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THE ARMY OF THE ARABIAN
THE PRODUCTION IN THE
SECOND HALF OF THE
SIXTEENTH CENTURY

BY
FARIDAMOURAD



834

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The Revival of Damascene Tile Production
in the Second Half of the Sixteenth Century

by

Farida Mourad

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834

THIS THESIS FOR THE MASTER OF ARTS DEGREE

BY

FARIDA M. MOURAD
HAS BEEN APPROVED

NO

Thesis
1989/834

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CHAIRMAN, DEPARTMENT OF ARABIC STUDIES

To My Parents

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Last, but certainly not least, I would like to express my gratitude to my family; to my husband, Ted Rosen, for patiently editing the drafts and for his constructive criticism. His continuous encouragement and understanding were crucial; and to my parents for their unconditional moral and material support. To them I dedicate this thesis.

Farida Mourad

Washington, D.C.

September, 1989

Transliteration

The Encyclopaedia of Islam system of transliteration has been used with the two following exceptions:

- ق : "q" instead of "k"
- ج : "g" instead of "dj"

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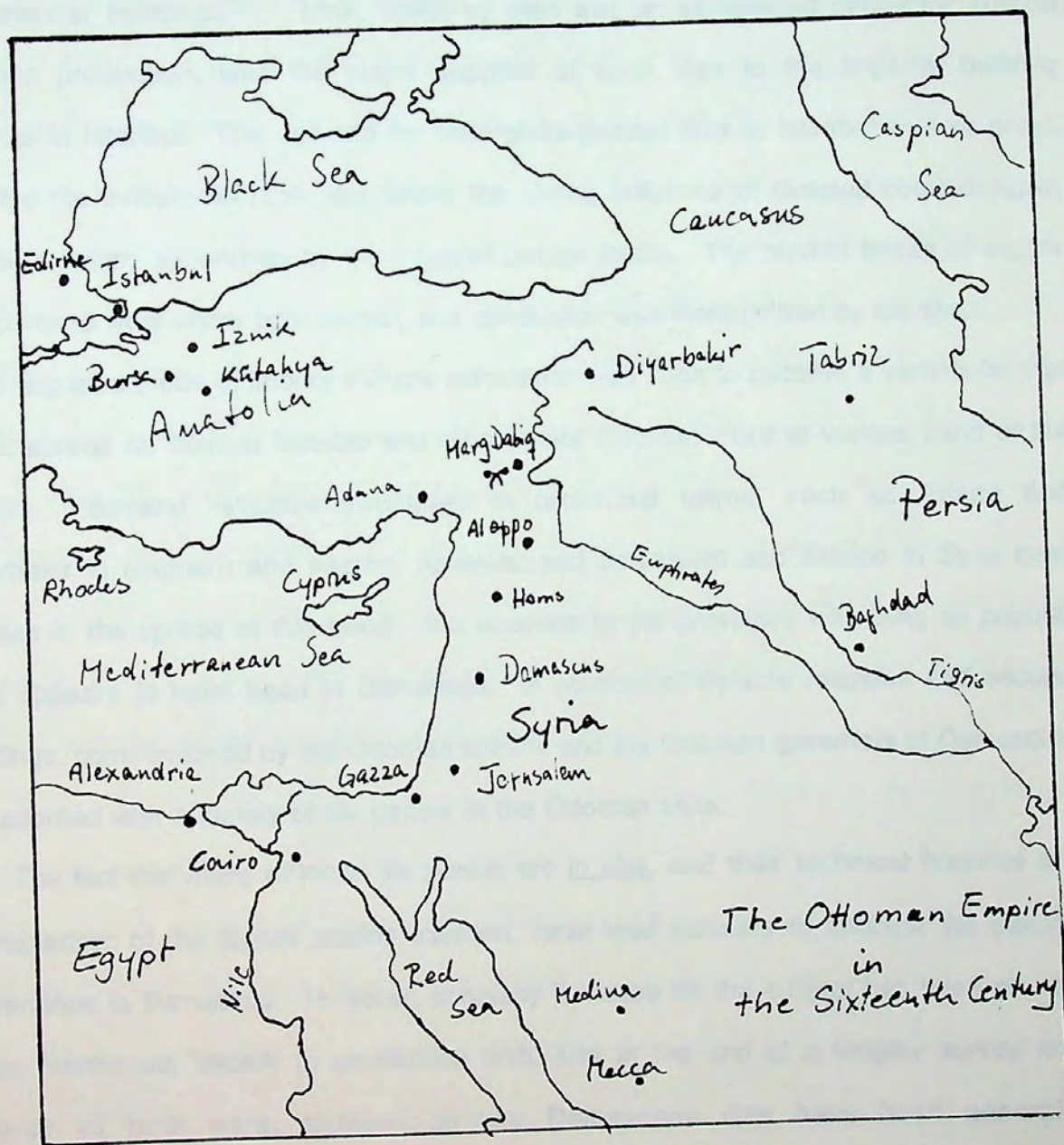
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INTRODUCTION

Sometime in the middle of the sixteenth-century underglaze-painted tiles emerged as the most favorable medium for interior architectural decoration in Ottoman religious and secular buildings.¹ Iznik, which by then was an established center for Turkish ceramic production, was the major supplier of such tiles to the imperial building projects in Istanbul. The demand for underglaze-painted tiles in Istanbul was so great, that the tile industry in Iznik was under the strong influence of dictated court designs, and was strictly supervised by the imperial design studio. The market forces of supply and demand were under tight control, and production was monopolized by the state.

Tiling as a mode of interior surface articulation was soon to become a vernacular that would spread far beyond Istanbul and other major Ottoman cities to various parts of the Empire. Several religious structures in provincial towns, such as Adana and Diyarbakir in southern and eastern Anatolia, and Jerusalem and Aleppo in Syria bear witness to the spread of this trend. But nowhere in the provinces was tiling as popular as it appears to have been in Damascus. A number of datable religious and secular buildings, commissioned by the Ottoman sultans and the Ottoman governors of Damascus, are adorned with a variety of tile panels in the Ottoman style.

The fact that many of these tile panels are *in situ*, and their technical features are characteristic of the Syrian potting tradition, have lead scholars to attribute the panels' provenance to Damascus. However, scholarly literature on the subject has been scanty. When mentioned, usually in connection with, and at the end of a lengthy survey and analysis of Iznik ware, sixteenth-century Damascene tiles have been generally dismissed as a poor quality, provincial imitation of the Iznik product.

Since the pioneering work of Wulzinger and Watzinger, who first documented the existence of the panels in Damascus, and suggested a local production center, a few

¹The earliest known example of underglaze-painted tiles in an Ottoman structure is in the mosque of Murad II in Edirne (1435).

isolated efforts have been made to study this group of tiles. One such effort has been initiated by Carswell, whose partially published survey of the tile panels located in Damascene monuments has provided this study with its necessary groundwork. Until documentary and/or archaeological material surfaces to provide conclusive evidence, research in this area will continue to depend on circumstantial evidence and conjecture.

Like other scholars before him, Carswell makes the observation that the Damascene tiles are stylistically closely related to contemporary Iznik ware, but that "[U]nlike the hybrid, court-oriented Iznik product, the Syrian tiles show a lively independence and are much more easily identifiable as the work of individual artists."² However, no attempt has been made to date to further research this notion, which inherently warrants: (a) a visual analysis and comparison of the stylistic elements of Damascene and Ottoman tiles, to establish the degree of influence of Iznik production on Damascene tiles; and (b) the establishment of a typology of decorative patterns of Damascene tile panels, which will determine the degree of individuality expressed by Damascene potters, at the same time supplying us with a chronological framework for Damascene production in the second half of the sixteenth century.

The availability of an unpublished group of Damascene tile panels in the collection of the Islamic Museum in Cairo was the major incentive for this study. The ability to compare it with examples in two other collections, one in the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, the other in the Victoria & Albert Museum in London, led to the availability of a comprehensive body of material that would lend itself to the above proposed analysis.

The most pressing question that posed itself was: If there appears to be a large-scale production, presumably in Damascus, that revitalized the well-established tradition of Syrian ceramic production, and this new production only partially reflects that tradition,

² John Carswell, "Ceramics", *Tulips, Arabesques & Turbans*, ed. Y. Petsopoulos (New York, 1982), p.89 (hereafter cited as Carswell, Ceramics).

what then were the forces behind such a revival? And how do we explain the obvious break in aesthetics reflected in the resulting designs?

It is our contention, then, that the revival of Damascene tile production in the middle of the sixteenth century was the result of the patronage of the Ottoman ruling elite, and that the aesthetic make-up of these tiles was the reflection of a provincial interpretation of an elitist taste to which the Damascene potters were catering.

The *lyca*, who dominated the period, were a distinct element of the scene and their influence surrounding the battle. In 1548, during the initial stages of the battle, the Mamluks agreed to hand the upper hand. Finally, there was a breakdown of communication between al-Ghawzi and his troops, resulting in the troops' revolt. One of the first officers to rise was al-Ghawzi's commander Khair Bey, who also acted as Governor of Aleppo. Khair Bey's revolt and desertion, Ibn Iyaz concludes, was the evidence of the governor's collusion with the Ottomans, who later appointed Khair Bey as Vizier of Aleppo.²

Ibn Iyaz informs us that the swords of the Mamluk cavalry were no match against the Ottomans' cannons. The Mamluks on their horses were easy targets for Ottoman artillery and gunpowder.³ When al-Ghawzi realized that defeat was inevitable, he withdrew his troops, but did so in a disorganized manner.⁴ The Ottoman victory at Manbij was total and decisive. The Mamluks suffered heavy losses, both in men

² For a detailed account of events in the battle, see al-Ghawzi, *al-Hayat al-Siyasiyya*, vol. 2, pp. 100-101. For a general account of the battle, see al-Ghawzi, *al-Hayat al-Siyasiyya*, vol. 2, pp. 100-101.

³ Ibid. pp. 100-101.

⁴ Ibid. p. 101.

⁵ Ibid. pp. 101-102.

Chapter I

THE HISTORICAL SETTING

Period of Sultan Selim I (1516-1520)

On August 24, 1516, Sultan Selim I, also known as Selim the Grim, defeated the Mamluk forces of Qansuh al-Ghawri at Marg Dabiq, near Aleppo. The battle of Marg Dabiq signaled the beginning of the end of the Mamluk Empire.¹

Ibn Iyas, who chronicled this period, wrote a detailed account of the events and circumstances surrounding the battle. Ibn Iyas reports that in the initial stages of the battle the Mamluks appeared to have the upper hand. Finally, there was a breakdown in communications between al-Ghawri and his troops, resulting in the troops' retreat. One of the first officers to flee was al-Ghawri's commander Khair Bey, who also served as Governor of Aleppo. Khair Bey's retreat and desertion, Ibn Iyas concludes, was hard evidence of the governor's collusion with Selim, who later appointed Khair Bay as Viceroy of Egypt.²

Ibn Iyas informs us that the swords of the Mamluk cavalry were no match against the Ottomans' cannons. The Mamluks on their horses were easy targets for Ottoman artillery and gunpowder.³ When al-Ghawri realized that defeat was inevitable, he attempted to escape, but died on the battlefield of natural causes.⁴ The Ottoman victory at Marg Dabiq was total and decisive. The Mamluks suffered heavy losses, both in lives

¹ For a detailed description of events in this battle, see Muhammad ibn Ahmed ibn Iyas, *Bada'i' al-Zuhur fi Waqai' al-Duhur* (hereafter cited as Ibn Iyas), ed. Muhammad Mostafa, vol.V (Cairo, 1984), pp.68:11-71:6.

² Ibid, pp. 69:18-21,76:13-9.

³ Ibid, p.131:5-7.

⁴ Ibid, pp.70:14-17, 87:7-9

and material.⁵ Selim wanted to secure the Ottoman position by bringing all of Syria under his control. With many of the Mamluk emirs and governors killed in the battle, and the local population offering little resistance, Selim's goal was easy to achieve.⁶ Selim seized the Mamluk treasury in Aleppo, appointed an Ottoman governor to defend its citadel, and attended the Friday prayers where the khutba was recited in his name.⁷ The local population of Aleppo gave Selim and his troops a warm reception. Ibn Iyas describes how "... Aleppo was beautified ... candles were lit ... in the stores, and voices cried out loud in prayer....".⁸ After securing Aleppo, Selim headed south towards Damascus, taking control of Hamah, Homs, and Tripoli, all of which surrendered peacefully.⁹

Selim and his army finally entered Damascus in a 'great procession' on October 9, 1516.¹⁰ The local notables and the governor of the citadel surrendered peacefully.¹¹ After eliminating all Mamluk opposition, Selim spent a little over two months in Damascus resting his weary troops, and attending to the reorganization of the administrative affairs of Damascus and Syria.¹²

After securing Syria, Selim decided to attack the Mamluks in Egypt, and defeated them

⁵ Ibid, pp.71-72.

⁶ George W. F. Stripling, *The Ottoman Turks and the Arabs 1511-1574* (Illinois, 1942), p. 73 (hereafter cited as Stripling); cf. Michael Cook, ed. *A History of the Ottoman Empire to 1730*, (Cambridge, 1976), p. 75 (hereafter cited as Cook).

⁷ Ibn Iyas, pp. 74-6; cf. Shams al-Din ibn 'Ali ibn Tulun, *Mufakahat al-Khillan fi Hawadith al-Zaman* (Cairo, 1964), vol. 2, p. 25:14 (hereafter cited as Ibn Tulun).

⁸ Ibn Iyas, p. 76:3-4.

⁹ Ibid, p. 117:3-5; cf. Ibn Tulun, p. 28:8-9; cf. Stripling, p. 50; cf. Stanford J. Shaw, *History of the Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey*, vol. 1 (Cambridge, 1976), p. 84 (hereafter cited as Shaw).

¹⁰ J. von Hammer-Purgstall, *Geschichte des Osmanischen Reiches*, vol. 2 (Graz, 1963), p. 481 (hereafter cited as Hammer-Purgstall); cf. Muhammad 'Abd al-Mu'ti al-Ishaqi, *Akhbar al-Uwal fi man tasarafa fi Misr min Arbab al-Duwal* (Cairo, H. 1296), p. 306 (hereafter cited as al-Ishaqi).

¹¹ Ibn Tulun, p. 28:15; cf. Ibn Iyas, pp. 111:1-4, 152:10-12.

¹² Ibid, p. 117:3-5; cf. Stripling, p. 50.

in the battle of Raydaniya on January 23, 1517.¹³ Approximately eight months later, on September 10, 1517, Selim departed Egypt for Istanbul. En route, Selim spent the winter months in Damascus where he rested his troops and attended to the administration of Syria.¹⁴ In Damascus, Selim appointed the Mamluk emir, Janbardi al-Ghazali, as Governor of Syria, an appointment he would later regret.¹⁵ Selim left Damascus on February 21, 1518, never to set foot in it again.¹⁶

Period of Sultan Suleyman I (1520-1566)

Selim spent the following two years increasing his naval power in the Mediterranean. However, while preparing for yet another campaign, Selim fell ill on his way to Edirne, and died on September 20, 1520.¹⁷ Selim was succeeded by his son Suleyman I.

In Damascus, Janbardi al-Ghazali, the newly appointed Governor of the southern provinces of Syria and Palestine, occupied himself with two major tasks. The first was subduing the Arab tribes who were harassing the annual Pilgrimage routes. Obligated to guarantee the safety of the pilgrims, Janbardi quelled the tribes in April 1520. His troops killed Ibn al-Hanash and Ibn al-Harfush, two of the most powerful tribal chiefs.¹⁸

Janbardi's second task was far more difficult and ambitious. He secretly organized a revolt, which would not only restore Mamluk control over Syria, but would revive the entire Mamluk Empire. Ibn Tulun alludes to Janbardi's ill intentions and scheming

¹³ Ibn Iyas, pp. 145:10-46:16; cf. Hammer-Purgstall, pp. 495-97; cf. al-Ishaqi, p. 307.

¹⁴ Ibn Iyas, p. 206:3-4, passim.

¹⁵ Ibid, p. 208:10-3.

¹⁶ Ibn Tulun, p. 82.

¹⁷ P. M. Holt, *Egypt and the Fertile Crescent 1516-1922* (Ithaca, New York, 1966), p. 46 (hereafter cited as Holt); cf. Ibn Iyas, p. 360:12-13.

¹⁸ Ibid, p. 252:17-20; Ibn Tulun, p. 85:3-4.

nature.¹⁹ When Janbardi received word of Selim's death, he was quick to strike his first blow. Ibn Tulun reports that when Janbardi, then in the Biqa', received news of Selim's death, immediately disposed of the Ottoman governor in the Biqa', and returned to Damascus in a hurry.²⁰ Janbardi seized this golden opportunity and acted immediately. On October 29, he laid siege to the citadel in Damascus and captured it the same day. When Janbardi entered the citadel, he immediately exchanged his Ottoman dress for that of the Mamluks.²¹ Janbardi declared himself Sultan of Syria, struck new coins under his sovereignty and had his name recited in the Friday khutba.²²

Janbardi's goal, to restore the Mamluk Empire, led him to attempt to secure the northern province of Syria and to gain Khair Bey's support in Egypt. However, Janbardi's plan met with a great deal of resistance on both fronts. His attempt to capture Aleppo failed, and he was forced to retreat to Damascus. In Egypt, Khair Bey remained loyal to the High Porte, and rejected Janbardi's plan, declaring him a traitor.²³

In Istanbul, Sultan Suleyman learned of Janbardi's revolt, and dispatched his vezir, Farhad Pasha, to Syria to put down the revolt. Janbardi mobilized the local population of Damascus and fortified the citadel. On February 5, 1521, Janbardi was soundly defeated by Farhad Pasha and his Ottoman troops. Janbardi was killed in battle, only three months after having declared his sovereignty.²⁴

Janbardi's attempt to rebel was a clear indication of the flaw in Selim's policy to place the administration of his newly acquired territory in the hands of the Mamluk political elite. Suleyman was quick to realize the disastrous consequences of his

¹⁹ Op. cit. For a detailed discussion on al-Ghazali's secret preparations for the revolt, see David Ayalon, "The End of the Mamluk Sultanate", *Studia Islamica* LXV (1987):136-138 (hereafter cited as Ayalon).

²⁰ Ibn Tulun, p. 123:14-9.

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 124:3-5,16-7.

²² Ibn Iyas, p. 368:9-13.

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 367:13-21.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 382:5-18.

father's policies, and immediately took the necessary measures to ensure the future stability of the newly conquered territories. After Janbardi's revolt was crushed, Ottoman forces took control of the citadel and the city of Damascus, and an Ottoman governor was appointed. Syria's administration was restructured, and the entire Mamluk aristocracy eliminated.²⁵

These drastic changes signaled a new era for Syria. Unlike Egypt, where the Mamluk ruling aristocracy was preserved, Syria was fully integrated into the Ottoman administrative and fiscal system, reducing Syria's status to that of any other province of the Ottoman empire.²⁶ As a result, from 1521 and throughout the sixteenth century, Syria would assume a backseat role in the politics of the Ottoman empire. Sultan Suleyman's forty-six year reign was dominated by military campaigns to protect the boundaries of his everexpanding empire. In a holy war of *jihad*, Suleyman fought battle after battle against the Habsburgs, his archrivals in eastern Europe and the Mediterranean. He also fought against the Safavids on the eastern frontiers of his empire, and against the Portuguese and their monopoly of international trade routes in the Indian Ocean, the Persian Gulf, and the Red Sea.²⁷

The Arab lands conquered by Selim and inherited by Suleyman played only a minor role in the international political events at the time. Like all provinces incorporated into the Ottoman empire, Egypt and Syria served as one of the Empire's main sources of revenues necessary to sustain Suleyman's costly and draining military campaigns. The provinces also served as occasional military bases.²⁸ For example, Ibn Iyas, in his account, refers to the role Egypt played in the siege of Rhodes in 1522, when Khair Bey

²⁵ Stripling, pp. 65-6.

²⁶ Ayalon, pp. 143-4.

²⁷ Shaw, pp. 87-111; cf. Cook, pp. 79-102.

²⁸ For the role of Arab provinces in Ottoman military, political, and economic affairs under Suleyman, see Holt, pp. 46-57; cf. Stripling, pp. 66-87.

received an imperial order from Suleyman to dispatch about 1,500 Mamluk troops to fight against the Knights of St. John.²⁹ In addition, Ibn Iyas informs us that during the several-month siege, Egypt was requested to replenish the diminishing supply of wheat necessary to feed the Ottoman troops. According to Ibn Iyas, Khair Bay came to their rescue by sending Suleyman and his troops 30,000 irdab of wheat and 10,000 irdab of flour, and other food staples.³⁰

Towards the middle of the sixteenth century, Suleyman launched a second major campaign against the Safavids, in the hope of eliminating the Shi'a threat against his vassal states in the Caucasus and Azerbaijan. Suleyman and his troops twice wintered in Aleppo, in preparation for battle.³¹ Due to a lack of information dealing with the effects these campaigns had on Syria, it can only be surmised that the Syrian cities must have been drained of their resources while Suleyman's troops were stationed in Aleppo.

'Ali in Khitat al-Sham alludes to the impact the political and military events of the Empire had on the population of Syria. He writes that the people of Syria could not have cared less about the number of military successes Suleyman scored throughout the Empire, because it was they who had to finance the conquests and suffer the dire economic consequences.³² The Syrians, only indirectly involved in the political and military affairs of the Ottoman empire at large, had their share of internal problems. A continuous struggle for territorial power between the various Arab tribes on the one hand, and between them and the Ottoman ruling elite, represented by the governor and the Janissaries, on the other, dominated the political scene in Syria in the course of the sixteenth century.³³ The constant struggle between these various factions, and the lack

²⁹ Ibn Iyas, pp. 463:9-22, 464:1.

³⁰ Ibid, p. 477:6-14. An irdab is a form of dry measure, in use to this day in Egypt.

³¹ Cook, pp. 93-4; cf. Shaw, pp. 104-5.

³² Muhammad Kurd 'Ali, *Khitat al-Sham*, vol. V (Damascus, 1925-28), p. 244 (hereafter cited as 'Ali).

³³ Holt, p. 102; cf. Stripling, p. 85.

of political stability-among other factors-contributed to the deterioration of the economic and social conditions in Syria starting in the final decade of Suleyman's reign and throughout the sixteenth century.

Period of Selim II (1566-1574) and Murad III (1574-95)

The end of Suleyman's reign signaled the beginning of a period of decline for the Ottoman Empire. This decline, induced by changing political and economic realities, was further accelerated by the inability of Suleyman's heirs to adapt to or respond to change. The "Golden Age" of the Ottoman Empire was waning.³⁴ The Arab provinces which indirectly had contributed more than their fair share in creating and maintaining the glory of the Empire for almost half a century, never really reaped the benefits associated with a golden age. In Syria, as in other Arab provinces, the political and socio-economic conditions continued to deteriorate throughout the second half of the sixteenth century, especially during the post-Suleyman period.³⁵

The reigns of both Selim II and Murad III were predominated by continuous warfare fought on the three frontiers of the empire: in the Mediterranean against the Christian naval powers, on the Eastern front against the Safavids and Turcomans, and on the western front against the Habsburgs. Prolonged and arduous warfare resulted in an exorbitant expenditure in men and material, which in turn drained the Empire's state treasury and resources. The economic and social impact these military campaigns had on the provinces was devastating. In the case of Syria, the deterioration of economic and social conditions "[was] aggravated by the lack of political unity of the region, by its geographical divisions, and by the absence of an established and powerful group, like the

³⁴ Shaw, pp. 169-184, for an analysis of the political, economic, and social factors that lead to the decline of the Empire; cf. Holt, pp. 61-70; cf. Cook, pp. 103-130; cf. Norman Itzkowitz, *Ottoman Empire and Islamic Tradition* (Princeton, 1972), pp. 63-99 (hereafter cited as Itzkowitz).

³⁵ Holt, pp. 102-11.

Egyptian Mamluks, who were able to resume authority behind the facade of Ottoman provincial government."³⁶ In order to fully understand this trend of decline, it is important to take a closer look at the development of the Ottoman institutions in the Syrian province, and the impact they had on its political, economic, and social structure during the sixteenth century.

Government and Administration

Under the Mamluks, Syria was divided into six administrative districts, the governors of which were appointed directly by the Sultan and reported to the central government in Egypt.³⁷ When Selim conquered Syria, he divided the country into three provinces, Aleppo, Tripoli, and Damascus. Although Selim had intended to diminish Mamluk control by appointing an Ottoman governor over Aleppo, he nevertheless appointed Janbardi al-Ghazali as governor of Damascus. This gave the former Mamluk governor control over the entire southern region of Syria, extending from Ma'arrat an-Nu'man in the north to al-'Arish in the south.³⁸

After crushing Janbardi's revolt and eliminating the Mamluk ruling elite, Suleyman reorganized the administration of Syria by introducing, in 1524, an imperial code of laws, known as the Qanun-name of the provinces.³⁹ Syria was divided into saniags or provinces, which in turn were divided into kazas or districts, towns and villages. In the case of Damascus, the province comprised ten saniags. Each saniag was governed by a saniag-bey who would report to the beylerbey or the governor of the province.⁴⁰

³⁶ Ibid, p. 102.

³⁷ Ibn Iyas, p. 4:14-17; cf. Stripling, p. 66.

³⁸ Jean-Paul Pascual, *Damas a la fin du XVIe siecle d'apres trois actes de waqf ottomans* (Damascus, 1983), pp. 1,2 (hereafter cited as Pascual); cf. Ibn Iyas, p. 244:13-15.

³⁹ Halil Inalcik, *The Ottoman Empire, Conquest, Organization and Economy* (London, 1978), pp. 111-12 (hereafter cited as Inalcik, 1978); cf. Stripling, pp. 71-7.

⁴⁰ Ibid, pp. 61, 67, Pascual, p. 2.

