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Drawings of the Ḥaram of Jerusalem in Ottoman Manuscripts

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Pictorial representations of holy places in Jerusalem and its surroundings first appeared in Ottoman manuscripts in the mid-sixteenth century. They subsequently reappeared on a regular basis, until the late nineteenth century, as illustrations to different texts. This was only one manifestation of a vogue for illustrated guidebooks, pilgrimage certificates, and geographical treatises that resulted from the growing ease of travel during that period, attested by the considerable number of such texts and drawings, from Iran and India as well as from Turkey.¹ But, while the Iranian and Indian manuscripts contain only depictions of holy places in Arabia, their Ottoman equivalents sometimes conclude with a scheme of the Jerusalem Ḥaram. This phenomenon can be explained by the fact that only the Ottoman pilgrims passed through Syria on their way to Mecca.

Certificates attesting that a person had performed his *ḥajj* duty exist from as early as the twelfth century, some of them with briefly drawn illustrations of the locales.² During that period, challenged by

- 1 The first known Ottoman document with a maplike depiction of the Ka'ba is a *ḥajj* certificate given to Mimūna bint Muḥammad in 836/1432: London, B.L. Add. 27566. It was published by Richard Ettinghausen in "Die bildische Darstellung der Ka'ba im islamischen Kulturkreis," *ZDMG* n.s. 12 (1933):111-137, Abb. 2. Examples of manuscripts with illustrations of the holy places from other countries are "Futūḥ al-Ḥaramayn" from Khorasan or Bukhara, Paris, B.N., Sup. Per. 1340; "Futūḥ al-Ḥaramayn" from Mecca, Paris, B.N., Pers. 237; Qazwini's "Ajā'ib al-Makhlūqāt" from Iran 970/1562-1563, Istanbul, Türk ve İslam Eserleri Müzesi, En. No. Y2013; "Futūḥ al-Ḥaramayn" from the year 982/4751 origin unknown, Paris, B.N., Sup. Pers. 1389; "Anthology of Persian Literature," from Mecca 1582, repr. in *Turkish Treasures from the Collection of Edwin Binney III*, Edwin Binney III ed. (Portland 1979), No. 100.
- 2 A document of this type was written on a scroll in 589/1193: İstanbul, Türk ve İslam Eserleri Müzesi, Env. No. 4107. Another, in the same museum, was written in 1285 C.E. Many of the pre-Ottoman scrolls came to Istanbul from the Great Mosque in

the Crusader's conquests, the Muslims nourished and promoted the religious value of the holy places in Palestine. It was then, for example, that 'Alī bin Bakr al-Harawī wrote his *Kitāb al-Ziyārāt* (guide to the holy places), after a visit to Jerusalem in the year 569/1173.³

Between those twelfth-century drawings and the Ottoman conquest of the Arab lands on the route to Arabia, no other depictions of the Jerusalem Ḥaram are known. The earliest known Ottoman illustration appears at the end of the pilgrimage scroll written for Shehzade Mehmed in 1544-1545, a year after the prince's death. His father, Sultan Süleyman, asked Hacı Piri bin Seyyid Ahmed to perform the pilgrimage in the prince's memory, and on this occasion the document, known as *Hac Vekaletnamesi*, was written by Ebu Fadl Sincari.⁴ It contains fifteen scenes, framed and interspersed with Koranic verses and citations of *ḥadīth* in the *thulūth* script. In the frame, the phrases are inscribed on red cartouches, which give the complete compositions a certain resemblance to ceramic tiles. It recalls maps of the Ka'ba, painted on glazed tiles, that are fixed to *qibla* walls of Ottoman mosques, either inside the prayer halls or on the outside porches.⁵ The ceramic art may have inspired the illustrator of the pilgrimage scroll.

The Jerusalem Ḥaram is depicted at the end of the scroll, followed by a drawing of the Prophet's sandals. On a blue background above the scene is written the beginning of *Āyat al-Isrā'* (Sura 17/1): "Glory to Him who did take His servant for a journey by night from the

Damascus. See Zeren Tanındı, "Resimli Bir Hac Vekaletnamesi," *Sanat Dünyamız* 9(28) (1983):2-6; idem, "İslam Resiminde Kutsal Kent ve Yöre Tasvirleri," *Journal of Turkish Studies* 7 (1983): 409, 410, n. 12.

