

AYYUBID JERUSALEM

THE HOLY CITY
IN CONTEXT

1187-1250

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Chapter 11 AN AMBIGUOUS AESTHETIC: CRUSADER SPOLIA IN AyyUBID JERUSALEM

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Introduction¹

When the armies of Saladin recaptured the city of Jerusalem in 583/1187, the Ayyubids were faced with a series of practical choices stemming from the physical transformations that the architecture and sacred topography of the city had undergone during the eight decades of Crusader rule. The Ayyubid response to the 'Christianisation' of the third holiest city in Islam amounted to a highly selective series of interventions in the urban landscape, beginning with the reconsecration of the shrines on the Haram al-Sharif, extending to the confiscation and conversion to Muslim use of a few significant monuments associated with Latin rule, and culminating in the foundation or restoration of some twenty-five monuments in the decades between 583/1187 and 642/1244.²

The clearing of Crusader structures erected on the Haram platform, and the other alterations that followed the reconquest evidently resulted in the availability of a considerable amount of finely wrought architectural materials, for the re-use of Crusader spolia in the monuments built in the decades after the reconquest is so extensive that Myriam Rosen-Ayalon has identified it as a defining characteristic of the Ayyubid architecture of Jerusalem.³ The role of such material in Ayyubid monuments is not merely structural but applied, and aesthetically constitutive. The congestion of the area around the Haram precluded the undertaking of large-scale architectural projects by Ayyubid patrons, and instead, 'narrow Haram frontages were transformed into panels of virtuoso decoration to compensate for the absence of volumetric expression.⁴ Dissociated from their primary contexts, richly carved Crusader spolia played a

major role in such virtuoso assemblages, articulating exterior façades, and massed around entrances. In the interiors of the Dome of the Rock and Aqsa Mosque Crusader spolia comprised elements of liturgical furnishings that provided an interior visual focus, or were hung 'like paintings' to ornament vertical wall surfaces.⁵ Among the architectural members most commonly employed were columns (plain, interlaced, and double interlaced), capitals (single, double and even triple), dwarf arcades, window tracery, marble panels carved with acanthus, and archivolt variously decorated.

Over the past few decades, the researches of Buschhausen, Folda, Jacoby and others have made much of this material available to scholarship.⁶ However convenient these publications are for their encyclopaedic approach to Crusader material in Jerusalem, their main focus is on the production and primary context of the spolia, and the light that they shed on the development of the plastic arts during the Frankish occupation of the city. This is often reflected in the tendency to abstract the spolia from the contexts in which they are re-used, reinforcing their 'Crusader' identity.⁷ My aim in this paper is neither to detail every instance of re-use in Jerusalem, nor to describe each re-used carving, but by focusing on the monuments of the Haram, to offer a broad overview that considers the nature of the pieces chosen for re-use, the contexts of their redeployment, and the compositional strategies that determined its parameters.

Unfortunately, the medieval sources that are so forthcoming on the reconsecration of the monuments of the

¹ Jacoby 1992, 15.

² Folda 1968; Buschhausen 1978; Jacoby 1979; Jacoby 1982a & b; Folda 1995.

³ This is witnessed in the fragmentary approach to the visual evidence. If one looks for example at the images of the Bab al-Silsila/Bab al-Sakina that appear in Buschhausen's magisterial opus (1978, pls. 124–57), the gate is presented as a series of details abstracted from their immediate architectural contexts. The same is true of the Mihrab of 'Umar in the Aqsa Mosque in most publications. See, however, Jacoby (1992) for a discussion of the adaptation of Crusader spolia to their secondary contexts.

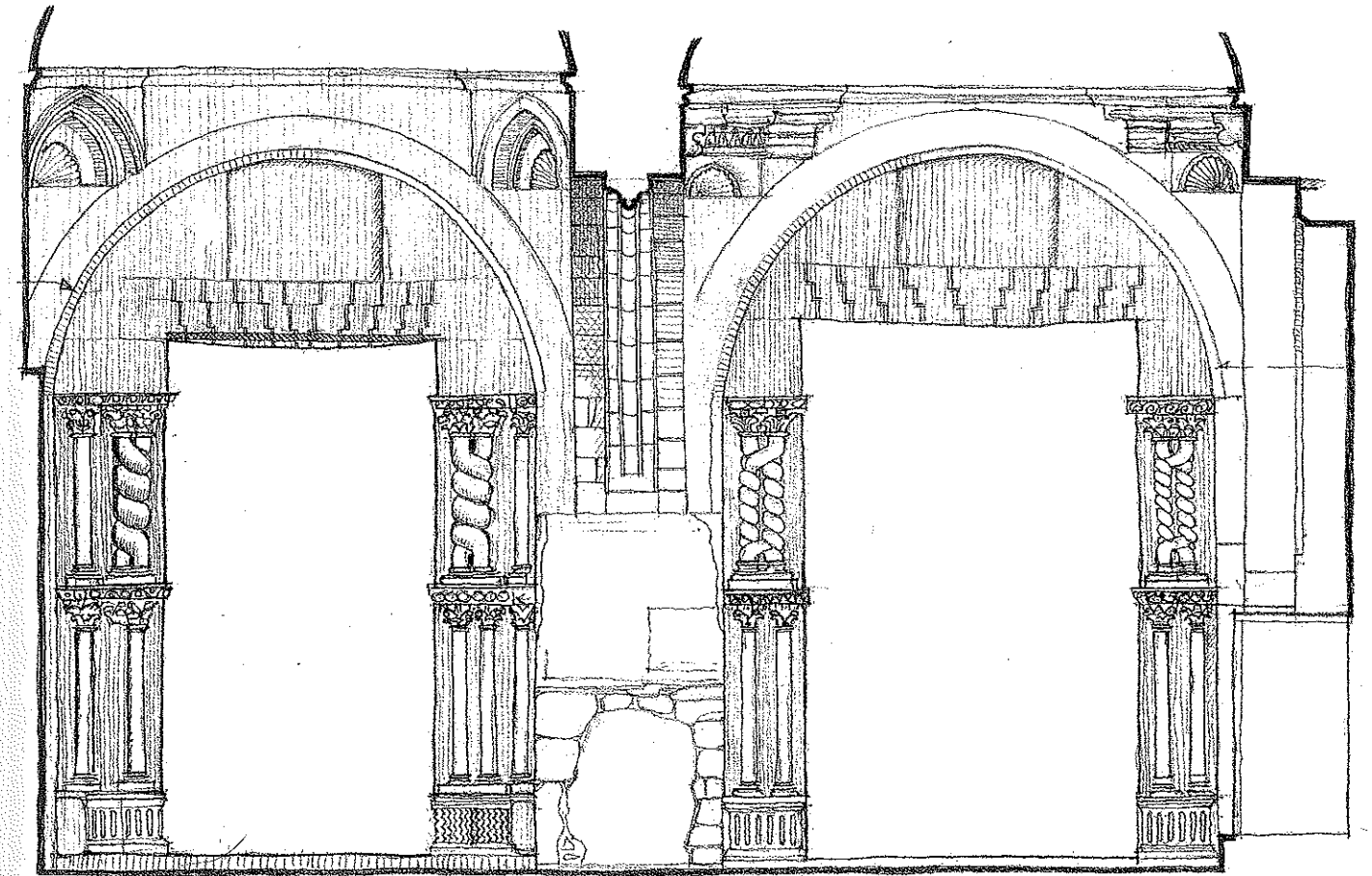


Fig. 11.1 Elevation of the Bab al-Sakina (left) and Bab al-Silsila (right) (after Burgoyne, 1992).

Jerusalem Haram are generally silent on the topic of re-used material. Existing scholarship cites three basic explanations for the prominence afforded Crusader spolia in medieval Islamic monuments: pragmatism, aesthetics, and the visual articulation of Muslim victory, with the emphasis generally on the latter.⁸ Considering the possible meaning of Crusader spolia in Ayyubid contexts, I will emphasize the evidence for the aesthetic value placed upon them, arguing that their use is best understood as part of a broader pattern of Ayyubid engagement with antecedent architectural traditions in both Syria and Egypt.

It should be stated at the outset that it is not always possible to date the monuments within which Crusader spolia appear with precision; in many cases the structures into which they were incorporated are undated, and even the date of the re-used carvings themselves, which might provide a *terminus post quem*, are sometimes disputed.⁹ Crusader spolia enjoyed

⁸ C Hillenbrand 1999, 384.

⁹ The major disagreement concerns whether the majority of spolia were carved before 583/1187 or, as Buschhausen (1978) has argued, in the 630s/1230s, when the city was again accessible to Christians. Burgoyne and Folda (1981: 322) have argued convincingly that the former is the case; the fact that many of the spolia are incorporated into monuments built in the first few decades after the reconquest of the city would support an earlier dating. See also Boase 1977, 91; Jacoby 1982b.

a long currency in Jerusalemite architecture, and was still available several centuries after 583/1187 for both Mamluk and Ottoman architects to draw upon. The picture has been further complicated by the removal of Crusader spolia from the monuments of the Haram during modern restorations. Given these limitations, and the impossibility of undertaking the archaeological and forensic investigations needed to transcend them, some of the conclusions offered below are necessarily of a preliminary nature.