The governor, also known as wali in the Arab provinces, had the rank of vezir or minister, and the title of pasha. The wali was appointed directly by Istanbul and his tenure was renewed on a yearly basis. The wali was the top executive and was fully responsible for effectively administering his provinces' military and civil affairs.⁴¹ The Wali of Damascus resided in the Dar as-Sa'ada, and his income was generated from the khasse or land grant.⁴²

The wali's main duty was to maintain law and order, which meant preventing and quelling bedouin incursions, as well as local uprisings. In addition, the wali was charged with providing a military escort to protect the pilgrimage caravan out of Damascus to the Holy Cities and ensure its safe return. Furthermore, the wali had to cooperate with the deftardar or treasurer by furnishing him with troops to collect taxes, and to maintain public buildings such as mosques, schools, fortresses and bridges. Finally, the wali was responsible for the remittance of the stipulated annual tribute to Istanbul.⁴³

In order to insure the efficient administration of the provinces, each governor was assisted by a group of administrators who constituted the vilayet divan or provincial council.⁴⁴ The structure of the vilayet divan was based on that of the Divan-i Humayun or Imperial Council in Istanbul, and consisted of the deftardar, the qadi al-qudah or chief judge, the subashi or chief of police, and the divan efendesi or council secretary.⁴⁵ The ultimate goals for the treasury and the judiciary were for the treasury to "pay for the upkeep of its [the province's] own administration and contribute an equitable proportion to the Imperial Treasury," and for the judiciary to adhere to the doctrines of the shari'a

⁴¹ Shaw, p. 122; cf. Henry Laoust, *Les Gouverneurs De Damas Sous Les Mamlouks Et Les Premiers Ottomans* (Damas, 1952), passim (hereafter cited as Laoust). From 1521 and throughout the 16th century, Damascus had at least 48 governors.

⁴² Shaw, pp. 122, 125-27; cf. Itzkowitz, pp. 40-42. 'Khasse' designated the largest fief obtainable by a member of the Ottoman ruling elite.

⁴³ Pascual, pp. 2-3.

⁴⁴ Shaw, p. 122.

⁴⁵ Pascual, p. 5; cf. Shaw, pp. 119, 122, 135.

or Islamic law and the organization of judicial service.⁴⁶

In order to prevent the governor from revolting against the central government, a balance of power was created by the installation of a military garrison, which resided at the citadel and was independent of the governor. These troops, which included the Janissaries, were under the command of an Ottoman lieutenant appointed by the Porte.⁴⁷ The Janissary corps' main functions, besides keeping the governor's authority in check, were to maintain order in the towns, to protect the main routes of communication, and to assist the defdar in collecting taxes.⁴⁸

The timarlis or provincial cavalry, also known as feudal sipahis, made up the final element in the administration of Damascus.⁴⁹ They were members of the cavalry who in return for land grants or fiefs, were required to render military services for the Sultan. The timarlis made up the largest part of the Ottoman army, and therefore required extensive expenditures to meet their military duties and requirements. Unlike the Janissary corps, who were much smaller in number, and received their wages in form of a fixed salary from Istanbul, the sipahis were granted a timar or fief, the tax revenue of which they were entitled to collect. Besides guaranteeing a fully equipped cavalry ready for battle at all times, the timar system also assured the continuous cultivation of land. Agricultural taxes provided one of the main sources of income for the Imperial Treasury. By allowing the sipahi to spend the revenues from the land tax on himself, on his cebeli or retainers, and on his military expenses, the Treasury was spared the additional burden of paying its cavalry troops in cash. Additional duties of the sipahis were to maintain order in the villages and collect the land tax from the peasants.

⁴⁶ H.A.R. Gibb and H. Bowen, *Islamic Society and the West* (London:1950-57), p. 200 (hereafter cited as Gibb and Bowen).

⁴⁷ Itzkowitz, pp. 49-51; cf. Shaw, pp. 113-15, 123. The Janissary was the imperial infantry recruited from the devshirme.

⁴⁸ Pascual, p. 3.

⁴⁹ Shaw, pp. 125-27; cf. Itzkowitz, pp. 40-1; cf. Pascual, p. 4.

The tahrirs or registers of the cadastral surveys of Damascus record that in 1529 there were 451 timar-holders, in 1548 the number decreased to 397, and in 1568 there were only 366.⁵⁰

In order for both the military and civil administrations to function efficiently, stability was crucial. The bedouins were the greatest threat to the stability of the province of Damascus. Their frequent raids on the pilgrimage caravans, trade caravans, and the rural population created an atmosphere of insecurity and instability. Therefore, the measure of a governor's success in his post depended mainly on his ability to deal with the bedouin incursions.⁵¹ The success of the Ottoman system of provincial administration, then, depended on maintaining a careful balance between the various elements involved in the system. It equally depended upon "the quality of the Imperial supervision and upon the character of the pasha and the defterdars."⁵² Gibb and Bowen describe the system and its inherent disadvantages:

"It was too much to expect that it [the system] would work without constant friction and overhaul, and the history of the Ottoman provinces in Asia during the 16th and 17th centuries is very largely taken up with the encroachment of one or the other of the parties upon the prerogatives of the remainder or of central revolt and occasional efforts to restore the balance."⁵³

⁵⁰ Ibid; cf. Itzkowitz, pp. 42-4.

⁵¹ Ibn Tulun pp. 90:1-6, 96:9-15, Laoust, pp. 159, passim.

⁵² Gibb and Bowen, p. 204.

⁵³ Ibid, p. 204.

Economy and Trade

When in 1516 Selim I conquered Syria, he found its towns and its countryside in a state of complete economic and social ruin. Politically disintegrated and plagued by rapid economic and social decline for over half a century prior to the Ottoman conquest, the Mamluks finally lost control over their empire.⁵⁴

Long and arduous warfare against the Ottomans and the Portuguese, civil war amongst the various political factions, social unrest resulting from continuous bedouin raids and distressing economic conditions, in addition to a shift in the traditional trade routes away from the Arab lands, all resulted in an empire drained of its resources and unable to sustain itself economically or otherwise.⁵⁵

The Ottoman economy, driven by military expansion and based on a system of self-sufficiency, heavily relied on the newly acquired provinces for its sources of revenue. It was the duty of the 'askeris or military elite to ensure the protection of its re'aya or subjects, which the 'askaris could fulfil only if the re'aya provided the necessary funds. This meant, that the provinces, in addition to paying a fixed annual tribute to the Imperial Treasury, had to be self-contained economically, in order not to overburden the treasury. Each province met its administrative and military expenses from its own revenues.⁵⁶

Suleyman I devised an elaborate fiscal system administered by a vast civil and military bureaucracy that would balance the revenues and expenditures of the Empire. This system was manifested in Suleyman's Qanun-name, a secular code of laws and regulations that ensured the smooth administration and just enforcement of his laws in

⁵⁴ For a detailed discussion of the conditions that lead to the decline of the Mamluk empire, see Ira Lapidus, *Muslim Cities in the Later Middle Ages* (hereafter cited as Lapidus), pp. 38-42.

⁵⁵ Stripling, pp. 15-37.

⁵⁶ Gibb and Bowen, p. 37.

the provinces.⁵⁷ Besides regulating and defining the duties of timar-holders, the Qanun-name included decrees authorized by the sultan that spelled out the 'urfi or secular taxes.⁵⁸ These taxes were levied on every aspect of agriculture, industry and commerce, and very often were a prime source of social injustice and unrest.

In Syria, agricultural revenues included land tax revenues collected from the peasants to finance the military and living expenses of the sipahis and their cebelis, as well as a cultivation tax.⁵⁹ Artisans and craftsmen paid a municipal tax in addition to market dues.⁶⁰ Merchants were subject to import and export taxes, and tribes moving through certain districts had to pay passage tolls on their flocks.⁶¹ Revenues from customs duties on trade, once a great source of income for the Mamluk Empire in the fourteenth century, were on a sharp decline. The famous spice trade that once moved through the Arab lands was now tightly monopolized by the Portuguese. By diverting the trade routes around the Cape of Good Hope in 1497, and by blockading the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf in 1502, the Portuguese paralyzed the Mamluk economy in the early sixteenth century.⁶² Suleyman attempted to regain strategic power in both the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf in order to revive the old trade routes through the Arab lands. However, Ottoman naval expeditions into the Gulf failed, and in 1557, Suleyman managed only to partially restore the old trade routes.⁶³ Suleyman's partial revival of the trade routes was of little consequence to the economy of the Arab provinces or that of the Empire.

⁵⁷ Inalcik, pp. 111-17; cf. Shaw, pp. 100-101, passim; cf. Itzkowitz, pp. 42-5.

⁵⁸ Ibid, p. 43. 'Urfi taxes were the taxes decreed by the sultan that covered secular matters not mentioned in the Islamic law (shari'a); cf. Shaw, pp. 120-121; cf. Bernard Lewis, "Ottoman land tenure and taxation in Syria", *Studia Islamica* L (1979):109-24.

⁵⁹ Idem, *Notes and documents from the Turkish Archives* (Jerusalem, 1952):15-20.

⁶⁰ J. von Hammer-Purgstall, *Das Osmanischen Reichs Staatsverfassung und Staatsverwaltung*, 2 vols. (Vienna, 1815):1,222.

⁶¹ Gibb and Bowen, p. 43.

⁶² Lapidus, pp. 41-2; cf. Stripling, pp. 26-9.

⁶³ Shaw, p. 107; cf. Stripling, pp. 88-101; cf. Cook, p. 100; cf. Holt, pp. 52-3.

Starting in the last decade of Suleyman's reign and throughout the remainder of the sixteenth century, the Ottoman Empire was confronted with economic and financial challenges, that threatened its political structure and resulted in the breakdown of its institutions.⁶⁴ Inflation coupled with a substantial growth in population and no further territorial expansions to absorb that growth, continuous warfare on all frontiers, and a weakened and ineffective central government, all resulted in a financial crisis that continued to plague the Empire in the final decades of the century, and from which the Imperial treasury was never to recover.⁶⁵

In Syria, as in other provinces, inflation was the main cause for the disruption of the timar system, which was the backbone of the military and civil administrations, and a major source of revenue for the treasury.⁶⁶ The feudal sipahis were unable to reconcile their fixed incomes with the rising rate of inflation. No longer in a financial position to fulfill their military duties, the sipahis were faced with confiscation of their land grants, or were forced to abandon them.⁶⁷ With the number of feudal sipahis decreasing, vacant timars and military positions were filled by an increasing number of Janissaries. Sources disagree as to the number of "paid soldiery" in the second half of the sixteenth century. However, it is clear that there was a significant increase.⁶⁸

Faced with a sharp increase in military expenses and a decrease in the number of timars, in addition to the devaluation of its currency, the Imperial Treasury resorted to harsh taxation, known as takalif-i divaniye, all at the expense of the re'aya.⁶⁹ Tax-

⁶⁴ Shaw, pp. 107-8, 171-2; cf. Itzkowitz, pp. 87-99; cf. Bernard Lewis, *The Emergence of Modern Turkey* (London, 1961), pp. 21-39 (hereafter cited as Lewis, 1961).

⁶⁵ Holt, p. 66. Inflation in the Ottoman Empire was part of what Holt calls 'an international price revolution' which was caused by Peruvian silver flooding Europe during the 16th century. That influx in turn resulted in one of the major debasements of Ottoman coinage in 1584.

⁶⁶ Itzkowitz, p. 95. Itzkowitz estimates that prices doubled between 1550 and 1600.

⁶⁷ Ibid, pp. 89-90; cf. Shaw, p. 108.

⁶⁸ Lewis, p. 30; cf. Itzkowitz, pp. 90-1. According to Lewis, the number of Janissaries in 1620 was 100,000, whereas Itzkowitz cites the number to have been 38,000 in 1609.

⁶⁹ Shaw, p. 108.

farmers, replacing feudal sipahis, extorted taxes from cultivators.⁷⁰ Industry too was under tight government control, with guilds acting as intermediaries, controlling the supply of raw materials and fixing prices and profits.⁷¹ The result of a controlled marketplace was that the quality of productivity suffered and was no longer able to compete with European manufactured imports.

The Europeans, who towards the end of the sixteenth century were in control of international trade and raw materials, were also heading towards entrepreneurship and an industrial and technological revolution. The Ottoman Empire was drained of its raw materials, and was no longer in control of the major trade routes.⁷² Consequently, heavy customs duties were imposed on all exports and imports, and certain grains were prohibited from export, only to result in illegal exports and bribery.⁷³ Despite all the desperate measures taken by the government, inflation continued to grow and taxation to increase, "creating a vicious circle within the closed economic system."⁷⁴

In addition to the economic and financial crisis, Ottoman society experienced a major transformation in its class structure, whereby the traditional roles of the elite and the subjects were fundamentally challenged, resulting in a great deal of social injustice and upheaval, mainly to the detriment of the subjects.

Social Structure

The Ottoman ruling elite set itself apart from its subjects, where "one group formed the governing class of soldiers and officials, the other the governed class of merchants, artisans and cultivators".⁷⁵ In Syria, as in most other provinces, the ruling class was

⁷⁰ Lewis, p. 31.

⁷¹ Shaw, pp. 108, 172; Itzkowitz, p. 94.

⁷² Shaw, p. 284.

⁷³ Itzkowitz, p. 94; cf. Shaw, p. 172.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ Gibb and Bowen, p. 209.

represented by the Ottoman wali, assisted by the divan, the Janissaries and the sipahis.⁷⁶ The main function of the ruling class was to secure the necessary revenues for the Imperial Treasury by maintaining law and order and protecting the population which provided these revenues. The re'aya consisted of all the productive elements in society, who, in return for providing the revenues, were assured the protection of the Sultan and his 'askeris.

The re'aya were divided into a number of social groups, based on their geographical locations, their religious affiliations, and their occupations.⁷⁷ The tapu defterleri or cadastral registers, also known as defter-i khagani, and located in the Ottoman archives in Istanbul, were administrative records based on demographic surveys conducted by the Ottomans in the provinces.⁷⁸ The purpose of the surveys was to assess and control properties, awqaf or endowment deeds, and various sources of revenues, such as timars. In Syria, the cadastral surveys were first introduced by Suleyman I and were repeated every few years.⁷⁹

Geographically, Syria was divided into rural and urban areas, with the cultivators and the nomads residing in the villages and mountains, and the craftsmen and the merchants living in the towns.⁸⁰ Each occupational group had its own set of rules and traditions, and social interaction between the various groups was strongly discouraged.⁸¹ Cultivators were generally bound to their land by force and prohibited from moving into the towns. Nomads were granted semi-autonomous rule in return for

⁷⁶ With regard to the Arab provinces Egypt was an exception, where the Mamluk military elite was preserved and continued to rule the country under the supervision of an Ottoman governor.

⁷⁷ Shaw, p. 150; cf. Gibb and Bowen, p. 211.

⁷⁸ For a detailed description of the tapu registers, their present location, and the various functions they served in the Ottoman administration of the Arab provinces, see Bernard Lewis, "The Ottoman Archives as a Source for the History of the Arab Lands", *JRAS* (October, 1951): 139-155.

⁷⁹ *Ibid*, pp. 147, 153.

⁸⁰ *Ibid*, p. 147; cf. Shaw, pp. 150-1.

⁸¹ Gibb and Bowen, pp. 211, 213.

military and civil services.⁸² Town dwellers were divided on the basis of their religious affiliations and their occupations, with each occupational and religious group living in a separate hara or quarter.⁸³

Artisans and craftsmen were organized into asnaf or guild corporations. The guilds set the standards and maintained the quality of production, as well as representing and protecting the social, economic, and spiritual needs of its members.⁸⁴ Each guild had its sheikh or spiritual leader, assisted by a kahya or executive officer, who acted as intermediary between the members of the guild and government officials in regulating the administrative and judicial affairs of the corporation.⁸⁵ It is believed that certain crafts in Damascus were hereditary and sometimes perpetuated within one family.⁸⁶ Guild members, in addition to their occupational and blood ties, could also be bound together by their religious affiliations, be they Muslim, Christian, or Jewish. In some cases, guilds would comprise different religious adherents. In other cases, certain crafts would be associated with one particular religious group.⁸⁷ Sufi mystic orders, for example, were often strongly represented in certain craft guilds, with initiation ceremonies and other festivals following religious traditions.⁸⁸ Religious communities were governed and protected by millets, semi-autonomous entities whose main function was to provide its members with a sense of status and social security, and to serve as a mediator between the local population and the government.⁸⁹

⁸² Shaw, pp. 150-1, 156.

⁸³ Gibb and Bowen, p. 277. For statistics on the population of Damascus in the sixteenth century and its religious representations, see Pascual, p. 24.

⁸⁴ Shaw, p. 157; cf. Gibb and Bowen, p. 278; cf. Lewis, 1961, p. 33.

⁸⁵ Gibb and Bowen, pp. 213, 293-4.

⁸⁶ Ibid, p. 293, cf. 'Ali, p. 242.

⁸⁷ Gibb and Bowen, p. 294.

⁸⁸ Shaw, p. 153; cf. Gibb and Bowen, p. 293. Gibb and Bowen give a detailed description of the rituals associated with the 'binding' ceremony which initiated a new member into the guild.

⁸⁹ Shaw, pp. 151-3; cf. Holt, p. 32.

Unlike the artisans and craftsmen who were under close governmental supervision and had to pay taxes on their profits, the merchants were exempted from taxes and their activities were not regulated by the government.⁹⁰ Trade, associated with the annual Pilgrimage to Mecca and Medina, was a main source of income for merchants living in Damascus. Officials took special care to facilitate trade, to protect the Pilgrimage route, and to exempt the incoming goods from customs duties.⁹¹ Merchants were among the wealthiest members of Damascene society, and were highly respected. Through their amassing of wealth and social position, many merchants were able to exert political pressure and influence on the administrative and military elite.⁹² Mercantile corporations are believed to have existed. However, little is known about their organization and social function, except that the leader of a mercantile community in Damascus was known as al-mutaqadim bayn al-tuqqar.⁹³

One final aspect of society, which was of great importance to the Sultan and his ruling elite, as well as of benefit to his subjects, was public service. The Ottomans continued the tradition previously practiced in the Arab lands of delegating the upkeep of religious and charitable institutions to the officials who administered them. The officials in turn relied on perpetual revenues from awqaf or permanent endowments, also known as hubus.⁹⁴ Religious endowments were funds donated as an act of charity, and as a result became a symbol of social standing. In Syria, as elsewhere in the Empire, awqaf were administered by a governmental body, whose main function was the distribution of revenues and the appointment of intendants.⁹⁵ All wagfiyas or endowment deeds had to

⁹⁰ Shaw, pp. 158-9.

⁹¹ Gibb and Bowen, p. 302.

⁹² Ibid, p. 303.

⁹³ Ibid.

⁹⁴ Shaw, pp. 161-2.

⁹⁵ Gibb and Bowen, p. 173

be registered in a shari'a court as well as in the defterhane.⁹⁶ Although awqaf were to serve charitable and religious purposes in society, it was an institution that was easily exploited and misused to the benefit of the supervisors of the awqaf, or to the benefit of their families.⁹⁷

Throughout the reign of Suleyman, and as long as the administration of the provinces was under close supervision by the sultan and his central government, the social structure as perceived by the Ottomans remained intact. However, in the last quarter of the sixteenth century, as the central government weakened and changing economic conditions led to severe inflation, the existing social structure also started to disintegrate. The civil and military elites with their fixed revenues and salaries were no longer in a position to catch up with inflation and resorted to various illegal means to secure their livelihood. The governor and his administration tended towards increasingly harsh measures to collect taxes from the re'aya to satisfy the demands of the treasury.⁹⁸ At the same time, the feudal sipahis, unable to sustain their land grants, often resorted to banditry, thereby creating unrest in the villages and towns. Cultivators, unable to meet the increasing tax demands, fled the villages thus creating labor shortages. With the number of Janissaries and their financial demands increasing, local crafts corporations were infiltrated by members of the elite. Not only did this infiltration increase the Janissaries' influence over the administration and the governor, but it opened the door to locals to enter the Janissary corps, which weakened the devshirme institution.⁹⁹ To prevent this infiltration, Sultan Selim II in 1577 issued a decree prohibiting the entry of locals into the corps.¹⁰⁰ With the ruling elite

⁹⁶ Ibid, pp. 174-5.

⁹⁷ Ibid, p. 177.

⁹⁸ Shaw, p. 156.

⁹⁹ Ibid, p. 170.

¹⁰⁰ Pascual, p. 8; cf. Abdul-Karim Rafeq, "The local forces in Syria in the seventeenth and

weakened, the civil and military bureaucracies inefficient and corrupt, and the traditional roles of social groups blurred and often reversed, social stability in the provinces was threatened. These conditions eventually lead to the revolts and uprisings of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.¹⁰¹

eighteenth centuries", in *War, technology and society in the Middle East*, eds. V.J. Parry and M.E. Yapp (London, 1975): 277.

¹⁰¹ Gibb and Bowen, p. 215; cf. Lewis, p. 37.

Chapter II

THIRTEEN TILE PANELS IN THE ISLAMIC MUSEUM COLLECTION

The thirteen panels of tiles on permanent exhibition at the Islamic Museum in Cairo, at first glance, are highly reminiscent of the so-called 'Iznik' tiles produced in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries under Ottoman royal patronage. A closer look at the panels, however, reveals several technical and stylistic features that clearly set the panels apart from Iznik tiles, and point towards a Damascene provenance.

Although the technique of underglaze-painting is used, the tiles in question are inferior in quality. The slip used as a background for the painted designs is not as brilliant as that used in the Iznik version. The transparent glaze is much thicker and crackled, a characteristic absent from the Iznik glaze.

The colors used in painting the designs are cobalt blue, turquoise, various shades of green, ranging from bright apple green, to a pale sage, to a dull olive, and rounded out with various shades of manganese purple. Black or charcoal grey is used exclusively to outline the designs. In terms of the chronological development of the Iznik palette, blue and turquoise on white, with occasional touches of sage green and purple, were the only colors used until the 1540's. Towards the middle of the century a bright green and a brilliant red came into use.¹ The red, which was applied in relief and required a special skill to adhere to the glaze, does not appear in the group in the panels in the Islamic Museum.

The elements of design used in the panels are reminiscent of the designs created originally by the naqashhane or court atelier in Istanbul for manuscript paintings. The repertoire of designs created by the naqashhane was fully developed by the middle of the

¹Lane, *L.I.P.*, pp. 49,50,55. In Iznik, sage green and purple seem to have been added in the 1540's to the already existing color repertoire of blues and turquoise in vessels but rarely on tiles. One noted exception are the tiles in the Yeni Kaplica Hammam in Istanbul.

sixteenth century, and was transposed onto other media such as ceramics and textiles throughout the second half of the century. The designs used to decorate Iznik tiles were pounced from paper cartoons supplied by the naqashhane in Istanbul, which insured the continuity of a controlled aesthetic and a superior technical standard. The compositions of the elements of design in the Islamic Museum panels, however, suggest a greater freedom in the interpretation and execution of the original designs, reflecting the individualistic style of the craftsmen.²

To demonstrate the individuality of the Damascene style we first need to analyze the motifs and the evolving stylistic patterns used to decorate the panels in the Islamic Museum. Then, we will compare the panels to some of the examples in the collections of the Metropolitan Museum of Art and the Victoria and Albert Museum in an attempt to survey the variety and types of designs used. Finally, we will establish the degree to which the Damascene tile production was influenced by its 'courtly' counterpart, and the impact that influence had on the emergence of a 'provincial' style, which, although catering to the Ottoman taste, clearly exhibits a character of its own.

Description and Analysis

Panel I (acc. no. 15894)

The first panel consists of twelve square tiles, each 20 square centimeters (pls.1, C1). The decorative pattern consists of a repetitive design of alternating stylized lotus blossoms and palmettes filled with so-called Chinese cloud-bands, connected to each other through intersecting stems, and arranged symmetrically around a central rosette.

² For the technique of using paper cartoons in transferring designs onto tiles, see Walter Denny, "Turkish Ceramics and Turkish Painting: The Role of the Paper Cartoon in Turkish Ceramic Production", *Essays in Islamic Art and Architecture*, ed. Abbas Daneshvari (1981), pp. 31-2.

A closer look at each tile, however, reveals subtle differences in the execution of the basic designs, which have been rendered in two different styles (pl. C2). Both variations render the lotus blossom in a stencilled fashion. In the first version (pl. 2C-a), the elements of the flower are all painted in one color, cobalt blue, and are grouped together more closely than in the second version (pl. 2C-b), where touches of sage green added to the blue impart a lighter, more transparent impression. The palmettes, which in both versions are rendered in various shades of green, ranging from sage to apple to olive, clearly differ in their execution. The style of type (a) is more elaborate and sophisticated, with the outlines of both the palmette and the cloud-band being more wavy and therefore less formal than those in example (b). Here the lines of the palmette are more straightforward, and the cloud-bands are rendered in a so-called arabesque fashion. Touches of cobalt blue filling the spaces within the design of the cloud-band allow the palmettes to jump forward and to dominate the composition.

Finally, there is a difference in the treatment of the way the connecting stems of the blossoms and palmettes interlace to form the outlines that create the central rosettes. In example (a), the stems are bracketed and the central rosette is painted in sage green and filled with trefoils in reserve white, whereas in example (b) the stems are angular and thicker, creating a somewhat crude effect. The central rosette is more simplified, whereby the petals are painted in cobalt blue with a white bud in the center. Type (a) is used only three times in the panel, with the rest of the tiles using type (b). The overall technical quality is adequate. The colors, although unevenly painted, do not run as they often tend to do. The panel has been extensively restored which seems to have discolored the glaze in parts of the tiles, creating a rather murky effect. Another example of tiles with the type (a) design are located in the Victoria and Albert Museum (pl. C3). Here the tiles also exhibit slight variation in rendition of the basic design, with the colors being more brilliant and applied more evenly than in the examples in the Islamic Museum.