3 Abu'l Hasan 'Alī bin Abi Bakr Al-Harawī. *Guide des Lieux de Pèlerinage*, trans. Janine Sourdel-Thomine (Damascus 1957).

4 This scroll was first published by Emel Esin, "Un manuscrit illustré représentant les sanctuaires de la Mecque et Médine et le Dome du Mi'raj, à l'époque des sultans turcs Selim et Süleyman 1^{er} (H.922-74/1516-66)," *Revue d'Histoire Maghrébine* 31-32 (1983):175-190. It was exhibited and reproduced in the catalogues of the exhibition: Esin Atil, *The Age of Sultan Süleyman the Magnificent* (New York 1987) 64-65; J. M. Rogers and R. M. Ward, *Süleyman the Magnificent* (London 1988) 100-101; and Marthe Bernus Taylor et al., *Soliman le Magnifique* (Paris 1990), 129. (İstanbul, Topkapı Sarayı Müzesi, Ms. H. 812.

5 For example, an Iznik tile from c. 1665, reproduced in Marilyn Jenkins, ed., *Islamic Art in the Kuwait National Museum: The Al-Sabah Collection* (London 1983), 122. The other known example dates to the seventeenth century as well, but there is a sixteenth-century silver embroidery of the same scheme from Egypt, in the collection of Jackson Higgs, New York, repr. in Ettinghausen, "Die Bildische Darstellung," pl. 3 (see n.1).

Sacred Mosque to the Farthest Mosque, whose precincts we did bless.” These very words were, according to the above-mentioned work of al-Harawī, inscribed in the mosaic inside al-Aqṣā mosque in the year 426/1035.⁶ They have since disappeared, but for the Ottoman pilgrims as well as for al-Harawī they were the *raison d’être* of a visit to Jerusalem. The meaning of the Prophet’s ascension, and the other meanings hinted at in the illustration, will be discussed later.

The visual depiction of the sacred precinct was executed in the Ottoman cartographic style, with buildings depicted both enface and from a bird’s-eye view. Lack of volume or perspective makes it look even more rigid than the usual Ottoman geographic illustrations, this rigidity being reserved, both in the Ottoman Empire and in Iran before the eighteenth century, for the depiction of holy places. The Ḥaram is here seen as a square; the Dome of the Rock is on its raised platform in the lower part of the square, al-Aqṣā mosque in its upper part. Four minarets embellish the corners of the square, and four smaller buildings or objects serve to fill the space between the Dome of the Rock and the corners. Evidently, the illustrator had not visited Jerusalem and had no accurate description of the Ḥaram available. This lack of firsthand knowledge accounts for the following errors: the raised platform of the Dome of the Rock in the drawing has ten sides and five gates rather than the four sides and seven gates of the actual Ḥaram; there is a minaret at every corner, while in reality there are three minarets along the western side and none at all in the southeastern corner; all the minarets of the actual Ḥaram are built in the Syrian style of Mamluk architecture, not in the Ottoman style depicted here; Al-Aqṣā mosque is depicted with five arcades rather than seven; and the smaller monuments or *maqāmāt* in the scheme do not correspond to the real area.

And yet, each of these monuments has a symbolic value that sheds light on the complex meaning and history of the Ḥaram. Emel Esin has justly remarked that the decorative design inscribed on the walls of both monuments closely resembles the Ottoman ceramic tiles on the façade of the Dome of the Rock. From this resemblance she deduces that the tiles were made prior to the scroll, a conclusion that may be historically correct.⁷ It cannot be concluded, however, that the drawing

6 Al-Harawī, *Guide des Lieux*, 64. See also, M. Van Berchem, *Matériaux pour un Corpus Inscriptionum Arabicarum* (Cairo 1927), II: 381-1392.

7 Emel Esin, “Un manuscrit illustré,” 189; The accepted date of Süleyman’s restoration, 1561 C.E., is based on the testimony of Evliya Çelebi, who wrote his *Seyahatname* a century later. See Evliya Çelebi, *Seyahatnamesi* (Istanbul 1935), 9:469.

was based on reality, because the same pattern also adorns some of the other monuments in this scroll.