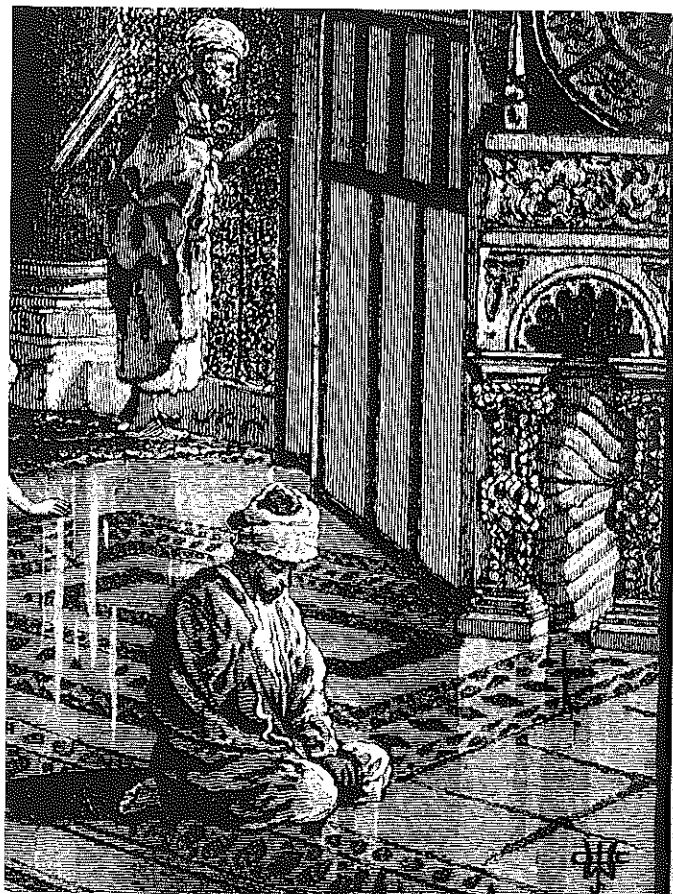
Sites and sources

Re-used Crusader materials are found in Ayyubid structures within and without the Haram, but there is a particular concentration in and around it.¹⁰ A re-used miniature arcade consisting of trefoil arches borne on columns crowned with acanthus capitals appears in the interior of the Bab Hitta, at the northern end of the sanctuary, which a lost inscription in the name of the Ayyubid prince al-Mu'azzam 'Isa dated

¹⁰ Among the Ayyubid monuments outside the Haram one might mention the entrance of the Afdaliyya Madrasa, whose cushion voussoirs may be Crusader spolia; Burgoyne 1982 49, pl. 9.

to 617/1220;¹¹ the trefoil arches are comparable to those that appear on the 'Summer Pulpit' of the Haram, assembled from Crusader *spolia* probably in the late 6th/12th century.¹² In both quantity and diversity, however, it is the western Bab al-Sakina/Bab al-Silsila that witnesses the most extensive use of Crusader material at any of the entrances to the Haram (fig. 11.1). The gate was built into an older double gate, probably in the last decade of the 6th/12th century.¹³ Pairs of Crusader columns and capitals support the archivolt of the gate's outer opening,¹⁴ but a more diverse array of Crusader *spolia* is massed on either side of the double openings that lead directly into the Haram.¹⁵ The more northerly of the two, the Bab al-Sakina, is flanked by two superimposed rows of re-used Crusader columns and capitals capped by narrow entablatures carved with vegetal ornament. On the topmost row, single interlaced columns are flanked on their exterior by columns of plainer type, similar to those in the lower row of columns below. A similar arrangement is followed in the adjoining Bab al-Silsila, but with a double rather than a single interlaced column flanking the gate on the upper level. The broad symmetry of the entire arrangement is breached by the appearance of a single extraneous column in the lower level of the Bab al-Sakina.

Within the Haram itself, Crusader *spolia* appear in several structures dated or datable to the Ayyubid period. Standing at the south-western edge of the platform, the Qubbat al-Nahwiyya, a *madrasa* founded by al-Malik al-Mu'azzam 'Isa in 605/1207-8, makes extensive use of Crusader *spolia* on its façade. In addition to cavetto mouldings (which may be *spolia*) on corbels, the large double interlaced columns flanking the entrance are of Crusader workmanship. Although the façade has clearly been refurbished or remodelled, the use of such columns around entrances is characteristic of Ayyubid monuments in the Haram, suggesting that these are in (or have been returned to) the positions that they occupied in the original structure.¹⁶ These are the sole remains of what was once a more extensive use of Crusader *spolia*, for al-'Umari (died 750/1349) describes a series of such columns on the north side of the building, similarly framing its two entrances.¹⁷ A photograph taken in the 13th/19th century before the destruction of this part of the building shows a blocked arcade supported on monumental interlaced columns similar in form and proportions to those re-used in the Mihrab of 'Umar in the Aqsa Mosque (pl. 11.7).¹⁸

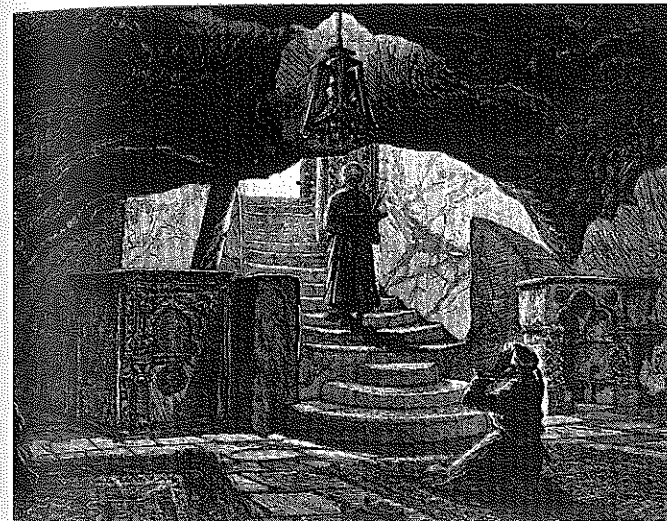


Pl. 11.1 Interior of the Dome of the Rock with the 'Table of Hamza' to the right (after Wilson, 1880).

Crusader *spolia* were also prominent in several of the domed structures that stand on the Haram platform, which have been dated on stylistic grounds to the later 6th/12th century, among them the 'Summer Pulpit' and Qubbat Sulaiman.¹⁹ The most extensive use of such material was in the Qubbat al-Mirraj, which an inscription dates to 597/1200-1. Whether this is the date at which the structure was constructed or refurbished is a matter of debate. Against the resemblances in form and exterior articulation between this structure and the Crusader Church of the Ascension on the Mount of Olives must be measured the lack of Crusader masons' marks on the capitals, which suggests that they have been reworked.²⁰ A total of fifty-four carved stone capitals appears within the structure, including those in the lantern (itself probably a Crusader spolium) and the thirty that encircle the exterior of the monument. Despite the apparently disparate arrangement of Crusader capitals on the exterior, there is a broad logic to their disposition, with pairs of plain stylized foliate capitals being sandwiched between capitals of more elaborate form bearing registers of acanthus or braided ornament. The southern corners flanking the *mihrab* projection are exceptions, with only a single example of the

¹⁹ Burgoyne 1987, 47-8, 319-20.

²⁰ Boase 1977, pl. Xa-b; Burgoyne 1987, 48; Folda 1995, 253-66.



Pl. 11.2 Dome of the Rock, the cave beneath the rock with the Mihrab Ibrahim on right (after Wilson, 1889).

more elaborate capitals appearing in conjunction with a pair of the plain foliate type.

The quantity of Crusader *spolia* re-used in the Dome of the Rock is difficult to determine with certainty, since at least some of this material was removed or covered in the centuries after it was set in place. Among the Crusader material in the Sakhra removed to the Islamic Museum during restorations in the last century was a composite structure known as the 'Table of Hamza' which was constructed from at least six different fragments of Crusader *spolia*. The 'table' was comprised of a narrow fragment of an acanthus frieze placed atop a panel carved with two conchoid niches, the ensemble supported on three small interlaced columns, two double, one single. The columns and conchoid niches are similar to those that appeared in the tomb of Baldwin V (died 581/1185), suggesting that they may have derived from a tomb or pulpit.²¹ Before their removal, these elements were set into the base of the north-western pier, below the 'Buckler of Hamza' (pl. 11.1).²²

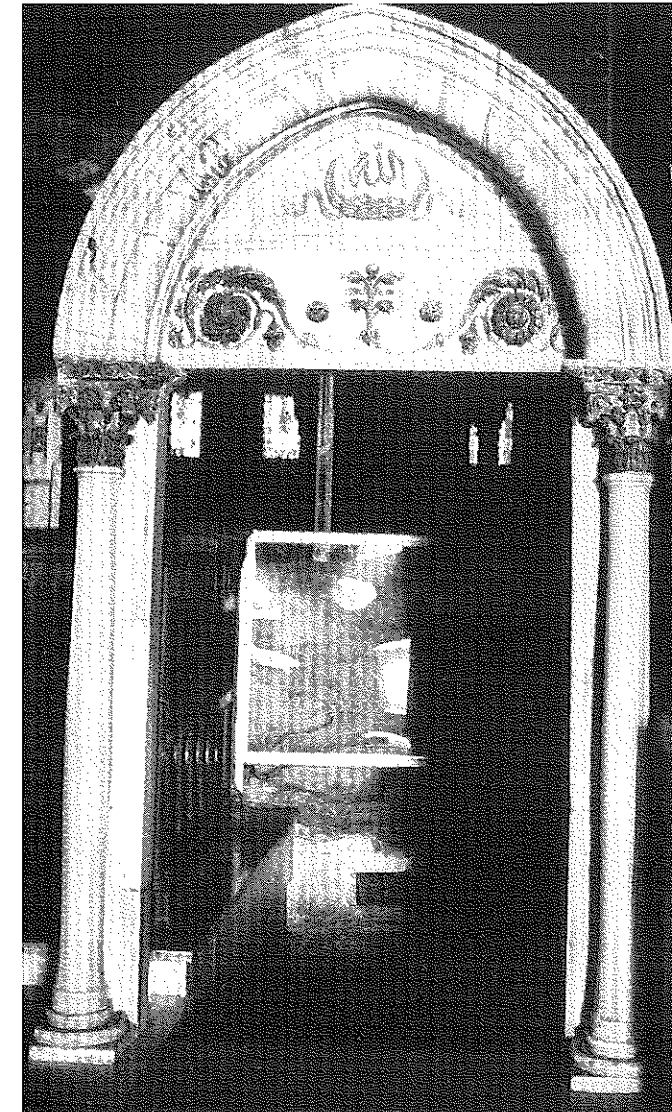
In addition to this composite *mihrab*, similar conchoid niches, also Crusader *spolia*, were used to form a *mihrab* near the western entrance to the Dome of the Rock.²³ Crusader capitals were also set around the Mihrab of Abu Hanifa, located opposite the portal leading to the cave beneath the Rock. The *mihrab* bears an undated inscription in glass mosaic and, if not Mamluk, may be Ayyubid.²⁴ Further examples of Crusader *spolia* were used in the construction of the Mihrab Ibrahim, one of two set within the Cave, on either side of the stair

²¹ Buschhausen 1978, 165-67, figs 72-6, 89-90; Jacoby 1979, 9, fig. 9.

