and later floor mosaics found in the area which, although using similar designs with a central circular disk framed by a square, are treated differently.<sup>51</sup>

The vegetal design carved on the triangular corners of the northwest dome of the Double Gate presents yet another problem. According to the various drawings made of the northwest dome, which seem to be based on preconceived ideas of Herodian origins, its pendentives are supposed to be adorned with a single acanthus motif representing the Herodian style.<sup>52</sup> Unfortunately, the original layout cannot really be understood from the deteriorated condition of the carved vestiges on the pendentives of the north-



Fig. 10. Double Gate. Northwest dome. (Photo: courtesy 'Isam 'Awwad)

west dome, which makes it difficult to examine the validity of the acanthus depicted in those drawings. However, provided the two northern domes were conceived as a symmetrical pair—as seems to have been the case of the fluted pendentives of the southern pair of domes (fig. 8)—one can try to reconstruct the original appearance of the vegetal pendentives by considering the decorative fragment of vegetal design carved into the pendentive at the northeastern corner of the northeast dome, which is still in relatively good condition (fig. 11).

The top of this vegetal design is abruptly cut off by a heavy layer of cement that confused scholars into thinking it to be a foreign element reused by later restorers who inserted it in its present position.<sup>53</sup> However, on our frequent visits to the site we noted that the same design was in fact repeated on the three other pendentives of the dome, suggesting that the pendentive was one of four of the same kind. Although

at present cut off at the top, its carving presumably extended up towards the scrolling vines appearing along the first stone ring of the dome, some of which are still clearly visible. Regarding the latter, one may contest yet another common, if false, assumption that the entire northeast dome is not original. This notion presumably arose because the darkness of this particular side of the hall created the mistaken impression that it lacked any trace of original decoration. In fact, the vestiges of decoration on it show a design which consists of vines of the kind inscribed along the first ring of the northwest dome (fig. 10).

The post-Herodian dating of the decoration on the northeast pendentive owes its convincing evidence to the compositional and stylistic concepts behind the vegetal motif (fig. 11): The composition is totally schematized and certainly not classical. Similarly nonclassical is the stylized rendering of the palmette-like motifs comprising the fragment. Thus, stems and



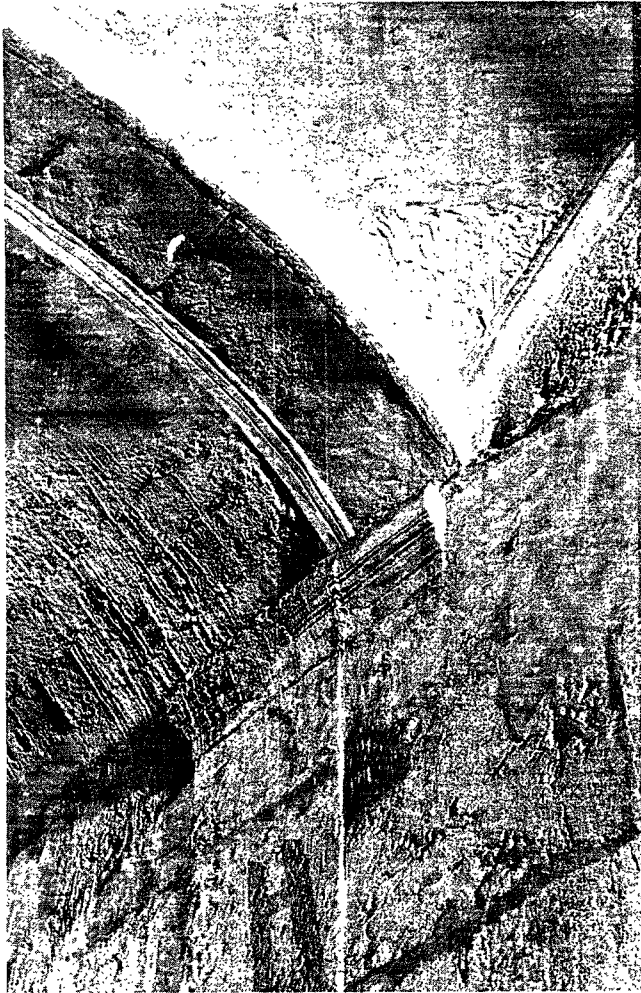


Fig. 11. Double Gate. Pendentive on northeast inner dome, viewed from southwest (Photo: courtesy 'Isam 'Awwad )

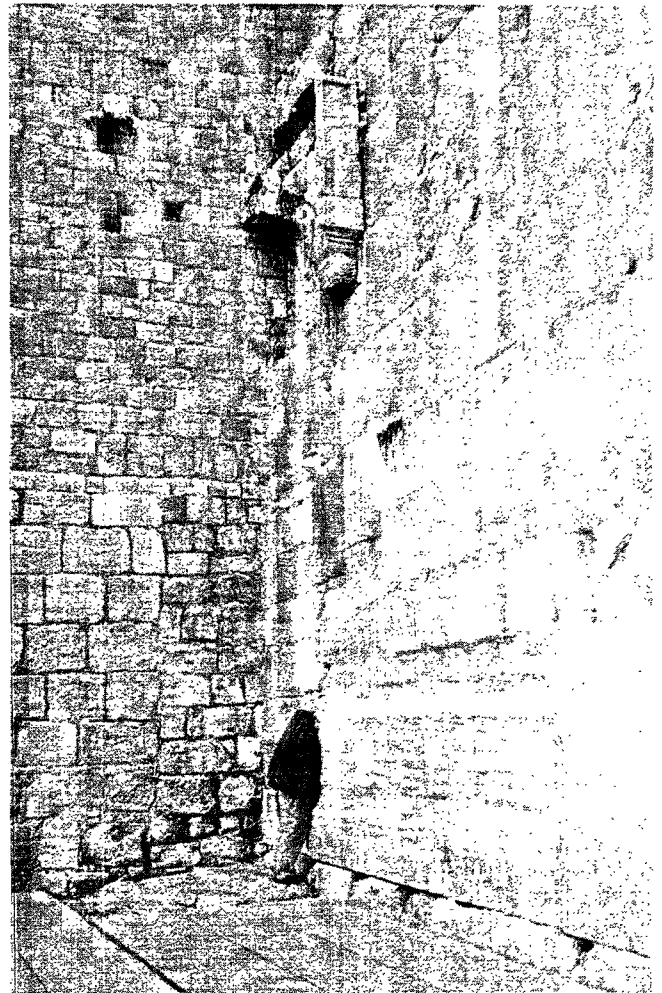


Fig. 12. Double Gate. South façade. General view from southeast.

lobes are thin and elongated in proportion, and flat and linear in rendering. Noticeable also is the conceptual similarity between the composition here and the one carved outside the gate, on the east-facing rectangular panel of the archivolt decorating the southern façade (figs. 12, 13). The archivolt affixed to the southern façade of the Double Gate is by now commonly considered entirely Umayyad (see n. 2). This panel, although it belongs to the same Umayyad framework, differs in stylistic approach; it is rather similar to the northeastern pendentive inside the hall. Its design consists of thick, undulating bands running down the vertical surface like two symmetrical vines, which, as in the pendentive, form a rhyth-

mical repetition of identical compartments, each enclosing a single foil carved in shallow relief. Thus both outside and inside the gate the vegetal designs are stylized, creating a strongly geometric impression. By simple analogy, we can conclude that the northeast pendentive in the Double Gate is contemporary with the external panel, which means that, like the latter, it was produced during the Umayyad period.

The geometric compartments of the pendentive's design each contain a single stylized palmette rendered with pointed leaves and voluted tips which spring in rigid symmetry from a central stem (fig. 11). This specific motif had been extremely common in the local repertoire since late antiquity. It is not



Fig. 13. Double Gate. South façade. Carved stone panel on east-facing surface of archivolt. (Photo: courtesy 'Isam 'Awwad)

surprising, therefore, that de Vogüé proposed a late-antique date for the decoration he saw on the north-eastern pendentive of the northeast dome.<sup>54</sup> However, this kind of stylized palmette does not exist in Herodian carvings; the earliest in the region are from about the third and fourth centuries A.D., mostly on stone carvings of synagogues which were mistakenly considered in the past as Herodian.<sup>55</sup> Following those, the same palmettes also prevailed in late Byzantine stone carvings, in both Syria and Coptic Egypt.<sup>56</sup> Their mere appearance in this pendentive can thus be taken as a definite indication of a post-Herodian date. A specific Umayyad date is feasible, as evidenced in particular by the context in which these palmettes appear—rigidly closed compartments which, as in the external Umayyad panel, again produce a strong geometric impact.

The underlying concept in these vegetal compositions does not correspond to any example produced in the region in the late-antique and Byzantine periods, but it is rather common in Coptic art. Examples are the flat carvings on vertical bands and pilasters in the Coptic centers of Bawit and Saqqara.<sup>57</sup> Also instructive is the schematized frieze along a cornice in the sixth-century church of St. Polyeuktos at Istanbul (fig. 14). According to McKenzie, it was executed by Coptic artists from Egypt working for Julia Anicia.<sup>58</sup> This is a first indication of a possible Coptic connection in Jerusalem as well.

*The Domes.* Most of the vegetal elements still visible on the northwest dome and partly visible on its companions to the east and to the south are not necessarily post-Herodian by definition. But then, again, the classical heritage survived much longer in stone carving, which makes the task of chronological determination extremely difficult. The poor condition of the carvings is another obstacle. We will have to rely mainly on the better preserved vestiges still visible on the key panels in the center of each cardinal side (figs. 10, 15–16). These are made of hard stone (the local so-called *mizi* stone); the remaining surfaces of the domes of softer limestone. One can speculate that the stonemasons used the partial designs carved on the central panels for codifying the rhythmic flow along the intervening surfaces.

The discussion will proceed along two lines. The first will show that these vegetal designs, although



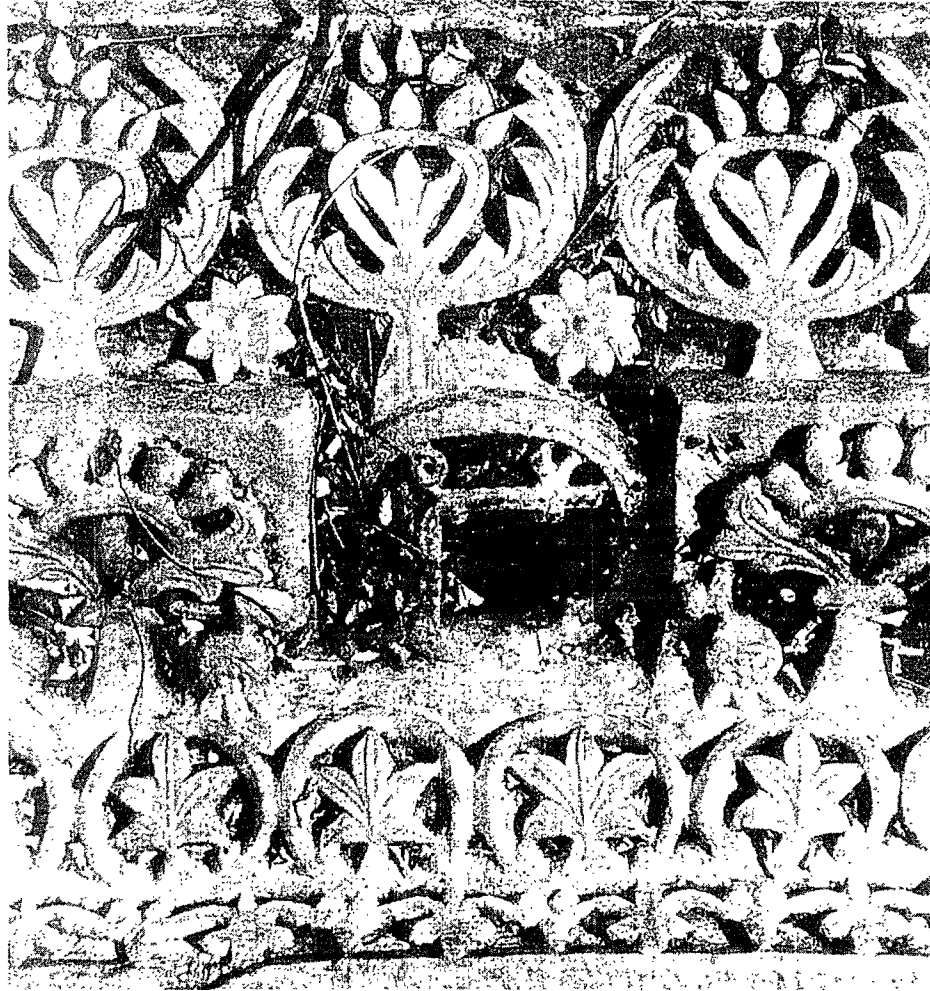


Fig. 14. Istanbul. Church of St. Polyeuktos. (Photo: from McKenzie, "The Architectural Style of Roman and Byzantine Alexandria and Egypt," *Archaeological Research in Roman Egypt*, ed. D. M. Bailey, fig. 6a)

known in Herodian stone carvings, remained prevalent throughout the centuries, undergoing gradual modification, mostly in matters of concept, such as those that characterize the decorations of the domes. Needless to say, this line of argument is introduced to explain the reasons why some scholars dated the dome decorations of the Double Gate to the Herodian period.<sup>59</sup> The second line of argument will show that, although these vegetal designs differ from those found on the pendentives that we associated above with the Coptic style, they could still possibly have also been produced by Coptic artists, since Coptic art encompasses a variety of opposing styles.

First, the vine scrolls on the first stone ring above the pendentives of the northwest dome (fig. 10), also partly visible on its companion to the east, at first sight may seem to belong to the vine-scroll designs that were popular motifs in the Herodian period, especially in funerary art. Some parallels can be detected in Herodian sarcophagi made for princely, aristocratic, and high-priestly families in Jerusalem who, like Herod himself, had at their disposal workers of great technical skill and also familiar with the Hellenistic tradition. One example is the so-called *Dominus flevit* sarcophagus in Jerusalem.<sup>60</sup> The seemingly classical continuity of the vine scrolls in the



Fig. 15. Double Gate. Key panel on northwest dome. (Photo: courtesy 'Isam 'Awwad)

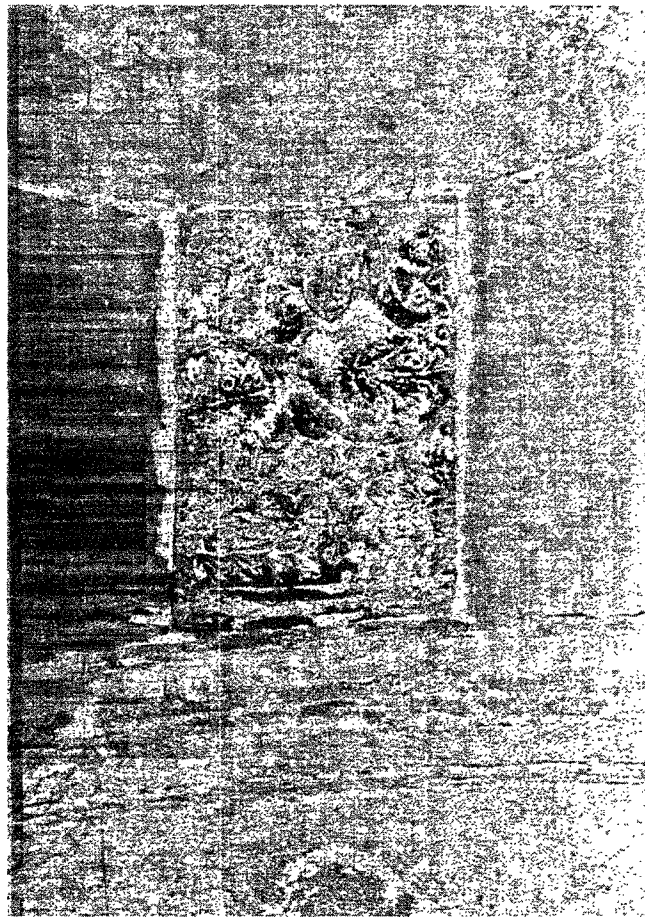


Fig. 16. Double Gate. Key panel on southwest dome. (Photo: courtesy 'Isam 'Awwad)

Double Gate applies to the details as well, both of the vine leaves and the grapes. Thus, the vine leaves as they are still partly to be seen on the southwest dome (fig. 17) are based on a five-pointed star-like shape, with sharply cut folioles standing out in flat relief. The ribbing of the veins is indicated by protruding ridges, using a rippled technique, also a basic convention typical of the classical repertoire.<sup>61</sup> The grape clusters, a central bunch flanked by two smaller ones hanging from the vine scroll (fig. 15), is again a typical classical feature, also found in Jewish monuments from the Herodian period.<sup>62</sup> The same traditional motifs persisted in Syria until at least the third century and were repeated in stone carvings from the late Byzantine period as well, so even similar forms provide no basis for establishing chronology. There

was, however, a tendency towards schematization in stone carvings of the region, and using this as the criterion the vine scrolls on the Herodian sarcophagus are still far behind the dome decorations on the Double Gate. In fact, the earliest vine-scroll designs that are similar in concept to the dome decoration in the Double Gate are much later than the classical Herodian art made for the Jewish aristocracy. Geometrically regular, dense, flat carvings similar to those on the Double Gate are found in the region only from the fourth or fifth centuries—examples are in the roughly contemporary carved fragments from Hadera, the synagogue of Chorazim, the late cancel-post from Beit Jibrin, and the lintel from Kafr Nebo (308 C.E.).<sup>63</sup>

Within this process of schematization, then, the

Herodian scrolls are still based on the classical code, even if they do reveal a certain geometrical approach, perhaps inspired by the art of Palmyra in the Assyrian heartland.<sup>64</sup> They were obviously made by draftsmen familiar with the Hellenistic legacy. Leaves and grapes are sharply cut and broadly spread out above a carved background, itself formed by some of the tendrils attached to the scroll, thus upholding a relatively correct spatial framework of the Hellenistic kind. Also illustrative of the Herodian style is the so-called Nazirite sarcophagus from Mt. Scopus, where a symmetrical pair of bunches of grapes hangs in the center accompanied by acanthus leaves in interlocking scrolls of spirals on a second plane, and by triple leaves and rosettes filling the empty spaces on yet a different plane.<sup>65</sup> By contrast, the rhythmic flow of the scrolls on the northern domes of the Double Gate is densely spread on a single plane only, and the scrolls are rather more stylized and flat than in the classical examples. It is hardly conceivable, then, that this apparently provincial style of decoration, at least relative to the sarcophagi made for the rich people of Jerusalem during the Herodian period, can belong to Herod's original royal project of the Double Gate.