Stenciled lotus blossoms, Chinese cloud-bands, and designs such as palmettes, trefoils and other stylized vegetal elements, often loosely referred to as arabesques, can be traced back to the so-called 'international Timurid style' of the fifteenth century, where Chinese and arabesque elements of design found their way into the repertoire of faience-mosaics and later into the cuerda seca technique, both of which were popular techniques used in the surface articulations of Timurid structures in the late fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries, such as the tiles at the Aq Seray at Shahr-i-Sabz.⁴ This style was also well established in Ottoman Turkey in the second quarter of the 16th century, where these elements of design can be found decorating manuscript illuminations as well as underglaze-painted tiles.⁵ A likely antecedent to the elements of design used in the example in the Islamic Museum could have been the underglaze-painted tiles in the Sunnet Odasi or Circumcision Room in the Harem of the Topkapi Palace in Istanbul. The tiles, which are believed to date to the third decade of the sixteenth century, are decorated with stencilled lotus blossoms, split-leaf palmettes, and Chinese cloud-bands, and although they appear in symmetrical configurations, the compositions used are not like the composition of the panel in the Museum.⁶

The only example of tiles using a very similar pattern to panel I is on the exterior of the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem, which has been attributed to the extensive restorations commissioned by Sultan Suleyman in the fourth decade of the sixteenth century.⁷ The style of rendition is very close to style (a) in plate 2C, with the exception of the treatment of the central rosette being more reminiscent of style (b) on

⁴ Derek Hill and Oleg Grabar, *Islamic Architecture and its Decoration A.D. 800-1500* (London, 1964), plate opposite p. 64, figs. 91-9.

⁵ For an example on illuminated manuscripts, see Esin Atil, *The Age of Sultan Suleyman the Magnificent* (New York, 1987), pl. 30 (hereafter Atil); for examples on tiles, see Berlin, Staatliche Museen Preussischer Kulturbesitz, *The Arts of Islam, Masterpieces from The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York*, (New York, 1982), pl. 107; cf. Carswell, *Ceramics*, pl. 85.

⁶ Kurt Erdmann, "Die Fliesen am Sunnet Odasi des Topkapi Saray in Istanbul", in *Aus der Welt der Islamischen Kunst, Festschrift für Ernst Kuhnel* (Berlin, 1975), figs. 4, 6.

⁷ Ernest T. Richmond, *The Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem* (Oxford, 1924), figs. 32-3.

the same plate. The two examples depicted by Richmond clearly show that variations on a basic design were used, which can mean only one of two things. Either the designs were free-hand drawings, a less likely possibility when taking into consideration the formal style and the fact that the tiles were used as modular tiles. The overall pattern was created by putting several of these modular tiles together as the examples at the Islamic Museum and the Victoria and Albert Museum clearly demonstrate. Or, more plausibly, the designs were stencilled from paper cartoons, which themselves used variations on a single design.

Whatever the case may have been, it is of interest to note that the examples at the Dome of the Rock, according to Richmond's observations, were painted in turquoise and blue on a white background and under a transparent glaze, which seems to correspond to the colors used in the tiles and ceramics known as the so-called 'Damascus group', which Lane dates from about 1525 to 1555.⁸ It has already been argued that the restorations at the Dome of the Rock were undertaken by tilemakers from Tabriz and possibly also from Damascus, and that the period from 1549 to 1561 (these dates are hypothetical and based on dated inscriptions found on the Dome of the Rock), during which the restorations were executed, must have been a period of experimentation for the tileworkers who seem to have been mutually influenced by their different origins, techniques, and styles. There exists no hard evidence to support such assumptions. However, the fact that examples of compositions of rumi (arabesque) and hatayi (Chinese) elements of design, were never known to exist in Tabriz or Istanbul, but only in Jerusalem and later in Damascene tiles, suggests that the design could very well have been conceived by a Syrian craftsman on location at the Dome of the Rock, and then taken back to Damascus where it made its way into the repertoire of Damascene patterns.

⁸ Lane, LIP, p. 49.

This hypothesis can be substantiated by the existence of similar tiles adorning the interior walls of the Ramazan Oglu mosque in Adana.⁹ Denny, in an article analyzing the tile revetments in this mosque, points to a group of tile panels placed on the qibla wall in the eastern iwan of the prayer hall. "To either side of this mihrap are panels of blue-and-white tiles eighteen centimeters square....the design of these field tiles consists of a tri-lobed form set on a diagonal, with four tiles forming together a repeating unit. The glaze exhibits a marked craquelure in some cases."¹⁰ Denny then points out their similarity to tiles on the Dome of the Rock, and suggests that these tiles could have been manufactured "...either in Syria or in the environs of Adana....," and that "...the group dates from the forties of the sixteenth century, which would coincide with the 1541 restoration of the mosque mentioned in the inscription on the north-west portal."¹¹ The close geographical proximity of Adana to Damascus and the similarities between the designs on the tiles at the Ramazan Oglu mosque, the Dome of the Rock, and the Damascene tiles, not only indicate the close connection between the restorations at the Dome of the Rock and subsequent Syrian tile production, but also the possible existence of a production center in Damascus as early as the fourth decade of the sixteenth century.

Panel II (acc. no.15891)

The same composition as in panel I _ two alternating floral elements arranged in axial symmetry around a central rosette _ is used in three other panels in the collection. The first example consists of six modular tiles decorated with a repeat design of alternating, stylized lotus blossoms and tulips, both of which are rendered in cobalt blue, apple green and outlined in black (pls. 2, 3, C4). The floral elements are interconnected on both

⁹ Walter Denny, "Ceramic Revetments Of The Mosque Of The Ramazan Oglu In Adana", *IV Cong. int. art turc* (1971), pp. 60-3 (hereafter cited as Denny, Adana).

¹⁰ Denny, Adana, p. 60. For an illustration of these tiles, see Walter Denny, *The Ceramics of the Mosque of Rustem Pasha and the Environment of change* (New York, 1977), pl. 133 (hereafter cited as Denny, *Rustem Pasha*).

¹¹ Denny, Adana, pp. 62-3.

ends through abstracted tendrils that scallop from one element to the other, also painted in grass green and outlined in black. The central rosette, in this case highly simplified, is painted in cobalt blue and outlined in black with its bud left unpainted. The whole composition is painted on an eggshell background. The tiles are of equal technical quality. A brilliant, evenly applied slip and relatively fast colors are covered with a transparent and crackled glaze.¹²

Panel III (acc. no. 15915)

The second example consists of twenty modular tiles, each measuring 22.2 square centimeters (pls. 4, 5, C5). The design and the composition are similar to panel II. Here, the carnations, which replace the lotus blossoms of the previous example, are rendered in section, and are proportionately larger than the tulips with which they alternate (pl. 5). The carnations are rendered in an expanded color scheme including turquoise, cobalt blue, and touches of sage green, which lends the composition texture and depth. The technical quality and the style of rendition of this and the previous example being equal, it is tempting to assume that both panels were produced at the same period by the same school of design.

Panel IV (acc. no. 15901)

The final example in this series consists of twelve modular tiles, each measuring 22.5 square centimeters (pls. 7, 8, C7). As in the two previous examples, this panel follows the same basic design and overall pattern structure, whereby a repeat pattern of lotus blossoms alternating with serrated leaves is placed in axial symmetry around a central rosette. The difference here lies in the quality of artistic and technical execution. The elements of design are drawn in a sloppy manner when compared to the

¹² see pl. 6 for a similar example located at the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

crispness of the two previous examples, and the turquoise tends to bleed more (pl. C7). One of the tiles (the first tile from the left in the middle row) is a poor imitation of the other tiles and appears to be a later addition to the panel.

The elements of design used in the three panels - lotus blossoms, tulips, carnations, serrated leaves and rosettes - are clearly all elements of the Iznik repertoire which became fashionable in the second half of the sixteenth century, and were frequently used in decorating tile revetments. Similar Iznik examples can be found in the Mosque of Rustem Pasha, commissioned by Suleyman's grand vezier and completed in 1561.¹³ However, it is only to the layout of the design that the Damascene examples can be compared. The example in the Mosque of Rustem Pasha uses different floral elements, and the rendition is never as stylized as in the Damascene tiles. What is apparent about the Damascene style is that, although it exhibits Iznik elements of design and structural layout, the end product is not a slavish imitation of the Iznik production. Instead, the various floral and vegetal elements are either combined in different ways, such as tulips combined with lotus blossoms (pls. 2, 3), a combination never used in Iznik examples; or the style of rendition is far more stylized. When combined, these elements lend the Damascene versions a style they can claim their own.

Panel V (acc. no. 15906)

This panel consists of twenty-four square tiles, each measuring 25.25 square centimeters, and nine rectangular border tiles, cut to various dimensions (pl. 9, C6). The overall pattern is part of a continuous design, where pairs of wavy interlacing tendrils reserved in white and outlined in black on a cobalt blue ground are intersecting diagonally, thereby forming a geometric lattice design (pl. 10). The spaces created by these interlacing and intersecting tendrils form geometric shapes of octagons, triangles,

¹³ Denny, *Rustem Pasha*, pl. 234.

and circles. These spaces are in turn filled with rosettes and arabesques of various shapes and sizes, singularly or interconnected, and are all reserved in white on cobalt blue, turquoise, or various shades of green, from olive to sage to apple. All elements of design are highly abstracted, and although, at first glance, the tiles appear to be modular tiles with the basic design repeating itself, a closer look reveals that the design had been drawn free-hand. This free-hand style is evident when comparing the various floral renditions (pl. 10). Although the basic design is one of alternating floral buds and abstract arabesques interconnected through tendrils and radiating from a central rosette, no two floral buds, or two arabesques are alike. The same applies to the central rosettes, where the number and shapes of petals differ from one example to the other.

The overall design is framed by a border consisting of clusters of triple balls alternating with pairs of wavy lines, set at a diagonal, also known as the chintamani design (pl. 11). The two vertical borders are an integral part of the design, with a thick turquoise line clearly separating the field design from the border design; whereas the two horizontal borders are rectangular tiles of different dimensions added onto the field design. One irregularity in the design can be seen on the border at the base of the panel, where two of the four tiles exhibit two further variations on the chintamani. In the first example, the two wavy lines are thinner and more clearly separated from each other. They are also set at a diagonal; however, unlike the pattern in the rest of the border where the lines form a zigzag, the lines here run in a parallel fashion, and alternate with two sets of triple balls interspersed with single dots. The second variation consists of two sets of wavy lines, whereby in each set four wavy lines are placed in a radial fashion and alternate with sets of simple triple balls, with an additional larger ball at their center. Each of the larger balls in turn contains a cluster of triple balls (pl. 9).

The chintamani design, the origin and meaning of which remain uncertain, can be traced back as far as the middle of the fifteenth century, where it appeared repeatedly on

catma or velvets, now believed to have been produced in Bursa.¹⁴ The chintamani design remained popular throughout the sixteenth century, appearing frequently on royal kaftans or robes and other textiles produced for the Ottoman court.¹⁵ Sometimes, the triple balls appear without the wavy lines, and can be seen on silks, velvets, embroideries, as well as on carpets, furniture, or armor.¹⁶ However, as appealing as this design seemed to have been to the weavers, the triple balls and the two wavy lines, often interpreted as an abstraction representing leopard spots and tiger stripes, rarely appeared on Ottoman ceramic ware.¹⁷ The motif appears only sparingly on tile revetments adorning Ottoman religious buildings. One example is known to exist in the Topkapi Palace.¹⁸ The use of the chintamani design by the Damascene tilemakers is yet another example of individuality, whereby a pattern, which in the Ottoman repertoire was clearly preferred for textiles, is transferred to a different medium by the Damascene craftsmen. And, unlike Ottoman textiles where triple dots and/or wavy lines are always featured as the central design, in Damascene tiles the chintamani is often confined to borders or used to supplement the central design.¹⁹

Panel VI (acc. no. 15905)

¹⁴ Atil, p. 26; cf. Lane, LIP, p. 51; cf. Walter Denny, "Textiles", *Tulips, Arabesques and Turbans*, ed. Yanni Petsopoulos (London, 1982), pp. 126, 128 (hereafter cited as Denny, Textiles); cf. Louise Mackie, *The Splendor of Turkish Weaving* (Washington, D.C., 1974), p. 21, pls. 1, 2 (hereafter cited as Mackie).

¹⁵ Atil, pp. 185, 222, pls. 113 a, b, 154; Denny, Textiles, pls. 135, 148, 156.

¹⁶ Ibid, pl. 115; cf. Atil, pls. 102-3, 107, 139, 141, 162; cf. Mackie, pl. 34.

¹⁷ For two of the few examples utilizing this design, see The Arts Council of Great Britain, *The Arts of Islam*, an exhibition held at the Hayward Gallery (London, 1976), p. 269, no. 418 (hereafter cited as *The Arts of Islam*); cf. John A. Pope, "Chinese Influences on Iznik Pottery: A Re-examination of an Old Problem", *Islamic art in the Metropolitan Museum of Art*, ed. R. Ettinghausen (1972), p. 32, fig. 13 (hereafter cited as Pope).

¹⁸ Carswell, Ceramics, p. 90, pl. 54.

¹⁹ see pls. 9, 25.

This panel of twelve tiles depicts an ogival lattice design decorated with vertically climbing, abstract and naturalistic floral and vegetal motifs, surmounted at the top with a lobed arch filled with arabesques and framed on all four sides with a border of two undulating and intertwining rincaux of split-leaf palmettes (pl. C8). The cobalt blue ogival lattice, outlined on both sides with serrated leaves in sage green, and bearing vertically climbing blossoms painted in reserve white, divides the field into staggered, bulbous medallions, with the width of the panel allowing for the depiction of one full medallion at the bottom and two half-medallions in the center. The medallion at the top of the panel, framed by a cusped arch, takes on a different shape, and is therefore treated differently (pl.12). The central motif of each medallion, which features a large olive green serrated leaf superimposed by a cobalt blue lobed cartouche, and filled with an arabesque design of trefoils and split rumis reserved in white with touches of olive green, is a hybrid design commonly referred to as palmette.

Surrounding the central palmette are two groups of floral sprays of cobalt blue hyacinths and narcissi attached to sage green stems. The stems bearing the hyacinths spring from the serrations framing the bottom of the medallion, climbing up and around the palmette to either side of it. The spray of narcissi emerges from the tip of the central palmette, with two stems curving down to either side of it. Another two stems, bearing narcissi buds, wind upward into the adjacent medallions, thereby intersecting with the lattice as well as other floral sprays. The vertical movement of these floral sprays is interrupted with the lattice framing the bottom of the top medallion (pl.13).

Departing from the bulbous shape of its neighboring medallions and framed with a lobed arch, the rendition of the floral composition is slightly altered. The central palmette, besides being proportionately larger in scale in relation to the medallion, features a more elaborate and detailed depiction of the abstract bud from which it grows. In addition, the arabesque cartouche which in the previous palmettes was merely superimposed on the leaf, is now incorporated into the structure of the palmette,

whereby the bottom part of the cartouche is covered with a serrated leaf, and its outline echoes that of the surmounted arch. The sprays of hyacinths are rendered in a more upright fashion, only flanking the stems of the palmette, and the narcissi are now directly attached to the palmette, emerging from in between the serrations of the leaf and surrounding it in a radial fashion. The cusped arch itself is painted in sage green and outlined like the rest of the motifs in black. The spandrels, painted in cobalt blue, are filled with the same arabesque design used in the cartouches of the palmettes.

Tying the whole composition together, and serving as its focal point, is an interstitial design featuring a lotus blossom in full bloom, which is superimposed over the intersecting lattices (pl.13). The petals of the blossom are painted in cobalt blue and highlighted with touches of olive green, thereby adding texture and depth to the blossom. A few touches of light turquoise in the core of the bud enhance the three-dimensional effect. The rincaux of spiralling split-leaf arabesques, reserved in white on a cobalt blue ground, frames the field design.

The inspiration for the pattern used in this panel can be attributed to the tiles adorning the mihrab or prayer niche of the mosque of Piyale Pasha in Istanbul (ca. 1574), of which this example appears to be an almost direct imitation.²⁰ Denny, in his analysis of the decorative patterns of the tile revetments in the Rustem Pasha Mosque in Istanbul (ca. 1561), refers to the tiles of the Piyale mosque as an example where "...the cartouche design with a central palmette or flower.... reaches its most satisfactory form...".²¹ This example is also one of the few examples of Ottoman tile revetments that employs the ogival pattern in conjunction with a central floral motif as a means of decorative design. Earlier examples can be seen in the Mosque of Rustem Pasha.²² A much more popular medium for the ogival pattern, however, seems to have been

²⁰ Denny, *Rustem Pasha*, p. 181, fig. 211.

²¹ *Ibid*, p. 181.

²² *Ibid*, pl. 212; cf. Denny, *Textiles*, pl.127.

textiles, where ogival designs appear as early as the second quarter of the sixteenth century and continue to be the rage throughout the century.²³ The court atelier in Istanbul applied the ogival layout to the renowned Bursa silk brocades, velvets, and embroideries, which were used for the ceremonial kaftans of the Sultans, cushion covers, ceremonial floor coverings, and tents. Examples can be found in the Topkapi Sarayi Muzesi and western museum collections, and are depicted in Turkish miniature paintings of the sixteenth century.²⁴

Panel VII (acc. no. 15908)

One of the most striking panels in the collection also uses the ogival layout (pls. 14, C9). The largest panel in the collection, it measures 150 by 147 centimeters. It consists of 48 tiles, cut to different dimensions and fitted together in an irregular fashion, creating irregularities within the design. The layout of the design can be perceived on two levels. One level consists of the ogival lattice in the foreground, held together at its intersecting points by interstitial designs of floral motifs. The second level features clusters of grapes and vine leaves together with tulips, narcissi and hyacinths, all of which twist and undulate behind the lattice from one ogival field to another, and are rendered against a stippled cobalt blue background. The lattice itself is painted in sage green, outlined on both sides with thick black lines and a serrated trim in reserve white. The lattice is decorated with vertically climbing white blossoms painted in reserve with touches of manganese purple in their centers.

The intersecting points of the lattice are superimposed with floral motifs painted in pale turquoise, trimmed in reserve white, and filled with floral sprays of tulips or carnations bunched together with narcissi, hyacinths, and other small blossoms, all of

²³ Mackie, p. 12, pls. 4-8, 18-21.

²⁴ Louise W. Mackie, "Rugs and Textiles", *Turkish Art*, ed. Esin Atil (1980), p. 354, pls. 202-3, 209, color plates 22,32, ill.87 (hereafter cited as Mackie, Rugs); cf. Denny, Textiles, pls. 146-7.

which are reserved in white and silhouetted with grey or black outlines, and their buds and leaves painted with touches of sage green. Each floral spray is rendered slightly differently, some of them containing tulips and others containing carnations, with no two flowers ever being the same. This suggests a free-hand drawing of the motifs (compare pls. 15 and 16). Each ogival medallion has a central motif of a bunch of grapes suspended from a thin stem emerging from behind the lattice in the upper right side of the medallion. Branching off from the same stem are two vine leaves which flank the grapes on both sides and are painted in grass green.

The lower right side of the medallion also contains a vine leaf which branches off from a stem that emerges from the interstitial design below and twists up and around, thereby moving from one medallion to the other. This leaf is in some instances replaced by a spray of hyacinths or smaller tulips and carnations, as can be seen in the lower right corner and top row of the panel. The lower left side of the medallion is filled with a large tulip rendered in a stencilled fashion and reserved in white and outlined in grey. The tulip, flanked to either side by two elongated and serrated leaves, emerges from in between the jagged edge of the lattice in an upward motion. Above the tulip is a narcissus which sprouts from the floral interstitial motif to its left.

The entire design is framed by a relatively narrow border of two undulating and intertwining rincaux of arabesques reserved in white on a cobalt blue ground, with some variations on the coloration. As in the field design, the border too is irregular and patched in several places. The borders at the top and the bottom feature the same design and color scheme, whereas the side borders are thinner and are patched together from several different tiles, with no regard to the direction of the design or the coloration.

Irregularities in the field design occur in several places, especially at the bottom of the panel, where the design is interrupted due to the irregularity of the tiles. In one instance, as in the second tile from the left at the bottom of the panel, the floral interstice is set upside down. With several breaks in the pattern and all the

irregularities resulting from them, the panel nevertheless maintains its charm. The stippled colors, the high contrast between the sage green against the dark blue background, together with the shading of the grapes for highlighting, all add depth and texture to the design and render it a three-dimensional quality.

Other examples of the same design appear in the collections at the Metropolitan Museum of Art and the Victoria and Albert Museum (pls. 17, C10). Comparing the example in the Islamic Museum to those in the other two collections, differences in the quality of both technical and artistic achievement are clearly visible, with the panel at the Victoria and Albert being of superior technical quality (pl. C10). Besides the differences in quality and the variations in color combinations, one other feature is striking, and that is the individuality with which the design has been perceived and rendered.

This feature becomes evident when comparing, for example, the bunches of grapes. Four different styles can be detected, with painter A (pls. 14, C10) and painter B (pl. 17) being inclined towards a more naturalistic style, which they achieve by merely shading the grapes in different colors and by stippling the colors for highlights. By using thick outlines for contours, painter C's style (pl. C9), although he experiments with shading and highlighting, is more stylized than the styles of painters A and B. Finally, painter D (pl. C12) renders the grapes in an unnaturally orderly fashion, and is restrained in his use of color. His style emerges as the most abstract in the group.

Another example in the Victoria and Albert Museum (pls. 18, C11) which features the 'grapes and tulip' design, is rendered in the same semi-natural style as the example in this collection, and could very possibly have been executed by the same painter. The attempt to squeeze the motif, as part of an ogival design, into the spandrels over an arch, thereby simulating the ablaq design of alternating stones of contrasting colors

characteristic of Mamluk architectural decoration, is at best awkward and forced, especially since both patterns were supposedly painted as part of an integral design.

The grape motif which can be seen on two further examples in the Victoria and Albert Museum (pls. C13, C14), appears to have been one of the more popular motifs adopted by the Damascene tile makers, who seem to have used it mostly in combination with the ogival pattern. Two panels at the Victoria and Albert (pl. C14) are exceptions. Bunches of grapes are depicted undulating behind cyprus trees midst floral sprays and tufts of grass (V and A, 1427-1902), or surrounding vases with floral arrangements (V and A, 506-1886), a combination that appears to be exclusively Damascene.

The inspiration for the idea of using clusters of grapes as a decorative motif appears to be derived from the Ottoman repertoire of design, which can be traced back to the second quarter of the sixteenth century. Three bunches of grapes appear for the first time as the central field design on ceramic plates in combination with the so-called 'wave' pattern, both of which were Chinese inspirations enthusiastically adopted by the Ottoman court designers from early fifteenth century blue-and-white Ming porcelains.²⁵ At first, the grape motif in bunches of three was used exclusively to decorate Iznik ware produced during the second quarter of the sixteenth century. Most of the examples available were rendered in the then fashionable color palette of blue, or blue and turquoise on white, with a few examples using sage green, purple, and red.²⁶ With the introduction of the so-called sealing wax red and the bright green into the color palette of Ottoman ceramics in the fifth decade of the sixteenth century, and with the

²⁵ For an analysis of the origin of the vine pattern in Chinese ceramics and the extent to which it influenced Ottoman ceramic design, see Pope, pp. 128-30, figs. 1-6,8,9; cf. Yolande Crowe, "Iznik And The Chinese Manner: Waves and Vines", *Vth Int. Congress of Turkish Art* (1978), pp. 207-8, figs. 4,7-10 (hereafter cited as Crowe); cf. Julian Raby and Unsal Yucel, "Blue-And-White, Celadon And Whitewares: Iznik's Debt To China", *Oriental Art*, XXIX, 1(1983), p. 39, fig. 6 and frontispiece (hereafter cited as Raby and Yucel).

²⁶ Atil, p. 251, pl. 173. For other examples in color, see Carswell, *Ceramics*, pls. 75-7; Esin Atil, *Turkish Art of the Ottoman Period* (Washington, D.C., 1973), pl. 11 (hereafter cited as Atil, *TAOP*).

emergence of the so-called quatre-fleur style, the grape pattern seems to disappear from Ottoman ceramics.²⁷

Grape patterns seem to resurface once more in Istanbul in the eighties and nineties of the sixteenth century, only this time they appear on tile revetments. Two examples are known to exist. One is a group of blue and white underglazed tiles now located in the mosque of Sultan Ahmed (ca. 1616), which are believed to have been relocated, and to originally date to ca. 1585-95.²⁸ The other example is located in the Takkeci Ibrahim Aga Cami in Istanbul (1592).²⁹ Unlike the vine patterns first used in the earlier part of the century, the designs decorating these tiles are rendered in a more naturalistic fashion, the bunches now reduced to single or double clusters. It is to the style used in the Takkeci tiles that the Damascene examples come closest.

Other elements of design used in panel VII, such as the tulip, the floral interstitial design, in addition to the ogival layout of the pattern, can all be attributed to the influence of designs and patterns used in Ottoman textiles. One particular example that is highly reminiscent of the ogival pattern in this example is a kaftan illustrated in a portrait of Selim II painted by Nigari in ca. 1570.³⁰ This example seems to be one of the few examples that exhibit the same interstitial motif used in panel VII, and in association with an ogival layout. However, there are no extant examples of textiles employing the grape and vine motif, which makes the Damascene composition all the more original.

²⁷ Raby and Yucel, p. 42.

²⁸ Denny, *Rustem Pasha*, p.169, fig.156.

²⁹ Crowe, pp. 208-9; for an illustration of this panel, see Oktay Aslanapa, *Tuerkische Fliesen und Keramik in Anatolien* (Istanbul,1965), ill. 51 (hereafter cited as Aslanapa).

³⁰ Atil, p. 34, fig. 11.

Panel VIII (acc. no. 15909)

A much inferior and simplified version of the ogival layout, this panel consists of twenty square tiles, and measures 111 by 89 centimeters (pl. 19). Arranged in vertically staggered rows, lobed arabesque medallions alternate with bulbous floral medallions on an egg-shell colored ground. Vertical rows of thick wavy lines, probably representing a highly stylized version of the saz leaf, separate the rows of medallions and accentuate the ogival pattern. The basic element of design, which is repeated on each tile, consists of a central, lobed medallion painted in green, with the nuances changing from one medallion to the other, and ranging from sage to grass to olive green (pls. C15, C16).