²² Wilson 1880, 59. For a good photograph of the structure still in place see Strzygowski 1936, pl. 3. This was evidently not a *mihrab*, for the orientation would have been incorrect; see Clermont-Ganneau 1899, 'K' on plan on page 154.

²³ Buschhausen 1978, 186, fig. 162.

²⁴ Buschhausen 1978, 184, figs 324-29; Rosen-Ayalon 1986, 557.



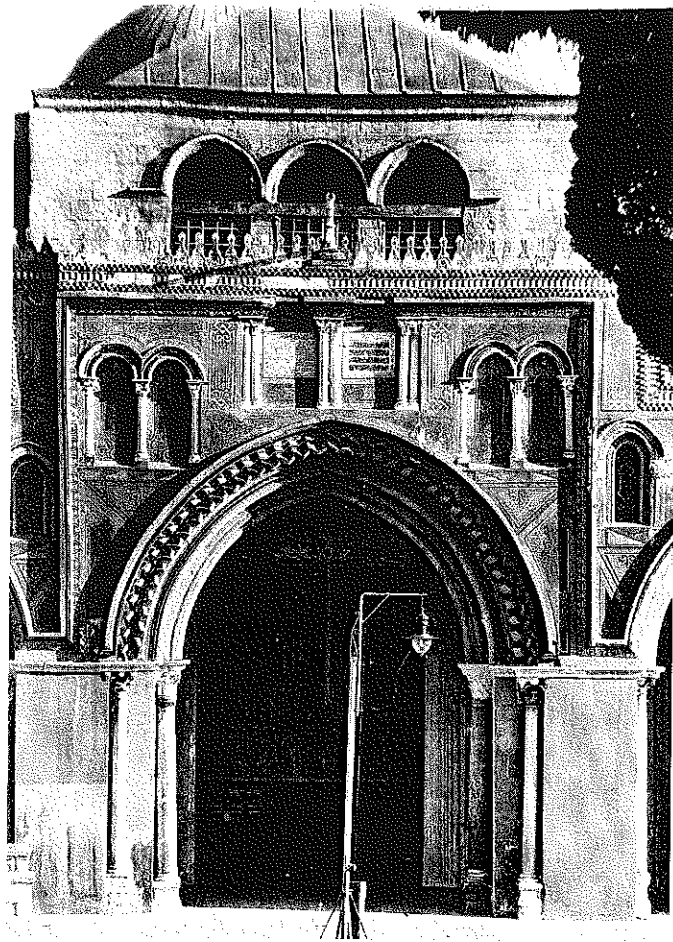
Pl. 11.3 Dome of the Rock, Portal with re-used Crusader material (after Folda, 1995).

that descends into it (pl. 11.2). The *mihrab* is constructed from two pairs of double interlaced columns and acanthus capitals supporting a trefoil arch with rosette spandrels; the arrangement is similar to that found in the Mihrab of Zakariyya in the Aqsa Mosque, which will be described shortly.²⁵

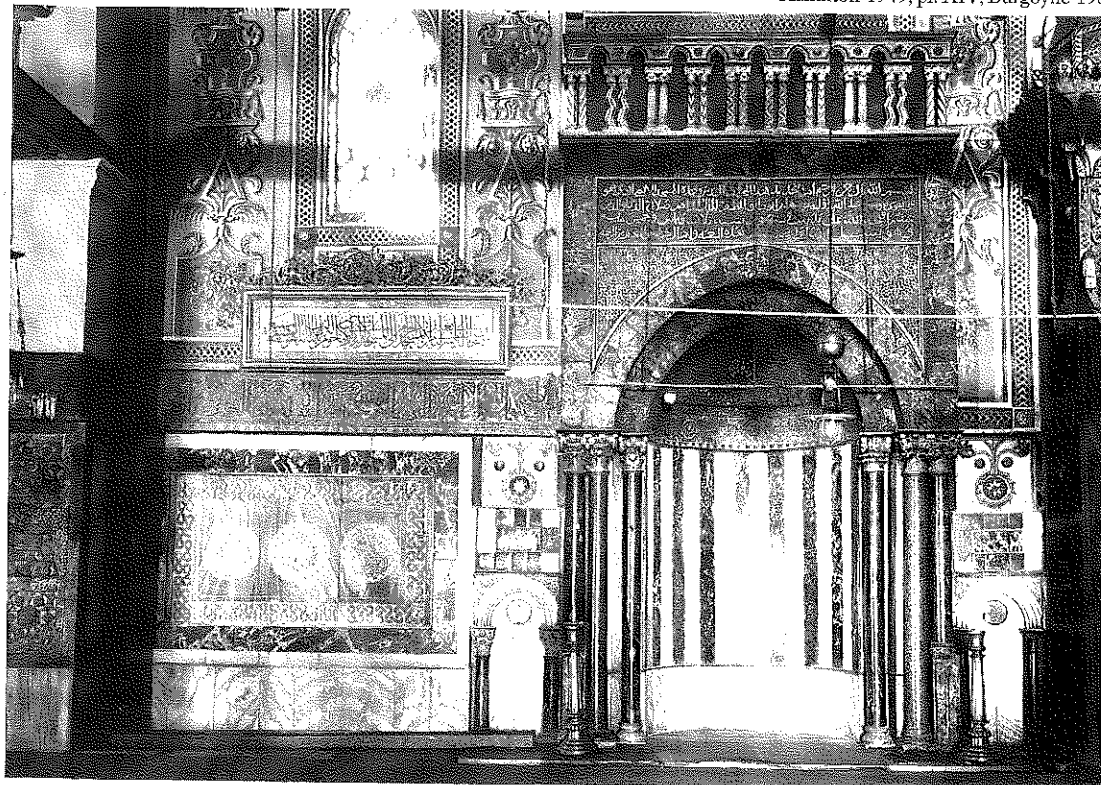
The largest example of Crusader carving in the Dome of the Rock is the portal that leads to the cave beneath the Rock (pl. 11.3). Although the tympanum consists of Crusader *spolia* cut down and altered to fit, the portal itself may have remained *in situ* after the reconsecration of the Templum Domini to Muslim use.²⁶ The presence of an Arabic inscription notwithstanding, the portal is comparable in structure and decorative syntax to Crusader portals in the Holy Sepulchre,

²⁵ Strzygowski 1936, 500, pl. 2; Buschhausen 1978, figs 77-80; Jacoby 1979, fig. 11; Jacoby 1982b, 328.

²⁶ Boase 1967, 19; Boase 1977, 88-9; Jacoby 1982b, 328, pl. 7; Folda 1995, pls 10.15a-d.



Pl. 11.4 Al-Aqsa Mosque, central portion of the façade. (Fondation Max van Berchem, Geneva)



Pl. 11.5 Al-Aqsa Mosque, central mihrab. (Creswell Photographic Archive, Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, neg. C. 500)

and is especially reminiscent of the south entrance to the grotto in the Church of the Nativity at Bethlehem.²⁷ The well-known Crusader portal from Acre, later incorporated into the Madrasa of Sultan al-Nasir Muhammad in Cairo (703/1303-4), provides a parallel for the re-use of such features.²⁸ If the Jerusalem portal is still *in situ* it would not, strictly speaking, represent a Crusader spoliium but would, like the iron grille of Crusader workmanship left in place around the Rock after 583/1187, represent continuity between the Crusader and Ayyubid periods.²⁹

In terms of quantity, quality and diversity, the Aqsa Mosque houses the most impressive array of Crusader material to be found among the monuments of the Haram. Much of the Crusader work in the eastern aisles of the mosque and the long vaulted chambers adjoining was altered or removed in the restorations of 1357-61/1938-1942,³⁰ but considerable quantities remain on the façade, along the *qibla* wall, and in the *mihirabs* and *dikka* of the mosque. This is in addition to the elements of Crusader work that appear in and around the mosque, reminders of its role as the headquarters of the Knights Templar; these include the remains of several portals on the east side of the building, and the tracery of a rose window incorporated into the eastern area of the mosque that houses the Mihrab of Zakariyya.³¹

²⁷ Boase 1977, pl. XIVa; Folda 1995, pl. 7.8k.

²⁸ Creswell 1978 Vol. 2, 234-35; Jacoby 1982a.

²⁹ Folda 1995, 136, pls 6.7b-c, 8A.3c.

³⁰ Boase 1977, 87.

³¹ Enlart 1925-28 Vol. 2, 220; Van Berchem 1927, 446, nos. 68 and 300; Hamilton 1949, pl. XIV; Burgoyne 1987, 47.

The façade of the portico, whose three central bays were added or remodelled by al-Mu'azzam 'Isa in 609/1217-8, incorporates a range of Crusader material, both visible and hidden (pl. 11.4). The chevron moulding of the archivolt of the portico has been carved on the reverse of Crusader masonry, which itself bore carved ornament.³² Such mouldings are common in Crusader monuments, and we seem to have here the appropriation of both a decorative vocabulary and the materials to execute it.³³ The opening of the arch is flanked by engaged columns that bear foliated capitals of Crusader type, and the impostes of at least one of the corbels bear figural ornament.