The composition of these vegetal designs is also common in Byzantine stone carving, and in particular stone carving in Coptic Egypt, where it is a typical device frequently found on various architectural surfaces, such as carved lintel friezes<sup>66</sup> and niche heads, where the scrolls grow out from the corners towards the center, which in turn is governed by a human figure or a seashell.<sup>67</sup> Most illuminating in this respect is the arrangement found on a niche head from the Ashmunein Basilica (fifth century),<sup>68</sup> where schematized pairs of grape bunches appear at the corners, while the remaining space is filled, as in our case, with scrolling vines forming a relatively free-running trellis in set circles, consisting of leaves, tendrils, and grapes. Here, too, they are related to a fluted seashell design, as on our dome. In comparison, then, the schematized arrangement of the vine clusters dominating the four key panels of the northwest dome of the Double Gate is similarly set with symmetrical pairs of grape bunches hanging from a central stem. These, too, are fairly organically connected to the vine scrolls which run along the first ring of the dome, following its curving outline.

A word is in order regarding the small, plastically

rendered rosettes and whirling wheels filling the empty spaces of the vine scrolls which revolve around the central crown of the southwest dome (fig. 17). Widely diffused in the Herodian period,<sup>69</sup> these motifs were also used later.<sup>70</sup> In Coptic art, in particular, the rosette and the whirling wheel occur frequently, sometimes inserted along scrolling vines as in our monument.<sup>71</sup>

In the second ring are the decorative bands of acanthus scrolls, each enclosing a rosette, appearing on the northwest and northeast domes (figs. 10, 18), and the laurel wreaths, interrupted by single rosettes on the cardinal side, that appear on the southwest dome (fig. 19). They all are certainly classical features, but they figure in later periods as well, even in a similar style, which again makes them unreliable as chronological references. They could in fact just as well be Umayyad, considering that the first type of decorative band is also found on the Umayyad archivolts decorating the south façade of the Double Gate and in the Dome of the Rock. The Coptic element in the latter has been discussed by Rosen-Ayalon, who particularly dwells on the floral motifs between the scrolls and the focal design at the center of each rosette.<sup>72</sup> Coptic authorship is also conceivable, therefore, for the decorative bands appearing on the second ring of the domes in the Double Gate, which one could further compare with many similar renderings on the Oxyrhynchos carvings (fig. 20) which continue the classical tradition.<sup>73</sup>

Altogether, then, the Coptic connection is possible with regard to the more classical-like vegetal motifs and decorative bands on the domes. In fact, as McKenzie shows, the characteristic features of Ptolemaic architecture continued in Egypt into the Roman and Byzantine periods, and the so-called Coptic architecture surviving at sites along the Nile displays more local continuity of this classical tradition than has generally been assumed.<sup>74</sup>

Finally, the circular decorative bands create an impressive frame for the central composition which is still intact on the two western domes. On the northwest, the composition comprises a fluted seashell design surrounding a plastically rendered rosette-like motif in the center which in turn is encompassed by a flat pattern of angular compartments, each filled with foils, by now in too poor a condition to allow identification of the original forms (fig. 18). On the

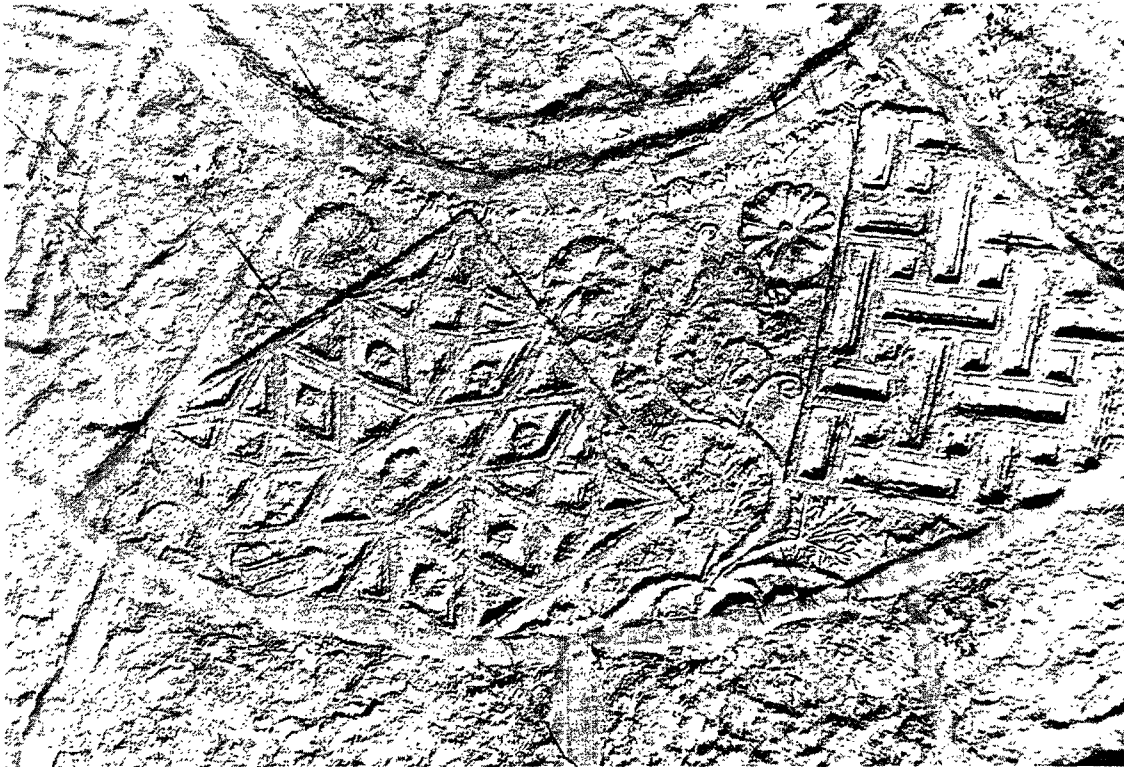


Fig. 17. Double Gate. Southwest dome. (Photo: from Mazar, *Mountain of the Lord*, p. 142)

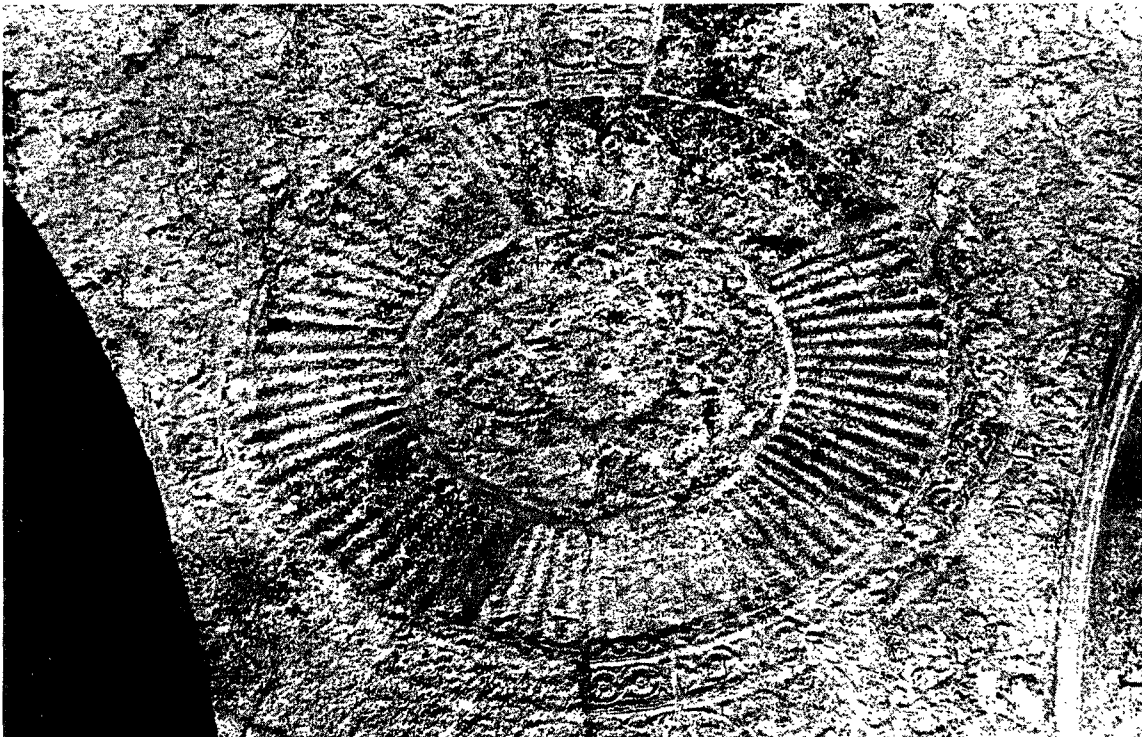


Fig. 18. Double Gate. Northwest dome interior. (Photo: courtesy 'Isam 'Awwad)

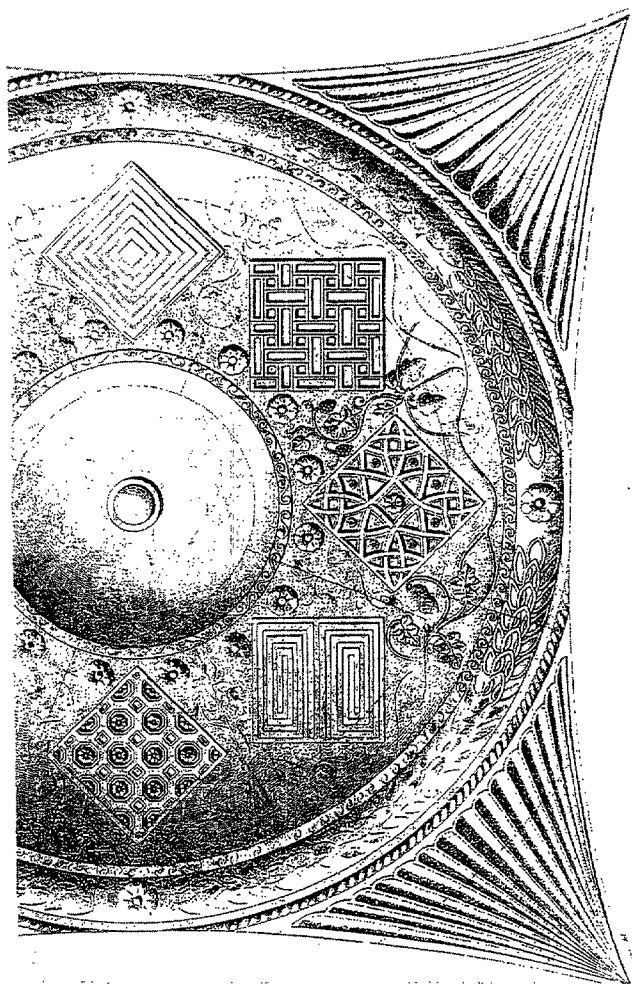


Fig. 19. Double Gate. Drawing of interior of southwest dome by de Vogüé. (Photo: from Gibson and Jacobson, *Below the Temple Mount in Jerusalem*, fig. 118)

southwest, the same central motif in the apex still in situ<sup>75</sup> is surrounded by a composite design of vine scrolls interspersed with eight panels of geometrical designs (fig. 19).

The apex rosette is known to us from the carved rectangular ceilings of the anteroms in the tombs of Palmyra.<sup>76</sup> There, the central rosette appears within a geometrical framework which is created by the deep coffers in the ceilings. This geometrical type might in fact have led to the subsequent development of similar patterns, even if in flat versions, like those

still to be found behind the angular compartments surrounding the central rosette in our domes. That said, the flat rendering in the latter is obviously based on a different concept and is found only much later than Palmyra, as, for example, in the rendering of the geometric network surrounding the rosettes carved on limestone in Qasr al-Hallabat, presumably from the Umayyad period.<sup>77</sup> The pattern thus became manneristic, and it appears in that form in the domes of the Double Gate. In fact, the general impression created by the compound apex design of our domes is that of a monumental sun-burst motif of a kind most closely paralleled in the reconstructed Umayyad dome of the Khirbat al-Mafjar *dīwān*.<sup>78</sup> The sun-burst motif, which in both cases appears as an impressive apex, is striking. In the northwest dome, it is further embellished by a halo of sunbeams, created by the dense, fluted pattern carved in radial order, spreading along the stone ring below.<sup>79</sup>

Still unexplained are the eight diamond-shaped panels with geometric designs interspersed by vine scrolls spreading all over the second stone ring of the southwest dome. These designs, first published in de Vogüé's drawing (fig. 19), have been considered as representing an original Herodian creation. In their present condition they are held together by later work (fig. 17). Their diamond-shaped frames, filled with various geometric patterns, were, Wilkinson believes, generated by two rotated squares, in the same way as in the plan of the Dome of the Rock, as Mauss and Creswell showed.<sup>80</sup> Although the connection with the Dome of the Rock proved to be wrong, this design does appear in Byzantine mosaics. One example, cited by Wilkinson, is the floor mosaic made in the sixth century for a church at Gerasa,<sup>81</sup> which may again speak for a Byzantine rather than a Herodian precedent.