Each medallion contains a crudely rendered and misinterpreted arabesque motif of intertwining tendrils with split-leaf palmettes and trefoils, painted in reserve white with touches of cobalt blue, and outlined in black (pl. C16). Each medallion is framed by a stylized cloud-band, the top and bottom of which end in trefoils, painted in a deep blue bordering on black, and highlighted occasionally with touches of turquoise. Each of the four corners of the tiles is filled with a quarter medallion, on which tulips and other three-petalled blossoms are rendered in white and blue, with black outlines on a green ground. As in the case of the arabesque medallions, the tonality of the green varies from medallion to medallion. Between each of the four quarter-medallions and the central medallion are wavy lines rendered in thick turquoise brush strokes, outlined in black, with an abstract design of a string of circles with appended leaf-shapes contoured in thick black outlines. This motif, based on its wavy shape, suggests an abstract form of leaf. One probable representation could be the saz leaf, popularly featured in Ottoman book illuminations, textiles, pottery, and tile revetments in the second half of the sixteenth century.³¹

³¹ Yanni Petsopoulos, "Introduction - the Ottoman Style", *Tulips, Arabesques & Turbans*, ed. Yanni Petsopoulos, p. 8, pls. 2d, 81, 86, 123a, b, 124, 186.

The central medallion with appended trefoils, too, is a motif that Ottoman court designers adopted as early as the second half of the fifteenth century under the influence of Persian court art³², and was featured on every medium from bookbindings to textiles, such as silk brocades and embroideries, to rugs, ceramics, and tile revetments, particularly in the second half of the sixteenth century.³³ In most of the examples cited here, the medallions which are filled with either arabesque or floral designs, are rendered as the central motif. Only on tile revetments, and apparently only in the last quarter of the sixteenth century, do medallions with arabesque designs appear as a repeat motif on all-over patterns, particularly in combination with floral elements of design. One such example can be seen in Edirne, on the tile revetments adorning the qibla wall at the Selimiye mosque (ca.1575), where the arabesque medallion is incorporated into a floral scroll of lotus blossoms, rosettes, and saz leaves.³⁴

Damascene tile makers must have been influenced by this pattern, as an example in the Metropolitan Museum of Art clearly shows (pl.21). As in the example at Edirne, the pattern of the panel in the Metropolitan Museum is based on floral scrolls linked together by scalloped arabesque medallions with appended trefoils. In the Damascene panel, however, the naturalistically rendered floral elements in Edirne are replaced by floral elements and leaves that are rendered in a stenciled fashion. The Damascene example is reminiscent of the stenciled designs found on blue and turquoise tiles, believed to be from the thirties and forties of the sixteenth century.³⁵ The same

³² Mackie, p. 22. For examples on bookbindings from the fifteenth century and the influence of Persian court art, see Esin Atil, "The Art of the Book", *Turkish Art*, ed. Esin Atil (1980), pp. 154-7, ill. 66 (hereafter cited as Atil, *Turkish Art*).

³³ For examples featuring central medallions on bookbindings, see Atil, pls. 16, 18a, 19; for examples on textiles, see Mackie, pls. 3, 8, 12; for examples on rugs, see Mackie, Rugs, p. 327, pl. 54; for examples on ceramics, see Atil, *TAOP*, pl. 16; and for examples on tile revetments, see Atil, p. 240, fig. 24.

³⁴ Walter Denny, "Ceramics", *Turkish Art*, ed. Esin Atil (1980), p. 272, pl. 46 (hereafter cited as Denny, *Ceramics*).

³⁵ Carswell, *Ceramics*, pl. 82.

pattern, with slight variations, adorns another Damascene panel located in the Victoria and Albert Museum in London (pl. C17). Panel VIII differs from both these panels in that the medallions are part of an ogival layout, a pattern more commonly associated with textiles. Also, the artistic and technical quality of rendering the design is far more inferior to that of the two examples in the Metropolitan Museum and the Victoria and Albert Museum. This can be clearly seen in the misinterpreted drawing of the arabesque designs on the medallions, and the inability to control the turquoise color from bleeding into the off-white slip.

Panel IX (acc. no. 15904)

One of the more unusual examples in the collection, this arched panel consists of eighteen tiles and measures 133.5 by 61.5 centimeters (pls. 22, C18). The overall field design is occupied by staggered hexagons painted in a deep cobalt blue on an off-white ground, forming a reciprocal grid pattern in contrast with the hexagons. Each hexagon contains in its center an abstracted floral design composed of a silhouetted rosette, the off-white ground of which is painted with a cobalt blue central rosette surrounded by eight tiny blue dots. The field design, a hexagonal grid reminiscent of a honeycomb, is framed by a border of an uninterrupted braided motif and reserved in white on a cobalt blue ground.

The honeycomb pattern used in this example seems to be one of its kind. No other examples with this design are known to exist either on Damascene or on Ottoman tile revetments. Nor can this pattern be found on any of the other contemporary media. A possible source of inspiration, however, could have been the hexagonal tiles of the fifteenth century. Two examples that come to mind are the hexagonal blue-and-white tiles adorning the east wall in the interior of the Mosque of Murad II in Edirne (ca.1434), and the blue-and-white hexagonal tiles in the Tawrizi Mosque in

Damascus.³⁶ The designer of the Damascene panel, however, in his choice of composition, deviated from the example in Edirne, where the hexagonal tiles are separated from each other by monochrome glazed triangular tiles, thereby forming a star-shaped pattern. Another example of hexagonal tiles can be seen in one of the miniature paintings in the *Kulliyat* (Complete Works) of Katibi depicting an enthronement scene, and believed to date from the second half of the fifteenth century.³⁷ Once again, this panel demonstrates the individualistic treatment that seems to characterize Damascene designs, particularly with regard to composition.

Panel X (acc. no. 15892)

This narrow, rectangular panel consists of one row of four square tiles and one rectangular border tile, together measuring 20 by 94 centimeters (pls. 23, C19). Three of the four square tiles are modular, whereby the same design is repeated on each. The fourth is divided between the same field design and the border design. The decoration consists of a central cartouche painted in turquoise and filled with a bouquet of flowers arranged symmetrically in a goblet-like vase. The bouquet, which is rendered in a semi-naturalistic fashion, consists of a central floral bud flanked from top to bottom by pairs of tulips, carnations, and small four-petalled flowers, all painted in white with touches of manganese purple.

The vase, which is proportionately much smaller than the bouquet, has a flared stem connected to its bulbous body by means of a ball-like knot. The body of the vase is decorated with concentric lines radiating from the bottom of the vase to its rim. The contours of the designs are outlined in black. The cartouche is trimmed with a scalloped edge, painted in manganese purple and outlined in black. Abstract leaves, reserved in

³⁶Denny, *Ceramics*, p. 265, pl. 37; John Carswell, "Six Tiles", *Islamic Art in the Metropolitan Museum of Art*, ed. R. Ettinghausen (1972), p. 114, pl. 5.

³⁷ Atil, *Turkish Art*, p. 156, pl. 16.

white and outlined in black, line the inner rim of the scallops, and surround the floral bouquet in a directional and symmetrical arrangement.

The entire cartouche is then surrounded by a wreath of serrated leaves painted in turquoise, with the spaces in between the leaves filled with deep blue, rounded leaves. The motif is rendered against an off-white ground. The corners of each tile are filled with quarter rosettes, which, when four tiles are placed together, are rendered in full face (pl. 24). The rosette consists of cobalt blue petals alternating with spiky, turquoise leaves, thereby echoing the colors of the wreath that surrounds the cartouche. The field design is framed on both sides with a border decorated with the chintamani motif of alternating double wavy lines and clusters of triple balls, and reserved in white against a deep blue ground (see panel V, pl. 9). The effect of the over-all pattern can be seen on a panel of nineteen tiles in the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York (pl. 24), using the same motif as in panel X.

Bouquets of flowers arranged in a vase are a characteristic motif in the Ottoman repertoire of design, and flourished particularly in the second half of the sixteenth century with the emergence of the so-called quatre fleurs style. Tulips, carnations, roses, crysanthemums, and hyacinths were among the most popular flowers, and renditions of floral clusters can be seen decorating ceramic ware, tiles, textiles, and book illuminations throughout the second half of the sixteenth century, the seventeenth, and into the eighteenth centuries.³⁸ Most of the floral sprays decorating Ottoman ceramics and tiles are rendered in a naturalistic fashion with the drawings conveying a sense of motion, often bordering on realism. The floral bouquet depicted on the Damascene tiles is rendered in a more chimerical fashion, whereby the symmetrical arrangement of the flowers and the stiffness with which they are depicted convey a

³⁸ Lane, L.I.P., p. 58; Petsopoulos, p. 8. For examples of ceramic ware and tiles, see Lane, L.I.P., pls. 35B, 36A, B; cf. Carswell, *Ceramics*, pls. 89, 100, 86; cf. Atil, pls. 185, 199; for examples of textiles, see Denny, *Textiles*, pls. 132, 146, 151; cf. Atil, pl. 137; for examples of book illuminations, *ibid*, pl. 26.

certain rigidity and formality, a characteristic seldom found in Ottoman ceramics or tile revetments using floral arrangements. The style of rendition in the Damascene example is much more reminiscent of the floral sprays decorating Ottoman silk brocades produced in the second half of the sixteenth century. One example, that comes close in spirit to the cartouches in panel X, is a kemha fragment in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, which features an ogival pattern of staggered cartouches framed by serrated leaves and decorated with floral bouquets.³⁹

Panel XI (acc. no.15896)

This is another example of a modular tile panel consisting of three square tiles bordered at top and bottom by six rectangular tiles (pls. 25, C20). The field design, which is identical on all three tiles, consists of a central scalloped roundel filled with a spray of hybrid blossoms, emerging from the same source, with their stems tied together by means of a bow. The roundel is surrounded by alternating double wavy lines and triple balls, or chintamani. The four corners are occupied by quarter rosettes. The inner rim of the scalloped roundel is outlined by a thick black contour and trimmed with a turquoise border. The field of the roundel is left uncolored. The floral design which is composed of a central lotus blossom, is rendered in stencil-like fashion, and painted in shades of cobalt blue, turquoise, and touches of aubergine on an off-white slip. Emerging from the tip of the lotus blossom is a blue, stenciled tulip, flanked by a pair of wavy grass green leaves and tendrils. In addition, two carnations emerge from the same source as the tulip, bending sideways, and flanking the central tulip. The carnations, which are rendered in profile, have aubergine petals outlined in black, and drawn in the same stenciled fashion as the tulip and the lotus blossom. Moving down to either side of the lotus blossom, two narcissi sprout from the petals of the lotus in an upward motion,

³⁹ Atil, pl. 144.

thereby intersecting with the stems of the carnations and flanking the tulip in the same symmetrical, mirror image arrangement. The cobalt blue and turquoise narcissi, unlike the other blossoms, are rendered in a more naturalistic fashion. Two further pairs of carnations and tulips emerge from the bottom to the top of the lotus blossom stem, and are arranged in symmetrical mirror-image. They are rendered in the same style and painted the same colors as the other flowers.

The chintamani design, which surrounds the roundel, consists of two wavy lines painted in black and is set at a diagonal. It alternates with clusters of triple balls painted in turquoise and black. The quarter rosettes in the corners of the tiles are painted in grass green, outlined in black. They are superimposed by small five-petalled blossoms reserved in white, with black dots in their centers.

The repeat-pattern field design is framed at top and bottom by two borders of different designs. The upper border is decorated with a frieze consisting of a scroll of alternating bunches of serrated leaves and floral trefoils painted in cobalt blue on an egg-shell ground, with touches of turquoise added to the trefoils' interior. The drawings are irregular. The tile on the far right is a variation on the coloration of the same design. The cobalt blue is replaced by charcoal grey, and the interior of the vegetal freeze is painted turquoise instead of letting the slip show through as in the other two examples.

The lower border is decorated with a scroll of intersecting stems and tendrils, to which alternating split-leaf palmettes and peony blossoms, rendered in full face, are attached. The scroll is reserved in white on a cobalt blue ground, and outlined in black. The split-leaf palmettes are painted in grass green and filled with arabesque designs reserved in white. The peonies are also reserved in white, and touched up with turquoise and green, ranging from a grass green to a dirty olive. Both borders are rendered in a stylised fashion, with abstract motifs in the upper border .

The technical quality of the border tiles is poor. The execution of the designs is rather sloppy when compared to that of the field design, which suggests that the borders are possibly later additions. The borders, which overpower the field design instead of accentuating it, are an unsuccessful choice, creating a poor overall composition. A far more successful arrangement can be seen on an example in the Metropolitan Museum of Art (pl. 26). Here the arrangement of four tiles forming a square allows the design to fully unfold. The quarter rosettes form a unified blossom, creating a focal point for the design. Another example of superior technical quality is in the Victoria and Albert Museum (pl. C23).

The elements of design, in this case the central roundel filled with hybrid floral sprays, single rosettes with superimposed blossoms, and the chintamani design, are all popular motifs frequently used by Ottoman designers in their repertoire of decorative arts. Once again, it is the location and the combination of these various elements into one composition that adds a different flavor to the Damascene tiles. For example, the use of the chintamani design as a filler or peripheral element in the composition of the pattern is a treatment not found so far in Ottoman patterns used for tiles or for ceramics. The few existing examples of Ottoman ceramics that exhibit the chintamani design use the design as the main theme.⁴⁰

Panel XII (acc. no. 15897)

This panel is composed of four, unevenly cut tiles of various dimensions, and measures 24.5 by 94.5 centimeters (pls. 27, C24). The decoration consists of a frieze of trefoils containing arabesque motifs arranged in a reciprocal pattern. The trefoils are painted in cobalt blue, framed with a thick turquoise contour line, and filled with an

⁴⁰ The Arts of Islam, p. 269, pl. 418; Carswell, *Ceramics*, p. 72, pl. 54; Damascene designers appear to have also used the chintamani on its own as the main theme, as can be seen on a hexagonal tile in the Victoria and Albert Museum (396-1898), pl. C13.

arabesque design of interlacing split-leaf palmettes and trefoils reserved in white. The whole motif is outlined in black and painted on an egg-shell ground, which also serves as the ground of the reciprocal trefoils. The inverted trefoils are accented by smaller cobalt blue trefoils which are centered on them and follow their outline. The frieze of trefoils is trimmed at the bottom by a rincaux of split-leaf palmettes reserved in white on a cobalt blue ground, with touches of sage green accentuating the stems. The pattern is interrupted three times because of mismatched tiles. Nevertheless, the drawing of the designs is detailed and well executed, and the technical quality is relatively successful.

This motif, which imitates trefoil crenellations often used as architectural decoration in religious structures, appears to have been a popular motif suitable for borders framing the top of tile panels. Two other examples are in the Victoria and Albert Museum (pls. C21, C22).⁴¹ They are more elaborate variations on the same design. The arabesque designs are rendered in more intricate detail, and different color combinations are used. Friezes of reciprocal trefoils were used sparingly in decorating Ottoman tile revetments. Only a few known examples exist. One such example is located in the mosque of Ramazan Oglu in Adana (ca. 1559), where two of the tile revetments are framed with a simple frieze of reciprocal trefoils. Another example can be seen in the Harem at the Topkapi Palace in Istanbul, where two adjacent tile panels are each crowned by an arch of reciprocal trefoils.⁴²

The inspiration for using trefoils as a decorative motif in a reciprocal pattern to frame tile panels could very well have come from the illuminated pages of Qur'ans designed in the naqashhane. For example, a serlevha or fronticepiece from a mid-sixteenth century, illuminated Qur'an, located in the Topkapi Saray Muzesi in Istanbul,

⁴¹ A similar tile is published in Carswell, *Ceramics*, pl. 109.

⁴² Denny, *Rustem Pasha*, figs. 125, 184; Aslanapa, fig. 61.

depicts an elaborate border of trefoils in reciprocal arrangement decorated with intricate arabesque designs. 43

Panel XIII (acc. no. 13948)

The only dated panel in the collection consists of four tiles, and measures 26 by 91 centimeters (pls. 28, C25). The tiles are arranged horizontally, with the edges of the two end-tiles cut in the shape of brackets, thereby lending the whole panel the shape of a cartouche. The cartouche is filled with a cursive naskhi inscription in two lines, reserved in white on an unevenly painted cobalt blue ground, and outlined in black. The two lines of inscription are separated by a white horizontal band also outlined in black. The entire inscription is trimmed with a thin white frame, and flanked on either side by an ansa filled with interlacing scrolls of trefoils and split-leaf palmettes. The scrolls are reserved in white on a turquoise ground, with black outlines and highlights. The edges of the ansae are trimmed in black. The inscription, which consists of two integrated levels of script, reads as following:

"Ibrahim son of Adham Shaikh al-Islam 'Abd al-Samad, may God give them to drink from the spring of paradise, and may He have mercy on those who drink from this fountain, and those who pray for their forgiveness and for the forgiveness of all Muslims, the year 998."

The content of the inscription reveals that these tiles once served as what appears to be the foundation inscription of a sabil or public water fountain, founded in 1589-90, and dedicated to a certain Ibrahim, and to his father Adham 'Abd al-Samad who was known as shaikh al-Islam⁴⁴. According to three contemporary chroniclers, Shaikh Ibrahim

⁴³ Atil, p. 54. One of the earliest uses of the motif is on top of the dado of the mosque of Murad in Edirne (1421).

⁴⁴ J. H. Kramers, "Shaikh al-Islam", *EI*, vol. IV (1934), pp. 275-9. An honorific title usually bestowed upon sufis and Islamic jurists known as muftis who attained a special position among their religious communities for their fatwas, or legal opinions on the personal aspects of religious life.

as-Samadi was one of the most respected sufis or mystics of Damascus and a venerated saint known for performing miracles.⁴⁵ Al-Muhibbi informs us that Ibrahim ibn as-Samadi was born in 998/1590, and died in 1070/1662-3. He was buried in the cemetery at the Bab as-Saghir in Damascus. Shaikh Ibrahim ibn as-Samadi was known to have contributed to the restoration of the Zawiya as-Samadiya in Damascus, which was commissioned by Sultan Ibrahim I in 1644 A.D. According to al-Ghazzi, also a contemporary chronicler of the sixteenth century, Ibrahim ibn 'Abd as-Samad was a man of piety and of faith, who's father (i.e. 'Abd as-Samad) was the mufti or jurist of Damascus.⁴⁶ From the above information, we can then infer, that the tiled inscription could possibly have come from a sabil attached to the Zawiya as-Samadiya, which according to al-Muhibbi was situated in Damascus. Unfortunately, no documentation is known to exist on such a zawiya or small mosque, which renders this hypothesis inconclusive.

Stylistically, inscriptions on tiles reserved in white on a blue ground were a well established tradition started in Istanbul sometime in the mid to late fifties of the sixteenth century.⁴⁷ The earliest example of tiled inscriptions in this style can be seen in the Suleymaniye Mosque in Istanbul (ca. 1550-7), where the inscriptions around the mihrab were composed by the master calligrapher Ahmad Karahisari.⁴⁸ This tradition was readily adopted by the Damascene calligraphers, to which several examples in Damascene buildings attest. Koranic, poetic and dedicatory inscriptions, reserved in

⁴⁵ Heinz Gaube, *Arabische Inschriften Aus Syrien* (Beirut, 1978), p. 174 (hereafter cited as Gaube). Gaube's information is based on a translation of al-Muhibbi's seventeenth-century *Who's Who: Khulasat al-Athar fi A'yan al-Qarn al-Hadi 'Ashar*; cf. Laoust, p. 213; Laoust's information is based on a translation of ibn Gum'a's chronicle of pashas and governors of Damascus in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

⁴⁶ Nagm al-Din al-Ghazzi, *al-Kawakib al-Sa'ra bi A'yan al-Mi'a al-'Ashira*, ed. Gibra'il S. Gabbur, vol. III (Beirut, 1945), p. 167: 6-10.

⁴⁷ Walter Denny, "Ceramic Revetments Of The Mosque of Rustem Pasha.", *IVeme Congres International d'Art Turc* (1971), p. 270.

⁴⁸ Atil, pp. 34-5, fig. 12.

white on a blue ground, are located in the Zawiya of Sa'd ad-Din (ca. 1562-3), in the mosque and tomb of Darwish Pasha (1571-5), and in the mosque of Sinan Pasha (1586-91).⁴⁹

TECHNOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENT OF DAMASCENE TILE PRODUCTION

The purpose of this chapter is to suggest a chronological development for the Damascus tile production in the second half of the sixteenth century. To do so, we will first need to establish a hierarchy of the various patterns of designs for the panels in the collections of the Syrian Museum, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, and the Victoria and Albert Museum's researches. Then, with each category of patterns, we will compare the material pattern to other examples of the revetments located in the datable monuments of Damascus in order to assign each design group to a specific time frame. Before we discuss each of the five categories, a brief survey of the technical features of Damascus tiles will help us better understand the important role of color in the decoration of Damascus tiles.

Technique

Like the brick production of the second half of the sixteenth century, Damascus tiles were decorated in the underglaze-painted technique. However, due to the lack of certain ingredients such as red pigments, and the lack of the technical knowledge for producing a color-firing glaze so characteristic of brick tiles, the quality of the Syrian production is substantially inferior.

49 'Afif Bahnasi, *"al-Qashani al-Dimashqi", al-Hawliyat al-Athariya al-'Arabiya al-Suriya* (n.d.), pp. 36-9, 41, 46, 51 (hereafter cited as Bahnasi).

Chapter III

THE CHRONOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENT OF DAMASCENE TILE PRODUCTION

The purpose of this chapter is to suggest a chronological development for the Damascene tile production in the second half of the sixteenth century. To do so, we will first need to establish a typology of the stylistic patterns of design for the panels in the collections of the Islamic Museum, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, and the Victoria and Albert Museum, respectively. Then, within each category of patterns, we will compare the museum panels to similar examples of tile revetments located in the datable monuments of Damascus, in order to assign each stylistic group to a specific time frame. Before we discuss each of the five categories, a brief survey of the technical features of Damascene tiles will help us better understand the important role of color in the conception of Damascene designs.

Technique

Like the Iznik production of the second half of the sixteenth century, Damascene tiles were decorated in the underglaze-painted technique. However, due to the lack of certain ingredients such as red pigments, and the lack of the technical knowhow for producing a close-fitting glaze so characteristic of Iznik tiles, the quality of the Syrian production is substantially inferior.

The body of Damascene tiles, unlike the white hard body of Iznik tiles, tends to be softer and never white.¹ The Syrian color palette, which includes cobalt blue, turquoise, manganese purple, black for outlines, and a distinctive green of varying shades ranging from sage to apple to olive, differs from the Iznik palette because of the total absence of red. Red, also known as 'Armenian bole', was developed in Iznik in the fifth decade of the sixteenth century, and became the characteristic color of the palette of Ottoman court production of ceramics.² The lack of availability of iron-red pigments to the Damascene potters limited their palette to more subdued colors such as blue, turquoise, green, and purple. Having adopted the Iznik floral designs for which the color red was most suitable, the Damascene tile makers had to resort to different means to accentuate their floral designs. In most panels in the collection at the Islamic Museum the designs are painted on an off-white slip with either a yellowish or a grayish tinge. Sometimes a cobalt blue is used as the ground color, a feature found only occasionally on Iznik tiles (pls. C9, C25).³

Typical of Damascene tiles is also the thick glaze, which unlike the thin and close fitting Iznik glaze, has a tendency to crackle, a feature never found on Iznik tiles. Finally, the sizes of tiles generally measure between 21-32 centimeters in length, with 24.5 square centimeters being the most common.

¹ Lane, L.I.P., p. 62. The information available on the body of Damascene tiles in the sources is scanty. The only reference to the body of Syrian tiles was found in the accession books of the collection at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, where some of the tiles were described as having a composite body with the color varying from white to a fine redish-grey.

² Lane, L.I.P., p. 57; Katharina Otto-Dorn, *Das Islamische Iznik* (Berlin, 1941), p. 110.

³ One of the few examples of Iznik tile panels that exhibit a colored slip as a background for the designs painted on it can be seen in the Topkapi palace. See Atil, pl. 210.

Categories of Stylistic Patterns of Design

The designs used to decorate the Damascene tile panels in the three collections at hand can be divided into five stylistic groups. Within each group we will discuss the decorative motifs, their stylistic rendition and overall composition. We will also consider the role of color in the design and its visual effect. Furthermore, we will identify the characteristic features of the designs that lend Damascene tiles a definite style of their own, distinguishing them from the contemporary Ottoman court production.

Group A: Repeat patterns using symmetrically arranged lattice designs of stylized floral and vegetal motifs

The designs of the panels in this group, which includes five panels from the Islamic Museum in Cairo (pls. 1-5, 7-11, C1, C2, C4-C6), one panel from the Victoria and Albert Museum (pl. C3), and one from the Metropolitan Museum of Art (pl. 6), all share one common feature, repeat patterns of floral and vegetal motifs arranged symmetrically around a central motif, forming an overall lattice design. Characteristic decorative motifs are stylized Chinese lotus-blossoms, split-leaf palmettes, and hybrid rosettes (pls. C2-C4), in addition to abstracted tulips (pl. C4), stylized carnations and serrated leaves, and other floral buds (pl. C5-C7). As discussed in chapter II, the motifs used in these examples are clearly inspired by the repertoire of Ottoman decorative designs used in book illuminations and ceramics of the first half of the sixteenth century. The stenciled style of rendition of the motifs appears to be a direct reflection of the influence of designs executed in the cuerda seca technique used extensively to decorate Ottoman tile revetments during the early fifteenth century in

Bursa and Edirne, during the mid fifteenth and the first half of the sixteenth centuries in Istanbul.⁴

The most prominent motif in this group is the Chinese lotus blossom, which is rendered in four different styles (pls. C2-4, C7).⁵ The most striking rendition of all the lotus blossoms in this group can be seen on plate C4. The painter in this example departed from the more familiar stenciled rendition of lotus blossoms frequently used in Ottoman decorative arts.⁶ The blossom is rendered in a more fluid style, and unlike most other examples of the stenciled type, the petals of the blossom are connected. The characteristic diadem so often surrounding the core is absent. By reducing the number of petals and by suspending black dots between them, as well as highlighting the core of the blossom with a single stroke of apple green, the painter has deftly expressed a style uniquely characteristic to Damascene tiles.

Equally rare and Damascene in style is the treatment of the tulip in the same example. Consisting of only two blue strokes representing the petals, and a single apple green stroke representing the core, with a single black dot at the base, this version of stylized flowers is one of the more successful attempts to abstract the tulip. The simplicity of the design and the attractive color combination lend this panel a modern and timeless feel, making it one of the more pleasing examples in this group.