All the monuments built on the two platforms, as well as those on the hilly landscape above the large inscription, are identified by small inscriptions in the Naskhi script. Those on the raised platform around the Dome of the Rock are (clockwise): Miḥrāb Aḥmar, Qubbat al-Mi'rāj, and Maqām Da'ūd. The four monuments in the corners of the square platform are: Mizān A'māl, Gunbaḍ 'Isā, Gunbaḍ Mūsā, and Khūḍ. The monuments on the hills, too, are ascribed to Jesus, Solomon or Salmān and Maryam Bint 'Imrān, sister of Moses. A straight line connecting the two chains of hills is identified as Şirāṭ al-Mustaqīm.

The specific meanings of *qubba* and *gunbaḍ* in this instance are not clear, since the Dome of the Rock is called *gunbaḍ* while the Dome of the Mi'rāj is called *qubba*. Regardless of this point, all the *maqāmāt* are connected with the first messengers — Moses and Jesus; with the builders of Jerusalem and the Temple — David and Solomon, and with the last of all the prophets — Muḥammad, on the occasion of the Mi'rāj. Thus the imaginary map brings together Muḥammad and his forerunners in propagating the true religion, as well as the two kings and prophets who erected the Jewish Temple, identified with al-Aqṣā since early Islam.⁸ Some of the names in the illustration refer to monuments actually built in the Ḥaram area, such as Qubbat al-Mi'rāj and Maqām Da'ūd, now called Qubbat al-Silsilah (The Dome of the Chain).⁹ Other names were added arbitrarily, such as the tomb of Moses, thought to be found not far from Jericho, in an architectural complex named Nabi Musa. The two *gunbaḍs* ascribed here to 'Isā may represent first, a marble basin near the eastern end of al-Aqṣā, which was said to be the cradle of Jesus; and second, the Church of the Ascension on the Mount of Olives. An identification with the Holy Sepulchre seems too fanciful, but it cannot be ruled out in the context of a purely symbolic map.

Three of the monuments depicted refer to another context. These are Mizān al-A'māl, Şirāṭ al-Mustaqīm, and the Khūḍ, which constitute

8 On the Temple of Solomon in Islamic art, see Priscilla Soucek, "The Temple of Solomon in the Islamic Legend and Art," in *The Temple of Solomon*, Joseph Gutman, ed. (Montana 1976), 73-121.

9 For the identification of this very interesting monument with the seat of judgment of King David, see Evliya Çelebi, *Seyahatnamesi* 9:466-486.

some of the accepted symbols of the Day of Judgment.¹⁰ *Şirâṭ al-Mustaqīm*, the right way followed by the believer all his life to enable him eventually to reach paradise, is mentioned in the first *sura* of the Koran, where it should be understood as an abstract concept or metaphor. But in later ages, when eschatological ideas evolved into literary forms, the concept of the “right way” was visualized as a bridge leading from the Mount of Olives to the Temple Mount, which the souls of the dead would have to cross as a part of their trial. The souls of the just would reach the end of the narrow bridge safely, and from there they would ascend to paradise. The sinners on the other hand would fall from the bridge to the valley, called by the Muslims *Jahannam* (hell). This vulgarization of an abstract concept became widespread and was soon considered to be part of the material reality of the holy precinct. Thus when the noble traveler *Evliya Çelebi* visited Jerusalem in the seventeenth century, he was shown the edge of a column protruding from the eastern wall of the *Haram*, which was said to be the point of origin of *Şirâṭ al-Mustaqīm*.¹¹

The same *Şirâṭ*, as a cosmic element rather than a material monument, figures in illustrations for a specific literary genre — the cosmographic literature. A work of this genre, *Ibrahim Hakki's Ma'rifat Nāme* (Book of mysterious knowledge), may serve as an example.¹² Here, in folio 23v of the manuscript, *Şirâṭ al-Mustaqīm* is placed at the bottom, above *Jahannam* and below the Scale of Actions and the *minbars* of the prophets. Above all these are the pool, *Khūḍ al-Kauthar*, and the eight degrees of paradise, with the tree, *Taubah*, spreading into them. The scale, in the context of the Day of Judgment, will serve to weigh the good actions of every individual against his or her sins, according to which the verdict will be given — paradise or hell. The *Khūḍ al-Kauthar* is a pool of pure water, the water of life, situated in the center of paradise and giving life to all the plants and animals in the garden-universe.¹³

10 On the Day of Judgment in relation to the Temple Mount of Jerusalem, see Myriam Rosen-Ayalon, *The Early Islamic Monuments of al-Haram al-Sharif* (Jerusalem 1989), 46-69.