The placement of the geometric patterns enclosed in diamond-shaped frames on the Double Gate is very unlike Herodian stonework. Although interlacing patterns had been common in the region since the classical period, all such early geometric patterns, including later imitations in the Syrian region, were basically restricted to the surfaces of friezes and were accordingly designed as continuous, undulating meanders in a horizontal, sometimes curved, flow. In contrast, each of the geometric elements in our dome, although maintaining a classical look in its details, is



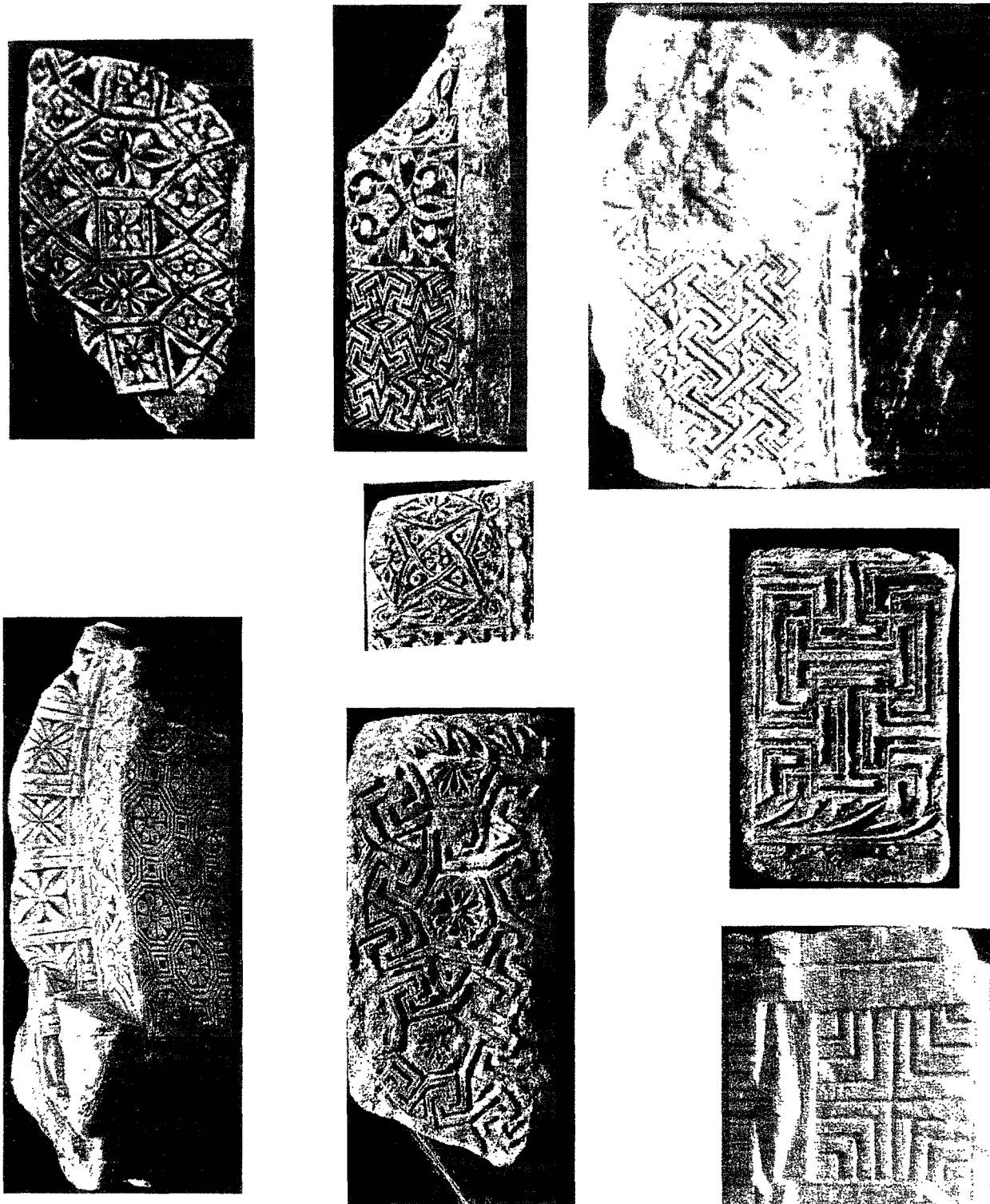


Fig. 20. Oxyrhynchus. Geometric designs on friezes and arch heads. (Photos: from Breccia, *Le Musée Greco-Romain d'Alexandrie*, II, pls 33-36; 38; 45; 47)

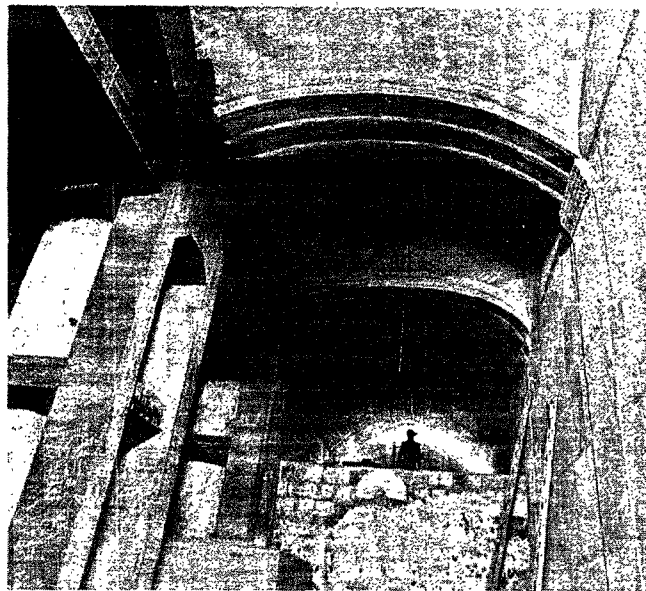


Fig. 21. Double Gate: (a) Hall viewed from northeast. Photograph taken in 1928, before installation of concrete structure; (b) hall viewed from southeast. Photograph taken after 1928, with concrete structure. (Photos: courtesy 'Isam 'Awwad)

treated as a single self-contained entity which is displayed separately. No parallels are found in Syrian stone carvings, which deliberately tried to maintain the classical legacy. They do appear, however, in carvings made by the Copts. In Oxyrhynchos, for example, most of the friezes are divided into alternating panels, some filled with vegetal compositions and others with geometric designs which, as in our case, are treated as single entities (fig. 20).<sup>82</sup> It is among the latter that we can also discern exact parallels for each of the geometric designs carved on our dome (fig. 20 versus fig. 19). Moreover, in a number of seventh-century Coptic limestone stelae, geometrical designs are displayed as autonomous carpet-like entities, playing a dominant role on the carved surface.<sup>83</sup> The geometric repertoire on these stelae is unique among known funerary monuments in the Middle East. The geometric repertoire of the Coptic stelae, as of the alternating panels dividing the friezes in

Oxyrhynchos, indeed includes designs similar to those carved on our dome. It is on the southwest dome of the Double Gate, then, that geometrical designs, so profuse in Byzantine and Umayyad floor mosaics, not only achieved, perhaps for the first time, an autonomous role in stone carving, but represented an impressive tour de force of technique as well. This elaboration developed until it dominated all carved media in the later Umayyad period (e.g., al-Aqsa and Khirbat al-Mafjar).

*The Capitals.* The capital over the column in the center of the Double Gate (fig. 2[d]) had been seriously eroded even before it was finally blocked in 1928 by concrete construction (fig. 21a-b). The following analysis is based on fragmentary data: a single, rather poor photograph taken by Rev. Charles J. Wilson in 1902 and two drawings, one by Pierotti<sup>84</sup> and one by de Vogüé (fig. 22).



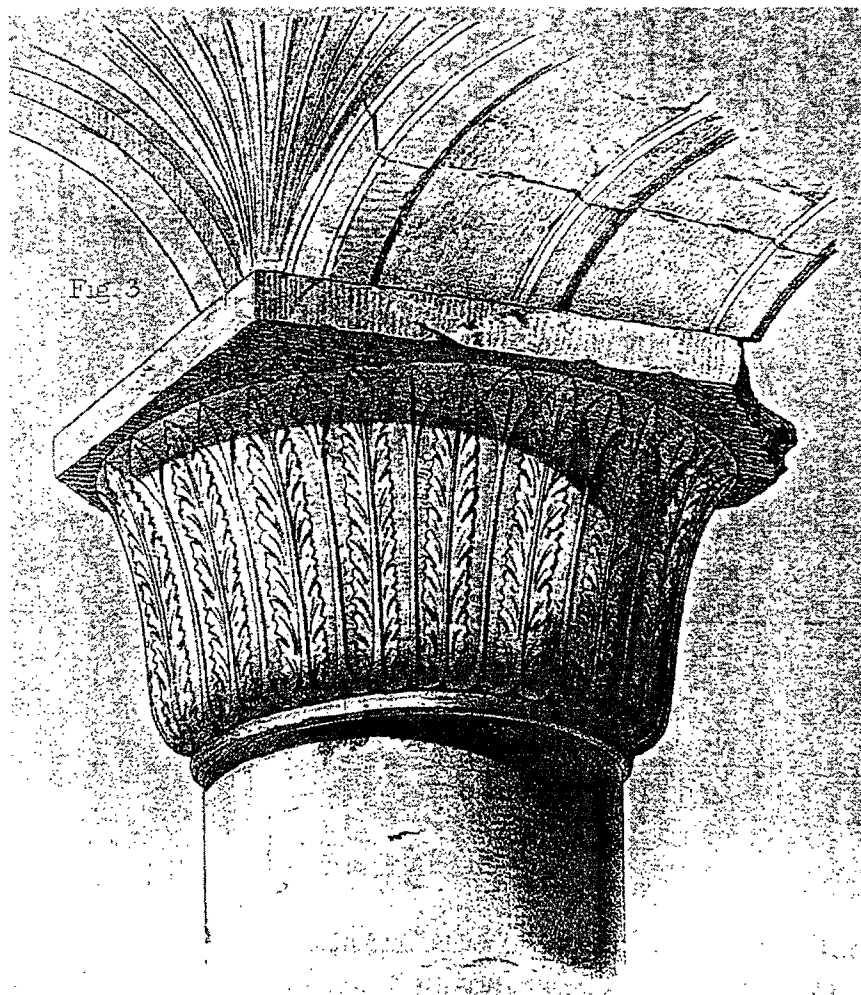


Fig. 22. Double Gate. Central capital. Drawing by de Vogüé. (Photo: from de Vogüé, *Le Temple de Jérusalem*, pl. XXIX)

This capital crowns a column measuring 1.53 m in diameter (see n. 37). It presents a modified version of the classical Corinthian scheme, with repeated, alternating acanthus motifs evolving along a single, frieze-like horizontal row, all carved in extremely low relief. Each acanthus consists of a symmetrical setting of leaves springing from both sides of an apparently grooved stem. The leaves are stiff and flat, displaying linear indentation at the edges and low carving of the veins. They alternate with bare, slightly protruding stems, which climb from bottom to top, each crowned with an angular, spiky leaf.

Needless to say, this capital is not Herodian. Nor does it correspond to late-antique or Byzantine capitals in Syria, which display the acanthus motifs in at least two horizontal rows, with occasional protrusions.<sup>85</sup>

However, it can be compared to an almost unique Coptic type of acanthus base, a local Egyptian feature virtually unknown elsewhere.<sup>86</sup> Examples similar in design to the Double Gate capital are an undated fragment in the Coptic Museum at Cairo (fig. 23), and two in Saqqara: an acanthus base of an engaged column<sup>87</sup> and a free-standing base from the sixth-century monastery of Apa Jeremie.<sup>88</sup> In those instances, as here, the decoration displays a single row of acanthus motifs, often alternating with tall stems similar to ours. They all display identical, schematized acanthus designs, with fine vertical lines for the stems and tooth-like serrations for the leaves. Also interesting is the repeated appearance in Coptic architecture of the same kind of acanthus designs in capitals, both in angular and round ones, as well.<sup>89</sup>

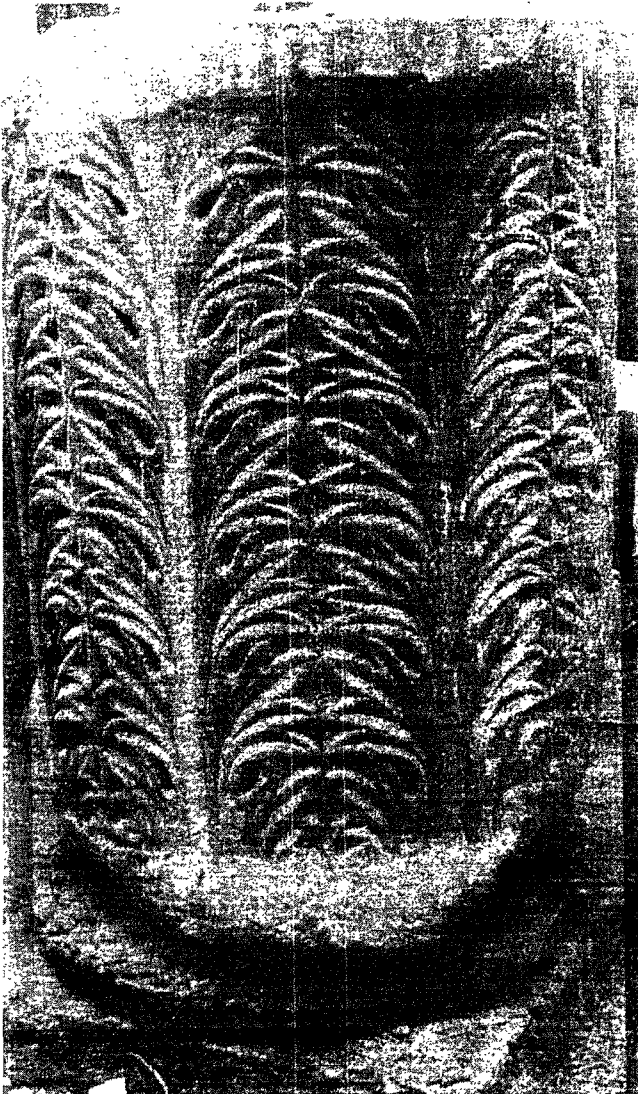


Fig. 23. Coptic acanthus base. Coptic Museum, forecourt. (Photo: from Torok, "Notes on the Chronology of Late Antique Stone Sculpture in Egypt," fig. 7)

True, the type of acanthus base already figures in the classical architecture of Alexandria, some as early as the second century B.C.,<sup>90</sup> others from the late second or third century C.E. (fig. 24).<sup>91</sup> Although similarly schematized, in either Alexandrian case the acanthus surfaces are somewhat more roundly modeled when compared with the flat, stylized scheme of rendering the acanthi in the Coptic bases (cf. fig. 24 with fig. 23). The strongly schematized, flat design of the central capital inside the Double Gate in Jerusalem (fig. 22), even though slightly changed in form,



Fig. 24. Coptic acanthus base from Alexandria. (Photo: from K. Michalowski, *Alexandria* [Vienna, 1970], p. 66)

seems to belong to the same process, which indeed has here reached its ultimate expression.

Interesting in terms of the Egyptian-Jerusalem connection is also the stylistic resemblance between the early Alexandrian base (fig. 24) and the two acanthus wreaths on the façade of the so-called Tomb of the Kings in Jerusalem.<sup>92</sup> This may indicate that ornament in Jerusalem during the Herodian period was strongly influenced by Alexandrian art ranging from the first century B.C. to the first century C.E.<sup>93</sup> By comparison with the latter, the unclassical character of the central capital in the Double Gate is more than obvious, for the surface treatment of its acanthi is far more flat and stiff, lacking the dense sharp carving of the veins and the deep indentation at the edges that characterize the Alexandrian type and its Near Eastern version at the Tomb of the Kings in Jerusa-



Fig. 25. Double Gate. Capital crowning the western column next to the east doorpost. (Photo: courtesy 'Isam 'Awwad)

lem. All this shows, in short, that the capital certainly cannot be included in the Alexandrian-inspired group of ornaments. This unique type of Jerusalem capital was probably inspired by the Coptic acanthus base used only in Egypt. The Coptic kind has, according to Torok, "leaves of the early-fourth-century type, the modelling of which foretells the typical modelling starting, as it seems, rather contemporaneously at Ahnas, Bawit and Ashmunein around 330 and going to become, in contrast to other areas of the eastern Mediterranean, the only acanthus type."<sup>94</sup> If so, its single reappearance in the Double Gate in Jerusalem must mean that it was designed by Coptic stonecarvers.

The schematized, flat appearance of the capital of the western column next to the east doorpost of the eastern doorway (fig. 2[c]) is just as striking (fig. 25).<sup>95</sup> In particular, the treatment of this capital recalls the decorative concept in the pendentive of the northeast dome (fig. 11), and the panel on the southern façade of the Double Gate (fig. 13). A relative chronology based on stylistic criteria can be established for the carved design of this capital, with a *terminus post quem* determined by its decorative scheme. As

will be shown, this decorative scheme is certainly not Herodian, nor does it correspond to the local, late-antique style current in the region. It can only be compared to the grammar of sculptured ornament in the late Byzantine world of the Middle East, specifically Coptic art.