The predominant colors in this group are cobalt blue and a characteristic 'Damascene' green. The blue is used either for the petals of the flowers, or as a ground color (pl. C6). The green, which varies in its intensity and shades, is well exemplified in Panel I, where the various shades of apple green, sage, and olive are all featured

⁴ Denny, *Rustem Pasha*, pp. 13-16; cf. Julian Raby, "Diyarbakir: a rival to Iznik. A sixteenth century tile industry in Eastern Anatolia", *Istanbulur Mitt*, XXVII-XXVIII (1977-8), p. 445.

⁵ For a discussion of the various styles, see chapter II, pp. 3,4.

⁶ For examples on Damascene tiles, see pls. C2, C3; for the same type used to decorate Ottoman ceramics, see Carswell, *Ceramics*, pl. 85.

together (pl.C1). Unfortunately, the overall effect is not very pleasing, due to the irregularity of the pattern.

A further characteristic of this group is the restrained use of turquoise, one of the least successful colors when fired. Having the tendency to bleed into the surrounding white slip, the use of turquoise is often limited to accentuating a design (pls. C4, C6, C7). A striking exception to this rule can be seen on plate C5. Here, the painter solved the technical drawback of turquoise by placing it in the center of the carnations, and surrounding it on both sides by cobalt blue and green. As a result the undesired effect of the bleeding is avoided, and an interesting dimension of texture is added to the visual impact of the design. The originality of this design stems from combining an imaginative use of colors with a new interpretation of the carnation, which is abstracted by being rendered in section. This interpretation is not found on either Ottoman ceramics or tiles.

Grouping the first four panels together on stylistic grounds does not necessarily place them within the same chronological group. In chapter II, a possible terminus a quo has been suggested for the design on panel I.⁷ The symmetrical arrangement of split-leaf palmettes alternating with stenciled Chinese lotus blossoms, besides being a direct adaptation of a closely related design found on the Dome of the Rock⁸, also comes close in spirit to a number of tiled lunettes located above the windows on the exterior and interior of the Tekiya Suleymaniya built in Damascus between 1554-60.⁹ This complex, which was commissioned by Suleyman I and designed by the renowned Ottoman architect, Sinan, exhibits the earliest known examples of Ottoman-inspired tile revetments in Damascus in the second half of the sixteenth century.¹⁰

⁷ Chapter II, pp. 5-7.

⁸ Ibid, fn. 7.

⁹ Jean Sauvaget, *Les Monuments Historiques de Damas* (Beyrouth, 1932), p. 81; cf. Lane, Iznik, fig. 48; cf. Carswell, *Ceramics*, p. 89, pl. 68b; cf. Bahnasi, pp. 30-1, pls. 17-8.

¹⁰ Wulzinger and Watzinger, pp. 14-5, fig. 27; cf. Katharina Otto-Dorn, *Türkische Keramik* (Ankara, 1957), p. 150; cf. Lane, L.I.P., p. 62. For an analysis of the architectural and decorative features of the Tekiyya, see Michael Meinecke, "Die Osmanische Architektur Des

Stylistically, the designs depicted on the tile revetments at the Tekiya appear to be closely related to the formal style of the symmetrical designs on the cuerda seca tile revetments located in the mosque of Selim I in Istanbul (ca.1520), and the designs found on the exterior of the mosque of Kara Ahmet Pasha in Istanbul (ca.1550-55).¹¹ The examples at the Tekiya Suleymaniya clearly exhibit the influence of the so-called 'Tabrizi' school of design, which appears to have been revived around the middle of the century both in Istanbul as well as in the provinces. Contrary to the examples found in Istanbul, which were executed in the cuerda seca technique, the tiles at the Tekiya in Damascus are underglaze-painted.

The design of the Tekiya examples, when compared to the designs of the Museum panels, is more intricate and complex. Here, stylized Chinese lotus blossoms and saz leaves arranged in chimerical fashion alternate with a single, more elaborate hatayi surrounded by intertwining arabesque formations. The symmetrical composition is rather formal and stiff. The overall visual effect, suffering somewhat from the crowding of motifs and the intricacy of the pattern, nevertheless, is well balanced by the meticulous rendition of the design and the good technical quality.

In comparison with the lunettes at the Tekiya in Damascus, the Museum examples are much more simplified. The designers, clearly inspired by the formal approach to design and the symmetrical arrangement of motifs, have a tendency to simplify the elements of design and their compositional arrangement. With the exception of panel I, which has a design similar to that found on the Dome of the Rock, the other panels in the group do not appear to be represented in the existing examples of tile revetments located in Damascene buildings. Hence, panels II-IV cannot be placed within an architectural context, which makes the task of dating them difficult.

16. *Jahrhunderts In Damaskus*, 5th Int. Cong. Turkish Art (1978), pp. 580-2 (hereafter cited as Meineke).

¹¹ Cf. Denny, Rustem, figs. 39, 41.

Group B: Ogival patterns using composite designs of naturalistic and/or abstract floral and vegetal motifs

The main characteristic of this group is the ogival layout of the patterns, which appears to be a direct inspiration of designs usually associated with Ottoman textiles of the second half of the sixteenth century, and is adapted in this case to the medium of ceramics.¹² The main decorative motifs employed are floral and vegetal. Floral motifs include tulips, carnations, hyacinths, and narcissi, rendered naturalistically (pl. C8) or in a stylized fashion (pls. C9, C16). Vegetal motifs include abstracted palmette leaves, often in combination with superimposed arabesque elements (pl. C8), abstracted saz leaves (pl. C15), or naturalistically rendered vines (pl. C9).

However, the motif that is most characteristic of this group, and is typically Damascene, is the so-called 'grape and vine' motif (pls. C9-C12). Damascene tilemakers were not the first to employ the grape and vine motif. Iznik potters inspired by Chinese Ming porcelains of the early fifteenth century had already used the grape and vine motif as early as the second quarter of the sixteenth century.¹³ However, the Damascene versions of the motif, which are clearly distinguishable from any of the Iznik examples, are spirited, freehand renditions.¹⁴ A close look reveals that no two bunches are exactly the same.

The attempt to render the grapes and the appended vine leaves in a naturalistic, almost realistic fashion is enhanced further by the use of color. The Damascene color palette, with its characteristic green and purple is perfectly suitable for the motif,

¹² For the influence of Ottoman textiles on ogival patterns used on Damascene tiles, see chapter II, pp. 13, 18.

¹³ Chapter II, pp. 16-7.

¹⁴ cf. pls. C9-C12.

which may explain why this motif in particular assumed such a popular position in the repertoire of Damascene designs. In combination with flowers, and placed within an ogival lattice pattern, this design is rendered in several color combinations, whereby cobalt blue is often used as the ground color (pls. C9, C11-C13). Green, in its distinct shades of sage, apple, and olive, is used mainly for the vine leaves and tendrils, and occasionally also as a ground color for the lattice as in panel VII (pl. C9). Turquoise is usually limited to being a ground color for the lattices, or for the interstitial cartouches (pls. C9, C10, C12), and sometimes used as highlights for floral designs (pl. C12).

The earliest known example of tile revetments using the ogival pattern in Damascus is a panel located in the mosque of Darwish Pasha (1571-1574/5).¹⁵ This mosque, together with a tomb (ca.1579), a madrassa, and a sabil, are all part of a complex known as the Darwishiya.¹⁶ The complex was commissioned by Darwish Pasha Rustem, who was appointed governor of Damascus in ca.1571-2.¹⁷

Both the mosque and the tomb appear to be the earliest existing examples of provincial Ottoman architecture that exhibit an extensive use of tile revetments as a means of interior surface decoration.¹⁸ According to Carswell and Bahnasi, the mosque is decorated with approximately thirty revetments of varying shapes, sizes, and designs,

¹⁵ For an illustration of the panel, see Bahnasi, p. 40, pl. 31; for the dating of the Darwishiya, see Wulzinger and Watzinger, pp. 14,45; Jean Sauvaget, *Les Monuments Historiques de Damas* (Beyrouth,1932), pp. 83-4 (hereafter cited as Sauvaget,1932); Meineke, p. 584; John Carswell, "Syrian tiles from Sinai and Damascus", *Archaeology in the Levant* (Warminster,1978), p. 277, fn. 19 (hereafter cited as Carswell, 1978); John Carswell, "Two Tiny Turkish Pots-Some Recent Discoveries in Syria", *Islamic Art II* (1987), p. 205 (hereafter cited as Carswell,1987); Unlike Watzinger, Sauvaget, Meineke, and Carswell, who date the building between 1571 and 1574-5, the date of completion mentioned by Bahnasi is 1571.

¹⁶ Wulzinger and Watzinger, p. 14; Sauvaget, pp. 83-4; Carswell,1987, p. 205; Bahnasi, p. 40.

¹⁷ Laoust, p. 187. According to Ibn Gum'a Darwish Pasha died in 981/1573-4 and buried in his mausoleum; Bahnasi, p. 40. Bahnasi states that he was buried in 1580.

¹⁸ Earlier structures, such as the Suleymaniya mosque in Damascus (1550-4), exhibit a restricted use of tile revetments, mainly in the form of lunettes above its windows and entrances.

From the above evidence, the introduction of ogival designs into the repertoire of Damascene tiles must have taken place some time in the early seventies. This suggestion seems plausible if we consider the fact that ogival designs were fashionable also at the imperial workshops in Istanbul during that same period.²⁸

Group C: Floral Patterns

1-Repeat-patterns of symmetrically arranged floral sprays contained in cartouches

The main characteristic of this group is the cartouche design containing a symmetrically arranged floral spray, where the flowers are rendered either in naturalistic or hybrid fashion. This group is represented in the museum collections by five examples, two in the Islamic Museum (pls. 23, 25, C19, C20), two at the Metropolitan Museum of Art (pls. 24, 26), and one at the Victoria and Albert Museum (pl. C23). The floral arrangements, according to the examples at hand, are depicted either as a hybrid spray of flowers bunched together by a stylized Chinese cloud-band (pl. C20), or as a bouquet of flowers standing in a goblet-like vase (pl. C19). The flowers represented are tulips, carnations, narcissi, and stylized Chinese lotus blossoms (pl. C20).

Dating the floral cartouche designs remains a difficult task. Even suggesting a terminus a quo is made difficult by the lack of sufficient examples in datable buildings. The only comparable example known to exist in a Damascene structure is located in the Tomb of Salah el-Din²⁹, the design of which is almost identical to the designs decorating the two panels in the Islamic Museum (pls. 23, C19), and the Metropolitan Museum of Art (pl. 24). This panel, together with several other panels decorating the interior walls of the tomb, are all believed to be later additions, for which no certain date is

²⁸ See chapter II, p. 18, fn. 30.

²⁹ Bahnasi, p. 27, pl. 13.

known.³⁰ However, one of the calligraphy panels located on the western wall of the tomb, features an Ottoman poem, which is signed and dated. The eulogistic poem cites, among other things, Ibrahim Pasha as the renovator of the tomb. The poem itself is dated 1027/1618-19.³¹ According to Carswell, the tiles were produced specifically for the tomb.³² It remains unclear, however, if the tiles with the cartouche design surrounding the inscription tiles were also produced specifically for the tomb, and whether they were part of the same restoration. Be this as it may, tiles with floral cartouches were probably produced in the late sixteenth or early seventeenth centuries.

2-Floral patterns with undulating vertical stems

Vertically undulating stems carrying a variety of floral blossoms, vines and leaves are the main theme of this category of patterns (pls. 29-32). The stems climb either singularly, or in pairs and in parallel fashion, or undulate in opposite directions, at the same time intersecting and intertwining. Each of the patterns is marked by its formality and rigidity. Although the undulations of the stems add movement, and the variety of blossoms create a certain rhythm, nevertheless, the movement and the rhythm are controlled and restrained. This effect has been achieved by the deliberate symmetry in the placement of blossoms and vegetal elements, and by the repetition of their compositions. A variety of floral elements is represented, including tulips, carnations, honeysuckles, narcissi, forget-me-nots, pomegranate blossoms, and stylized lotus blossoms and rosettes. Hybrid motifs, such as hatavis, and vines with superimposed blossoms (pls. C26, C28) are mingled with stylized saz leaves and other simpler forms of leaves (pls. C28, C29).

³⁰ Carswell, 1972, p. 71.

³¹ Bahnasi, pp. 25, 62. Bahnasi provides a full translation of the poem into Arabic.

³² Carswell, p. 75, fn. 30.

The entire range of Damascene colors is represented, with blue of various shades from cobalt to mauve dominating, usually used to render the blossoms, though not exclusively. Sometimes blue is used for the stems or even the vegetal motifs, such as the oversized, and elaborate version of a saz leaf in plate C29, or the vine leaves in plate C29. Green in its distinctive Damascene shades is usually reserved for depicting the leaves, and turquoise and purple are limited to a few touches and highlights. As usual, all designs are outlined in black, and white is limited as a ground for the designs.

The patterns and motifs represented in this category clearly reflect the aesthetic trends of the second half of the sixteenth century that prevailed at the naqashhane in Istanbul. Floral designs with vertically climbing stems appear to have been particularly fashionable during the reign of sultan Selim II in the third quarter of the century, as numerous examples of tile panels and textiles produced for the Ottoman court attest.³³ However, the Damascene tilemakers clearly had their own interpretations of such patterns. None of the examples represented in the collections appear to be slavish imitations of the Ottoman court designs. Although the patterns and the individual elements of design are directly inspired by the prevailing Ottoman taste, once again the Damascene style asserts itself by the introduction of fresh ideas, such as the tulip superimposed on a vine leaf, or the tiny flowers bunched together invoking a cluster of grapes (pl. 29). In addition to such individualistic touches, the spirited, freehand style of drawing the designs adds an element of spontaneity lacking in most of the designs produced by the court atelier for royal consumption.

Chronologically, this category would appear to fit in easily within a general aesthetic context. Not only do the examples in the museum collections reflect the current trends of patterns prevailing at the Ottoman court during the reign of Selim II, but several comparable examples are located in at least one securely datable structure in Damascus,

³³ Binney, p. 212, ceramic 6; Denny, *Rustem Pasha*, p. 327, pl. 77; for examples of textiles, see Mackie, pp. 51-52, pls. 9-10; cf. Atil, *Turkish Art*, pp. 330-31, pls. 57, 59.

namely the Mosque of Darwish Pasha (1574-5). One such example is a panel located in the sanctuary of the mosque, which is highly reminiscent of the panels in the Metropolitan Museum (pl. 29) and the Victoria and Albert Museum (pl. C26), respectively.³⁴ Another example is located in the courtyard, under the portico, and surrounds the mihrab.³⁵ Vertically climbing undulating stems bearing stylized rosettes, lotus blossoms, and hatayis are closely related in pattern to an example in the Victoria and Albert Museum (pls. 31, C28). A possible terminus a quo, then, for the appearance of this type of floral pattern in Damascus could be the seventies of the sixteenth century.

3-Floral patterns of the so-called 'vase and garden style'

This group of panels, of which no examples exist in the Islamic Museum Collection, but which are represented in the collections of the Metropolitan Museum (pls. 33-36), and the Victoria and Albert Museum (pls. 37, 38), can be identified by their depictions of semi-naturalistic, composite floral sprays, either arranged in vases, and/or bursting from tufts of grass around cypresses, or in combination with more abstract elements such as the medallion superimposed with a mosque lamp (pl. 38).

The main element of design is floral, depicting fruit-tree blossoms and spring flowers of various kinds in their full bloom and in great abundance. Floral sprays, mostly of mixed types of flowers are depicted either as arrangements in an ornate vase, or emerging in an unrealistic fashion from a common tuft of grass. The most commonly represented flowers are carnations, tulips, peonies, hyacinths, irises, campanulas, roses, cosmos, and fruit-tree blossoms, also known as prunus. The flowers, painted in a stylized fashion, impart a certain naturalism derived from the attempt to portray them

³⁴ Bahnasi, p. 42, pl. 31; cf. Marilyn Jenkins, *Islamic Pottery, a Brief History* (New York, 1983), p. 44, pl. 50.

³⁵ Carswell, 1987, p. 205, pl. XII D.

in a more realistic way by allowing them more freedom of movement. When compared to the strictly symmetrical rendition of floral bouquets seen in plates 23 and 24, the style of painting here is more fluid and less restrained. While they are less structured and more assymetrical in style, the overall compositions are, nevertheless, axial (pls. 33, 34).

Another element of design characteristic of this group is the cypress tree, which is always highly stylized and disproportionately small in size when compared to its surrounding floral compositions (pl. 35, 37). The cypress, which is usually depicted against a backdrop of winding floral stems, or vertically climbing vines and bunches of grapes (pl. 37), is either used as the focal point of the composition (pl. 35), or as a complimentary element to other elements (pl. 37).

The third major element of design in this group are vases of various shapes, usually containing floral sprays. Their shapes vary from double-handed, footed vases with bulbous bodies, and short flaring necks (pl. 36), to straight-bodied tankards with single, straight handles (pl. 37). Frequently the vases and tankards stand in footed, shallow bowls. The vessels are always covered with a mixture of intertwining arabesque and stylised floral designs, whereby the undulating stems are typically tied together by the 'standard' clasp, an old hangover from the so-called international Timurid style, representing a highly simplified, and abstract form of the once elaborate Chinese cloud scroll.³⁶

Occasionally, this floral style is combined with more abstract elements, such as ogival cartouches, containing a mosque lamp (pl. 38), and embellished with cartouched inscriptions invoking the name of God and the prophet Mohammad (pls. 37, 38). Sometimes, they even contain the designers signature and a date of completion, a feature seldomly practiced by tilemakers (pl. 38).

³⁶ Lane, L.I.P., p. 53.

As a style of design, the vase-and-garden patterns are a reflection of the contemporary influences of what has been coined "the Ottoman classical style of the later sixteenth century", also known as 'Iznik III' or the 'Rhodian' style.³⁷ All elements of design in this group - floral sprays of mixed flowers such as carnations tulips, roses, and fruit-tree blossoms, in addition to the cypress tree, the clasps holding the floral sprays together, as well as shapes of ceramic objects such as vases and tankards - can all be traced back to the repertoire of Ottoman ceramic designs that emerged in the late fifties of the sixteenth century, and maintained their popularity throughout the century and well into the early seventeenth century. One only need compare the examples in this group, in particular plates 33-35 with several of the ceramic objects of the so-called 'Rhodian' ware, in order to see the extent to which the designs of the Iznik wares influenced those used by the Damascene tilemakers.³⁸

However, it is in the Damascene approach of transferring the 'classic' repertoire of design from the original medium of ceramic objects to the medium of tiles, that the Damascene individuality emerges and asserts itself. A case in point would be the rose or peony, which dominates the Damascene repertoire in the examples of this group, and which "is a very common element of floral designs on 'Rhodian' wares, even becoming in later examples the dominant flower seen..." but "...virtually never appears in wall-tiles".³⁹ The wall-tiles Denny is referring to are the Ottoman wall tiles of the second half of the sixteenth century, which depict the so-called 'garden of paradise' scenes. Examples of such scenes can be seen adorning the interior and sometimes the exterior walls of various religious and secular structures in Istanbul. One of the earliest examples is in the revak or portico of the Rustem Pasha mosque in Istanbul (1561),

³⁷ Denny, *Rustem Pasha*, p. 182; cf. Lane, L.I.P., p. 54.

³⁸ For comparison, see Carswell, *Ceramics*, pls. 89, 100, 105; cf. Lane, L.I.P., pls. 42B, 43B; cf. Denny, *Ceramics*, fig. 164.

³⁹ Denny, *Rustem Pasha*, p. 151.

other examples are found throughout the sixth, seventh, and eighth decades of the sixteenth century.⁴⁰

Another characteristic feature of the Damascene examples in this group is the depiction of tankards, in association with other vessels and with cypresses (pl. 37). Vases and cypresses appear occasionally on Ottoman tile panels⁴¹, and are always rendered separately, never in combination with one another. The tankard never appears as an element of decoration on Ottoman wares or tiles. The idea of using the tankard as an element of design, rather than a ceramic shape as in Ottoman ceramic production, is yet another example of how the Damascene tile design has an identity of its own. Finally, elements such as grape vines climbing behind cypresses, and the depiction of irises in plate 37, are two new, purely Damascene introductions to the Ottoman repertoire, never depicted in Ottoman ceramics or tile panels of the period.

The earliest examples of the vase-and-garden style known to exist in Damascene buildings are located in the tomb of Darwish Pasha (ca. 1579).⁴² This octagonal tomb, which is part of a complex commissioned by Darwish Pasha, is decorated with eight wall-panels, all of which are set over the eight corners of the structure.⁴³ Only four of the eight panels have been published so far, and the decorative themes of all four panels are highly reminiscent of the vase-and-garden panels featured in the two museum collections under discussion. Floral sprays of the usual mix of flowers, depicted in a naturalistic fashion fill the panels in a swaying motion, and are rendered either with or without the central cypress, or set in pairs of vases of varying shapes, either on their own or in combination with a cypress tree.

⁴⁰ Ibid, pl. 215-223.

⁴¹ Otto-Dorn, 1941, pls. 56, 70.

⁴² Wulzinger and Watzinger, p. 14; cf. Sauvaget, 1932, p. 84.

⁴³ Bahnasi, p. 44, pls. 33-6.

Another example appears in the Qashani bath in Damascus, which has a striking resemblance with the panel in the Victoria and Albert Museum (pl. 38).⁴⁴ This bath is not dated but believed to have been commissioned by Darwish Pasha, who died in 1579.⁴⁵ From the examples above, and particularly from the panels which are *in situ* at the tomb of the Darwishiya, one can secure a possible *terminus a quo* for this style in the mid to late seventies. The fact that no earlier known datable examples exist, does not necessarily mean that it could not have been produced earlier. However, given the fact that the naturalistic 'Rhodian' style only became fashionable in the mid fifties in Iznik, and cannot be seen on Ottoman tilework until the early sixties, the last quarter of the sixteenth century appears to be the most viable suggestion in terms of the emergence and popularity of the style in Damascus.

Group D: Border patterns

The borders used to frame the field designs of most tile panels are usually an integral part of the overall layout of the design, i.e. the border tiles contain both the pattern of the border as well as part of the field design. The patterns used for the borders are of great variety, and include repetitive and/or reciprocal designs of stylized floral and vegetal motifs, as well as geometric and abstract designs. The most popular elements of design are the *chintamani*, floral and vegetal motifs such as rosettes, tulips, Chinese lotus blossoms, and *saz* leaves, and arabesques composed of split-leaf palmettes and trefoils. The following categories represent the patterns most frequently used in borders of Damascene tile panels.

Chintamanis consisting of pairs of wavy lines, set either in an oblique or parallel fashion and alternating with triple balls, appear to have been one of the favorite border designs used by the Damascene tile makers (pls. 9, 23, 24, C29). The designs are

⁴⁴ Ibid, p. 44, pl. 39.

⁴⁵ Wulzinger and Watzinger, p. 137.

always reserved in white on a cobalt blue ground and outlined in black. Touches of sage green and manganese purple are used as highlights (pls. C6, C29). The chintamani border also appears in two known examples located in two Damascene structures. One example is in the tomb of Salah al-Din⁴⁶, and resembles the examples found in the Islamic Museum (pl. 23) and the Metropolitan Museum (pl. 24). The other example is in the Qashani bath, located in the Suq al-Harir close to the Great mosque, and built by Darwish Pasha, probably sometime in the seventies.⁴⁷

Arabesques of undulating and intertwining rinceaux of split-leaf palmettes, either singularly (pl. 12) or alternating with trefoils (pls. 14, 21, 27, 30), is another example of a popular border designs frequently used to frame tile panels. Once again, the motif is reserved in white on a blue ground, with touches of turquoise, purple, or sage green accentuating the design (pls. C8, C9, C24, C27).

Floral borders of two or more undulating and intertwining stems carrying blossoms of different types, and serrated or split-leaf palmettes, arranged in an alternate fashion (pls. C10, C20, C28, C30). As in the two previous categories, the motifs are reserved in white on a blue or turquoise ground, with touches of apple green, turquoise, and purple. Black is used occasionally for accents.

Crenellated friezes of scalloped abstract motifs is a type of border design that appears to have been used most often in combination with floral tile panels (pls. 25, 33, 37). The design is usually drawn rather casually, and without much attention to detail, the example in plate 25 being an exception. The crenellation itself is usually reserved in white on a cobalt blue ground, with touches of apple green and purple placed in the center of each crenellation, creating a pierced effect.

Reciprocal trefoils filled with arabesque designs is one final motif that appears to hold a special place in the repertoire of border designs (pls. 27, C21, C22). Unlike all

⁴⁶ Bahnasi, p. 25, pl. 13.

⁴⁷ Bahnasi, p. 44, pl. 39. No precise date appears to be known for this structure.

other border designs which frame tile panels on all four sides, this design is used almost exclusively as a singular continuous frieze decorating the upper part of marble dados, following the contours of prayer niches, or as a border framing the upper side of inscription friezes, as in the Suleymaniya, and the tomb of Darwish Pasha in Damascus.⁴⁸

Group E: Inscriptions

Like their contemporaries in Istanbul, the Damascene tilemakers made extensive use of calligraphy as an element of design in decorating the interior surfaces of structures. Inscriptions, whether religious such as Koranic verses or prayers, or secular, such as poems, eulogies, and foundation or renovation inscriptions, were used to adorn the interior walls of mainly religious buildings such as mosques, tombs, sabils, and zawiya.⁴⁹ Inscriptions are most frequently displayed on rectangular or arched panels set above entryways and lintels of windows, or as continuous friezes set below the zone of transition of the sanctuary hall or surmounting mihirabs. Occasionally, inscriptions are an integral part of the overall design of an otherwise purely decorative panel. The most commonly used script is the cursive thuluth, which is usually reserved in white on a cobalt blue ground, and often set in a cartouche. The cartouche is either surrounded by floral and vegetal designs or framed by borders of arabesque or reciprocal patterns of trefoils.