In the interior of the mosque, panels of Crusader marble carved with wet-leaf acanthus have been integrated into the *mihirabs* and surrounding decorative scheme of the *qibla* wall, along with fragments featuring arcade motifs with conchoid niches and spandrels carved with acanthus.³⁴ The date at which these were set in place has not been determined, but at least some of the decorative scheme is likely to date from the refurbishments of 583/1187, when the main *mihirab* was redecorated (pl. 11.5).³⁵ Crusader columns and foliate capitals flank this *mihirab* on either side and are set within it; at its base are set a pair of panels with double arches extracted from a slender arcade.³⁶ On either side were smaller *mihirabs* flanked by smaller columns topped by re-used Crusader capitals. The main *mihirab* is surmounted by a re-used composite miniature arcade borne on alternating straight and zig-zag spiral columns. The re-use of such miniature arcades in and around *mihirabs* in the Dome of the Rock and Aqsa Mosque may have been informed by the presence of similar features in major Syrian monuments of the period. The interior of the main *mihirab* of the Great Mosque of Damascus, seen by Ibn Jubayr when he visited in 580/1184, was, for example, decorated with a series of miniature arcades.³⁷

Greater massing of Crusader *spolia* is used to spectacular effect in other *mihirabs* of the Aqsa, most noticeably in two monumental *mihirabs* that stand in the eastern part of the mosque. The Mihrab of Zakariyya is a composite arrangement of Crusader *spolia* in which a trefoil arch is supported on pairs of Crusader columns, the spandrels of the arch filled with two separate acanthus carvings, while an unrelated portion of a rectangular frieze of scrolling acanthus shorter than the

width of the *mihirab* is set into the wall above as a terminal ornament (pl. 11.6). The use of wet-leaf acanthus reliefs and the care taken with assembling the re-used pieces relates the *mihirab* to other instances of *spolia* construction in the Haram, as Folda has noted:

This extraordinary effort at piecing together numerous fragments of the wet-leaf acanthus sculpture for later Moslem decoration can be seen in many examples of which the Zachariye *mihirab* in the Aqsa Mosque is an important example. Here the paneling of the interstices over the trefoil arch and on the sides, without counting the parts of the voussoirs or the columnlike corner pieces, consists of fourteen separate segments.³⁸

The Zakariyya *mihirab* is undated, but based on palaeographic and stylistic grounds van Berchem attributed it to the refurbishments of Saladin.³⁹ Crusader *spolia* was also incorporated into the Mihrab of 'Umar, which has been tentatively dated to the same period.⁴⁰ The *mihirab* is flanked by double figural capitals surmounting massive double interlaced columns set on inverted capitals also of Crusader origin, one of which imitates Byzantine wind-blown acanthus (pl. 11.7).⁴¹ Flanking the interior opening of the niche are two columns with foliated capitals of plainer type, but also of Crusader origin.

The *dikka* of the Aqsa Mosque, an elevated rectangular platform approximately twelve feet long by six feet wide, is a monumental assemblage of Crusader *spolia*, most of it apparently from the Templar workshop based in the area of the mosque (pl. 11.8).⁴² Over fourteen pieces of carved stone of various sizes have been used in constructing the balustrade, and sixteen in the cornice, while the platform itself is comprised of five separate slabs. The decorated fragments include narrow friezes of scrolling and wet-leaf acanthus borne on re-used acanthus capitals, with triplex columns and capitals cut down to support the corners of the structure, except on the north-eastern corner where three single capitals have been used.⁴³ Like many of the interior fixtures of the Aqsa

³⁸ 1995, 596 n. 184. See also van Berchem 1927, no. 300, pl. CXIX; Buschhausen 1978, 199-200, figs 172-4, 179-80; Jacoby 1982b, 326, figs 1, 10.

³⁹ Van Berchem 1927, 448; Hamilton 1949, 21.

⁴⁰ Korn 1998, 223.

⁴¹ Buschhausen 1978, 198, figs 109-14; Folda 1995, pl. 8A.8c. One of the capitals is closely related to those re-used in the Bab al-Sakina, the other to Crusader capitals in the Holy Sepulchre; Wilson 1880, 68; Hamilton 1949, 44. For a rare photograph of the *mihirab* in its entirety see Rosen-Ayalon 1989, ill. 16.

⁴² Enlart 1925-28 Vol. 2, 217-18; Boase 1977, 89, pl. VIIIa; Buschhausen 1978, 218-24, figs 185-95; Folda 1995, 442-51, pls 10.13a-w. For a rare comprehensive view see Jacoby 1992, fig. 2. The *dikka* has been moved several times in the past century; Folda 1995, 596n.

⁴³ Burgoyne and Folda 1981, 322.

³² Hamilton 1949, 39-44, pls XXII-XXV.

³³ Enlart 1925-28 Vol. 2, 221. An archivolt of similar form is part of the Crusader portal re-used at the main entrance to the Great Mosque of Tripoli in Lebanon; Salam-Liebich 1983, 18 fig. 4. See also Allen 1984, chapter 4. Similar mouldings appear on the Qubbat Yusuf on the Haram, which recent research has placed in the Ottoman period, despite its inclusion of a re-used Ayyubid inscription; Natsheh 2002, 938.

³⁴ Buschhausen 1978, 186, 205, figs 160-3, 198, 207-11, 319, 325; Jacoby 1979, 10 fig. 10; Jacoby 1982b, 326 figs 4, 8.

³⁵ Van Berchem 1927, 403, no. 280; Boase 1977, pl. VIIIb; Jacoby 1982, pl. 5.8a.

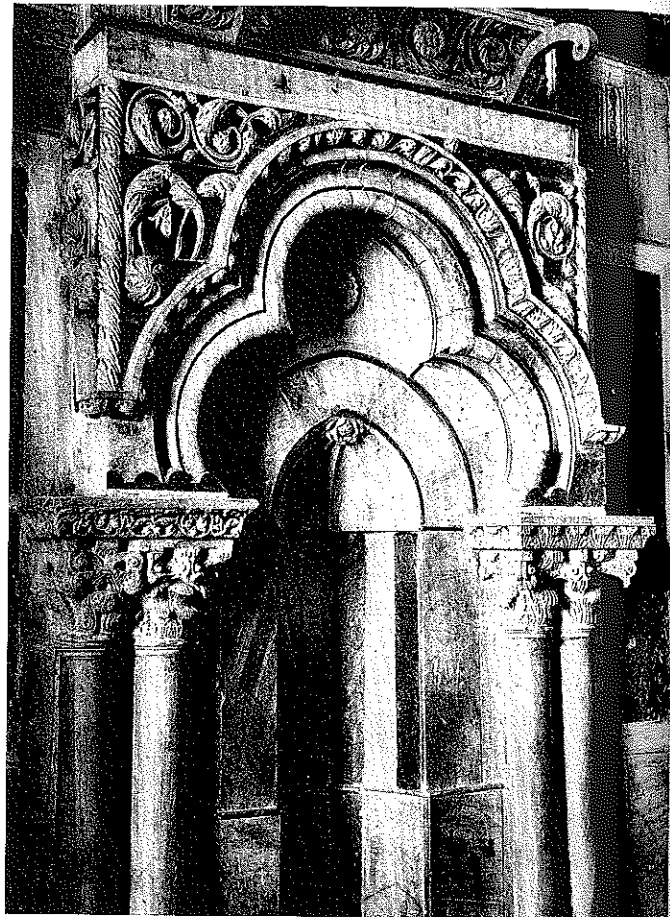
³⁶ Rosen-Ayalon 1986, 553-6; C Hillenbrand 1999, pl. 5.6.

³⁷ Flood 1997, 64.

Mosque, the date of the *dikka* is hard to determine, but the quantity and quality of the Crusader *spolia* that comprise it speaks in favour of a date soon after the Ayyubid conquest, when material of this quality could have become available as the result of clearances on the Haram; van Berchem suggested quite plausibly that the construction of the *dikka* was part of Saladin's refurbishment of the Aqsa mosque.⁴⁴ Material of similar range and quality, including triplex capitals, was used to construct a small domed structure to the south-west of the Dome of the Rock that today serves as the 'Summer Pulpit': Burgoyne ascribes the construction of the domed core to the late 6th/12th century.⁴⁵

From this brief survey it is clear that there is a certain consistency to the contexts in which Crusader *spolia* are deployed and to the compositional strategies that determine the manner of their deployment. Interlaced columns are frequently used to flank entrances and *mihrabs*, often in combination with trefoil arches and conchoid niches. Horizontal acanthus friezes are either inserted into vertical wall surfaces or used to form entablatures. The repetitious use of similar types of *spolia*, most obviously columns and capitals not only imbues the Ayyubid monuments in and around the Haram with a sense of rhythm, but lends them a visual coherence. For example, interlaced marble Crusader columns flanked the entrances of the Bab al-Sakina/Bab al-Silsila in the western portico of the Haram, and several of the entrances to the Qubbat al-Nahwiyya (604/1207-8) at the south-western corner of the Haram platform.⁴⁶ Re-used double capitals similar to those used on the Bab al-Silsila also appear on the façade of the Qubbat al-Nahwiyya, on the Aqsa façade rebuilt by al-Mu'azzam 'Isa, and in the Mihrab of 'Umar within the Aqsa.⁴⁷ As Folda has noted, the non-figural double capitals re-used in the Bab al-Silsila/Bab al-Sakina are also closely related to those re-used in the Qubbat al-Mi'raj, 'in the types, sizes, and proportions of capitals, motifs, vocabulary of forms, style of foliate design, and technique of execution', further establishing visual links between these two structures, rebuilt or remodelled in the Ayyubid period.⁴⁸