This capital is a highly schematized variant of the fully articulated Corinthian capital where acanthus motifs alternate with volutes, reduced here to a very simple, shallow drum adorned by four angle leaves with no surmounting volutes, alternating with small foliated beds on each of the four surfaces. The latter are symmetrically arranged in two pairs of spiky lobes, with an extra pair of lobes converging inward, two of which enclose a drilled grain-like motif and the other two a small rosette. These alternating motifs are all connected by the repeated curving lines of a continuous bare *caulicoli* from which they spring. The extremely shallow carving of all the components is further characterized by a distinctly graphic treatment: both leaves and stems are rendered with linear grooves along the axis, deeply incised and scooped out. The linear effect thus created is intensified by the rhythmic repetition of drilled, loop-like renderings of the

curved tips of the angle foils and of the drilled "grains" and rosettes on each surface. This technique creates linear shadows which emphasize the graphic role of the design, which is entirely different from the relatively plastic effect of the three other capitals beside the gatepost.

The capital of the western column reflects the modifications of the classical Corinthian capital that took place in the Middle East, possibly under the influence of the specific process occurring in the classical architecture of Alexandria.<sup>96</sup> Similarly schematized versions are common in the so-called Corinthian-Nabatean group, ranging from the first century B.C. to the first century C.E. (fig. 26).<sup>97</sup> Such schematized versions are also found in contemporary Herodian sites, e.g., Samaria-Sebaste, Herodium, Cyprus, and Masada.<sup>98</sup> The type found in Nabatea has a certain graphic effect which, although rendered in relatively high relief, in a way also resembles our capital (cf. fig. 26 and fig. 25). That said, no Nabatean Corinthian capital fails to preserve the corner volutes, also a cardinal component in Corinthian capitals of the Herodian period.<sup>99</sup> The absence of volutes in our case in itself provides proof that no Herodian date is applicable to this capital. The same conclusion also follows from post-Herodian versions of schematized Corinthian capitals produced in Syria. These all preserve some vestiges from their classical predecessors, having at least four volutes at the corners that are totally lacking in our case.<sup>100</sup>

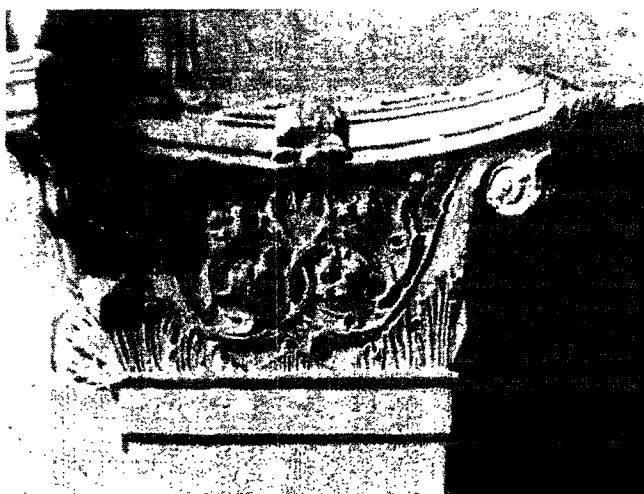


Fig. 26. Petra. Corinthian-Nabatean capital of type B. (Photo: from Patrich, "The Formation of the Nabatean Capital," p. 217, fig. 7)

In contrast, the Egyptian versions of the Corinthian capital had since the early days of Alexandria (second century B.C.) shown a tendency to omit the traditional volutes altogether.<sup>101</sup> This trend appears in Coptic sculpture as well, at least until the late sixth century C.E. For our present concern, a large group of so-called pseudo-Corinthian Coptic capitals, produced by Coptic craftsmen for their monasteries and churches, is particularly pertinent.<sup>102</sup> Ranging in date from the fourth to the late sixth century, these capitals show an obvious tendency to omit the volutes altogether, which may indicate a possible Coptic linkage to the capital at the east gatepost of the Double Gate.

Examples such as a capital from Abu Mina (Maryut), dated to the early fifth century, another one, as yet undated, in the Coptic Museum in Cairo, and two more from Bawit,<sup>103</sup> show several Coptic variants of the modified Corinthian type, of the kind described by Badawy as "a seemingly native invention found only in Coptic sculpture."<sup>104</sup> Thus, as on our capital, each of their surfaces is governed by a central motif—a cross in Abu Mina, a five-lobed leaf embraced by two converging lobes which evolve from a symmetrically foliated bed, in the others. This compositional concept, so common in Coptic capitals, is unknown in Syrian ones.

Stylistically speaking, our capital seems, then, to conform with idiosyncrasies originating in Coptic Egypt—the linear grooves incised or scooped out along the central axis of the leaves and stems are typical of Coptic stonework. This convention is unknown in Syrian examples, where the acanthus leaves retain relatively classical forms and the stems are never grooved along the axis.<sup>105</sup> Only in the Coptic examples are the stems and spiky leaves grooved along the axis in a similar way. Most revealing in this respect is a fragmentary frieze from Oxyrhynchos, featuring stems and leaves of the grooved kind found on our capital.<sup>106</sup>

The second element indicating a Coptic connection is the repeated drilled loop rendered on the flat leaves, which particularly resembles a Coptic stylistic convention, but is certainly not typical of Herodian or Hadrianic stonework, or post-classical examples from Syria. A similar stylistic approach is evident in the various foliate motifs in Coptic stonework, for example in Oxyrhynchos (fig. 27). It is only in such works that the tips of the flat spiky leaves are often rendered as deeply drilled loops.<sup>107</sup>

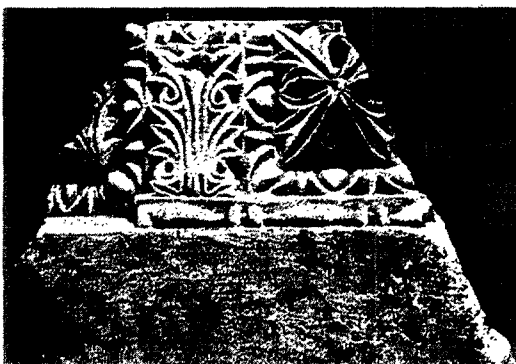
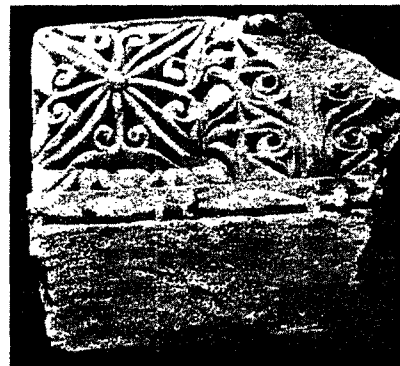


Fig. 27. Oxyrhynchos. Fragments of carved friezes. Alexandria Museum. (Photos: from Breccia, *Le Musée Greco-Romain d'Alexandrie*, II, pls. 29, 34, 36, 39, 45)

Finally, the design of alternating motifs evolving from the forked curves of a single, continuously winding *caulicoli* found on the capital, although not entirely unknown in late Byzantine stonecarving from the Middle East,<sup>108</sup> also has parallels in Coptic stonework.<sup>109</sup> As in our case, the five-lobed leaf repeatedly inserted between meandering lines evolves from its own forked stem. This concept, presumably based on Sasanian models in stucco friezes,<sup>110</sup> is in fact an integral part of the general process of modifying classical forms. Yet, within this general framework our capital definitely follows the Coptic way of interpreting the process.

From both stylistic and compositional aspects, then, we can safely conclude that the carvers working on the capital for the Double Gate were strongly influenced by Coptic rather than by other contemporary Middle Eastern patterns. In fact, our capital only differs from its Coptic parallels by the relative spaciousness of the flat background, which enhances the graphic effect of the design. A similar concept in metalwork is apparent in a fifth-century silver cup exhibited in Vienna in 1964.<sup>111</sup>

The comparisons cited here show how the two unusual capitals of the Double Gate, though different in design, display a repetitive quality very similar to what appears to be specific to Coptic art. While still referring in both cases to Hellenistic and Roman elements, the rendering is entirely graphic in concept and the three-dimensional arrangement in rows, one behind the other, is abandoned in favor of a two-dimensional pattern deriving from one alignment. The Hellenistic tradition is thus transformed into a style characterized by a loss of naturalism in foliate design and carving. As in Coptic art, the two capitals create a linear, geometrical impression, extremely formalized in delineation.

*Concluding Notes.* The Coptic spirit appears to underlie the designs of the nonconformist capitals in the double passageway of the Double Gate as well as the one decorating the northeast pendentive. A Coptic source is also indicated for the broad geometric panels on the southwestern dome.

The capitals reflect two Coptic groups current at the same time as other types of capitals which preserved the original Corinthian style. Thus, as Drioton pointed out with reference to the Coptic capitals in the Nilometer of Rawda, those in which the Hellenistic tradition was transformed into a style charac-

terized by a loss of naturalism in foliate design and carving coexisted with fourteen others that preserved the original Corinthian type.<sup>112</sup> In a limited way, this occurs in our monument as well, where the inner sides of the southern doorposts present both types of capital.

Combined styles are also apparent in the dome decorations. The unclassical schematized design of the extant pendentive, which was probably identical to the other northern pendentives, is combined with a different kind of vegetal design which is in line with the modified versions of the classical legacy found throughout the region. It is this combination of two opposite stylistic concepts that helps to affirm a Coptic connection for the decorations. Unlike Syrian craftsmen, who maintained a late-antique flavor in their work throughout the centuries, Coptic stonecarvers found their own original way of interpreting the ancient legacy.

As suggested by Badawy and Torok with regard to various Coptic sites such as Oxyrhynchos, Ahnas, Saqqara, and Bawit, architectural ornaments dating from the fourth to the late sixth centuries and appearing side by side often reveal different stylistic traditions preserved for a considerable time. Torok, in particular, emphasizes the coincidence in Coptic stonework of different stylistic trends, in local limestone or sandstone, executed by generations of sculptors and dispersed all over the country with no chronological or stylistic dividing line.<sup>113</sup> Badawy further admits that "stylistic and iconographic evidence is not as reliable for Coptic work as it is for Byzantine production, because of the wide differences that are apparent in Egypt between various contemporary productions."<sup>114</sup>

Distinctively Alexandrian architecture continued into the late-antique and early Christian periods of the fourth to sixth centuries, with many examples of broken pediments and niche heads executed in the classical style. This could mean, McKenzie suggests, that local expertise in classical architecture was called upon in the carving of later architectural decoration at nearby sites.<sup>115</sup> However, the classical legacy of Alexandria was gradually modified. While there was a surprising coexistence of different stylistic trends, the most widely diffused were those characterized by a gradual process of de-Hellenization, both in details and in concept. The surfaces would be decorated in low relief with emphasis on a graphic, repetitive quality, enhanced by the geometrical delineation of foliated



motifs, often rendered as well-balanced patterns of light and shade, stiffly stylized, while abstract, geometric designs might be employed as autonomous entities.<sup>116</sup>

THE CHRONOLOGICAL RELEVANCE OF  
COPTIC ART TO THE STONWORK OF THE  
DOUBLE GATE

The phenomenon of different stylistic tendencies coexisting through generations with no chronological or stylistic dividing lines is the hallmark of Coptic architectural sculpture from the early fourth until at least the late sixth century. These characteristics, idiosyncratic to the Copts, are all present in the decorative repertoire of the Double Gate. Our findings may therefore indicate that Coptic stoneworkers worked on the Double Gate in Jerusalem.

Confirming this conclusion depends on proving two points: first, that the two artistic trends persisted among the Copts at least until the Umayyad period, and, second, that the Umayyad rulers made use of Coptic stoneworkers for their restoration work in Jerusalem. Regarding the first, the Coptic examples presented are to a great extent relevant to this specific line of argument. Although most are unreliably dated, they show how stylistic modes of abstraction appeared at an early period and continued until at least the beginning of the sixth century. Most illuminating in this respect are the marble decorations in the church of St. Polyeuktos at Istanbul, completed by 527, and executed, according to McKenzie, by artists from Coptic Egypt who worked for the Byzantine empress Anicia Juliana. It is there that one may find the various Coptic stylistic tendencies coexisting at a single site.<sup>117</sup> As McKenzie shows, the vine decorations on a marble niche head in St. Polyeuktos are echoed only in Coptic stonework and in fact on the same architectural element, a niche head.<sup>118</sup> The Coptic parallels cited by McKenzie are the vines decorating the niche head of the fifth-century basilica at Ashmunein that were also closely connected with the vine scrolls in our monument. Similarly, the stylized, symmetrical palmette motifs decorating a cornice in St. Polyeuktos (fig. 14) are associated by McKenzie with examples in Oxyrhynchus, again on the same architectural elements, this time cornices.<sup>119</sup> The connection between these and the motifs decorating the extant pendentive of the northeast dome in our monument is apparent. The characteristics

peculiar to the Copts are all present, then, in the decorative repertoire inside the Double Gate, an indication that Coptic stoneworkers were employed there.

To decide whether or not Umayyad rulers used Coptic stoneworkers, we must rely mainly on historical evidence. Although the archaeological data are less explicit regarding the Coptic architecture of the years after the sixth century, we know that Coptic churches and monasteries continued to be active, as did also Coptic craftsmen in all their traditional fields. For example, we read in sources that in the years 619–29, following a few years of terror at the hands of the Persian invaders, the Copts enjoyed a peaceful interlude, during which they were much better treated by the Muslims than they had ever been by the Byzantines.<sup>120</sup> According to other written sources, similar conditions also prevailed from the spread of Islam in 642 until at least the mid eighth century. In some documents one reads that, although subjected to heavy taxation, the Copts enjoyed virtual self-rule and their churches and monasteries were in use for many years.<sup>121</sup> A Nestorian bishop mentions in a letter that the Arab governors used to visit Coptic sites and even presented gifts to their churches and monasteries (e.g., 'Abd al-'Aziz ibn Marwan, in 686).<sup>122</sup> In fact, it was only in the mid eighth century that monasteries and churches gradually became impoverished, and no new churches could be built or ruined ones restored.<sup>123</sup>

Regarding the suggestion that the early Umayyads employed Coptic artists to decorate the Double Gate, we may turn to the Aphrodito papyri, even if the surviving letters sent by Qurrah b. Sharik, the Muslim governor in Fustat, to Basil, the bishop acting as the administrator of the village of Aphrodito, are all dated to the second decade of the eighth century.<sup>124</sup> Many of these letters deal with orders by the caliph or other Muslim officials for items produced in Aphrodito, such as textiles, cushions, felt, and mats, but also rope of palm fiber, cables, copper chains, and nails used mainly in shipbuilding. Local production also included split palm trunks and fronds, as well as gnarled fig trees, all used for building ships or for roofing official buildings. Thus, for example, a total of 21 split palm trunks and 2,500 palm fronds was ordered from this district for roofing the palace of the Amir al-Mu'minin that was then being built in Fustat.<sup>125</sup> These orders show that the basic industries remained in the hands of the Copts to serve the needs of the Umayyad administration.



Local craftsmen were summoned by the Muslim governor from all over the country to work on official building projects as well. For example, one of the letters (no. 1336) records that the governor allotted from the administrative district of Aphrodito one carpenter to work on the barges in Babylon for four months and that the carpenter, together with his tools, was sent by Basil to a certain Muhammad b. Abi Habibah, who was in charge of the work at the barges.<sup>126</sup> From other letters we know that Coptic craftsmen were also sent to work on official projects abroad. Thus, laborers, skilled workmen, and carpenters were hired from Aphrodito, not only for the construction of the palace of the Amir al-Mu'minin in Fustat,<sup>127</sup> but for another palace in Jerusalem, and for the mosques of Jerusalem and Damascus. Forty skilled workmen from Aphrodito were employed in Damascus<sup>128</sup> and one laborer for six months for the construction work in Jerusalem,<sup>129</sup> or, in another instance, three for twelve months.<sup>130</sup>

The specific terms used in the governor's letters are of interest. The term "skilled workmen" usually refers to carpenters, "laborers" to builders, perhaps stonemasons. In some cases, even the names of the builders are specified, such as a certain Nemesion and a Sarapion, both from the village of Onouphis.<sup>131</sup> In other instances, the individuals in charge of construction work are mentioned. From these references one can deduce that the supervisors were usually Muslims—for example, in Jerusalem the construction of the mosque was supervised by a certain Ibn Yazid<sup>132</sup>—and most of the architects Christians, perhaps even Copts, including a certain Yahya b. Handalah, who built the Fustat palace<sup>133</sup> and Enoch b. Theodosius, who built the mosque in Damascus.<sup>134</sup>

Although these letters admittedly belong to the second decade of the eighth century, they may be seen as representing a more general phenomenon prevalent throughout the Umayyad period and already known in 'Abd al-Malik's time. The employment of architects and craftsmen from all over the empire to work on the Dome of the Rock is a striking instance. In particular, the Umayyad governors maintained close contacts with the Copts in Egypt (e.g., the visit of 'Abd al-'Aziz to the monastery of Tamweyh in 686).