Three broad categories of inscriptions can be identified according to the examples in the museum collections and the examples located in some of the Damascene structures: religious, poetic, and dedicatory inscriptions. Religious inscriptions include Koranic verses, prayers, and the shahada or Muslim profession of faith. Verses from the Qur'an are usually depicted as single or double friezes of inscriptions, reserved in

⁴⁸ Ibid, pp. 35,46.

⁴⁹ Inscriptions most probably also decorated secular structures in Damascus, however no published examples are available.

white on a cobalt blue ground, and set in cartouches. The script used is thuluth, the most popular type of cursive script associated with the Ottoman period. No examples of Koranic verses exist in the museum collections under discussion. However, several examples can be seen in Damascene religious buildings. One such inscription is located above the mihrab on the southern wall of the tomb-chamber. This tomb, also known as the mausoleum of Muhyidin ibn al-'Arabi, is part of the Selimiya complex commissioned by Sultan Selim in 1518.⁵⁰ Furthermore, two examples of Koranic inscription bands are located in the Darwishiya Complex; one below the zone of transition, on the four sanctuary walls of the mosque (1571), the other below the zone of transition of the octagonal tomb chamber.⁵¹ One final example is located in the Sinaniya mosque (1586).⁵²

Occasionally, Koranic verses appear on arched tile panels set above windows or as integral parts of the overall design of a floral panel, examples of which can be seen in the Zawiya of Sa'd ad-Din 'Umar al-Taftazani (ca. 1562-3).⁵³ In both cases, the verses, written in thuluth script, are separated from one another by white lines forming cartouches with scalloped edges, in a fashion similar to the example in the Islamic Museum Collection (pl. 28).

Other religious inscriptions, such as prayers and the shahada, are frequently found set in cartouches surrounded by hybrid floral compositions decorating arched panels over the lintels of windows, or as an integral part of the overall design of floral panels. Examples of prayer verses are located in both the Darwishiya and the Sinaniya in Damascus.⁵⁴ In these four examples, the naskhi inscriptions are painted in cobalt blue

⁵⁰ Meinecke, p. 577; cf. Bahnasi, p. 28, pl. 15.

⁵¹ Ibid, p. 40, pl. 28, p. 44, pl. 37.

⁵² Ibid, p. 51, pl. 43.

⁵³ Wulzinger and Watzinger, p. 101; cf. Carswell, 1978, p. 269, pl. XLVIII; cf. Bahnasi, pls. 26, 27.

⁵⁴ Ibid, pls. 29, 41, 42; cf. Carswell, Ceramics, p. 88, pl. 68a

on a white ground, unlike inscriptions that are reserved in white on a blue ground. It is in these examples, that the Damascene character resurfaces once again. Unlike the contemporary Ottoman examples, where such inscriptions appear singularly, and merely bordered by rectangular floral and vegetal borders, such as in the mosques of Rustem Pasha (1561) and Sokullu Mehmet Pasha (1571-2) in Istanbul⁵⁵, the Damascene designs combine the inscription cartouches with floral sprays and set them in arched panels, a combination not found in Ottoman compositions. Equally unique and typically Damascene is the combination of the so-called vase and garden style with inscription cartouches, such as the example in the Victoria and Albert Museum (pl. 37).

Non-religious inscriptions, such as poetic verses⁵⁶ or dedicatory inscriptions, usually include vital information about the founder, the type and the date of foundation (pl. 28), or as in some cases the rennovator's name and the date of rennovation.⁵⁷ Examples of foundation inscriptions can be found over the entrance portals of both the Darwishiya and the Sinaniya in Damascus.⁵⁸

One of the most unusual Damascene panels that combines various kinds of inscriptions, is a panel in the Victoria and Albert Museum (pl. 38). This panel, which consists of three tiles, depicts a central scalloped medallion with appended finials. The medallion is filled with a pattern of scales, somewhat reminiscent of the designs found on fifteenth century Damascene tiles, also known as 'Tawrizi' tiles.⁵⁹ Superimposed and filling the center of that medallion is a mosque lamp suspended by a chain. Surrounding the medallion, and serving as a backdrop for the central design, a hybrid composition of floral sprays emerge from tufts of grass at the bottom of the panel. These floral sprays

⁵⁵ Metin Sozen, *The Evolution of Turkish Art And Atchitecture* (Istanbul, n.d.), pp. 124-5, 127, pls. 55, 56 (hereafter cited as Sozen).

⁵⁶ Carswell, 1978, pl. XLV, H, I. For a translation of the inscriptions, see pp. 292-3.

⁵⁷ Binney, p. 221, pl. Ceramic 12; cf. Bahnasi, pl. 55.

⁵⁸ Gaube, pp. 77, 89.

⁵⁹ Carswell, 1972, p. 64, fig. (j).

of stylized tulips, carnations, marigold, and other floral buds then climb vertically around and behind the medallion. The designer of this most unusual composition finally decided to sign and date his work, but only after invoking God's name in three inscriptions placed on the hanging lamp. The five inscriptions read from top to bottom as follows:

In the upper finial: "This was completed in the year 1002"; on the neck of the lamp: "In the name of God"; on the body of the lamp: "And praise be to God for His blessings"; on the foot of the lamp: "In God I trust"; and in the lower finial: "The poor[humble] Muhammad, known as Ibn al-Tusi."⁶⁰

⁶⁰ Arthur Lane, *A Guide to the Collection of Tiles, Victoria and Albert Museum* (London, 1960), p. 24, no. 128-1897. Lane reads the signature as 'Muhammad es-Shedid'.

CONCLUSION

The second half of the sixteenth century witnessed the revival of ceramic tile production in Damascus. This revival was set into motion around the middle of the century by several favorable conditions: the Dome of the Rock restorations, the availability in Syria of a well-established tradition of underglaze-painting, and the patronage of the Ottoman rulers.

The restorations of the Dome of the Rock commissioned by Sultan Suleyman I between 1549 and 1561 created a demand for potters, who at the time appear to have been sent for from Tabriz and possibly from Damascus. The Damascene potters, whose technique of underglaze-painting was well established since the late twelfth century, used this technique to create designs under the influence of the 'international Timurid style'. In the mid-fifties, under the patronage of Sultan Suleyman, the Tekiye Suleymaniya was built in Damascus. It seemed only natural to draw on local craftsmen to work on the tile-lunettes in that mosque, which clearly reflect the influence of a Tabrizi connection.

Throughout the sixteenth century and later, this industry continued to be spurred mainly by the patronage of several Ottoman governors of Damascus. The large number of religious and secular buildings attest to the financial imperative of their patronage. Only a few of these structures, however, are known to have been decorated with tile panels, of which the Darwishiya (ca.1571-74/5), and the Sinaniya (1586-91) are the two most prominent examples. Although no documentary or archaeological evidence has been recovered, the sheer number of tile panels found in situ and in museum collections, testify to the fact that such a production center must have existed in Damascus in the second half of the sixteenth century.

The stylistic analysis of the technical and decorative features of the panels in the museum collections allows us to trace two distinct yet interrelated developments: first,

the degree to which the Iznik workshops influenced the designs conceived by Damascene potters, and second, the degree to which the Damascene interpretations and paraphrasings of motifs resulted in novel, often spirited free-hand compositions with a noticeably local flavor. Tiling, as a means of surface decoration, had never really been part of the local aesthetic. Under the Ayyubids and the Mamluks Damascus had developed a tradition of stone carving and marble inlay. Even the tiles decorating the Mosque and Tomb of Tawrizi (ca. 1425) in Damascus were a shortlived trend emulating foreign tastes. It seems rather natural, then, for the Damascene potters to turn to Iznik for inspiration, as they were catering to the demands and tastes of the Ottoman elite. Iznik appeared to be the most logical source, and very soon an Ottoman-inspired repertoire of designs made its way into the newly revived Damascene tile industry.

With regard to technique, elements of design and overall compositions, similarities as well as differences are observed. They can be summarized as follows:

1-Technique: The Damascene potters used the same technique of underglaze-painting as their peers in Iznik, but the Damascene product was of inferior quality. This has been attributed to the different composition of body material, which in Damascus was less compact and not as hard as in the Iznik. Damascene tiles also suffered from a much thicker glaze, that had the distinctive quality of crackling, and lacked the close-fitting property of Iznik's glaze. The major technical difference, however, is the total absence of red color from Damascene tiles, limiting the Damascene color palette to a more subdued range of blues, greens and purple. This palette, being reminiscent of the palette of the so-called 'Damascus' group of Iznik ware, resulted in the initial confusion among scholars over the provenance of both groups. Finally, the varying technical quality of firing certain colors, particularly turquoise and green, added a distinguishing feature to Damascene tiles. Both olive and sage green are two shades that are seldom found on Iznik tiles after 1550.

2-Elements of design and composition: From the comparative analysis it is clear that Damascene potters borrowed heavily from the Iznik repertoire of designs, which in the sixties was undergoing a marked change in style from the formal 'international Timurid style' on blue-and-white ware and tiles, to what has been labeled the 'classical Ottoman style'.

Like their Iznik contemporaries, the Damascene potters exhibit a varied repertoire of motifs, including chinoiserie, arabesques and floral elements. And like the Iznik potters, they render them in stylized, abstract, or naturalistic fashion. Patterns range from symmetric arrangements of stylized motifs forming lattice designs, reminiscent of designs found on book illuminations produced by the court ateliers in Istanbul; to ogival patterns mixing stylized arabesque elements with floral elements, a type of pattern that was fashionable with the designers of court textiles in Istanbul; to several patterns of floral arrangements, some of which were inspired by contemporary designs produced by the court ateliers for tile panels, others merely rehashing popular designs of floral sprays found on contemporary Iznik ware.

Subtle differences can be detected in the interpretation and execution of motifs, in the compositions of the various elements, as well as in the introduction of new motifs borrowed from other media and reused as designs on tiles. The following four are the most prominent examples. First, the abstract rendition of the tulip, never found on Ottoman tiles or wares. Second, the 'grape and vine' motif, which was given a new prominence and set in a variety of compositional themes. Third, the floral spray, which in the Ottoman repertoire is found only on Iznik ware, is transposed by the Damascene potter onto tiles. Finally, the introduction of the tankard as a motif on tiles, which in Iznik was used exclusively as a vessel shape.

Dating and chronology

In an attempt to put the Damascene tile production within a chronological time frame, and in the hope of detecting a meaningful pattern of development, this study was based on the visual and comparative analysis of the tile panels in the museum collections, and the published examples of tile panels in datable Damascene and Ottoman buildings. As a result, the Damascene tile production in the second half of the sixteenth century can be divided into three phases:

Phase I: This period of initiation starts approximately in the mid-fifties, during the final few years of the Dome of the Rock restorations. The Damascene potters, who had been participating in the restorations along with their namesakes from Tabriz, were introduced to the 'international Timurid style' of the fifteenth and first half of the sixteenth centuries. Until the middle of the sixteenth century, this highly stylized form of design can be seen decorating everything from cuerda seca tiles adorning religious and secular structures in the Timurid and Ottoman capitals, to textiles, to the arts of the book, to metalwork. This universality in design helps explain why the Damascene potters followed a popular trend, especially when the Suleymaniya was commissioned in the mid-fifties.

Phase II: This period is characterized by experimentation and transition, and stretches roughly from the late sixties and throughout the seventies. The increasingly popular trend in Istanbul in the late fifties to adorn the interior of buildings with tiles, the expansion of the Iznik color palette to include red and green, and the introduction of new floral designs which had been successfully experimented with on Iznik ware of the 'Damascus' type, lead court designers and potters in the ateliers in Iznik to start a long process of experimentation which resulted in the classical phase of Ottoman design. Damascene potters, too, were quick to adopt the shift in style, and soon had plenty of opportunities to express their version in the panels commissioned for the Darwishiya (ca. 1571-74/5). The patterns and motifs of choice were those inspired by the designs

found on contemporary Ottoman textiles. Ogival patterns filled with bunches of grapes were one of the winners, but so were patterns of vertically climbing stems.

Phase III: This period appears to start towards the end of the seventies, when a totally new genre of designs was introduced in the Tomb of Darwish Pasha (ca.1579). Based on the floral designs frequently found decorating contemporary Iznik ware of the so-called 'Rhodian' type, the panels are filled with densely grouped floral sprays, representing a great variety of flowers rendered in a highly naturalistic fashion. Similar panels appear in the Sinaniya (ca.1590) and in the Qashani bath. This new floral style can be seen as an attempt by the Damascene potters to assert their individuality, by moving away from designs inspired by the Ottoman court ateliers, and adopting designs decorating the so-called Rhodian-ware of Iznik produced for bourgeois consumption.

Which brings us to the final point, namely that of the role of the marketplace and its influence on tastes and types of production. In the case of the Damascene tile production, it is evident that the industry was initially geared towards the demands and the tastes of the Ottoman elite, whose patronage paid for the high cost of tile production. This trend can be followed all the way until the end of the nineties. At some point in the latter part of the sixteenth century, the mass production of modular tiles, which were produced at a significantly lower cost, and could be fitted wherever needed, appears to coincide with the economic trends of the period. Furthermore, the existence of a number of seventeenth century Damascene houses adorned with tiles, points towards the continuation of the mass production of tiles. This mass production of tiles seems to have been catering to the rising middle class of local Damascene merchants, who in the meantime had acquired a taste for the luxuries of life, and possessed the financial means to satisfy their desires.¹

¹ Conversation with Julian Raby (April, 1989).

In conclusion, then, we can say that the revival of Damascene tile production in the second half of the sixteenth century is a reflection of both Ottoman patronage supplying the incentive and the means, and an existing local ceramic tradition, which, in catering to a foreign taste, did not compromise its sense of individuality.

Figure 1 (acc. no. 15303)

The Panel

Height 80 cm, width 60 cm

Damascus, late 16th century

A panel of square, partly encaustic, square tiles. They are painted in shades of green, ranging from apple green to olive to sage. In addition to colour there are black outlines on a greyish white background under a transparent and cracked glaze. Interconnected and intersecting stylized floral flowers, light greenish, and Chinese cloud-bands are repeated in an overall pattern of geometric interlocking.

The Islamic Museum Collection, Cairo, previously in the Al-Fatih Ibrahim Collection, 1549 (15524).

Unpublished. Other examples of this decorated with same or similar patterns are in the Victoria and Albert Museum, London (526 To B- 1550), and in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Bequest of Edward G. Moore, 1891(31.1.104).

CATALOGUE

The Islamic Museum Collection

Plate 1 (acc. no.15894)

Tile panel

Height: 80 cm; width: 60 cm

Damascus, late 16th century

A panel of twelve, partly restored, square tiles. They are painted in shades of green, ranging from apple green to olive to sage, in addition to cobalt blue with black outlines on a greyish white background under a transparent and crackled glaze. Interconnected and intersecting stylized lotus flowers, split palmettes, and Chinese cloud-bands are repeated in an overall pattern of geometrical interlacing.

The Islamic Museum Collection, Cairo, previously in the 'Ali Pasha Ibrahim Collection, 1949 (15894).

Unpublished. Other examples of tiles decorated with same or similar patterns are in the Victoria and Albert Museum, London (506 To B- 1900), and in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Bequest of Edward C. Moore, 1891(91.1.104).

Plates 2 and 3 (acc. no.15891)

Tile panel

Height: 112.5 cm; width: 90 cm

Syria, first half of 17th century

A panel of six tiles painted in shades of cobalt blue and turquoise, grass green, and touches of manganese purple bordering on black, outlined in charcoal on a greyish white ground under a transparent and crackled glaze. The alternating stylized lotus blossoms and tulips are interconnected with scalloping tendrils around a central, oddly abstract rosette. The repeat pattern conveys a formal appearance.

The Islamic Museum Collection, Cairo, previously in the 'Ali Pasha Ibrahim Collection, 1949 (15891).

Unpublished

Plates 7 and 8 (acc. no.15901)

Tile panel

Height: 67.5 cm; width: 90 cm

Syria, possibly first half of 17th century

A panel of twelve tiles painted in shades of cobalt blue, turquoise, and touches of olive green and manganese purple, outlined in black on a greyish white ground, and covered with a transparent and crackled glaze. The lattice design is composed of a repeat pattern of stylized floral elements, whereby a central peony is surrounded on all sides by alternating lotus blossoms and serrated saz leaves.

The Islamic Museum Collection, Cairo, previously in the 'Ali Pasha Ibrahim Collection, 1949 (15901).

Unpublished

Plates 9-11 (acc. no.15906)

Tile panel

Height: 175 cm; width: 101 cm

Damascus, late 16th century

A panel of thirty-three tiles of various dimensions painted in cobalt blue, turquoise, various shades of green, touches of purple and outlined in grey on a white ground under a transparent and crackled glaze. The overall lattice design consists of interlacing tendrils forming eight-pointed star shapes, the centers of which are filled with floral buds connected by their stems. The entire design is framed by a border of several clusters of three dots in varying sizes alternating with wavy bands set between them diagonally, a design known as chintamani.

The Islamic Museum Collection, Cairo; previously in the 'Ali Pasha Ibrahim Collection, 1949 (15906).

Unpublished

Plates 12 and 13 (acc. no.15905)

Tile panel

Height: 53 cm; width: 25 cm

Syria, early 17th century.

A panel of ten tiles painted in cobalt blue, various shades of green, and touches of manganese purple, on an off-white background covered with a transparent, crackled glaze. The decoration consists of an ogival pattern of vertically climbing floral and vegetal motifs, framed with a border of an undulating rincaux of split-leaf palmettes.

The Islamic Museum Collection, Cairo, previously in the 'Ali Pasha Ibrahim Collection, 1949 (15905).

Unpublished

Plates 14-16 (acc. no.15908)

Tile Panel

Height: 150 cm; width: 147 cm

Damascus, last quarter of 16th century

A panel of thirty tiles painted in cobalt blue, apple green, pale turquoise, various shades of manganese purple, and black outlines on a off-white background, under a transparent and crackled glaze. The ogival lattice design combines vegetal and floral elements of bunches of grapes, vines, tulips, carnations, and hyacinths. The design is framed with an arabesque rincaux of intertwining trefoils and split-leaf palmettes.

The Islamic Museum Collection, Cairo, previously in the 'Ali Pasha Ibrahim Collection, 1949(15908).

Unpublished. Similar examples published in Wulzinger and Watzinger, pl. 33b; Jenkins, 1982, pl. 10a; Denny, *Rustem Pasha*, fig. 228.

Plates 19 and 20 (acc. no.15909)

Tile panel

Height: 111 cm; width: 89 cm

Syria, late 16th, early 17th centuries

A panel of twenty tiles painted in turquoise, cobalt blue, and shades of green, ranging from apple green to olive, to sage, outlined in black on an egg-shell white ground, and covered with a transparent and crackled glaze. The basic pattern is repeated on each tile and is crudely executed. It consists of a cartouche of abstract interlacing framed by a continuous cloud-band, the top and bottom of which end in trefoils. The cartouche is surrounded by four stylized saz leaves, and the four corners of the tile are filled each with a quarter cartouche filled with rosettes and tulips. The overall effect is one of an ogival pattern, whereby the cartouches are staggered and separated from each other by the saz leaves.

The Islamic Museum Collection, Cairo, previously in the 'Ali Pasha Ibrahim Collection, 1949 (15909).

Unpublished

Plate 22 (acc. no.15904)

Tile Panel

Height: 133.5 cm; width 61.5 cm

Damascus, late 16th century

A panel of eighteen tiles painted in cobalt blue and turquoise on a greyish white ground under a transparent crackled glaze. The decoration consists of a geometric repeat pattern of hexagons with stylized floral designs in their centers. The hexagons are separated from each other by a grid in off-white, creating the effect of a honeycomb pattern. The design is framed by a border of a continuous braided motif.

The Islamic Museum Collection, Cairo, previously in the 'Ali Pasha Ibrahim Collection, 1949(15904).

Unpublished

Plate 23 (acc. no.15892)

Tile panel

Height: 20 cm; width: 94 cm

Damascus, late 16th, early 17th centuries

A panel of four square tiles and one rectangular border tile of various dimensions painted in cobalt blue, turquoise, white and touches of sage green and manganese purple bordering on grey outlined in black on a white ground under a transparent, crackled glaze. Each of the four square tiles has a central floral spray of stylized carnations and tulips surrounded by a wreath of serrated leaves, with quarter rosettes filling the four corners of the tiles. The borders to the left and right of the panel are decorated with the chintamani pattern, reserved on a cobalt blue ground.

The Islamic Museum Collection, Cairo, previously in the 'Ali Pasha Ibrahim Collection, 1949 (15892).

Similar examples are published in Petsopoulos, pl. 106; Papadopoulo, pl. 454; Wulzinger and Watzinger, pl. 30c. Other examples are in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Rogers Fund, 1907 (07.190.20).

Plate 25 (acc. no.15896)

Tile panel

Hight: 51 cm, width: 80.5 cm

Syria, early 17th century

A panel of three square tiles and six rectangular border tiles painted in shades of cobalt blue, turquoise, shades of grass green, olive and aubergine, outlined in black on a white ground, and covered with a transparent, crackled glaze. The square tiles are decorated in a repeat pattern of a floral spray of lotus blossoms, tulips, carnations, and peonies in a scalloped roundel. This motif is surrounded by chintamanis and stylized rosettes in the corners. The upper border is decorated with a frieze of alternating stylized trefoils and clusters of serrated leaves. The lower border is decorated with a spiralling rincaux of stylized peonies and split palmette leaves rendered in reserve on a cobalt blue ground.

The Islamic Museum Collection, Cairo, previously in the 'Ali Pasha Ibrahim Collection, 1948 (15896).

Similar tiles are published in Binney, p. 221, Ceramic 11; other examples are in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Rogers Fund, 1907 (07.190.17), and in the Victoria and Albert Museum, London (452-1901).

Plate 27 (acc. no.15897)

Border tiles

Height: 24.5 cm; width: 94.5 cm

Damascus, second half of 16th century

A panel of four border tiles, of irregular widths, painted in cobalt blue, turquoise, sage green, and white, with black outlines on an off-white ground under a transparent, crackled glaze. The tiles are decorated with a crenellated frieze of a reciprocal pattern of trefoils containing arabesque motifs. The tile at the far right is slightly different from the other tiles. The trefoils are rendered proportionately larger and the bottom trim consists of a border of alternating trefoils and split-leaf palmettes, as opposed to the undulating split palmette leaves on the other three tiles. Both patterns are reserved in white on a cobalt blue ground with sage green touches.

The Islamic Museum Collection, Cairo, previously in the 'Ali Pasha Ibrahim Collection, 1949 (15897).

Similar tiles are published in Petsopoulos, pl. 109; Wulzinger and Watzinger, pl. 38,a, fig. 28. Tiles with a similar pattern are in the Victoria and Albert Museum, London (459-1900).

Plate 28 (acc. no.13948)

Inscription panel

Height: 26 cm; width: 91 cm

Syria, dated 998 H./1588-9 A.D.

A panel of four tiles reserved in white on a cobalt blue ground, and turquoise on a white ground, outlined in black under a transparent, crackled glaze. The panel consists of a cartouche bearing a naskhi inscription in two lines, flanked on either side with an arabesque design reserved in white on a turquoise ground. The tiles bear the following inscription:

" Ibrahim son of Adham Sheikh al-Islam 'Abd al-Samad, may God give them to drink from the spring of paradise, and may He have mercy on those who drink from this fountain, and those who pray for their forgiveness and for the forgiveness of all Muslims, the year 998."

The Islamic Museum Collection, Cairo, gift of Rakel Pasha Nubar, 1938 (13948).