The sources of the Crusader material re-used in Ayyubid, Mamluk and Ottoman Jerusalem are largely a matter of conjecture. Some of the smaller elements scattered around the Haram—the miniature arcades of plaited columns and conchoid arches for example—evidently come from either

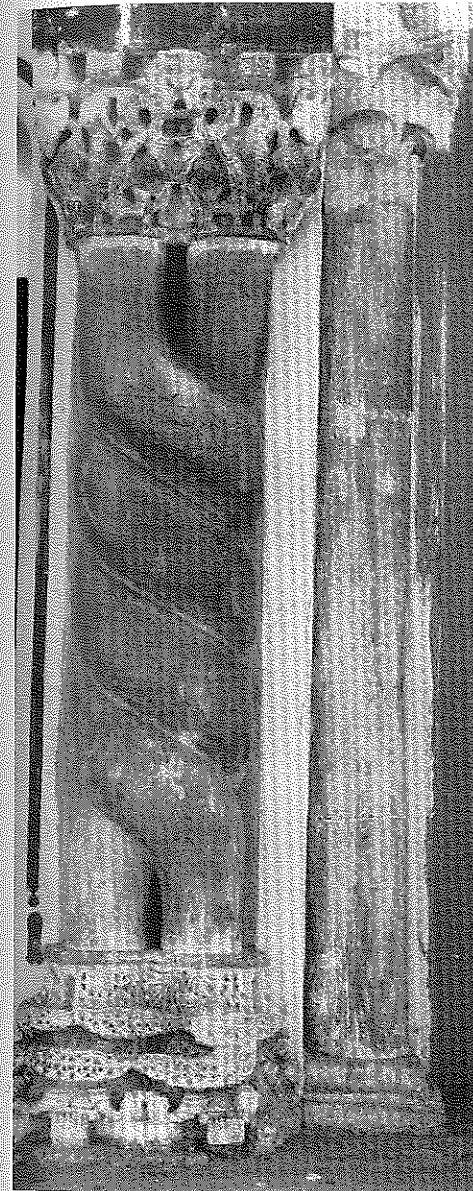


Pl. 11.6 Al-Aqsa Mosque, Mihrab of Zachariyya. (Fondation Max van Berchem, Geneva)

liturgical furnishings or funerary monuments; in this respect, it is worth remembering John of Würzburg's reference to Crusader funerary structures on the Haram platform.⁴⁹ The Crusader monuments on the Haram platform that were demolished by Saladin in 583/1187 are likely sources for some of the *spolia*. Some of the capitals re-used in the Qubbat al-Mi'raj may have come from the monastery of the Augustinian canons or its colonnade, which was destroyed at this time, and it has been suggested that the double interlaced columns re-used in the Bab al-Sakina, the Qubbat al-Nahwiyya and elsewhere came from the destroyed atrium of the Templum Domini.⁵⁰ It is now generally accepted that the three historiated capitals re-used in the Ghawanima minaret (ca 697/1298) were originally carved for the Chapel of Repose, a small

⁴⁹ Burgoyne 1987, 47. Since the date of many of the structures referred to above is uncertain, it is possible that some of the material stems from the Khwarizmiyan sack of Jerusalem in 642/1244, when some of the church furniture in the Holy Sepulchre was dismantled and the tombs of the Latin kings ransacked; Jacoby 1979, 9.

⁵⁰ Enlart 1925-28, 209, 216; Burgoyne and Folda 1981, 323; Jacoby 1982b, 378-80; Folda 1995, 260, 441-2. It has also been suggested that the Crusader carvings incorporated into the Bab al-Silsila and into later Ottoman *sabils* came from the nearby Church of St Gilles; Boase 1977, 273.

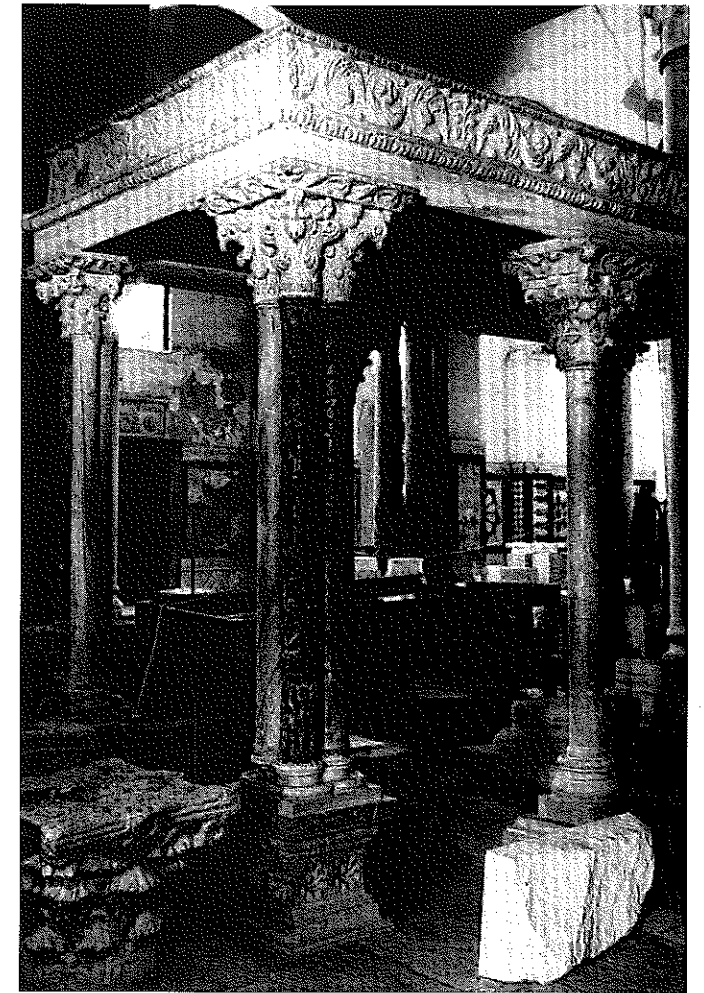


Pl. 11.7 Al-Aqsa Mosque, Mihrab of 'Umar, double interlaced column and figural capital on eastern side (after Folda, 1995).

12th-century chapel that stood nearby, and that had fallen into disuse by the time the minaret was built; whether the capitals were taken directly from the chapel or were used in some intervening monuments is not clear.⁵¹ As Boase points out, some of the re-used material is unfinished, suggesting that it may have come from the Crusader workshop known to have been based in the Haram area and whose work is believed to be represented in the Aqsa *dikka*.⁵²

⁵¹ Folda 1977, 273.

⁵² Boase 1977, 89; Folda 1995, 451.



Pl. 11.8 Al-Aqsa Mosque, *Dikka* (after Folda, 1995).

The question of figural *spolia*

In spite of frequent assertions that all Crusader figural carving fell victim to the iconoclastic zeal of the Ayyubids,⁵³ in fact a surprising range of such material was incorporated into the post-conquest monuments of Jerusalem. Crusader figural carvings appear in several locations in the Jerusalem Haram, but there is a particular concentration in and around the Aqsa Mosque, with anthropomorphic and zoomorphic material being re-used on the entrance façade, around interior *mihrabs* and on the *dikka* of the mosque. A capital with intertwined

⁵³ Boase 1977, 73, 274. The erroneous identification of images of swine within the Christian Templum Domini by Muslim authors suggests that it was the content and nature of representation rather than figuration *per se* that was at issue; Massé 1972, 55; C Hillenbrand 1999, 290. Judging from the well-known metalwork and enamelled glass vessels bearing Christian imagery, Christian iconography was not in itself objectionable to Ayyubid patrons, although the context in which these were made and circulated is far from certain. Given the widespread assumption that iconoclasm is an essentially Muslim practice, it is worth noting the irony that many of the medieval French *comparanda* for the Crusader figural material from the Levant survives in defaced and fragmentary condition (if at all), victims of revolutionary iconoclasts.

griffins appears on the portion of the façade ascribed to al-Mu'azzam 'Isa.⁵⁴ Marble Crusader capitals carved with fish and birds also appear on the exterior of the Qubbat al-Nahwiyya, and eagle and lion capitals were re-used on the exterior of the Qubbat al-Mi'raj.⁵⁵ The possibility of a talismanic or apotropaic function attaching to the re-use of figural ornament on exteriors cannot be ruled out; in the medieval Mediterranean re-used zoomorphic carvings were particularly favoured in such contexts.⁵⁶

In the interior of the Aqsa, an eagle appears on a Crusader capital flanking the small *mihrab* beside the *minbar* of the mosque (pl. 11.9). The face of this eagle has been carefully reworked to assume the form of an abstract ovoid boss, leaving the body intact.⁵⁷ The faces of eagles and lions that appear on a double capital to one side of the Mihrab of 'Umar have been similarly reworked to obscure their features by the over-carving of a simple cross-hatched design (pl. 11.10). Such defacements accord with the treatment for figural ornament prescribed in the *hadith*, and follow a practice well established in the Dar al-Islam. Images of eagles that appeared on Byzantine capitals re-used in the Fatimid mosque of al-Azhar in Cairo (363/973) were similarly defaced, but by decapitation rather than recarving.⁵⁸ The same method was used for the figures that appeared on the Crusader foliate capitals of the portal leading to the cave beneath the Dome of the Rock, and for the angel or bird that once decorated the carving re-used in its tympanum, of which only the traces of wings remain.⁵⁹ The 'Table of Hamza', a composite of re-used Crusader sculpture, also bore a range of defaced figural ornament including a bird, a dog and an angel.⁶⁰ Elsewhere in the same monument a more drastic course was followed, with a fine Crusader carving of an acanthus scroll inhabited by nude male figures being inverted and used as one of the steps descending into the cave beneath the Rock.⁶¹ The date at which this was done is unclear, but if contemporary with the alterations just discussed, it suggests that the reception of the Crusader material was shaped by a range of attitudes towards figuration.