The Aphrodito papyri refer to a particular district, but they may probably be taken as fortuitously preserved evidence for the conscription of craftsmen from other parts of Egypt as well, suggesting a general practice among the Umayyads of employing any skilled

workmen available in the regions which they governed.<sup>135</sup> Thus, the decorative work carried out inside the Double Gate could also have been accomplished by a group of Coptic artisans employed by the Umayyad governor in Jerusalem. After all, Anicia Juliana found such a procedure appropriate for her majestic buildings at Constantinople and, as we read in other documents, so did Justinian himself.<sup>136</sup> Finally there is the example of Leontius of Neapolis who testifies in 645 that John, Archbishop of Alexandria, was ordered in 629 to send thousands of Copts to help in reconstructing the churches in Jerusalem that had been destroyed by the Persian invaders.<sup>137</sup> These precedents would be adequate models for imitation by any Umayyad ruler who wished to manifest his power vis-à-vis the Byzantines.

#### THE RAISON D'ÊTRE OF THE DOUBLE GATE

The Double Gate is usually paired with the Golden Gate because of their similarity in plan: both are double gates with two parallel series of domes<sup>138</sup> and both have a common Umayyad dating as suggested by the style of the elaborate decorative compositions on the façades.<sup>139</sup> The interiors of the two gates are also seen to be paired in their smooth lateral walls articulated with a series of flat pilasters.

Their interiors differ significantly in decorative style, however. The Coptic spirit apparent in the decorations of the Double Gate creates a very different, indeed unclassical, impression when compared to the Hellenistic flavor achieved by the elaborate, plastically rendered carvings inside the Golden Gate. Needless to say, these differences imply that the artisans working in the two gates were of different origins. The team decorating the Golden Gate may well have included craftsmen trained in the Syrian artistic tradition.

Comparing the concept underlying the decorative programs of the two gates, one finds that in the Golden Gate the decorative emphasis is on the horizontal rather than the vertical features,<sup>140</sup> with the evident aim of directing the viewer forward towards the end of the gate opening onto the esplanade. The capitals of the lateral pilasters are heavily decorated with vegetal ornaments, as is the broad, horizontal frieze of the architrave running above, whereas the surfaces of the domes are left bare. The Golden Gate was built by 'Abd al-Malik clearly to serve as a monumental and symbolical entrance to the Haram from the

east. The decorative program inside the Double Gate, on the other hand, seems to emphasize the higher parts, so that all the ornamental details, already flat, are totally subdued for the sake of articulating the movement from the floor level to its culmination in the domes (fig. 8). In other words, while no decorative emphasis was placed on the lateral cornices and friezes, the rising movement of the arches was strengthened by the subdivision of their broad surfaces into parallel, molded stripes (figs. 4, 21a-b). The upward spread was further enhanced by the motifs on the triangular pendentives, and the spherical interior surfaces of the domes were articulated by their carved radial bands, clearly meant to create a sense of concentric movement from the base to the crown. Instead of merely serving as an entrance, as the Golden Gate does, the Double Gate obliges the visitor to pause for a while inside the hall, and to turn his eyes upwards towards the lavishly decorated domes. The hall stands in its own right as a place to be visited and admired before leaving through the doorways at the northern end.

With this kind of decorative program, the Double Gate may have been intended to emphasize the new axis of the Haram created by 'Abd al-Malik's Dome of the Rock. By its position at the southern entrance to the axial route leading to the Dome of the Rock, the Double Gate anticipates the sight of the magnificent new shrine on the upper platform. The decorated domes of the Double Gate may also be viewed as an intentional echo of the inner surfaces of the monumental dome which stands above the sacred rock. The inner surface of the dome over the rock was undoubtedly originally decorated with elaborate designs, presumably carved in wood or plaster.

Finally, the Double Gate may also be seen in terms of its position relative to the compound to the south, which was presumably already inhabited. In plan, the partially recovered building which stands close by<sup>141</sup> is certainly related to contemporary Umayyad palaces,<sup>142</sup> and was probably built by 'Abd al-Malik as his royal residence. This suggestion is based on the terminology of the Aphrodito letters. Whenever the papyri refer to the mosques of Damascus and Jerusalem or to the palace of the caliph in Fustat, the writer remarks that those buildings were under construction. These include references to the construction of the Damascus mosque, built by Enoch b. Theodosius,<sup>143</sup> and to the construction of the mosque of Jerusalem, which was by then being supervised by Ibn

Yazid.<sup>144</sup> Similarly, the letters referring to the palace of the Amir al-Mu'minin say that it is "now being built" in Fustat,<sup>145</sup> but the palace of the same amir in Jerusalem is never described as "being under construction,"<sup>146</sup> suggesting that it was by then completed, and the workmen were engaged in maintenance only. If so, the Double Gate was built by 'Abd al-Malik to achieve two purposes in his grand scheme: the Double Gate as a monumental prologue foretelling the great new shrine on the upper platform of the esplanade and as the gate for royalty, by then residing in the palace adjacent to it on the south, i.e., in the partially recovered building which stands close by the Double Gate, to the east of building II shown in the plan reproduced in Rosen-Ayalon (see n. 141).

Regarding building II, it is notable that in the single reference (letter 1433) to the construction of a new secular building for the caliph in Jerusalem, the structure is identified as "the new building (*xtisma*) for the Amir al-Mu'minin" and not as a "palace" (*aule*),<sup>147</sup> terms suggesting that by the time the letter was written Amir al-Mu'minin already had his "palace" (*aule*) in the area adjacent to the Haram on the south, and the Coptic workmen mentioned in other letters in connection with it were engaged in its maintenance only. The construction of the official building, identified in letter 1433 as a new "building" (*xtisma*), rather than a new "palace", must therefore refer to the so-called building II, perhaps ordered to house the administration of the caliph or his viceroy.<sup>148</sup> It was constructed, according to Rosen Ayalon, under al-Walid (705-15).<sup>149</sup>

The building further to the east, next to the Double Gate, must therefore be identified as the palace of Amir al-Mu'minin mentioned in the Aphrodito letters as *aule*. Already finished long before al-Walid ordered the construction of building II, it might follow, then, that it was an integral part of 'Abd al-Malik's building program, to complement the axial scheme.<sup>150</sup> The Double Gate would not only have served as a suitable, impressive prologue to the axial route leading northwards towards the culmination of the complex, but also as the entrance for those living in the nearby palace. For them, the Double Gate was a truly royal gate, also leading directly to the qibla of the nearby Aqsa mosque.

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## NOTES

*Authors' note:* In memory of Professor David Ayalon.

1. M. de Vogüé, *Le Temple de Jérusalem* (Paris, 1864), p. 247, pl. IV, fig. 10.
2. Myriam Rosen-Ayalon, *The Early Islamic Monuments of al-Haram al-Sharif* (Jerusalem, 1989), pp. 36–37, suggests that the façade of the Double Gate, in its reconstructed form, was built first, providing a model for the Golden Gate, built shortly afterwards. Cf. Meir Ben-Dov, *In the Shadow of the Temple* (Jerusalem, 1982), p. 138, who argues that “from the standpoint of the type of rock used, artistic style, and technical modes of creation, its motifs date to the early Moslem period, and are highly reminiscent of the ornamentation on the Golden Gate.” The Umayyad date of the latter was already argued by Carl Watzinger (in 1935), who dated the Golden Gate on stylistic grounds to ‘Abd al-Malik’s reign; then by Robert Hamilton (in 1949), and again by Spencer Corbett (in 1952); Shimon Gibson and David M. Jacobson, *Below the Temple Mount in Jerusalem*, Biblical Archaeological Review, International Series 637 (Oxford, 1996), pp. 256, 258, referring to C. Watzinger, *Denkmäler Palästinas*, 2 vols. (Leipzig, 1935), 2: 115; R. W. Hamilton, *The Structural History of the Aqsa Mosque* (Oxford, 1947), p. 68, n. 1; S. Corbett, “Some Observations on the Gateways to the Herodian Temple in Jerusalem,” *Palestine Exploration Quarterly* 84 (1952): 10.
3. Benjamin Mazar, *The Mountain of the Lord* (New York, 1975), p. 269: “The ancient gate and its ancient inner vestibule had not been completely destroyed. The Moslems [Umayyads] repaired it, mainly at the upper sides of its flanking walls, replacing the ruined huge ashlar with smaller ones.” The same is repeated by Ben-Dov, “The inside of the western Hulda Gate is the original Herodian gate . . . its inner walls and its central pillar all date to the Second Temple period” (Ben-Dov, *In the Shadow of the Temple*, p. 138).
4. For the inner side of the western doorway, see the drawing by de Vogüé, *Le Temple de Jérusalem*.
5. Their insertion, according to Ben-Dov, was contemporary with the Umayyad palaces found in Mazar’s excavations immediately to the south (Ben-Dov, *In the Shadow of the Temple*, pp. 97–101; also cited in Gibson and Jacobson, *Below the Temple Mount in Jerusalem*, p. 280, n. 12). See also Rosen-Ayalon, *Early Islamic Monuments of al-Haram al-Sharif*, p. 38a. For earlier scholars using the same arguments, see J. Jeremias and A. M. Schneider, “Das westliche Sudtor des herodianischen Tempels,” *Zeitschrift des Deutschen Palästina-Vereins* 65 (1942): 118–21; Hamilton, *Structural History of the Aqsa Mosque*, p. 68; Corbett “Some Observations on the Gateways to the Herodian Temple in Jerusalem,” p. 10, all cited in Gibson and Jacobson, *Below the Temple Mount in Jerusalem*, p. 256.
6. As held by Melchior de Vogüé (1860), and Jeremias (1942), the reuse of architectural components in this manner was typical of the Islamic period: Gibson and Jacobson, *Below the Temple Mount in Jerusalem*, p. 256, referring to de Vogüé, *Le Temple de Jérusalem*; and to Jeremias and Schneider, “Das westliche Sudtor des herodianischen Tempels.”
7. As Ben-Dov (*In the Shadow of the Temple*, p. 138), claimed, “the decorated domes at the gate’s entrance . . . all date to the Second Temple period.” The same was proposed by Leendert P. Ritmeyer, “The Architectural Development of the Temple Mount in Jerusalem,” Ph.D. diss., University of Manchester, 1992, p. 242. Gibson and Jacobson argue for the Herodian date by comparing the flat domes with their relief decoration to Hellenistic rock tombs in Jerusalem and tomb towers at Palmyra (Gibson and Jacobson, *Below the Temple Mount in Jerusalem*, p. 256).
8. Thus, as suggested in 1847 by James Fergusson, and supported by Robert Willis, the vestibule with its central column and four flat domes, together with its walls of large ashlar, was a relic of Herod’s Temple (J. Fergusson, *An Essay on the Ancient Topography of Jerusalem* [London, 1847], pp. 118–19; idem, *The Holy Sepulchre and the Temple at Jerusalem* [London, 1865], p. 97; also cited in Gibson and Jacobson, *Below the Temple Mount in Jerusalem*, pp. 235–36, who consider Fergusson’s theory to be correct). Similar conclusions are argued by Barclay, who said that it “had all the characteristics of Jewish architecture,” although the exterior entablature, he thought, was unquestionably a Roman addition: J. T. Barclay, *The City of the Great King; or, Jerusalem as It Was, as It Is, and as It Is to Be* (Philadelphia, 1858), p. 488, cited in Gibson and Jacobson, *Below the Temple Mount in Jerusalem*, p. 236. Claude R. Conder similarly supposed that the four domes with pendentives roofing the vestibule of the Double Passage were Herodian: C. R. Conder, “The High Sanctuary at Jerusalem,” *Transactions of the Royal Institute of British Architects*, 1879, p. 33, cited in Gibson and Jacobson, *Below the Temple Mount in Jerusalem*, p. 249. Watzinger argued that the vestibule of the Double Gate is a unique example of a Herodian interior. Its original Herodian arrangement included, he believed, the engaged half-column attached to the central pier in the main doorway, the monolithic column in the center of the vestibule, and the semi-column attached to the northern pillar, as well as the flat pilasters which project from the ashlar walls, all of which provided support for the transverse arches bearing the four flat domes with pendentives, which are also part of the Herodian scheme (Watzinger, *Denkmäler Palästinas*, 2: 35–38). Finally, Corbett, like Watzinger, was convinced that much of the original structure was still in situ, including the central gate pier, the walls of the vestibule, and the door lintels which were originally supported by lining stones along the door jambs on either side of the two openings (Corbett, “Some Observations on the Gateways to the Herodian Temple in Jerusalem,” pp. 7–14; cited in Gibson and Jacobson, *Below the Temple Mount in Jerusalem*, p. 258). Ritmeyer aligns the monolithic column in the center of the vestibule with the row of columns in the Herodian Stoa (Ritmeyer, “Architectural Development of the Temple Mount in Jerusalem,” fig. 48).
9. The inscription was discovered by Raya Shani during a visit to the site in May 1996. It was introduced by her in the seventh colloquium, “From Jahiliyya to Islam,” held by the Institute for Advanced Studies at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem in July 1996.
10. We would like to take this opportunity to thank the director of the Office of the Awqaf, Mr. Adnan Husaini, for allowing us on the site for further research, and Mr. Khairi

Dajani, who devoted much of his precious time to accompanying us during our repeated visits there. We also wish to record our warmest gratitude to the chief architect of the Haram, Mr. 'Isam 'Awwad, for his generous cooperation.

11. This frieze was plastered over during the renovation works at the site (autumn 1999).
12. The script seems to include the following letters: *ha'* (or '*ain* or *mim*), *dhal* (or *ra'* or *ba'*), *alif*, lacuna, *mim* (or *ha'*) *ra'*, (or *dhal*), lacuna, *ba'* (or *ya'*), lacuna, *lam* (or *alif*).
13. Yoram Tsafrir and Gideon Foerster, "The Dating of the Earthquake of the Sabbatical Year of 749 C.E. in Palestine," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 55, 2 (1992): 231–35.
14. Ben-Dov, *In the Shadow of the Temple*, p. 323. This would mean that during the early Abbasid period the southern entrance to the Haram was no longer significant. The inscription on the Double Gate must therefore be viewed as commemorating the royal enterprise of 'Abd al-Malik.
15. Thus, for example, the epigraphic style in a fragment of a monumental inscription from the time of the Fatimids (Ben-Dov, *In the Shadow of the Temple*, p. 323) suggests restoration work carried out on the southern side of the Haram.
16. Ibn Kathir, *Abū al-Fidā'*, *al-Bidāya wa'l-Nihāya fi'l-Ta'rikh* (Cairo, 1351–58), 11: 226, quoting from Ibn Khallikan. For the reference, accompanied by an English translation of the tradition, see Amikam Elad, *Medieval Jerusalem and Islamic Worship* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1995), p. 25, n. 15.
17. Elad, *Medieval Jerusalem and Islamic Worship*, p. 25.
18. *Ibid.*, pp. 25–26. Elad bases his suggestion on earlier publications by Watzinger, Tsafrir, Ben-Dov, and especially Rosen-Ayalon, who attributed both gates to the Umayyad period (Elad, *Medieval Jerusalem and Islamic Worship*, n. 17).
19. Max van Berchem, *Matériaux pour un Corpus Inscriptionum Arabicarum, Jerusalem, Haram*, II, 2 (Cairo, 1922), p. 392, no. 276, refers to a certain Kufic inscription in the Double Gate. He says that the inscription was seen by Sauvaire inside the hall, and described by him (inscription no. 66), as carrying, perhaps, an invocation to Muhammad and his *Ṣahāba*. Van Berchem declares that in his two visits to the site, in 1894 and in 1914, he found no trace of the inscription described by Sauvaire. He accordingly assumed that what Sauvaire saw were mere graffiti.
20. Analyzing the Double Gate, Ritmeyer has already suggested that initially six rather than the present four domes formed the ceiling of the hall of the gate (Ritmeyer, "Architectural Development of the Temple Mount in Jerusalem," p. 238, figs. 48–49). If so, the plan of the Double Gate would be even more similar to that of the Golden Gate.
21. For a comprehensive resume of all views regarding the archaeological evidence in the Double Gate, see Gibson and Jacobson, *Below the Temple Mount in Jerusalem*, *passim*.
22. In 1849 George Williams disagreed with Fergusson and Willis, contending that the vestibule with its shallow domes should be dated to the late Roman period, by which he meant the sixth century (Gibson and Jacobson, *Below the Temple Mount in Jerusalem*, p. 236, citing George Williams, *The Holy City: Historical, Topographical, and Antiquarian Notices of Jerusalem* (London, 1849), 1: 103. In 1860 Melchior de Vogüé similarly wrote that, although materials found among the extensive ruins of the Herodian Temple were used in construct-

ing the present building, its extant structure should be dated to a later period. The cupolas and supporting members in their existing form were thus assigned by de Vogüé to restoration by Justinian. It was in this phase, he thought, that the doorways in the southern wall of the Haram with their various arches, including those which connect to the central column, were constructed and the vestibule was then covered by four cupolas (de Vogüé, *Le Temple de Jérusalem*, p. 272, as cited in Gibson and Jacobson, *Below the Temple Mount in Jerusalem*, p. 239). Similarly, in 1864 Pierotti suggested that the Herodian vaulting of the Double Passage was destroyed at the time of the razing of the Temple by the Romans, and that although materials found among the extensive ruins were used in constructing the walls, the present building is not from the time of Herod, but without doubt from that of Justinian (E. Pierotti, *Jerusalem Explored: Being a Description of the Ancient and Modern City* [London, 1864], 1: 81–83, as cited in Gibson and Jacobson, *Below the Temple Mount in Jerusalem*, p. 236).