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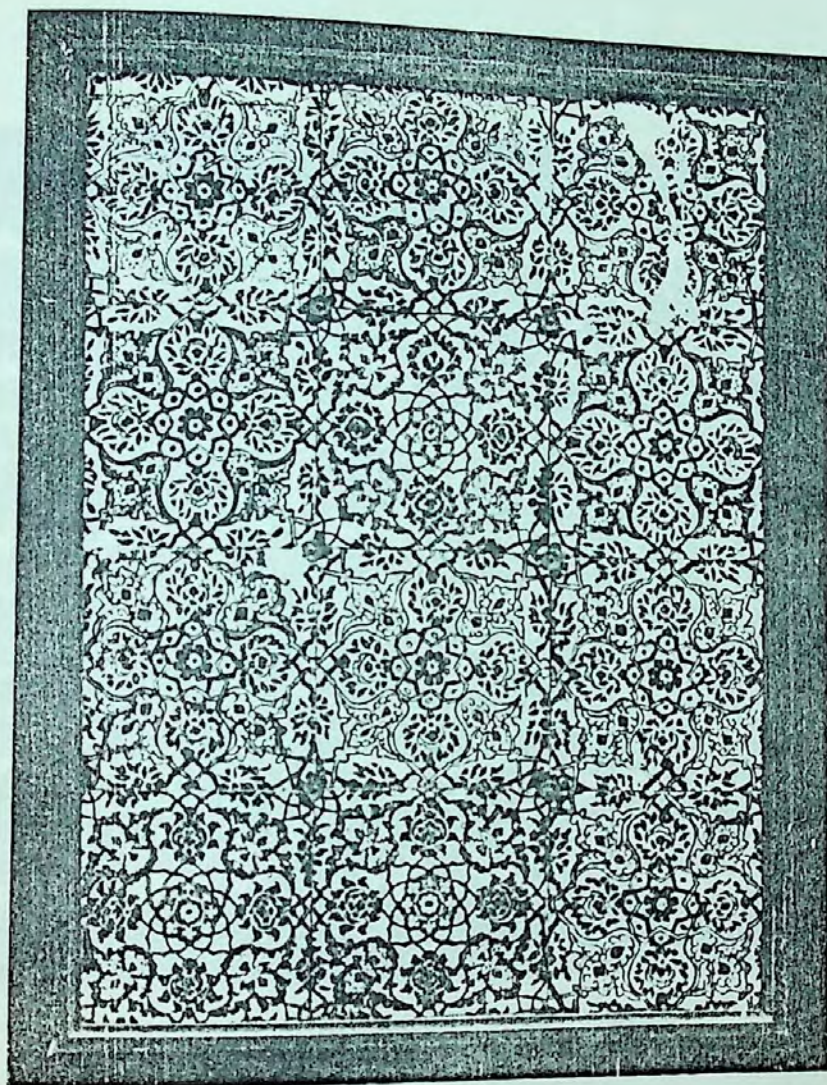
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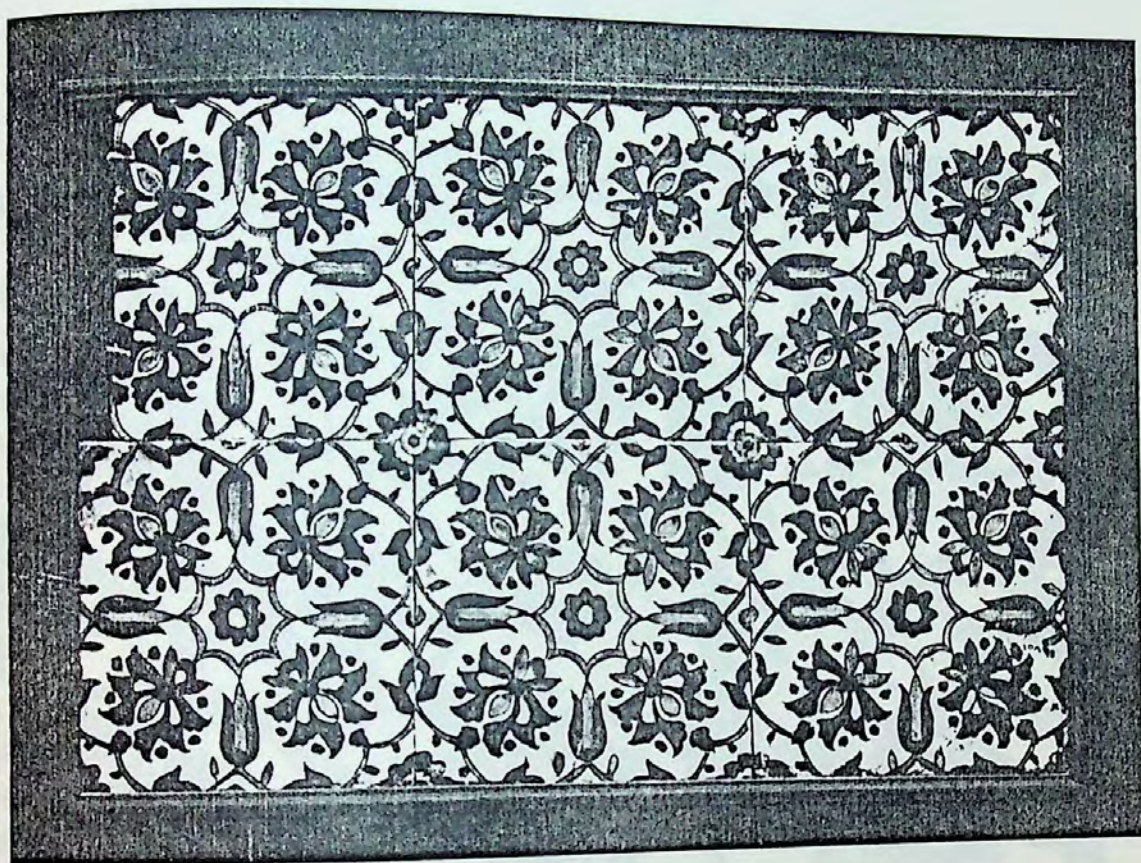
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Islamic Museum, Cairo (15894)

P1.1



Islamic Museum, Cairo (15891)

P1.2



Islamic Museum in Cairo (15891)

Pl.3



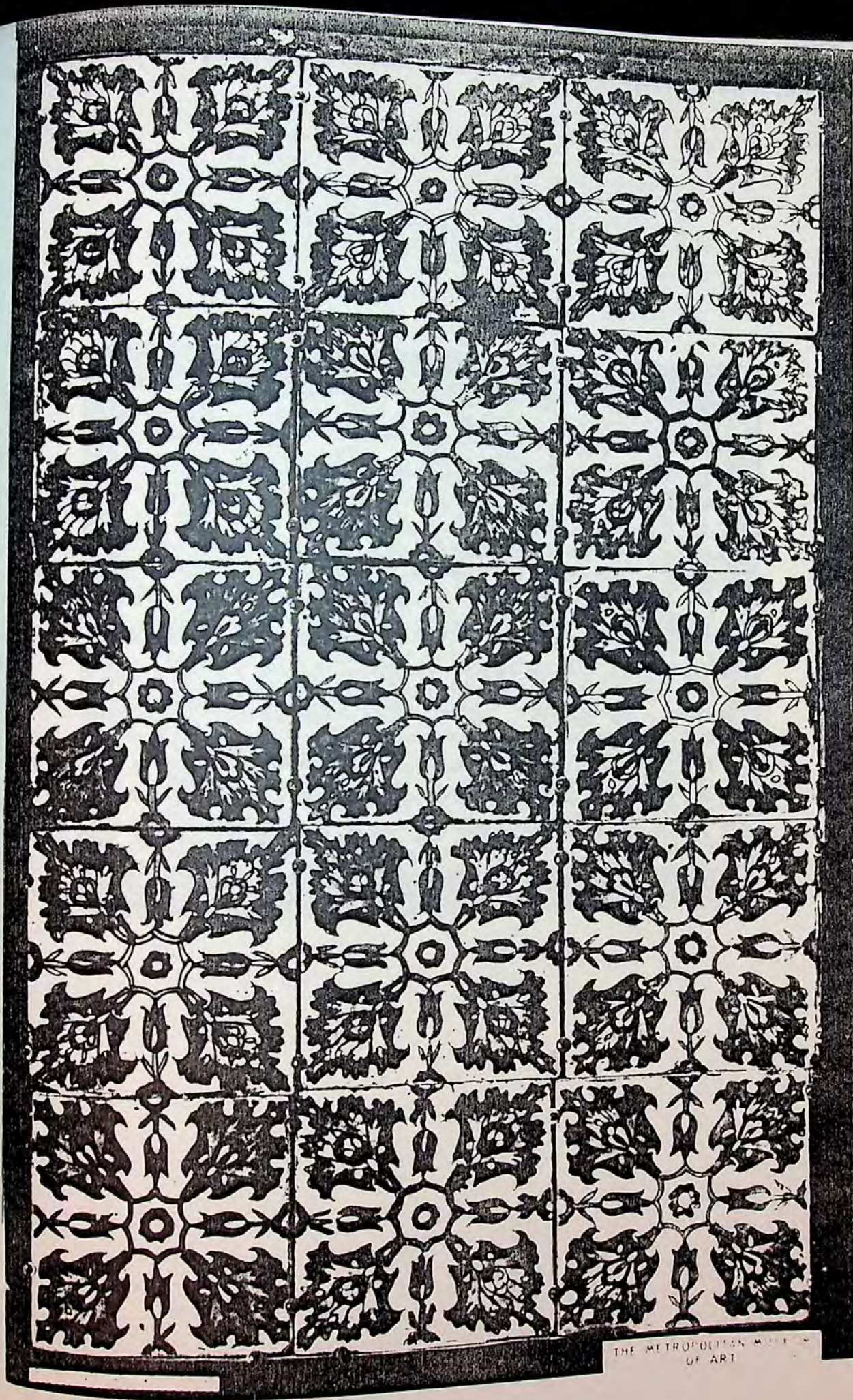
the Islamic Museum in Cairo (15915)

P1.4

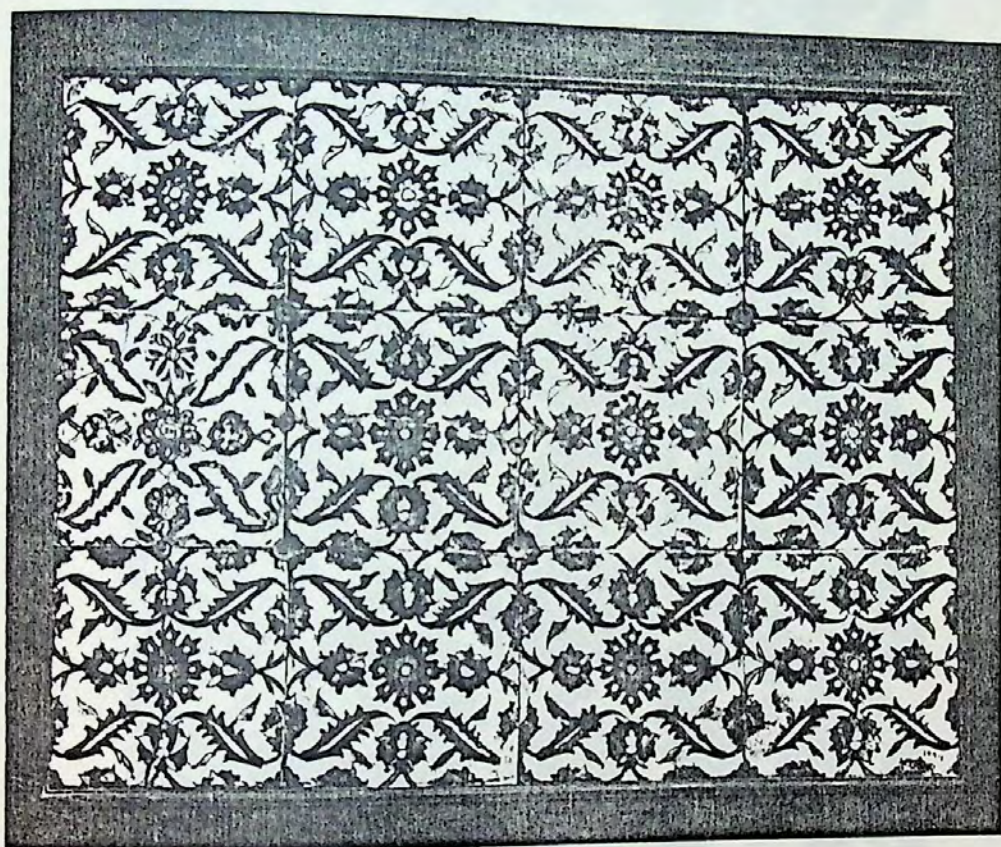


The Islamic Museum in Cairo (15915)

Pl.5



Metropolitan Museum of Art, Rogers Fund, 1922. (22.185.15a-o)



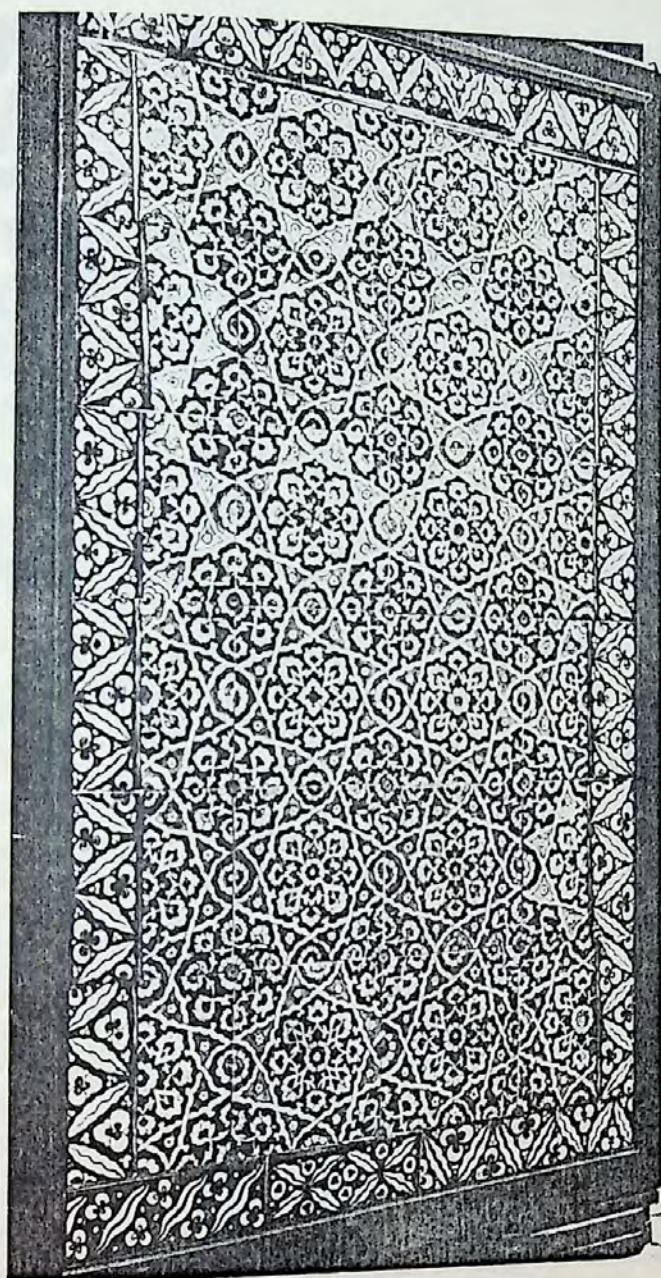
e Islamic Museum in Cairo (15901)

Pl.7



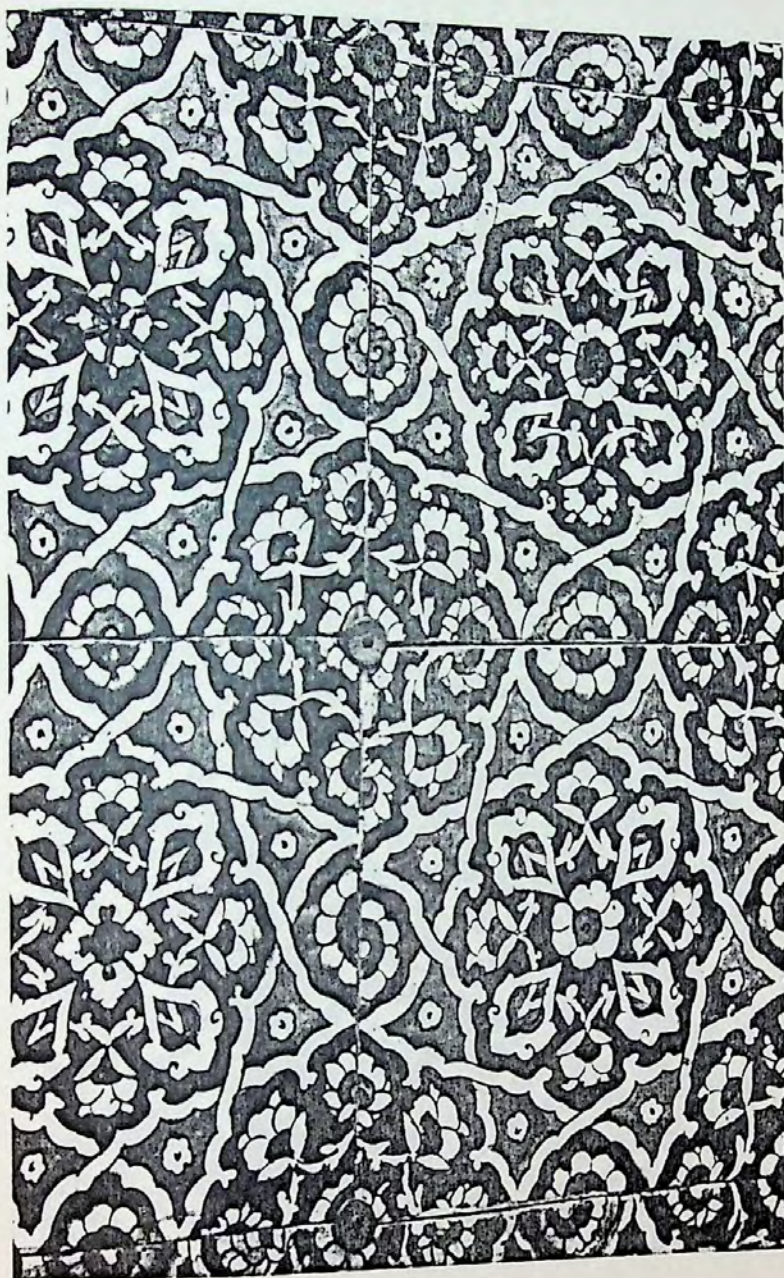
the Islamic Museum in Cairo (15901)

Pl.8



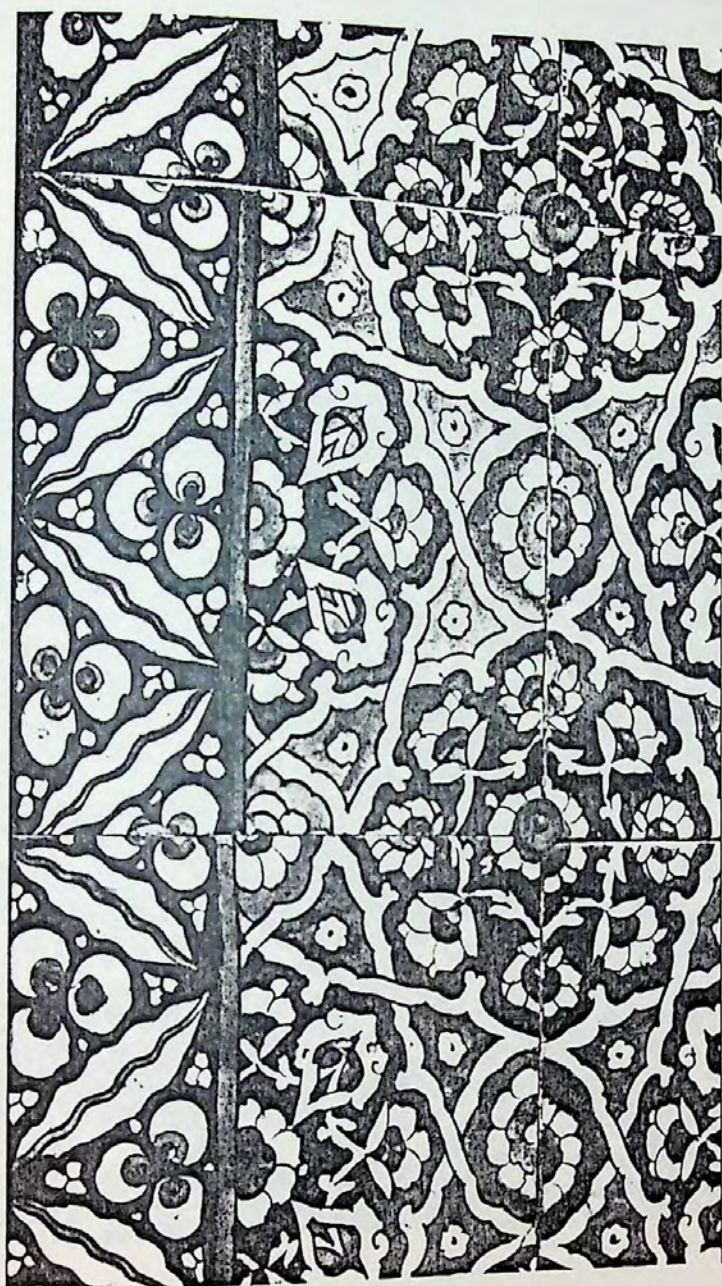
The Islamic Museum in Cairo (15906)

Pl.9



the Islamic Museum in Cairo (15906)

P1.10



the Islamic Museum in Cairo (15906)

Pl.11



The Islamic Museum in Cairo (15905)

Pl.12



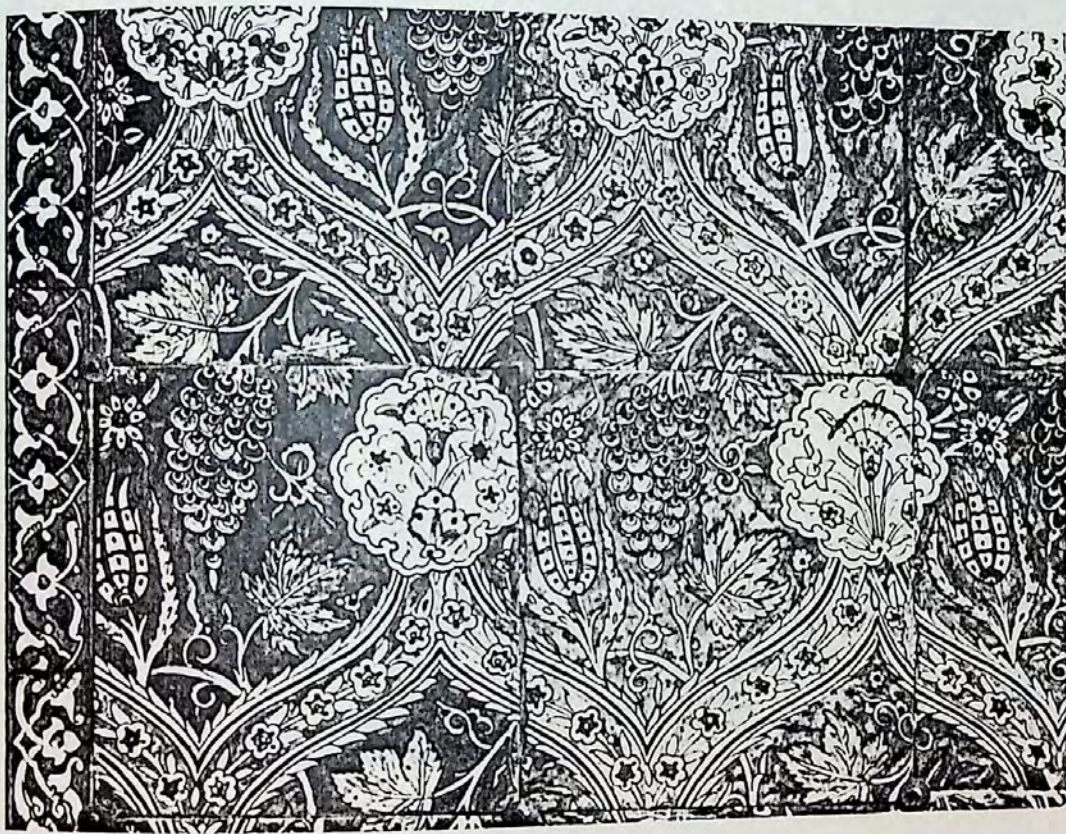
Islamic Museum in Cairo (15905)

Pl.13



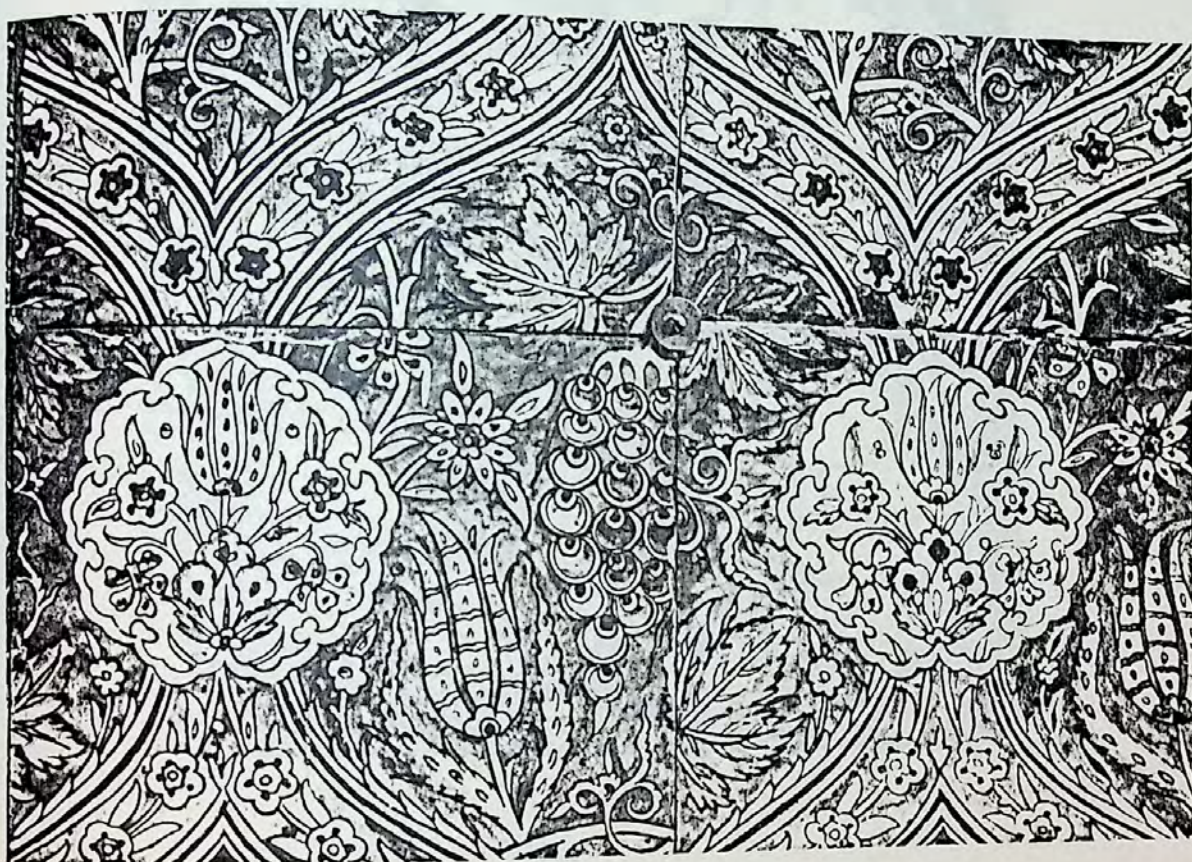
Islamic Museum in Cairo (15908)

Pl.14



Islamic Museum in Cairo (15908)