The proscriptions on figuration found in the *hadith* and elsewhere were historically honoured more in the breach than the observance, but in general medieval mosques remained free of figural ornament. Exceptionally, columns



Pl. 11.9 Al-Aqsa Mosque, detail of altered eagle capital, small *mihrab* in the western half of the south wall (after Folda, 1995).

added to the main *mihrab* of Nur al-Din's mosque in Hama towards the middle of the 7th/13th century include a band of zoomorphic carving, reinforcing the impression that attitudes to figuration in Ayyubid and Mamluk Syria were more diverse than sometimes imagined.⁶² Such exceptions apart, both proscription and practice ensured that when architectural members bearing figural ornament were re-used in medieval mosques, steps were taken to render such ornament innocuous. From a theological perspective defaced material would have been entirely acceptable, since defacement or decapitation effects a deanimation of the representation and its capacity to possess *ruh* or spirit.⁶³ As Jacoby has pointed out, this can lead to surprising 'anomalies': the buxom siren that appears among the Crusader material re-used on the 'Summer Pulpit' of the Haram has had her head removed, but is otherwise very much intact, underlining that the concerns of medieval iconoclasts were directed towards the issues of animation or figuration in general rather than at the body or nudity in particular.⁶⁴

In those cases where faces were carefully altered, the re-used figural material was evidently intended to be visible. By contrast, one of the Crusader figural capitals framing the Mihrab of 'Umar in the Aqsa is decorated with a pair of intertwined birds that appears remarkably intact.⁶⁵ It is possible that some of these figural carvings were once covered with plaster: 19th-century accounts mention the presence of plaster concealing some of the figural carvings re-used in the Dome of the Rock and Aqsa Mosque, where the application



Pl. 11.10 Al-Aqsa Mosque, Mihrab of 'Umar, eagle and lion capital (after Kühnel, 1994).

of stucco and careful recarving had earlier helped to transform anthropomorphic or zoomorphic designs on Byzantine material into more innocuous 'abstract' patterns.⁶⁶

The degree and nature of physical interventions upon re-used Crusader sculpture are to some extent related to issues of context and visibility. Crusader figural capitals, including a fine representation of Daniel in the Lion's Den, were set at the entrance to the Bab al-Silsila/Bab al-Sakina when it was remodelled in the late 6th/12th century.⁶⁷ Boase suggested that the undamaged condition of the figures on these capitals reflects their elevated position,⁶⁸ but the care taken to erase the features of the bearded man and bull's head depicted on the elevated consoles flanking the apse in the Church of St Anne (transformed into a *madrasa* after 583/1187) indicates that such physical limitations did not deter iconoclastic interventions.⁶⁹ It may be that the presence of figural ornament could be more

easily tolerated at the gate, outside the entrance to the Haram and without the confines of a mosque or *madrasa*.⁷⁰

Nevertheless, the issue of visibility is relevant to some other apparent anomalies in the alteration of figural ornament. The treatment of the Crusader figural material re-used in the construction of the *dikka* of the Aqsa Mosque is particularly instructive. The details of two human faces have been carefully erased so that they resemble smooth bosses; the same is true of the animal heads on the corners of the abaci supporting the archivolt of the Crusader portal in the Dome of the Rock.⁷¹ There is less consistency in the treatment of animal figures: a lion carved on the narrow horizontal frieze comprising the north side of the *dikka* has been decapitated, while the heads of an eagle and ram on the abacus of the south-west corner both survive unscathed, presumably because they were less visible in this position.⁷²

Where facial features were altered, the care taken recalls an interesting observation made by Clermont-Ganneau in connection with the historiated Crusader capitals later re-used on the Ghawanima minaret:

I think that the comparative respect which has been shown to these fragments, and more especially to the capitals in our minaret, can be explained by the fact that a large number of the masons were Christians, and that it must always have been so. It is probable that during the course of the work committed to their charge, they took care to preserve as far as they were able all stonework connected with their religion.⁷³

Evidence to support this interesting suggestion is not forthcoming but it is entirely conceivable that stonemasons who had formerly worked for the Franks continued to work in various capacities for Ayyubid patrons after the reconquest of Jerusalem. 'Imad al-Din al-Isfahani tells us that many of the Christians who remained in Jerusalem after 583/1187 entered into Muslim service in various capacities, and it is at least possible that some were masons.⁷⁴ Crusader prisoners were used in the construction of Ayyubid monuments in Cairo, and there is no reason to assume that the same practice was not also

⁵⁴ Enlart 1925-28 Vol. 2, 221; Kühnel 1994, 36.

⁵⁵ Boase 1977, 272, pl. Xb; Hawari 1994; Kühnel 1994, 36, fig. 16; Folda 1995, pl. 8A.5n-o.

⁵⁶ Flood 2003.

⁵⁷ Burgoyne and Folda 1981, 324.

⁵⁸ Barrucand 2002, 50, fig. 13.

⁵⁹ Jacoby 1992, 15, fig. 4; Folda 1995, 451, pl. 10.15b.

⁶⁰ Boase 1977, 90; Buschhausen 1978, 166, figs 98-100. These were noted by Clermont-Ganneau (1899, 151), who saw them when they were briefly divested of the whitewash that covered them.

⁶¹ Jacoby 1992, 18, fig. 6. The trampling of such material is a standard trope of pre-modern iconoclasts within and without in the Islamic world; Flood 2002, 644, 650.

⁶² Herzfeld 1943, 45, fig. 17. It has been suggested, somewhat controversially, that re-used Byzantine capitals decorated with images of animals and birds in the *qibla* bay of the Umayyad Aqsa Mosque were defaced only in the 'Abbasid period; Wilkinson 1992, 134-9.

⁶³ Flood 2002.

⁶⁴ 1992, 18. See also Boase 1977, 89; Buschhausen 1978, 231, fig. 290; Jacoby 1982b, fig. 52.

⁶⁵ Boase 1977, 90, pl. IXa; Buschhausen 1978, figs 112-13.

⁶⁶ Clermont-Ganneau 1889, 151; Wilkinson 1992, 130.

⁶⁷ Buschhausen 1978, pls 137, 141; Burgoyne and Folda 1981, 322, fig. 1; Folda 1995, 266, pls 8A.7e-f.

⁶⁸ 1977, 87.

⁶⁹ Visible in Deschamps 1964, 61; Jacoby 1992, 20.

⁷⁰ As Folda points out (1995, 596n.), the presence of the siren capital on the outdoor *minbar*, but not within the monuments of the Haram may indicate a process of selection based on context.

⁷¹ Jacoby 1982b, 347, figs 44, 50; Jacoby 1992, 15, fig. 3; Folda 1995, 451, pls 10.13n, 10.13r, 10.15c-d.

⁷² Folda 1995, pls 10.13q, 10.13s, 10.13v.

⁷³ 1899, 152.

⁷⁴ Massé 1972, 50. See also Burgoyne and Folda 1981, 322. One might also think of the indigenous Christians known to have worked on Crusader period architectural projects: Hunt 1991.

followed in Jerusalem.⁷⁵ There is, however, no need to have recourse to Christian masons, for the high profile that Crusader *spolia* assume in the Ayyubid monuments of Jerusalem and the care taken with their assemblage and reworking point to their investment with an aesthetic value that would itself offer an explanation for the desire to deface without deforming.⁷⁶

Constructing a context for Crusader *spolia*

In published discussions of Crusader *spolia* found in the Zangid, Ayyubid and Mamluk monuments of Syria, the aesthetic dimension has taken a backseat in favour of explanations that ascribe their presence in medieval Islamic monuments to their utility, their trophy value or the ascription of magical properties to them. Speaking of Crusader capitals re-used in two *mihhrabs* of the Mashhad al-Husain in Aleppo, Herzfeld is quite emphatic in denying any aesthetic value to them:

These pieces have not been used because it was not possible to produce their like, nor because they were considered more beautiful than the indigenous products—the art of stone carving was at its zenith—but these are trophies that were re-used, as in the *mihrab* of abu l-fiḍā in the mosque of Nūr al-dīn at Hāmā, by virtue of their magical power.⁷⁷

Sauvaget ignores here the crucial fact that the latter capitals are inverted, inversion being a long-accepted mode of articulating victory and defeat in visual terms.⁷⁸ With the exception of a pair of double capitals inverted to provide bases for the interlaced columns that frame the *Mihrab* of ‘Umar in

the Aqsa, there is little to suggest that Crusader material was inverted in Ayyubid contexts.⁷⁹

Medieval descriptions of Jerusalem do mention re-used Crusader carving, but not as such, nor do they ascribe any trophy value to re-used material.⁸⁰ The lack of textual evidence for any such value attaching to the Crusader material is all the more striking when one considers that we are told that certain elements were indeed taken from Crusader monuments as trophies. The cross on the Dome of the Rock is the obvious case in point, since it was reportedly sent to Baghdad in 583/1187 to commemorate the recapture of the Holy City.⁸¹

In the absence of such evidence, one is left to deduce what one can about the possible meanings of Crusader material from the specific contexts and mode of their redeployment. The deployment of figural capitals on the exterior of Ayyubid monuments might suggest that they assumed an apotropaic value, but a more likely candidate for such a role would be the interlaced columns that proliferate around entrances and *mihhrabs*. The likelihood that these were intended to evoke the columns of the Solomonic Temple (at least in their primary contexts) has been raised elsewhere,⁸² and the use of knotted designs around thresholds is well documented for the medieval Christian monuments of Palestine.⁸³