23. An exception is Ugo Monneret de Villard (*Introduzione allo studio dell'archeologia islamica: origini e il periodo omayyade* [Venice, 1966]), who even before the discovery of the Nea church on the Western Hill contended that the restoration and partial rebuilding of the original Herodian structure was undertaken by 'Abd al-Malik.
24. As Charles W. Wilson argued (*Ordnance Survey of Jerusalem Made in the Years 1864 to 1865* [Southampton, 1866], pp. 38–39), the typically Herodian chiseled drafts round the margins still exist at the south end of the southern pier, between the two gates (as shown in Gibson and Jacobson, *Below the Temple Mount in Jerusalem*, p. 247, fig. 112), while the stones at the side walls of the vestibule, originally similarly worked, disappeared at some point in the rebuilding, in order to enhance the four pilasters opposite the monoliths which support the cupolas. Wilson shows that the original work can still be found at the foot of the pilasters, where the junction of the old and the new may be seen, left in a rough state, which could mean that the floor of the second phase was at a higher level; see also Gibson and Jacobson, *Below the Temple Mount in Jerusalem*, p. 246. To demonstrate the same point, de Vogüé cited the stones at the foot of the wall where the ancient facing, covered by the first steps of the staircase, had been hidden, and escaped smoothing; subsequent destruction of the staircase exposed them again, and they are now visible on the eastern wall (see fig. 4). Pierotti agreed with de Vogüé on the subject of the western wall, saying that because the rustic work remains on some stones and not on others, where there are only slight traces of it, seems to indicate an attempt to destroy it everywhere to smooth the face of the wall. The west wall was shown by Pierotti to be built of irregular courses of smoothed Herodian ashlar laid in mortar, a technique which shows that this wall is definitely not of the age of Herod (Pierotti, *Jerusalem Explored*, 1: 81–83, cited in Gibson and Jacobson, *Below the Temple Mount in Jerusalem*, p. 236). As Pierotti thought, the western wall is undoubtedly from Justinian's time. The upper parts of the east wall were noted by Pierotti as entirely formed of rectangular blocks, all of moderate dimensions, which can only be post-Herodian, again laid in mortar (Pierotti, *Jerusalem Explored*, 1: 81–83, also cited in Gibson

- and Jacobson, *Below the Temple Mount in Jerusalem*, p. 236). Finally, even Claude R. Conder, an advocate of the Herodian theory, accepted that the stone faces in the side walls were cut at a later date to obliterate the drafted margins, and that the restorations, together with the fine undrafted ashlar of the walls, were presumably made in the time of Justinian (C. R. Conder, "Notes on Colonel Wilson's Paper on the Masonry of the Haram Wall," *Palestine Exploration Fund Quarterly Statement*, 1880, pp. 91–97, cited in Gibson and Jacobson, *Below the Temple Mount in Jerusalem*, p. 249, paragraph 4).
25. Such rustic walls, in fact, are suitable for vaulted corridors. We believe that the ceiling of the original Herodian Gate was probably vaulted (see below).
  26. De Vogüé, *Le Temple de Jérusalem*, pp. 8–10, cited in Gibson and Jacobson, *Below the Temple Mount in Jerusalem*, p. 243. For another possible clue regarding the dating of the central column, see n. 37.
  27. Thus, as Pierotti noted, the stones used for the vaulting correspond perfectly with Roman (i.e., Byzantine) masonry and cannot belong to an earlier period, since they are laid with mortar (Pierotti, *Jerusalem Explored*, 1: 81–83, as cited in Gibson and Jacobson, *Below the Temple Mount in Jerusalem*, p. 236). Then, de Vogüé observes that the spherical pendentives upon which these cupolas rest are typically Byzantine, and ascribes this whole phase of reconstruction to Justinian. He thinks that the various arches were constructed at this time, including those connected with the central column, and at the same time the vestibule was covered by four cupolas (de Vogüé, *Le Temple de Jérusalem*, pp. 8–10, cited in Gibson and Jacobson, *Below the Temple Mount in Jerusalem*, p. 243).
  28. See Corbett, "Some Observations on the Gateways to the Herodian Temple in Jerusalem," p. 9. Corbett thinks that the pendentives supporting the domes in the Golden Gate and the Double Gate respectively are distinctly different. The former are of a conical shape, which is an extension of the ring courses of the stones of the dome they support, like the pendentives in the second century c.e. mausoleum in Samaria. The latter are set in planes, like the pendentives in the second century c.e. west bath in Gerasa.
  29. Even Corbett, who first raised the chronological problem which might derive from this difference, found post-Herodian parallels for both systems of pendentives. Thus, for the specific arrangement of the pendentives in the Double Gate, Corbett quotes comparisons from early Syrian cupolas that can be securely dated to the second century c.e. (Corbett, "Some Observations on the Gateways to the Herodian Temple in Jerusalem," p. 9). Similar arguments are raised by Gibson and Jacobson, *Below the Temple Mount in Jerusalem*, p. 256; the pendentives, they say, would have been a device widely used by Alexandrian architects of the Caesarean and Augustan periods, but also earlier, as found in Egyptian brick buildings. The system continued to prevail under the Romans, as in funerary monuments from Amman and Samaria, and the *thermae* at Gerasa. No earlier examples of either type of pendentive are cited by Gibson and Jacobson or by Corbett. One may conclude from their findings that neither the pendentives in the Golden and Double Gate nor the domes they support necessarily pertain to the Herodian work on the Temple Esplanade (first century b.c.). The second conclusion would be that the pendentives in both gates could equally well support the domes built by Hadrian, Eudocia, Justinian, Chosroes, Modestus, 'Abd al-Malik, or any of his successors, for that matter.
  30. Doron Chen, "On the Golden Gate in Jerusalem and the Baptistery at Emmaus-Nicopolis," *Zeitschrift des Deutschen Palästina-Vereins* 97 (1981): 171–72.
  31. *Ibid.*
  32. Gibson and Jacobson, *Below the Temple Mount in Jerusalem*, p. 249.
  33. F. Hulstsch, *Griechische und Römische Metrologie* (Berlin, 1882), pp. 64–73.
  34. De Vogüé, *Le Temple de Jérusalem*, p. 9.
  35. Gibson and Jacobson, *Below the Temple Mount in Jerusalem*, p. 249.
  36. *Ibid.*, p. 236.
  37. Ritmeyer, "Architectural Development of the Temple Mount in Jerusalem," p. 242. According to Charles Clermont Ganneau (*Archaeological Researches in Palestine* [London, 1889], 1: 258), the diameter of the central column, measured before it was encased in a heavy concrete armature about seventy years ago (fig. 21a-b), is 1.53 m (our gratitude is due to Dr. David Jacobson who kindly drew our attention to this reference). If so, the column would be of the Umayyad period since 1.53 m equals 5 BF (1.544 m).
  38. The systematic use of the Roman units of measurement can be traced in the design of a few remaining elements from the Herodian Esplanade, such as the remains of the outer face of an ancient portico towards the northwest corner of the Esplanade, 5–6 m south of the present Bab al-Sarai, and the design of Robinson's Arch. The first, measuring ca. 4.6 m in length, was still visible and described in detail by Hugues Vincent, *Jérusalem de l'Ancien Testament*, 3 vols. in 2 (Paris, 1956), 2: 543–45, fig. 164. From the outer face of that wall two pilasters protrude, 1.48 m by 0.2957 m each, the two being set 2.68 m apart. In Roman feet, these dimensions yield 5 RF in breadth (1.478 m), by 1 RF protrusion (0.2957 m) for each pilaster, and 9 RF (2.661 m) for the distance between the two. If the remains of the ancient wall are indeed a section of the Herodian west portico on the esplanade, we may assume that columns with a diameter of 5 RF stood behind the pilasters, each 5 RF (or 2 RP) broad. By analogy, then, the central column in the hall of the Double Gate, of the same diameter, might possibly be a segment of one of the columns of the original Herodian portico, or the royal basilica, placed later in the hall of the gate to provide support for the arches carrying the domes (see above, n. 37). As to the second, Robinson's Arch, which springs from the western wall of the Temple Esplanade, its width along the wall of the esplanade measures, according to Robinson (E. Robinson and E. Smith, *Biblical Researches in Palestine, Mount Sinai and Arabia Petraea* [London, 1841], p. 425) "fifty one feet," which is 15.54 m along the wall, and the arch is distant from the southwest corner of the Esplanade by "thirty nine feet," which is 11.887 m. In terms of the Roman units of measurement, these dimensions give 52.5 RF or 21 RP (15.52 m) and to 40 RF or 16 RP (11.828 m). We were also able to measure the span of Robinson's Arch

- on the ground level. The span measures 12.60 m, that is 42.5 RF or 17 RP (12.567 m). Hence we concluded that one Roman pace, the equivalent of 2.5 Roman feet, was indeed the basic module that Herod's architects used in planning the Temple Esplanade (*contra* R. Grafman, "Herod's Foot and Robinson's Arch," *Israel Exploration Journal* 20 [1970]: 61).
39. Gibson and Jacobson, *Below the Temple Mount in Jerusalem*, p. 278, fig. 128.
  40. Ritmeyer, "Architectural Development of the Temple Mount in Jerusalem," p. 242.
  41. *Ibid.*
  42. *Ibid.*
  43. Gibson and Jacobson, *Below the Temple Mount in Jerusalem*, p. 253.
  44. *Ibid.*, p. 258.
  45. *Ibid.*, p. 249.
  46. Corbett, "Some Observations on the Gateways to the Herodian Temple in Jerusalem," fig. 1, pl. III.
  47. *Ibid.*
  48. R. A. S. Macalister, "The Rock-cut Tombs in Wady er-Rababi, Jerusalem," *Palestine Exploration Fund* (1901): 216-17. See also K. and L. Ritmeyer, "Reconstructing Herod's Temple Mount in Jerusalem," *Biblical Archaeology Review* 6 (1989): 52. The flattened cupola of the rock-cut tomb is covered, as is the northwest dome of the Double Gate, with a fluted design creating a full circle surrounding a central disk.
  49. As shown on a drawing by Macalister, "Rock-cut Tombs," p. 217.
  50. True, this kind of development is already apparent in stone carvings made during the late Herodian, or rather post-Herodian, period. Thus, for example, the carved pediment of the Tomb of Grapes in Jerusalem, although commonly identified as Herodian in origin, already heralds a decorative phenomenon which is due to occur in this medium later: for the scrolling vines which spring from its triangular corners spread their crowded stems towards a central medallion which they surround (A. Avi-Yonah, *Art in Ancient Palestine* [Jerusalem, 1981], pl. 12/5). However, the deep-cut rendering of the vine leaves and grapes creates in the latter a different style which is closer to the classical code than is the style of the stone carvings in the Double Gate. See also below, n. 63.
  51. Examples for the classical code underlying Herodian designs of floor mosaics are found in the upper hill of Jerusalem, in the houses of priests of the Second Temple (Nahman Avigad, *The Upper City of Jerusalem* [in Hebrew] [Jerusalem, 1981], figs. 160-64). An unclassical concept dominates the many Byzantine mosaics in the region, and recurs on those made for the Umayyads.
  52. Rachel Hachlili, *Ancient Jewish Art and Archaeology in the Land of Israel* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1988), figs 7a-b. As claimed by Mazar, *Mountain of the Lord*, p. 143: "The cupolas still retain traces of beautiful acanthus decorations in Herodian style."
  53. De Vogüé, *Le Temple de Jérusalem*, p. 9.
  54. For a drawing of the pendentive in the northeast dome by de Vogüé, see in *Le Temple de Jérusalem*, p. 9, fig. 7.
  55. After Avi-Yonah, *Art in Ancient Palestine*, pp. 271-81.
  56. For other examples, see E. Breccia, *Le Musée Greco-Romain d'Alexandrie*, II, 1931-1932 (Rome, 1978), pl. XXXVI; A. Effenberger and Hans-George Severin, *Das Museum für Spätantike und Byzantinische Kunst* (Berlin 1992), cat. nos. 70, 109; J. Beckwith, *Coptic Sculpture, 300-1300* (London, 1963), pls 90, 117, 130; C. Strube, *Baudekoration im Nordsyrischen Kalksteinmassiv* (Mainz am Rhein, 1993), pls. 17 c,d, 35 d. For further Coptic examples, see A. Badawy, *Coptic Art and Archaeology: The Art of the Christian Egyptians from the Late Antique to the Middle Ages* (Cairo, 1978), p.169, fig. 3.99/7,8.
  57. E.g., Badawy, *Coptic Art and Archaeology*, p. 200, fig. 3.126.
  58. Judith McKenzie, "The Architectural Style of Roman and Byzantine Alexandria and Egypt," in *Archaeological Research in Roman Egypt*, ed. D. M. Bailey (Ann Arbor, 1996), pp. 139-42.
  59. Thus, Mazar, *Mountain of the Lord*, p. 143: "The cupolas still retain traces of beautiful acanthus decorations in Herodian style." The same is claimed by Ben-Dov (*In the Shadow of the Temple*, p. 137), in his comment, "Without actually seeing these domes and their ornamentation, it is impossible fully to appreciate Jewish art of the Second Temple period." Ritmeyer ("Architectural Development of the Temple Mount in Jerusalem," p. 242), writes: "Both the carving technique and the style of decoration [of the domes] proved to be typically Herodian, and could be compared with many other Herodian fragments which were found in a corresponding stratigraphical context." Finally, Gibson and Jacobson, following their "pro-Herodian" approach, declare that "the decoration of these ceilings is now seen to be firmly based in the Herodian repertoire and Watzinger is correct in seeing its origins in the late Hellenistic period" (Gibson and Jacobson, *Below the Temple Mount*, p. 256). To confirm their approach, Gibson and Jacobson also offer comparisons with the Hellenistic rock tombs in Jerusalem and tomb towers at Palmyra. For the Hellenistic rock tombs in Jerusalem, Gibson and Jacobson refer to the tomb at the mouth of the Hinnom Valley published by Macalister (above, n. 48). On the tombs of Palmyra mentioned by Gibson and Jacobson, where the anterooms are covered by circular rosette-like designs carved in square and rectangular frames, see Henri Seyrig, Robert Amy, and Ernest Will, *Le Temple de Bel à Palmyre* (Paris, 1975), pls 26, 27, 29, 34.
  60. After Avi-Yonah, *Art in Ancient Palestine*, pl. 23.
  61. This kind of leaf is usually known as the Assyrian leaf: Hachlili, *Ancient Jewish Art and Archaeology in the Land of Israel*, p. 80, fig. 26.
  62. Early examples appear on the façades of the so-called Tomb of the Kings and Tomb of Grapes, both usually attributed to the first century C.E. (Hachlili, *Ancient Jewish Art and Archaeology in the Land of Israel*, p. 105, fig. 8; Avi-Yonah, *Art in Ancient Palestine*, pl. 12/1, 12/5). The same type also appears on coins of the Second Revolt: "In Jewish monuments in Palestine there is a marked preference for one particular type of cluster of grapes, viz. the type with a central bunch flanked by two smaller ones" (*ibid.*, p. 70). As Avi-Yonah further says, "It makes it probable that we have here the reproduction in other media of the famous golden vinestock in the Second Temple (Josephus, *Antiq.*, XV, II, 3), in itself most likely constructed on an Oriental model." The Oriental model, as he points out, is further confirmed