Pl.15

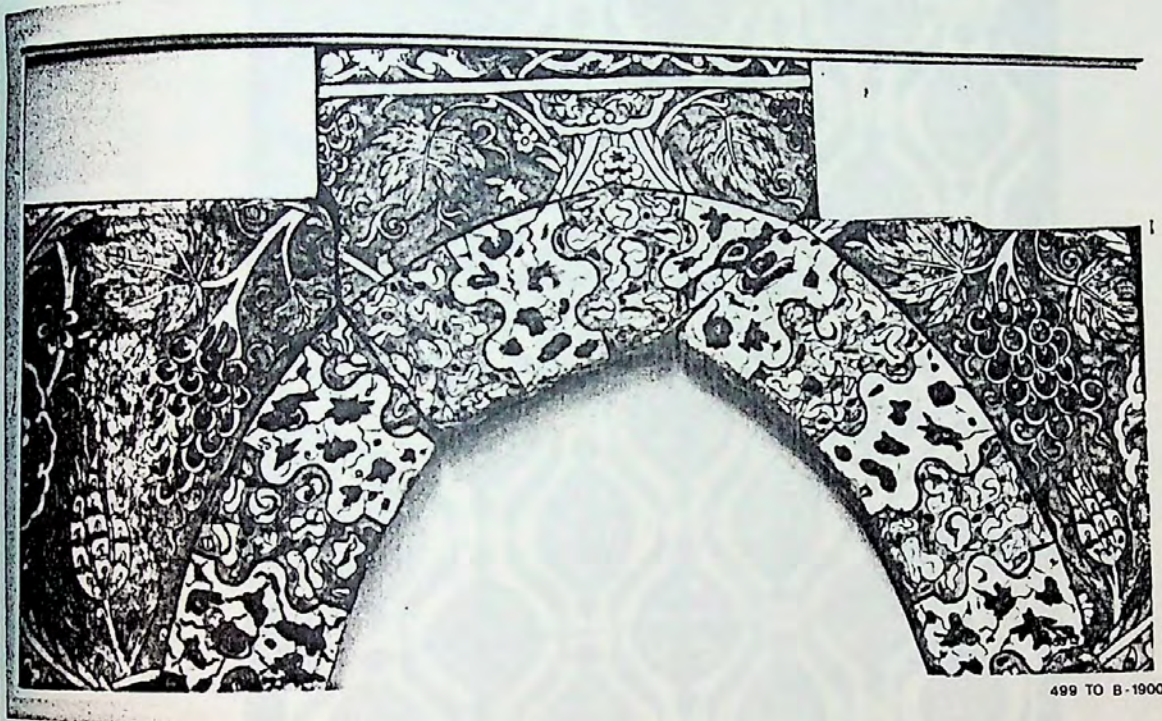


Islamic Museum in Cairo (15908)

Pl.16



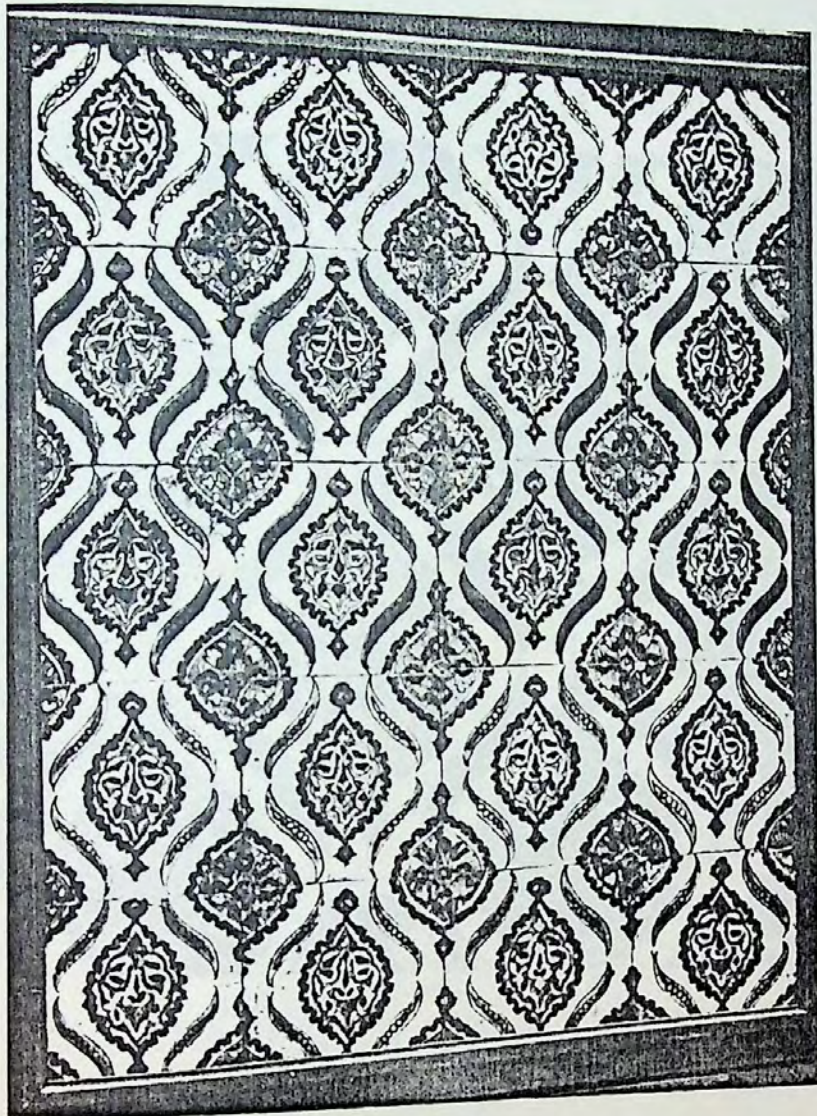
The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Bequest of Edward C. Moore, 1891.
(91.1.103)



499 TO B-1900

Victoria & Albert Museum (499 To B - 1900)

Pl.18



The Islamic Museum in Cairo (15909)

Pl.19

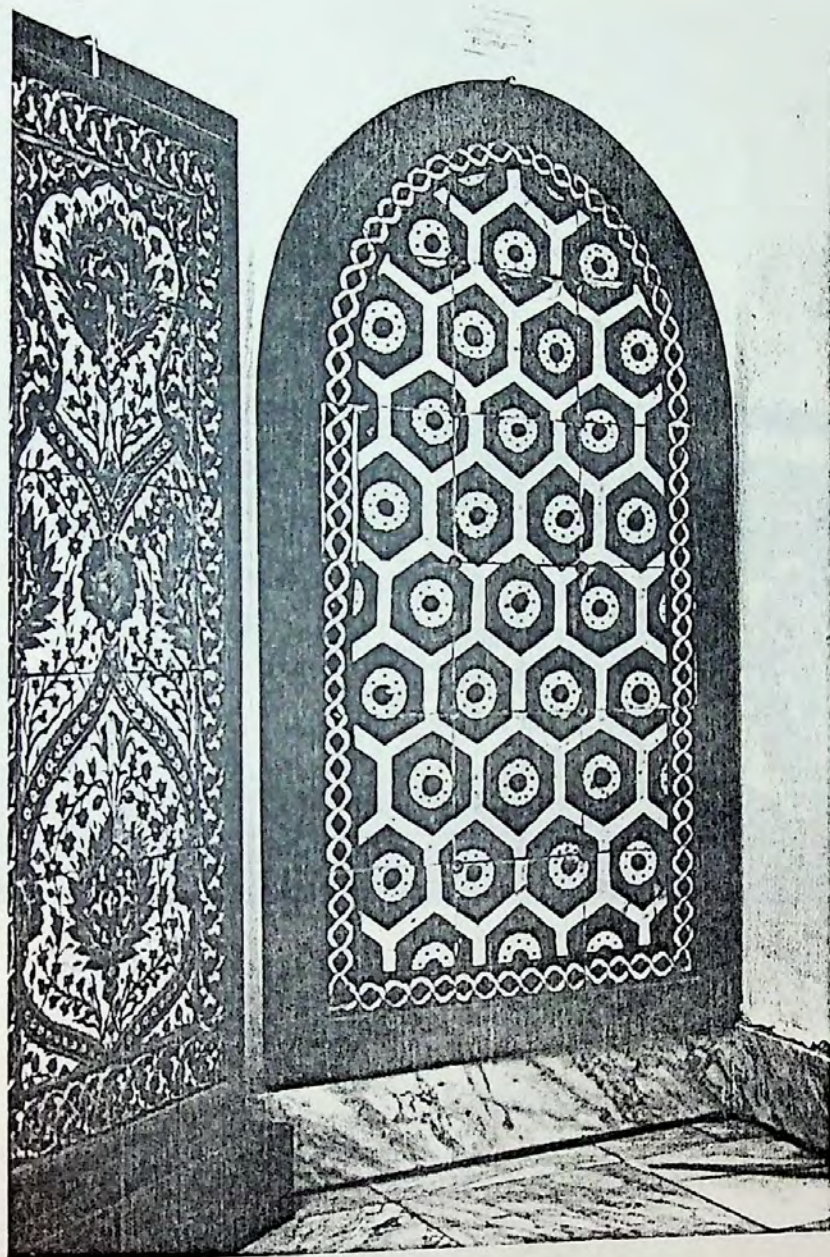


ic Museum in Cairo (15909)

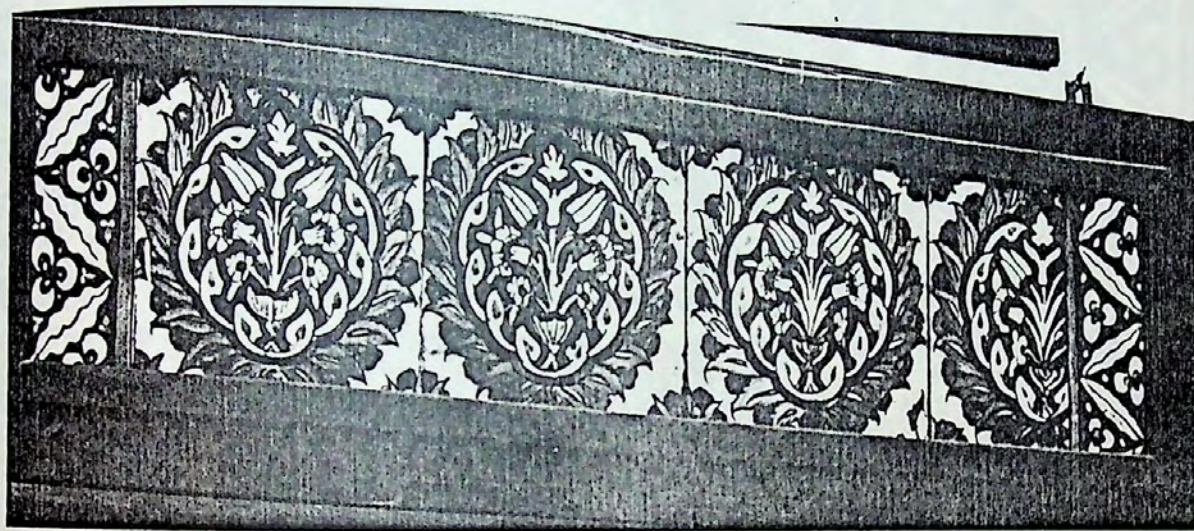
Pl. 20



The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Rogers Fund, 1907. (07.190.19)



the Islamic Museum in Cairo (15904)

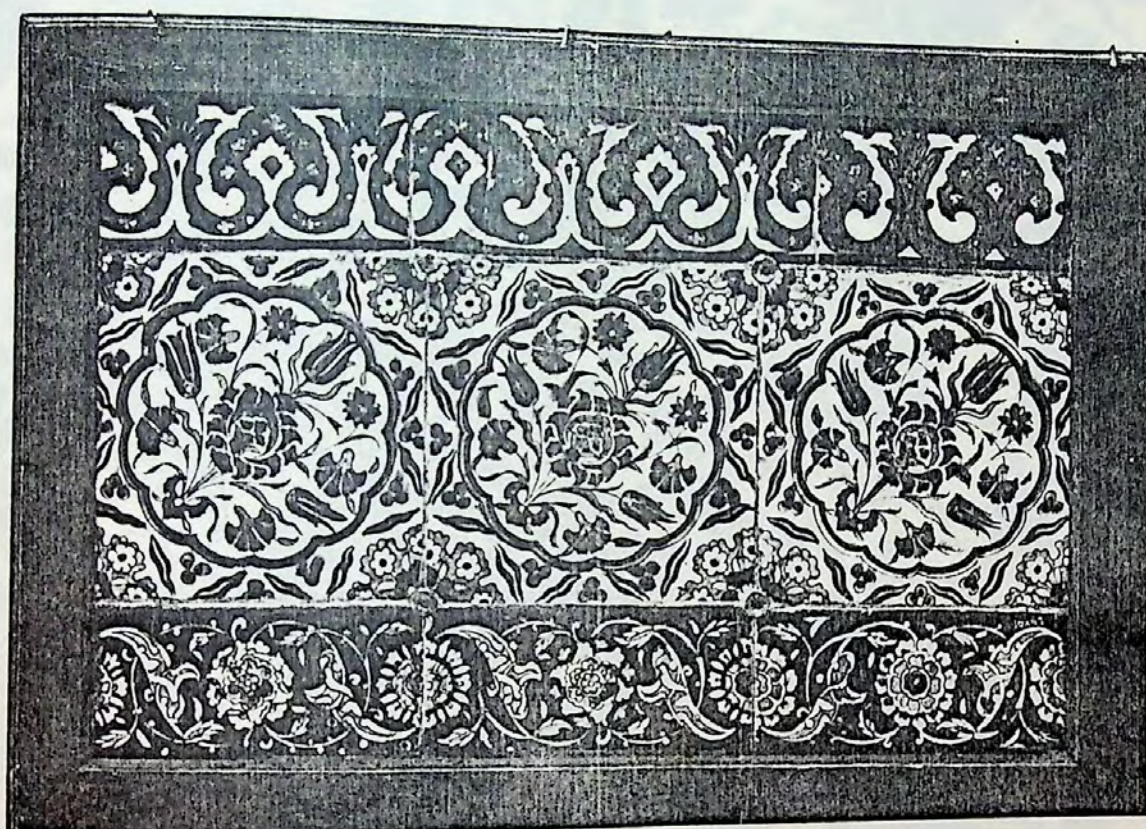


amic Museum in Cairo (15892)

P1.23

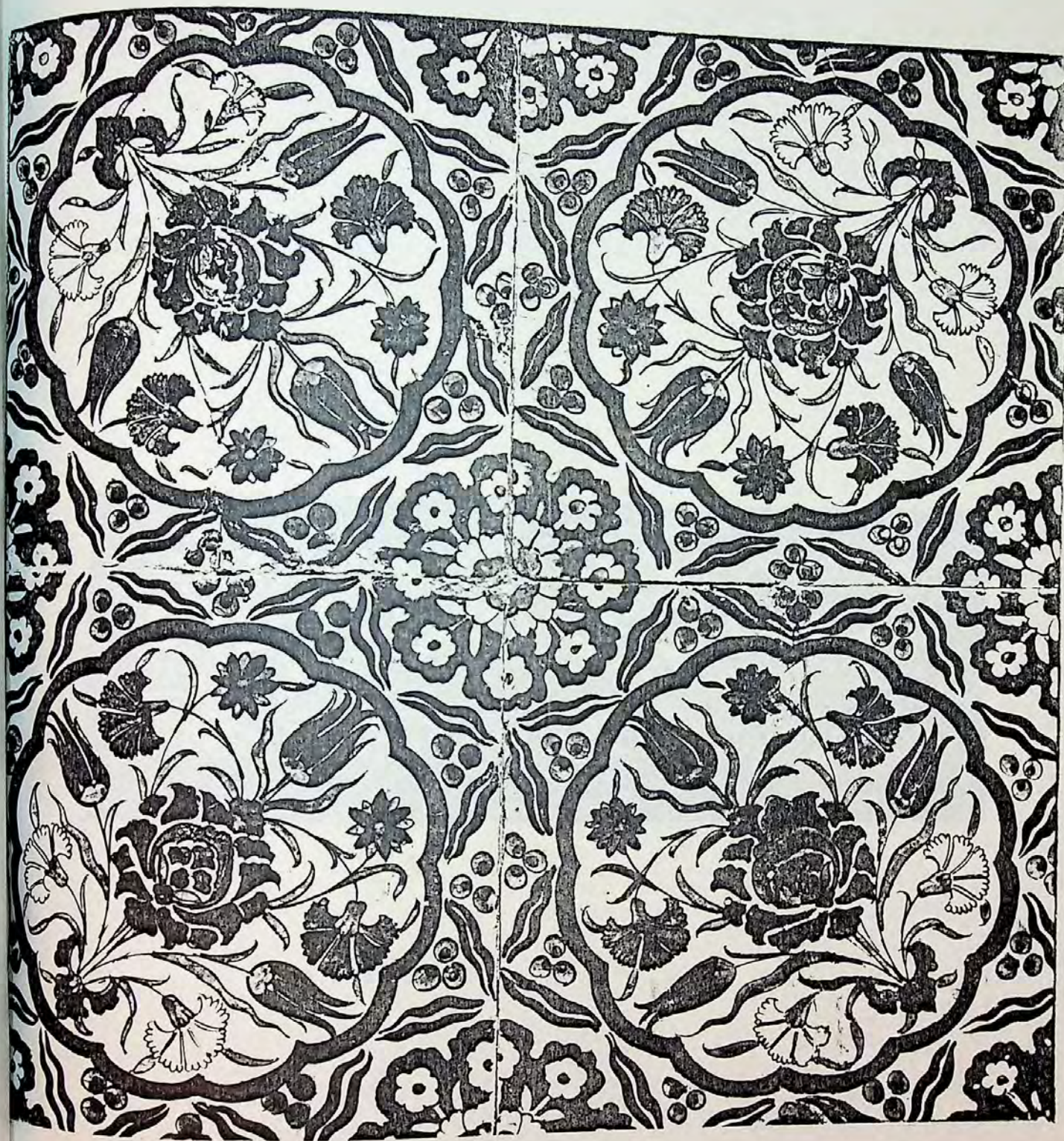


Metropolitan Museum of Art, Rogers Fund, 1907. (07.190.20)

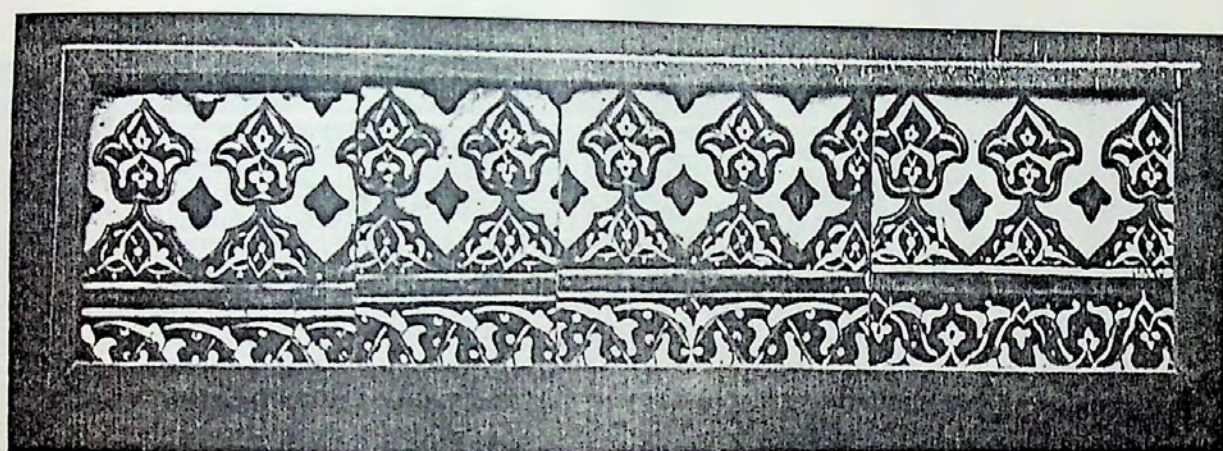


Islamic Museum in Cairo, (15896)

P1.25

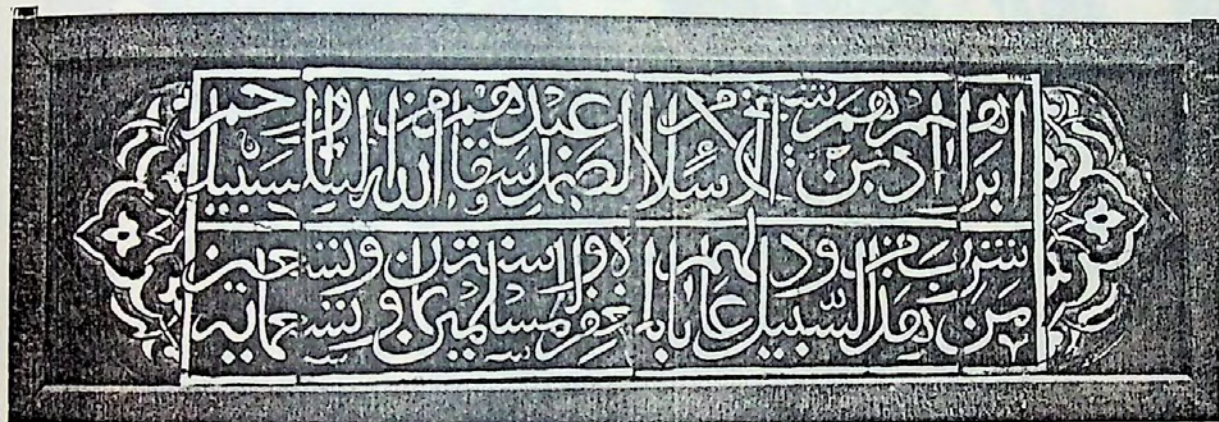


Metropolitan Museum of Art, Rogers Fund, 1907. (07.190.17)



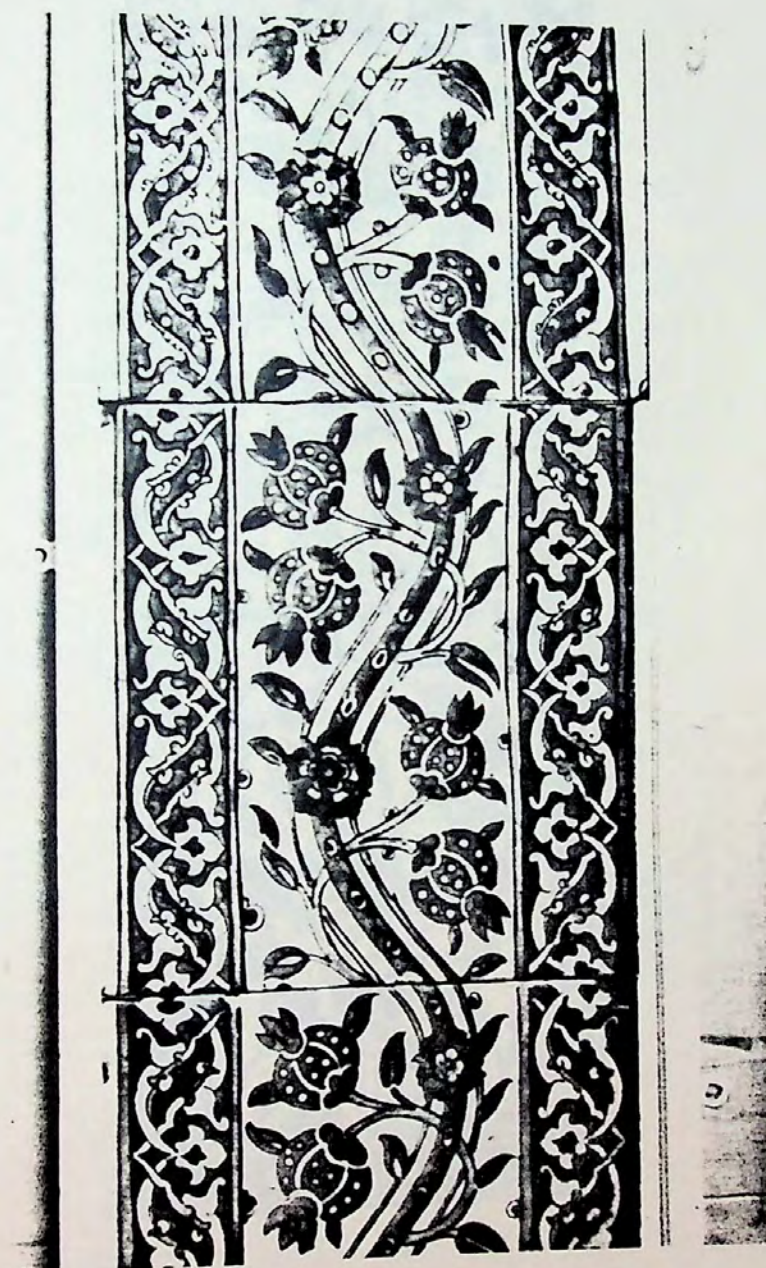
Islamic Museum in Cairo (15897)

P1.27





The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Rogers Fund, 1922 (22.185.13a-f)



The Victoria & Albert Museum (n/a)



The Victoria & Albert Museum (n/a)

Pl.31



The Victoria & Albert Museum (502 TO C - 1900)

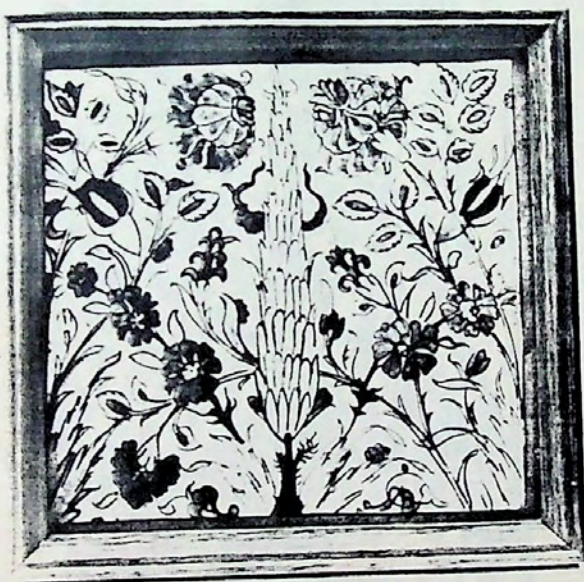


The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Rogers Fund, 1922 (22.185.11a-d)



The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Bequest of Edward C. Moore, 1891
(91.1.94)

Pl. 34



The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of Mrs. Frederick F. Thompson, 1915.
(15.76.1)



The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Rogers Fund, 1923 (23.12.2a-f)



SYRIAN (DAMASCUS); 16TH OR 17TH CENTURY.

The Victoria & Albert Museum (427 - 1902)



The Victoria & Albert Museum (128 - 1897)

-Pl.38