11 *Evliya Çelebi, Seyahatnamesi*.

12 London, B.L., Or. 12964, fols. 23v-24r. See Nora M. Titley, *Miniatures from Turkish Manuscripts* (London 1981), No. 40. Another interesting cosmographic map with similar components is painted in a manuscript of “*Mir'at al-Kā'ināt*” (The mirror of realities, or existences) a Turkish text by Husam a-din Bursawi, Berlin, Staatsbibliothek, Ms. Or. quart 1837, fols 45a, 88a.

13 S.V.J. Horovitz and L. Gardet, *EJ²*.

Both the scale and the pool are objects, or rather metaphysical concepts of no material reality. And yet, like Şirāṭ al-Mustaqīm, they appear as existing monuments in the Ḥaram al-Sharīf. In fact, at least as early as the fourteenth century there existed a monument named Qubbat al-Mizān, and this is very likely what later became the *minbar* of Qāḍī Burhān al-Dīn, near the southern stairs leading to the platform of the Dome of the Rock.¹⁴ Evliya Çelebi later saw a place called The Gate of the Scales, where balances and scales were painted.¹⁵ In the drawing the monument is not depicted as a domed *qubba* but rather as a gate, closer in conception to the gate of Evliya's report. The Khūḍ is not mentioned by Evliya or by other travelers, but the great care lavished by Sultan Süleyman on the unusually designed pool of ablution between the Dome of the Rock and al-Aqṣā mosque may attest to such a symbolic identification. We shall see that in later manuscripts the Khūḍ is depicted in the place and shape of Süleyman's pool.

In light of the illustrations to cosmological texts, it is now evident that the drawing of the Jerusalem Ḥaram in the *Hac Vekaletnamesi* is not based on a material description of the locale but rather on the religious importance of the place at the End of Time. In other words, this is a map of "the heavenly Jerusalem" in the Christian context. This point is emphasized by the twofold meaning of the Rock, which figures both as the ascending point of the Mi'rāj and as the first point of the Creation. A rock named "Şakhrat Allāh" is depicted in almost all the cosmographic maps, where it may indicate either the black stone of the Ka'ba, or Mount 'Arafāt near Mecca, or the rock of Jerusalem. The general opinion, as summed up by Evliya Çelebi, combined them all into one concept, and it is said that they originated in the same rock of paradise and will reunite on the Last Day like a bride with her bridegroom.¹⁶ The origin of the Rock and its role in the apocalypse explain why it was from there that Muḥammad is believed to have ascended to heaven, where he had a preview of the Day of Judgment. In this context it should be remembered that before the Mi'rāj Muḥammad performed a prayer in the company of the other prophets and served them as *imam*, in al-Aqṣā mosque. The

14 On the identification and the history of this monument, see Michael Burgoyne, *Mamluk Jerusalem* (London 1987), 319-320.

15 Evliya Çelebi, *Seyahatnamesi*, 9:476.

16 *Ibid.*, 472.

minbar used by Muḥammad on this occasion is depicted on the *ḥajj* document within the central arcade of al-Aqṣā.

Some other prophets are also commemorated by monuments ascribed to them. And indeed, the large platforms of the Ḥaram are dotted with small *qubbās* or *mihrābs* erected there by wealthy donors. An examination of the names and places of these *maqāmāt* in historical and geographical works shows that the identity of individual monuments changes from time to time. A systematic study of Ottoman illustrations from the early sixteenth to the late nineteenth century may shed new light on this question. The first illustration, though, as we have seen, is less faithful to reality than to a symbolic concept.

The next example, taken from an Ottoman guide to the *ḥajj* written in the year 984/1576, continues the symbolic approach. It depicts, along with the two major monuments, only two minarets, the Mīzān and the Khūd.¹⁷ Another manuscript, *Ḥarīdāt al-'Ajā'ib wa-Farīdat al-Gharā'ib*, from c. 1590, reflects the same attitude and refers to Maqām Da'ūd only by its new name — the Dome of the Chain.¹⁸ We are thus able to identify the time when this *maqām* changed its identity and the memory of King David was transferred to another monument.