- by its appearance at Palmyra on the great portal of the Temple of Bel, first century C.E., with stylized execution of the surfaces of the clusters.
63. Avi-Yonah, *Art in Ancient Palestine*, pls 13/6,8, 25/2; PAES, 2b, p. 294, fig. 322. For the late sixth or seventh century Avi-Yonah introduces a stone carving fragment found in Beisan (ibid., pl. 11/3). Here a stem ends in a large, extremely schematized bunch of grapes, which fills the whole center of the spiral created by the stem. It alternates with a rosette that has no organic connection.
  64. Avi-Yonah, *Art in Ancient Palestine*, pp. 23, 139–41. Avi-Yonah (ibid., p. 23) compares the stylized vine scroll on the *Dominus flevit* sarcophagus to the type of scroll used in the earliest buildings at Palmyra, which are all roughly contemporary, such as the Temple of Bel, which has been dated to 44 B.C.–32 C.E. (ibid., pl. 24/3). Such designs, Avi-Yonah concludes, oscillate between the naturalistic and the stylized. In another example from Palmyra (Seyrig et al., *Le Temple de Bel à Palmyre*, pl. 20), the vine scrolls decorating the elongated friezes are restricted to the architectural surface in a similar stylized flow, with regular wavy spirals in the vertical friezes. A similar process of stylization at a rather early stage is found in stone carvings at Petra, which show an apparent tendency towards simplification of the classical elements in architectural decoration. See Judith McKenzie, *The Architecture of Petra* (Oxford, 1990), p. 39, where the author illustrates her observation by comparing Kasr al-Bint, the *terminus ante quem* of which is the beginning of the first century C.E., with the temenos gate. In the earlier period the bases of the serrations on the leaves are carefully carved in a triangular shape or curled back on themselves, whereas in the later example the same serrations are merely indicated by a drill hole which was not carved out. It will be shown, though, that these, too, are different from the art of stone carving in Jerusalem under Herod.
  65. Avigad, *Upper City of Jerusalem*, p. 167, fig. 183.
  66. H. Zaloscer, *Une Collection de pierres sculptées au Musée Copte du Vieux-Caire* (Cairo, 1948), pl. III; Breccia, *Le Musée Greco-Romain d'Alexandrie*, II, pl. XXVII/89. In these and other examples from Oxyrhynchos a central stem is flanked by two bunches of grapes, sometimes shaped in the typical triple form described above, and connected with spiraling vine scrolls, sometimes containing rosettes: ibid., pls. XXVII/90, XXXII/95; Zaloscer, *Une Collection de pierres sculptées*, pl. III/4–5.
  67. Beckwith, *Coptic Sculpture, 300-1300*, fig. 56. A limestone niche head from Oxyrhynchus, late fourth century, now in the Greco-Roman Museum, Alexandria. Here the vine scroll starts with a central stem flanked by two hanging bunches of grapes, and continues vertically with alternate leaves and bunches of grapes, in concentric order relative to the central motif.
  68. McKenzie, *Architecture of Petra*, fig. 5f.
  69. E.g., on the so-called Nazirite sarcophagus found on Mt. Scopus (Avigad, *Upper City of Jerusalem*, p. 167, fig. 183), and the sarcophagus from the Tomb of the Kings (Hachlili, *Ancient Jewish Art and Archaeology in the Land of Israel*, p. 116, fig. 19).
  70. The rosette, an exclusively Jewish ornament in the Second Temple period, persisted into later times on several synagogue lintels, pediments, and capitals from the third century onwards, e.g., at Nabratein and Umm al-Kanatir (Hachlili, *Ancient Jewish Art and Archaeology in the Land of Israel*, p. 170, fig. 18, pls 23, 24); at Bar'am and Capernaum (ibid., pp. 207–14, figs. 45–54, pl. 40b); and on a capital from Khirbat Usha, possibly from the third-century synagogue, where the volutes are replaced by a rosette (Avi-Yonah, *Art in Ancient Palestine*, pp. 91–92, pl. 18/4). The rosette recurs on a capital from Deir Dosi and a keystone from Tell al-Matlab, both fifth century, where the center is filled with stylized plants with rosettes between them (ibid., p. 91, nn. 2, 4). Rosettes as space filling are found on a late Roman ossuary formerly in the Museum of the Dormition and on the late Roman tomb at Khirbat Zakariya (ibid., p. 91, fig. 3, n. 6). The same motifs are repeated on sarcophagi and lead coffins from Beth She'arim (Hachlili, *Ancient Jewish Art and Archaeology in the Land of Israel*, p. 319, fig. 2; p. 320; p. 326, fig. 14; p. 389, fig. 2). Here the local craftsmen worked in a style similar to that used in contemporary Jewish synagogue art. Rosettes also appear on stone screens from Gaza and on a tomb door at Kafr Yasif, as does the whirling-wheel motif (ibid., pls. 99, 33). The whirling-wheel motif also appears on Jewish tomb façades; see Avi-Yonah, *Art in Ancient Palestine*, pl. 22/5.
  71. Zaloscer, *Une Collection de pierres sculptées*, pl. III/5; R. M. Harrison, *A Temple for Byzantium* (London, 1989), figs. 147–48. The same characteristics appear in pillar capitals from St. Polyeuktos, which include the whirling-wheel motif as well. McKenzie identifies the artists of the church of Constantinople as Copts working for Justinian (McKenzie, "The Architectural Style of Roman and Byzantine Alexandria and Egypt," pp. 139–42). Although none of the Egyptian examples is reliably dated, it is clear that similar motifs were used in the Roman period, in the equivalent Egyptian-style capitals, and in the late Byzantine period.
  72. Rosen-Ayalon, *The Early Islamic Monuments of al-Haram al-Sharif*, p. 42a; ill. 23, 27.
  73. For the acanthus scrolls in Oxyrhynchos, see Breccia, *Le Musée Greco-Romain d'Alexandrie*, II, pls XXXVII/100, XXIX/92, XL/104. Acanthus scrolls as a circular architectural element appear on a limestone stele from Faiyum, fifth or sixth century, now in the Coptic Museum in Cairo, no. 8684 (Beckwith, *Coptic Sculpture, 300-1300*, fig. 116). The ultimate classical origins are also apparent from the carved fragments of the decorative band of the broken pediment in the Palazzo delle Colonne at Ptolemais (McKenzie, *Architecture of Petra*, pls 220, 222 a,b). The latter's date is controversial (ibid., p. 76). Yet, since McKenzie admits that the palazzo appears to represent a number of phases, including the post-Hellenistic, the pediment could just as well belong to the second or third century, or even later. Coptic examples of the laurel-wreath band, whether plastically or more schematically rendered, can be found at the same site; see Breccia, *Le Musée Greco-Romain d'Alexandrie*, II, pl. XXX/93. The same design also appears, as in our case, in the form of a circular band surrounding a seashell (ibid., pl. XXXIII/96). This design is, of course, a common feature in Byzantine stone carvings in Jerusalem; Meir Ben-Dov, *Jerusalem's Fortifications* [in Hebrew]. (Jerusalem, 1983), p. 237. Their Herodian mod-



- els appear on a sarcophagus at the mausoleum of the Tomb of the Kings, and the *Dominus flevit* sarcophagus, where the laurel surrounds a whirling rosette; see Mazar, *Mountain of the Lord*, p. 231; Avi-Yonah, *Art in Ancient Palestine*, pl. 24/2. They continue to be used in later periods of Jewish art in the region, as on the lintel in the synagogue of Gush Halav, surrounding a menorah motif; see Hachlili, *Ancient Jewish Art and Archaeology in the Land of Israel*, p. 204, fig. 44. For a drawing of this type surrounding a fluted medallion, see Avi-Yonah, *Art in Ancient Palestine*, p. 87, fig. 1.
74. McKenzie, *Architecture of Petra*, p. 137, nn. 29–33.
  75. It proves to be very different from the reconstructed ornament in de Vogüé's drawing, according to which the crown of the southwest dome was originally left altogether uncarved (fig. 19). The same drawing is also wrong in its rendering of the designs on the first stone ring of this dome.
  76. Seyrig et al., *Le Temple de Bel à Palmyre*, pls. 26–29. See above, n. 59.
  77. D. L. Kennedy, *Archaeological Explorations on the Roman Frontier in North-East Jordan*, *Biblical Archaeological Review*, International Series 132 (London, 1982), p. 33, pl. X/b, c. Although thought to be of Nabatean origin, it seems rather to belong to the decorative works carried out on the site during the Umayyad phase of occupation.
  78. For the reconstructed *dīwān* dome at Khirbat al-Mafjar, see Robert W. Hamilton, *Khirbat al-Mafjar: An Arabian Mansion in the Jordan Valley* (Oxford, 1959).
  79. If the Double Gate is the so-called Gate of the Prophet, as is thought today, one can refer to the traditions about the sun image seen by the Prophet when he entered this gate: Elad, *Medieval Jerusalem and Islamic Worship*, pp. 98–99 and nn. 101, 103–4, quoting traditions from various sources. As Elad remarks (p. 99), these traditions show an intimate knowledge of the Prophet's Gate, its location, and its internal structure, a fact we can now confirm, provided we consider the decorative sunburst and sunbeam motifs on the northwest dome of the Double Gate as representing the sun image described in the written sources. Another testimony to further confirm these traditions is the sun-like rosette motif on the southwestern dome at the entrance to the vestibule from the south, where the Prophet was supposed to have entered.
  80. John Wilkinson, "Architectural Procedure in Byzantine Palestine," *Levant* 13 (1981): 156–57, figs. 1, 2. For a different view regarding the designing procedure used for the Dome of the Rock, see Doron Chen, "The Design of the Dome of the Rock," *Palestinian Exploration Quarterly* 112 (1980): 41–50. The text reference is to Creswell and Maus. Wilkinson's calculations have been proven inadequate; see Doron Chen, "Sir Archibald Creswell's Setting-out of the Plan of the Dome of the Rock Reconsidered," *Palestine Exploration Quarterly* 117 (1985): 128–32; also Oleg Grabar, *The Shape of the Holy: Early Islamic Jerusalem* (Princeton, 1996), p. 104, n. 104; p. 108.
  81. Wilkinson, "Architectural Procedure in Byzantine Palestine," p. 158, fig. 3. It was also noticed by Watzinger that the scheme of eight diamond patterns arranged around a central disc was already being used in early Roman mosaics in Pompei: Watzinger, *Denkmäler Palästinas*, 2: 35–38; also cited in Gibson and Jacobson, *Below the Temple Mount in Jerusalem*, p. 253.
  82. Together with these friezes, the architectural sculpture in Oxyrhynchos includes the more traditional kind of frieze, decorated with undulating meanders in a continuous flow; see Breccia, *Le Musée Greco-Romain d'Alexandrie*, II., pls. XXVIII, XXX, XXXVII. The coexistence in a single site of two different kinds of frieze illustrates the so-called "stylistic polyphony" in Coptic art (L. Torok, "Notes on the Chronology of Late Antique Stone Sculpture in Egypt," in *Coptic Studies*, ed. V. Godlewski [Warsaw, 1990], p. 441). The decorative components, even on the same site, would often display traditional elements in a strictly classical mold side by side with the newest stylistic trends.
  83. Photo of Coptic stela in W. E. Crum, *Catalogue général des antiquités égyptiennes du Musée du Caire* (Osnabruck, 1975), pl. XL, 8631–8633.
  84. Photo of central column viewed from southwest taken in 1902 by the Rev. C. J. Wilson, in Gibson and Jacobson, *Below the Temple Mount in Jerusalem*, fig. 117; drawing of central capital by Pierotti from 1864 in *ibid.*, pl. 241, fig. 108.
  85. For Byzantine examples from Syria, see Strube, *Baudekoration im Nordsyrischen Kalksteinmassiv*, pls. 18, 19, 39, 57. In the few examples where the design does consist of a single row, as, for example, on the architrave of the fifth-century church in Me'ez, the style is totally different (*ibid.*, pls. 55 a,c).
  86. Torok, "Notes on the Chronology of Late Antique Stone Sculpture in Egypt," p. 440, n. 22; McKenzie, *Architecture of Petra*, p. 73.
  87. Badawy, *Coptic Art and Archaeology*, p. 201, fig. 3.168.
  88. Murad Kamil, *Aspects l'Egypte Copte* (Berlin, 1965), pl. 42.
  89. E.g., an unidentified Coptic capital in Museo Egizio (Badawy, *Coptic Art and Archaeology*, p. 201, fig. 3.167); a Coptic capital from Oxyrhynchos, from the Christian edifice in northern part of the city (Breccia, *Le Musée Greco-Romain d'Alexandrie* II, pl. XLIII, center). In this respect, it is notable that Watzinger argued, but with no examples, that the capital might have been produced in the late Hellenistic or Augustan periods. Watzinger compares it with those of the Tower of the Winds in Athens, commonly dated to the mid first century B.C. (Watzinger, *Denkmäler Palästinas*, 2: 35–38; Gibson and Jacobson, *Below the Temple Mount in Jerusalem*, p. 253). This in itself could perhaps indicate Egyptian influence in Athens as well, presumably connected with the classical art of Alexandria.
  90. For early examples from Alexandria, second century B.C., see McKenzie, *Architecture of Petra*, pl. 208 a,b.
  91. See also *ibid.*, pl. 209b, our fig. 24: it is one of a pair in the theater of Kom el-Dik in Alexandria, still *in situ*, but reused in a reconstruction of the second half of the fifth century C.E. (*ibid.*, p. 73). A similar column base, though different in the style of acanthus, was also found in the Palazzo delle Collone at Ptolemais, possibly later in date than the Alexandrian examples (*ibid.*, pl. 221d).
  92. Avi-Yonah, *Art in Ancient Palestine*, pl. 12/1. This tomb is commonly attributed to the first century C.E. (Hachlili, *Ancient Jewish Art and Archaeology*, p. 105).
  93. The dating of the Tomb of the Kings to the first century C.E. is based on references in Josephus regarding the tomb of Helen, the Queen of Adiabene, who left her country around Mosul, the heartland of Assyria, to settle in Jerusa-

