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MYRIAM ROSEN-AYALON: The Early Islamic Monuments of al-Haram al-Sharif: An Iconographic Study

This study of the Early Islamic monuments on the Temple Mount (al-Haram al-Sharif * "The Noble Enclosure") focuses on three main aspects: the actual planning of each monument; the historical evidence relating to each monument and its interpretation; and the role each monument was intended to play and the architectural expression of these roles. Recent architectural discoveries adjacent to the Temple Mount and elsewhere are used to further the study. The monuments are first examined individually with the aid of plans and photographs. A separate chapter is devoted to the decoration of the Dome of the Rock (with color plates of the mosaics in the drum of the dome). Finally, the iconographic scheme of the entire complex is examined. The author shows how all the beliefs and traditions of Paradise, Judgment Day, and Resurrection that were current in Islam were interlocked with the Rock at the center of al-Haram al-Sharif. The entire Islamic concept was grafted onto an intricate matrix of traditions inherited from pre-Islamic times, resulting in the great new enterprise initiated in the days of `Abd el-Malik.

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