King David and his son Solomon are thought to have been the two builders of the Jewish Temple. David is said to have started construction, while Solomon completed it with the help of demons, whom he locked up for the night in the hollow cisterns under the platform of the holy precinct.¹⁹ Legends about these events are recounted in the narrative literary genre of *Qiṣāṣ al-Anbiyā'*, which was copied and illustrated both in Iran and in Turkey during the second part of the sixteenth century. Some of the Turkish manuscripts contain illustrations of the biblical al-Aqṣā, King Solomon often being depicted in the company of his demonic servants.²⁰ The style of these miniatures is narrative rather than cartographic, and they should therefore be considered as a separate group.

A different style, which combines both the episodic and the schematic, was designated for another literary genre, that of the *Fāl-nāme*, books

17 Paris, B.N., Sup. pers., 1514, fol. 42a.

18 Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, cod. arabe. 461, Bi. 45a, repr. in *Türkische Kunst und Kultur aus Osmanischer Zeit* (Frankfurt 1985), vol. 2, no. 1/19a, p. 61.

19 Evliya gives a concise version of these traditions: *Seyahatnamesi*, 9:466.

20 For example, "Qisas Al-Anbiya," Dublin, Chester Beatty Library, Ms. Pers. 231, fol. 191v.; Istanbul, *Topkapı Sarayı Müzesi*, H. 1227, fol. 147v.; and Istanbul, *Topkapı Sarayı Müzesi*, B. 250, fol. 190r.

of divinations and places of healing. These texts recommend that while in Jerusalem the pilgrim visit the places of Jesus and Solomon.²¹

The cartographic style continues to characterize the illustrations of the following centuries.²² More monuments were introduced into the depiction of the Ḥaram, and without neglecting the major symbolic elements, the illustrations gradually became more true to reality. Thus an illustration for *Manāsik al-Ḥajj* from the mid-eighteenth century²³ depicts the four minarets in their proper places; the arcades surrounding only the northern and western sides of the Ḥaram, rather than all around; al-Aqṣā mosque with seven arcades; and the Khūḍ al-Kauthar in the actual location of the ablution pool. Here some of the *maqāmāt* are ascribed to historical figures, such as the four orthodox caliphs or the notorious shaykh ‘Abd al-Qādir. The four *maqāmāt* of the orthodox caliphs are depicted as roofless platforms for prayers, such as are actually built in the Ḥaram area. In spite of the symbolic and imaginary aspect of the whole, this drawing reflects a more pronounced interest in documentation, a tendency that characterizes the final example.

This is an unusual map, from an album of painting and calligraphy, 1730-1754,²⁴ which shows the precinct and its monuments with remarkable accuracy. While all the other examples were drawn from a fixed point in the north, facing the *qibla* direction in the south, this illustration is made from a viewpoint in the west. It depicts the many monuments with some sense of perspective and with true architectural characteristics. It does not neglect even seemingly trivial elements such as the paved paths leading from the gates of the Ḥaram to the upper platform. This miniature continues the tradition of the sixteenth-century geographical treatises and may be regarded as a valuable document for the history of the Ḥaram al-Sharīf.

21 For example, a *fal-nameh* of the sixteenth century, Paris, B.N., Sup. Turc. 242.

22 For example, a book of prayers from Kutahya, 1798: Dublin, Chester Beatty Library, Ms. Turk. 463, fol.95r.; and another book of prayer, from ca. 1861-1876, Dublin, Chester Beatty Library, Ms. Turk. 464, fol. 98v-99r. The similarity between the depictions of the Jerusalem Ḥaram in the two manuscripts suggests either that the earlier served as a model for the later or that both reflect a common and accepted model.

23 Jerusalem, The Jewish National and University Library, Yah. Ms. Ar. 1117, fols. 40v, 41r.

24 Dublin, Chester Beatty Library, Ms. 447, fols 7v-8r, repr. in David James, "The Noble Sanctuary," *Azure* 8 (1981):8-9.