The deployment of Crusader *spolia* in Jerusalem is part of a wider cultural phenomenon, witnessed for example in the penchant for using Crusader capitals in and around the *mihhrabs* of Zangid, Ayyubid and Mamluk monuments in Egypt and Syria.⁸⁴ There is a strong polemical opposition between

the altar and *mihrab* in Zangid, Ayyubid and Mamluk texts dealing with the Crusades, and the replacement of the altar by the *minbar* or *mihrab* is a standard trope in references to the resanctification of Muslim sacred space in Jerusalem and elsewhere.⁸⁵ There is a notable focus on the *mihrab* of the Aqsa in descriptions of the renovations undertaken by Saladin, and it has been suggested that at least some of the Crusader elements used to form *mihhrabs* here and in the Dome of the Rock came from Crusader altars or altar ciboria.⁸⁶ It is therefore possible that the frequent re-use of Crusader fragments to form Ayyubid *mihhrabs* carried with it connotations of military victory and spiritual triumph. The practice would continue a tradition found in earlier Syrian mosques and *madrasas*, in which antique Christian liturgical tables or *patinas* were re-used as *mihhrabs*; it is reported that such a table was incorporated into the Qubbat al-Nahwiyya in Jerusalem.⁸⁷ Although the earliest examples ante-date the Crusades, a particular concentration of such tables in monuments associated with Nur al-Din ibn Zangi (died 569/1174) raises the possibility that the transformation of such material into *mihhrabs* acquired polemical overtones in the context of the counter-Crusade. The practice of re-use is ambiguous and polyvalent, however, and contemporary accounts emphasize the aesthetic properties of the marble tables rather than any other aspect.⁸⁸

Any triumphal connotations attaching to Crusader *spolia* in Jerusalem are more plausible for monuments built in the wake of victory, and are unlikely to have survived long beyond the period of Ayyubid rule. As Dale Kinney has pointed out in her seminal work on *spolia* in late antiquity, to be seen as such *spolia* must be identified as the product of two distinct moments.⁸⁹ There is little to suggest that this was the case in Jerusalem, where the ubiquity of Crusader materials seems to have ‘naturalized’ them over time. Anthony Cutler has noted that re-use (as opposed to use) is to some degree ‘a historicist gesture’, one that ‘is a learned posture and, as such, not the attitude toward an object projected by the majority of its medieval or modern spectators.’⁹⁰ Paradoxically perhaps, in Jerusalem of all places there is reason to doubt such a sense of historicism. The Crusaders themselves had, after all, identified the Dome of the Rock as the *Templum Domini*, ‘undisturbed

mosque of al-Azhar in Cairo, Byzantine and Coptic columns and capitals are used throughout, with the notable exception of the *mihrab*, which is flanked by columns bearing capitals of a more sober type that were evidently carved *ex novo* for the building; Barrucand 2002.

⁷⁵ Flood 2001.

⁷⁶ Buschhausen 1978, 218; Jacoby 1982b, 378.

⁷⁷ Hillenbrand 2002, 21. There appears to be no published photograph of the table.

⁷⁸ Flood 2001, 49–64.

⁷⁹ Kinney 1995, 57. See also Jacoby (1982a, 126) on chronology and the meaning of Crusader *spolia* in Cairo.

⁸⁰ Cutler 1999, 1057, 1062. See also note 105 below.

by any historical sense of architectural styles,⁹¹ and none of the surviving descriptions of the Haram indicate that Crusader material was seen as anything other than integral to the monuments that it adorned. By the time that the Ottomans were again re-using Crusader fragments for their *sabils*, similar elements had been integrated into the monuments of the Haram for almost four centuries.⁹² To suggest that they were identified as ‘Crusader’, let alone re-used, assumes not only a fixed identity that is problematic, but a rather modern (and art historical) sense of style.⁹³ In the 8th/14th century, the iron grille of Crusader craftsmanship that framed the Sakhra in the Dome of the Rock was, for example, heralded as being of ‘wonderful workmanship (*badīā al-sānā*)’ [*Badī ‘aṭṭ al-ṣinā’ - LH*]’ by Ibn Battuta, who evidently had no idea of its Crusader origins.⁹⁴ So integral was the feature to the holistic perception of the Dome of the Rock that it had been among the basic formal features of the Dome of the Rock quoted in the tomb of the Mamluk sultan Qala’un in Cairo a few decades earlier.⁹⁵

The dividing line between continuity and discontinuity in Ayyubid use of *spolia* is a fine one, difficult to calibrate with any precision. On the one hand, the *spolia* were presumably removed from the destroyed or defunct Crusader monuments mentioned above. On the other, the practice of re-use has a history in the Levant that encompasses the Ayyubid period. The Franks themselves re-used late antique and Byzantine sculptural material similar in form or decorative content to the Crusader material later chosen to embellish the Ayyubid monuments of Jerusalem.⁹⁶ Just as Crusader masons often recarved *spolia* to adapt them for their new contexts, quite literally making their mark on antique stones, so the Crusader stones re-used in Ayyubid structures were often palimpsests, reworked in a way that effaced the tell-tale masons marks of

⁹¹ Boase 1977, 86. In many cases (the Aqsa façade is one), re-used Crusader material was combined with smaller quantities of Byzantine and Roman *spolia*, which have largely been ignored; Hamilton 1949, 44.

⁹² Hillenbrand 2002, 21–2.

⁹³ See Grabar’s comments (201, 238) on the use of *spolia* in the Bab al-Silsila *sabil*. Topography rather than the triumphal gesture is a more likely determinant of Ottoman re-use. The *sabil* mentioned by Grabar is located near the Bab al-Silsila/Bab al-Sakina in which extensive use is also made of Crusader *spolia*. The proximity of the Ottoman Qubbat al-Arwah, in which Crusader *spolia* was incorporated, to the Ayyubid Qubbat al-Nahwiyya has also been noted; Hillenbrand 2002, 21–2.

⁹⁴ Defrémery and Sanguinetti 1926, 123. Since al-Harawi, who visited the Dome of the Rock in 569/1173 during the Crusader occupation, noted the installation of the grille, we must assume that awareness of its Crusader origins had been lost in the intervening two centuries; Le Strange 1890, 132; Sourdel-Thomine 1957, 62–3.

⁹⁵ Grabar 2001, 238–9. While the tomb was completed in 683/1285, the screen was probably added by al-Nasir Muhammad in 703/1303; Creswell 1978, 194. For the iron grille, and fragments of another like it in the Aqsa, see Enlart 1925–28 Vol. 2, 220; Folda 1995, 136, pls 6.7b–c, 8A.3c. An alternative possibility is that the Cairene screen emulates the wooden grille added by al-Malik al-Nasir, son of Saladin, in 595/1199; van Berchem 1927, 301–2.

⁹⁶ Clermont-Ganneau 1899, 120–21; Kanaan 1973, 169; Boase 1977, 80; Muratova 1982, 57; Folda 1995, 308, 538n.; Ousterhout 2003, 13.

⁷⁵ MacKenzie 1992, 124; Little 1997, 179. See also van Berchem 1927, 413.

At this very period Hindu masons engaged in building mosques with *spolia* for the Ghurid conquerors of north India appear to have been charged with altering the figural ornament on *spolia* to prepare them for use in the construction of mosques; Flood forthcoming.

⁷⁶ Jacoby 1992: 20. As Folda notes (1995, 596n.), ‘It is a tribute to the quality of the sculpture that the Moslems with their highly sophisticated sense of patterned ornament admired it and decided to re-use it for some of the major decoration in these two important buildings, the Aqsa Mosque and the Dome of the Rock.’ In the emphasis on victory and trophy, the positive aesthetic value ascribed to *spolia* used in medieval Islamic monuments is often overlooked. The beauty and elegance of the Byzantine columns that were commandeered for the construction of al-Ramla in the early 8th century is, for example, an integral part of the story of their acquisition as told in the Arabic sources; Kanaan 1973, 172.

⁷⁷ Herzfeld 1955, 242–3; the translation is mine.

⁷⁸ Herzfeld 1943, 46–7, fig. 18; Flood 2001, 69n.

⁷⁹ Boase 1977, pl. IXa. Although one of the interlaced columns flanking the entrance to the Qubbat al-Nahwiyya is inverted in the image published in Folda (1995, fig. 8A.7g) this is an editing error rather than a reflection of the way in which the column actually appears on the monument.

⁸⁰ Al-Umari (died 750/1349), for example, makes reference to several structures on the Haram that incorporate Crusader *spolia* without ever demonstrating any awareness of their origins, but frequently praising their appearance. Thus we are told that the two *mihhrabs* in the Well of Souls beneath the Rock, one of which incorporates Crusader interlaced miniature columns, are each flanked by two fine marble columns, while similar praise is lavished on the columns and lantern of the Qubbat al-Mi’raj; al-Umari 1924, 144–5; Mayer 1931–32, 46–7.

⁸¹ C Hillenbrand 1999, 305. Enlart asserts (on whose authority is not clear) that columns from the courtyard of the Holy Sepulchre were sent to Mecca to commemorate the victory of 583/1187; 1925–28 Vol. 1, 37.

⁸² Cahn 1976, 54–6. In view of the suggested Byzantine origins of the some of these interlaced or plaited columns (Jacoby 1982b, 370, 373), it is worth noting a similar Solomonic iconography in Byzantium; Kalavrezou-Maxeiner 1985.

⁸³ Maguire 1998.