- lem after she converted to Judaism. She and her family were buried, according to the sources, to the north of the old city in ca. 50 C.E. (Avi-Yonah, *Art in Ancient Palestine*, p. 25). However, in the light of evidence from late-second- or third-century Alexandria (fig. 24), one should perhaps reconsider the identification of the above so-called Tomb of the Kings, redating it towards the late second or third century C.E.
94. Torok, "Notes on the Chronology of Late Antique Stone Sculpture in Egypt," p. 440a. Torok further describes the Coptic phenomenon as clearly originating in classical Alexandria. The change in form and modeling of the acanthus leaves in Egypt during the first half of the fourth century is, in his view, from classically soft modeling to sharply cut spiky acanthus, with more angular surface treatment—a consequence, perhaps, of less skilled craftsmanship or stylistic concept.
  95. The capital as part of an architectural set of four reused columns which flank the southern doorposts of the Double Gate on the inner side, and which all scholars perceive as an integral part of the original Umayyad design, as well as the three other capitals, which are of the Corinthian type, with impostes added to bring them up to the lintel level, reflect a practice common among Umayyad builders. An outstanding Umayyad example for the use of spolia as structural elements, with impostes added on top, is the intermediate octagon of the Dome of the Rock. Here the horizontal beams of the octagon are supported by impostes to compensate for the different heights of the reused columns and capitals, an arrangement identical to that on the entrance to the Double Gate. The fourth capital is an exception, being sufficiently tall to keep the lintel level without an impost. This in itself could mean that, unlike the other three, it must have been designed anew and suitably fitted to the relatively tall column which it caps. De Vogüé's drawing (*Le Temple de Jérusalem*, pl. 9), shows impostes placed on only two of the four capitals, but in fact an impost also appears on the eastern capital next to the west gatepost. The fact that our capital is placed on a narrow girdele of twisted molding, possibly with a decorated necking band underneath, simply reflects an idiom rather common in late Byzantine art. Necking bands were a common feature in classical capitals from Alexandria; see e.g., McKenzie, *Architecture of Petra*, pl. 207, where the necking bands are decorated with rosettes and meander patterns.
  96. E.g., *ibid.*, pp. 64–65, pls. 199–206. As McKenzie says (p. 69), the architectural fragments found at the Chantier Finney, Alexandria, form a stylistically homogeneous group, which can be dated by comparing them to the dated evidence from tombs of the second to not later than the beginning of the first century B.C., and in particular the tomb of Mustafa Pasha. On the dating of the latter, taking into account the numismatic evidence, pottery, and epigraphy, see *ibid.*, pp. 64–65, 130.
  97. See also *ibid.*, pls. 41–7, 82–3.
  98. Joseph Patrich, "The Formation of the Nabatean Capital," in *Judea and the Greco-Roman World in the Time of Herod in the Light of Archaeological Evidence* (Göttingen, 1996), p. 202, n. 40. This kind of schematized Corinthian capital, commonly known as the "floral heterodox group" (*ibid.*, pp. 201–9), can be divided into two major types. One of these (type A), also found in the above Herodian sites, comprises tall capitals consisting of two parts, the lower one representing two rows of acanthus leaves and the upper one arrays of schematized scrolls with S-shaped volutes at the corners (*ibid.*, pp. 201–2, figs 4–5). To the second (type B) belong capitals which leave out the lower half, with its double row of acanthus leaves, but preserve the upper half as on type A, having S-shaped volutes at the corners and schematized floral scrolls on the four surfaces (*ibid.*, pp. 202–3, figs. 7–8). As Patrich notes, this floral array substitutes for the normal calyces and helices of the Corinthian capital. See also McKenzie, *Architecture of Petra*, pls. 44–47.
  99. E.g., Avigad, *Upper City of Jerusalem*, p. 151, fig. 157.
  100. The leaves of these capitals alternate with curved double volutes forking from a central stem which rises from the base of the frieze, sometimes topped by a trilobate lotus leaf (Strube, *Baudekoration im Nordsyrischen Kalksteinmassiv*, pls. 32 f; 35 a,b; 37 b-f; 79, 102 c; 108 a left [cf. right]; 109 d right [cf. left]; 123.
  101. E.g., McKenzie, *Architecture of Petra*, pl. 207 d-i.
  102. Most of these have been moved to the Greco-Roman Museum of Alexandria and the Coptic Museum in Cairo.
  103. See Badawy, *Coptic Art and Archaeology*, p. 72, fig. 2.39 (early fifth century) and two from Bawit, *ibid.*, p. 199, fig. 3.159; and Zaloscer, *Une Collection de pierres sculptées*, pl. XIX/35.
  104. Badawy, *Coptic Art and Archaeology*, pp. 195c–196a.
  105. Strube, *Baudekoration im Nordsyrischen Kalksteinmassiv*, pls. 23, 24, 39, 41.
  106. See Breccia, *Le Musée Greco-Romain d'Alexandrie*, II, pls. XXXVIII and XXVII/89. For other such examples, see Badawy, *Coptic Art and Archaeology*, p. 200, 3.164; p. 201, 3.168, 3.169.
  107. Such idiosyncratic features were prevalent in Coptic sculpture from the early fourth until at least the end of the sixth century. Examples from the fourth century are the architectural decorations in the northern areas of Oxyrhynchos and, from the late sixth century, the carvings on several arches surrounding the inner walls of the basilica at Sendera (*ibid.*, p.183, fig. 3.124). For further examples, see, e.g., Breccia, *Le Musée Greco-Romain d'Alexandrie*, II, pls. XXIX, XXXIV, XXXVI, XXXIX; H. G. Franz "Wesenzuge Omayyadischer Schmuckkunst," in *Beiträge zur Kunstgeschichte Asiens, In Memoriam Ernst Diez*, ed. Oktay Aslanapa (Istanbul, 1963), figs 15, 17.
  108. One example, from Syria, consists of an undulating frieze which runs along an archivolt (Strube, *Baudekoration im Nordsyrischen Kalksteinmassiv*, pl. 44e).
  109. Oxyrhynchos, fragment of carved frieze, Alexandria Museum (Breccia, *Le Musée Greco-Romain d'Alexandrie*, II, pl. XXXVIII); Oxyrhynchos, fragment of carved frieze, Alexandria Museum (*ibid.*, pl. XXVII/89). Another Coptic example can be seen on the vestige of an architectural frieze from Aswan, along the round collar of an abstractly rendered capital: Badawy, *Coptic Art and Archaeology*, p. 204, 3.170.
  110. For Sasanian examples in stucco, see Arthur Upham Pope, ed., *A Survey of Persian Art* (New York, London, Tokyo, 1969), pl. 171. The ultimate source of many details described above could, of course, be identified as Sasanian, often consid-

- ered a significant factor in the general process of orientalizing classical forms in the Byzantine world of the Middle East.
111. About the silver cup, see in the catalogue of the Museum für Volkerkunde in Vienna: *Fruhchristliche und Koptische Kunst*, Ausstellung in der Akademie der bildenden Künste (Vienna, 1964), fig. 50.
  112. E. Drioton, *Les sculptures coptes du Nilometre de Rodah* (Cairo, 1942), p. 59, quoted in Badawy, *Coptic Art and Archaeology*, p. 195c.
  113. Torok, "Notes on the Chronology of Late Antique Stone Sculpture in Egypt," p. 440a.
  114. Badawy, *Coptic Art and Archaeology*, p. 156c.
  115. McKenzie, "Architectural Style of Roman and Byzantine Alexandria and Egypt," pp. 138 ff, which accords with the picture of stylistic continuity suggested by archaeological evidence.
  116. Some scholars explain this trend by the fact that Coptic stonecarvers often employed dressed sandstone and limestone instead of luxurious marble, which they lacked. As Badawy, for example, writes, "After a wave of inspiration from the imperial workshops, Coptic sculpture proper develops its repetitive quality of Saqqara and Bawit" (Badawy, *Coptic Art and Archaeology*, pp. 166-72). Badawy speaks about a gradual process of modification through the years. In illustrating this notion, he gives a few examples such as the hard technique production of Ahnas, dated to the end of the fifth century which displays characteristics of later sculpture with a stiffer stylization (p. 156). Another example (pp. 137c-138b) is the architectural sculpture at Oxyrhynchos which can be identified as the prototype for later Coptic elements. As Badawy notes, one can trace in the Oxyrhynchos friezes the simultaneous existence of various stages of evolution, from a naturalistic representation to a more stylized one. This process is well illustrated in the development of the acanthus scroll from the classical type, with naturalistic leaves on one side of the stem, to the symmetrical setting of two rows of triangular leaves on both sides, typical of Ahnas and other Coptic sites as well (p. 171, fig. 3.100/5,4,7). Another characteristic observed by Badawy is the running vine scroll in all its stages; from naturalistic tendrils, vine leaves, and grapes related to Syrian friezes with heavy stems or intertwined stems or vine scrolls, to an abstract pattern common in monastic sculpture (p. 139, cf. fig. 3.42 with 3.40).
  117. These fine marble decorations, McKenzie says, have no analogies in Constantinople, either earlier or later. The one place that has comparable decorative motifs is late-antique and early Christian Egypt (McKenzie, "Architectural Style of Roman and Byzantine Alexandria and Egypt," pp. 140-42.
  118. *Ibid.*, p. 140.
  119. *Ibid.*, fig. 6a.
  120. C. J. Burke, "Coptic-Muslim Relations in the Seventh Century: Conflict and Adjustment," *Islamic Culture* 69, 4 (1995): 45-57. Particularly interesting is the story about the recovery of St. Mark's head for the Coptic patriarch, Benjamin I, by 'Amru ibn al-'As, who insisted on bestowing on the patriarch 2,000 Egyptian dinars to build a church in Alexandria in honor of the head. See also Badawy, *Coptic Art and Archaeology*, p. 7a.
  121. Hugo MacLennan, *Oxyrhynchus, An Economic and Social Study* (Amsterdam, 1968), p. 81, referring to Oxyrhynchos.
  122. Badawy, *Coptic Art and Archaeology*, p. 8a, also quoting from Gaston Wiet, "L'Egypte musulmane de la conquête arabe à la conquête ottomane," *Precis de l'Histoire d'Egypte par divers historiens et archéologues* (Cairo, 1932), p. 131.
  123. Badawy, *Coptic Art and Archaeology*, p. 8b.
  124. Henry I. Bell, "Translations of the Greek Aphroditis Papyri in the British Museum," *Der Islam* 2-4 (1911-13); *idem*, "Two Official Letters of the Arab Period," *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* 12 (1926): 265-81. The Coptic connection is discussed by Myriam Rosen-Ayalon "Notes on a Particular Technique of Architectural Decoration," *Israel Exploration Journal* 24 (1974): 232-36, *idem*, *Early Islamic Monuments of al-Haram al-Sharif*, pp. 94-95; 41-45. For similar views, see also Franz, "Wesenzuge Omayyadischer Schmuckkunst," pp. 69-86.
  125. Bell, "Translations of the Greek Aphroditis Papyri in the British Museum" (1911), p. 274.
  126. *Ibid.*, p. 271.
  127. *Ibid.*, p. 274.
  128. *Ibid.* (1912), p. 373.
  129. *Ibid.* (1913), p. 93.
  130. *Ibid.*, p. 95.
  131. *Ibid.* (1912), p. 373, papyrus no. 21.
  132. *Ibid.* (1913), p. 95.
  133. *Ibid.* (1911), p. 274 ; (1912), p. 373.
  134. *Ibid.* (1912), p. 371; on p. 373, though, Enoch is called "the supercargo" [?].
  135. The fine marble decorations in St. Polyuktos contain many motifs which occur about a century later in the mosaics of the Dome of the Rock; see McKenzie, "Architectural Style of Roman and Byzantine Alexandria and Egypt," p. 140. The Coptic connection was touched on before by Rosen Ayalon (above, n. 124).
  136. McKenzie, "Architectural Style of Roman and Byzantine Alexandria and Egypt," p. 138, n. 35, referring to a text which says that, after the flood at Dara in Mesopotamia, the emperor Justinian chose to take the advice of a certain Chryses of Alexandria, a skillful master builder who served the emperor.
  137. Leontius of Neapolis, *Life of John, Archbishop of Alexandria*, ed. H. K. G. Gelzer (Freiburg and Leipzig, 1893), p. 37.
  138. Monneret de Villard, *Introduzione allo studio dell'archeologia islamica: origini e il periodo Omayyade*, p. 215; Rosen-Ayalon, *Early Islamic Monuments of al-Haram al-Sharif*, pp. 36-37. Fleming found an earlier arch below the existing structure of the Golden Gate (J. Fleming, "The Undiscovered Gate beneath Jerusalem's Golden Gate," *Biblical Archaeological Review* 9, 1 [1983]: 24-37), and Doron Chen has shown the exact correspondence between the dimensions used in the Golden Gate and those used for the inner circle of the Dome of the Rock (Chen, "On the Golden Gate in Jerusalem and the Baptistery at Emmaus-Nicopolis," pp. 171-72). For various other opinions, see Gibson and Jacobson, *Below the Temple Mount in Jerusalem*.
  139. See, in particular, Rosen-Ayalon, *Early Islamic Monuments of al-Haram al-Sharif*, p. 37a. Rosen-Ayalon defines the decorative archivolt and friezes as typically Umayyad in style (*ibid.*, p. 35).
  140. The horizontal emphasis in the hall of the Golden Gate is

- illustrated best in de Vogüé's drawing of the interior viewed from the southwest (de Vogüé, *Le Temple de Jérusalem*, pl. 3).
141. After Ben-Dov, as reproduced in Rosen-Ayalon, *The Early Islamic Monuments of al-Haram al-Sharif*, p. 9, Ill. 2. We refer to the building which stands to the east of building II.
  142. For the main characteristic features of contemporary Umayyad palaces, see, for example, Rosen-Ayalon, *Early Islamic Monuments of al-Haram al-Sharif*, p. 8, and n. 6, referring to comparative examples in K. A. C. Creswell, *Early Muslim Architecture* (Oxford, 1969), vol.1, pt. 2, figs. 448, 563, 570, 605.
  143. Bell, "Translations of the Greek Aphroditu Papyri in the British Museum" (1912), p. 371, letter no.1433, refers to the cost of employing a man for eight months, with supplies (p. 373).
  144. *Ibid.* (1913), p. 95, letter no.1435, refers to the cost of three laborers with supplies for twelve months.
  145. *Ibid.* (1911), p. 274, in letter no. 1342.
  146. Thus, in letter no. 1403, we read: "Concerning labourers and skilled workmen for Jerusalem. . . . The maintenance of the labourers and skilled workmen for . . . the palace of the *amir al-mu'minin*." (*ibid.* [1911], p. 383). In letter no. 1414, one can read about three laborers being employed for twelve months on the palace of the *amir al-mu'minin* (of Jerusalem) (*ibid.* [1912], p. 137).
  147. *Ibid.* (1912), p. 370, letter no.1433. Here one reads about "one labourer for twelve months for the new building of the *amir al-mu'minin*." For philological analysis of the terminology used for describing "the palace of the *amir al-mu'minin*," on one hand, and "the new building of the *amir al-mu'minin*," on the other, see Max von Kuchler, "Moschee und Kalifenpalaste Jerusalems nach den Aphrodito-Papyri," *Zeitschrift des Deutschen Palästina-Vereins* 107 (1991): 125–26. According to Grabar (*The Shape of the Holy*, p. 211, n. 34), the Greek term *aule* should be translated as a court or an official hall.
  148. *Ibid.*, p. 126.
  149. The new project mentioned in letter no. 1433 may refer to building II, constructed by al-Walid (705–15), and which Rosen-Ayalon noted had a bridge connecting it to the qibla wall of the al-Aqsa mosque (Rosen-Ayalon, *Early Monuments of al-Haram al-Sharif*, p. 9).
  150. A few remarks are necessary here concerning the some three hundred carved stone fragments uncovered during excavations of the southern compound adjacent to the qibla of the Haram (Ben-Dov, *In the Shadow of the Temple*, p. 139). Ben-Dov tells us that these fragments were all found near the Triple Gate, "Some in walls, others in collections of building materials, and yet others as masonry rejects relegated to the fill under the floors of the Moslem structures," leading him to believe that "they apparently [can be] traced to the ruins of the [Herodian], eastern Hulda Gate, which was decorated in the same manner as the [Herodian], western one" (*ibid.*, p. 137). According to Mazar, however, they seem to have been found near the southwestern corner of the esplanade (Mazar, *Mountain of the Lord*, p. 124). Some of the fragments were published, and some are now on display in the Hecht Museum at the University of Haifa (thanks to Rachel Hachlili who informed us of this). None of the decorated stones—at least those we have seen—indicate that they belonged to the curved surface of a dome. We attribute them to plane surfaces, which means that they could not have belonged to any original Herodian domes either in the Triple Gate or in the Double Gate. As described by Mazar (*Mountain of the Lord*, p. 124), "These fragments bear typical Herodian decorations. . . . Similar patterns figure prominently in the decoration of the façades of the sumptuous mausoleums, monumental tombs and ossuaries and sarcophagi in this period in Jerusalem." The similarities in motifs and style of rendering between these patterns and the ones decorating the façade of the so-called Tomb of Judges are striking (Avi-Yonah, *Art in Ancient Palestine*, pl. 17/1). In both, the whirling leaves are cut in very low relief and spread over as much ground as possible. Their rich carvings deserve separate study, of course, but whatever date might be assigned to them, these decorated stones are certainly incompatible with the Coptic style of the decoration inside the Double Gate.