⁸⁴ Closest in date to the Ayyubid monuments of the Haram are the *Jami’ al-Hanabila* (606/1209–1210), and the *Madrasa al-Adrawiyya* in Damascus (6th/12th century), both of which contain *mihhrabs* with Crusader capitals; Anon. 1938, 59; Herzfeld 1943, 46–7. For later examples in Syria and Egypt see Enlart 1925–28 Vol. 2, 101–2, fig. 235; Meinecke 1980, 51–2; Jacoby 1982a; Allen 1999, chapter 6, page 11; Flood 2001, 69, n. 56. Although final judgment should await a more systematic survey of *spolia* in the medieval Islamic monuments of the eastern Mediterranean, this penchant for using Crusader columns and capitals to frame *mihhrabs* stands in contrast to the only Fatimid mosque where the use of *spolia* has been studied in detail. In the

Crusader facture. The use of *spolia* was therefore a characteristic practice of both Crusader and Ayyubid architecture in Palestine, which constituted an engagement with some of the aesthetic values and decorative principles of an antecedent tradition. Just as *spolia* could be deployed in a manner consonant with that antecedent tradition, they could also inspire the creation of architectural forms or modes of ornament that continued its basic principles.⁹⁷ This is the case in Ayyubid Jerusalem, whose monumental architecture was characterised by a combination of *spolia in se* (the re-use of tangible objects) and *spolia in re* (virtual *spoliation*).⁹⁸

Although lacking its apparent 'historicism', Ayyubid engagement with Crusader architecture in Jerusalem might be considered in relation to the so-called 'classical revival' in the Zangid and Ayyubid monuments of north and central Syria, characterised by a taste for both archaic and archaising stone carving.⁹⁹ However, a more salient comparison for the interplay between past and present, inherited traditions and innovative (re)usage that characterises Ayyubid deployment of *spolia* in Jerusalem may be found in Ayyubid responses to the Fatimid monuments of Cairo after the conquest of Egypt in 567/1171. In both Jerusalem and Cairo, the re-assertion of Sunni orthodoxy was accompanied by the selective erasure of antecedent monuments (the Crusader structures on the Haram and the Fatimid palaces), followed by the construction of monuments that incorporate but reconfigure elements drawn from the preceding tradition.¹⁰⁰ Just as wet-leaf acanthus, interlaced columns and other modes of ornament associated with the Crusader monuments of the Levant make their appearance in Ayyubid Jerusalem, so the keel-headed

arches, rosettes, and radial modes of decoration that are so characteristic of Fatimid architecture continue to appear in the Ayyubid monuments of Egypt.

Lorenz Korn has noted that in a key monument such as the Madrasa of al-Salih Ayyub (641/1243-4), 'traditional elements from the Fatimid repertoire are composed in such a manner that a new effect of unity, rhythm and monumentality is achieved.'¹⁰¹ The massing of Crusader *spolia* at key points in the Ayyubid monuments of the Haram (at entrances or around *mihnabs*, for example) and their recombination in novel arrangements that frequently monumentalize what were once relatively minor elements of decorative carving achieves a comparable effect, best seen in the *Mihnabs* of 'Umar and of Zakariyya or in the *dikka* of the Aqsa. In one case continuity is maintained by appropriating elements of a pre-existing architectural vocabulary, in the other by appropriating the instantiated fragments of an antecedent tradition.

Conclusion

The re-use of Crusader material in Ayyubid Jerusalem is characterized by a number of ambiguities. On the one hand, the recontextualisation of Crusader carvings indexes the destruction or disappearance of the monuments from which they came. On the other, the presence of characteristic Crusader elements such as interlaced columns and wet-leaf acanthus in Ayyubid monuments provides a point of continuity with Crusader architecture. The use of *spolia* to form Ayyubid *mihnabs* may have been intended as part of a visual evocation of victory, but such associations appear to have been short-lived, for the re-used materials are not recognized as such in the medieval sources, which focus instead on their aesthetic properties. The repetitious use of Crusader elements imbues the monuments of Ayyubid Jerusalem with a visual coherence; this is particularly apparent in the works attributable al-Malik al-Mu'azzam 'Isa, governor of Jerusalem from 597/1200 and sultan of Syria between 615/1218 and 625/1227, in which the use of *spolia* is a hallmark.¹⁰²

Seen in a broader context, the integration of Crusader material into the Ayyubid monuments of Jerusalem not only continues a Levantine tradition of re-use, but is also part of a phenomenon that witnesses a similar appropriation and reconfiguration of a pre-existing decorative vocabulary in the Ayyubid monuments of Cairo. In addition to these regional and dynastic frames, one might also consider the Ayyubid penchant for Crusader *spolia* in the broader context of the 6th/12th century and the architecture of *jihād*. Even as Saladin was

¹⁰¹ 1999, 291, 275-84, pl. 44. See also Creswell 1978 Vol. 2, 94-100.

¹⁰² For a brief biography see Rosen-Ayalon 1990, 309-10.

recapturing Jerusalem, the eastern frontier of the Dar al-Islam was being radically extended through the Indian campaigns of the Ghurid sultans of Afghanistan. An association was made between these two campaigns in the minds of at least some contemporary literati, for Juzjani, our most important source for Ghurid history, makes an explicit comparison between the military victories of Saladin against the Fatimids and Franks in the West to those of the Ghurid sultan Mu'izz al-Din (died 602/1206) against the Yamini and Hindu kingdoms of northern India in the East during precisely the same period.¹⁰³ These latter victories were also followed by the erection of religious edifices in which extensive use was made of figural *spolia*, altered in a similar manner to the Crusader material in Jerusalem. Also common to both domains is the fact that medieval descriptions of these structures make no mention of *spolia*, but discuss them as unitary wholes, suggesting that medieval viewers saw them in quite different ways to modern art historians.¹⁰⁴

A major methodological problem in analyzing the re-use of architectural material in the medieval Islamic world inheres in the terminology itself. The use of the term '*spolia*' to designate the re-use of architectural materials originates in Renaissance Italy; a terminology with such a recent and culturally specific history is invariably 'laden with artistic prejudices and interests specific to a much later period', and as such, liable to offer explanations more relevant to *etic* rather

than *emic* categories of analysis.¹⁰⁵ The identification of re-used carving as 'Crusader' material, even when found in mosques, suggests that the identity of the material is fixed, an essential quality of physical form and, consequently, that its presence in secondary 'Islamic' contexts was intrusive and perceived as such. Although it may seem counter-intuitive, architectural materials are in no sense inalienable: on the contrary, the evidence from medieval monuments suggests that they were remarkably mobile, both physically and conceptually. This is particularly true of the medieval Levant, where an architectural element such as a capital might be the product of multiple contextual, material and stylistic transformations.

The tendency to see artifacts as objectifications of an identity fixed at the moment of an object's 'birth' ignores the fact that the 'biographies' of re-used materials are often more complex than a dialectical focus on origin and endpoint would suggest. The use of booty and loot (including architectural material) as objects of negotiation between members of Muslim élites was common in the medieval Islamic world, and frequently imbued these objects with meanings only contingently related to their original identity, if at all.¹⁰⁶ In other words, neither the functions nor meanings of *spolia* are fixed, but dynamically constructed and susceptible to change. In Nicholas Thomas' words, as they circulate in time and place, 'objects are not what they were made to be but what they have become.'¹⁰⁷

⁹⁷ The similarities between the deployment of Crusader columns and capitals in the Church of the Ascension and the Qubbat al-Mi'raj offer a good example of the first phenomenon. One could also mention the decoration of archivolt with cushion voussoirs and chevron mouldings. As for the second, see the relationship between the mosaic decoration of the Aqsa *mihrab* restored by Saladin in 583/1187-8 and acanthus scrolls of the Crusader period; van Berchem 1927, 412-3. Note also the suggestion that the large panels of acanthus carving re-used in the Aqsa Mosque were originally set into the walls of Crusader churches, exactly as they are in the Aqsa; Jacoby 1982b, 377. On the difficulties in distinguishing Crusader material *in situ* and in re-use see Burgoyne 1987, 48.

⁹⁸ The distinction between *spolia in re* and *spolia in se* was first noted by Richard Brilliant in relation to late antique sculpture in Italy, and has been adopted subsequently in medieval European *spolia* studies; Kinney 1997, 137. The same combination is apparent in the Crusader additions to the Holy Sepulchre; Kanaan 1973, 225; Allen 1986, 81; Ousterhout 2003, 18-19.

⁹⁹ The historical associations of certain sites that may have been a factor in such 'revivals' are clearly relevant to Jerusalem; Allen 1986, 81.

¹⁰⁰ While highlighting such continuities, one might also mention the numismatic evidence, and the way in which Ayyubid *dinars* minted after the conquest of Egypt continue the very striking concentric epigraphic design of Fatimid *dinars*; Bress 2001, 36-7. Such numismatic continuity in the wake of political change is paralleled in other times and places, and was no doubt a sensible economic move (although it is more difficult to explain the use of the same design for Ayyubid coins minted in Damascus in the same way), but it is one with aesthetic implications.

¹⁰³ Raverty 1970 Vol. 1, 214.

¹⁰⁴ Flood forthcoming. Kinney (1997, 140) notes that 'our gaze is analytic and art historical, not integrative.' The tendency to privilege modern Euro-American art-historical perception is clear from Strzygowski's assertion (1936, 504) that the Crusader material re-used in the Haram was the product of artists who 'had created a unique style, equally exotic for us in Europe and for the Orientals.'

¹⁰⁵ Kinney 1997, 120. See also Kinney 1995.

¹⁰⁶ For example, interpretations of the Crusader doorway incorporated into the Madrasa of al-Nasir Muhammad in Cairo (703/1303-4), or the carved pilasters bearing images of Jerusalem (?) that were placed at the entrance to the funerary complex of Sultan Hasan in the same city in 764/1362 stress the (known or assumed) association of these fragments with the fall of Acre in 1291. Between its capture and integration into the Qala'unid *madrasa*, the doorway from Acre circulated among members of the Mamluk élite, however; Sherif 1988, 84-111. Similarly, the Crusader elements re-used later in the complex of Sultan Hasan may have been incorporated into an earlier Cairene monument; Jacoby 1982a, 126.

¹⁰⁷ Thomas 1991, 4. See also Cutler (1999, 1079) on objects as 'evanescent links in a chain of Becoming.'