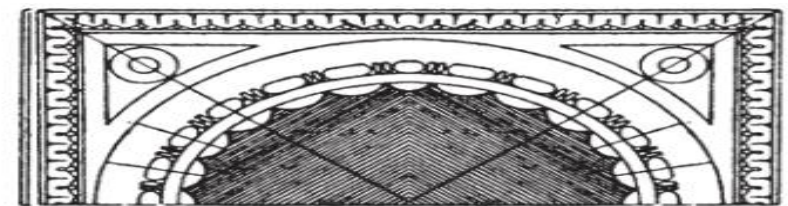


Preservation Survey and Situation Assessment

Acre's El-Jazzar Mosque (Various examples)

Dr. Abdel Razeq Matani

February 2023



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Preservation Survey and Situation Assessment

Acre's El-Jazzar Mosque (Various examples)

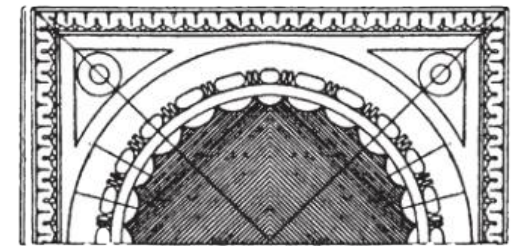
Commissioned by:

El-Jazzar Islamic Waqf Board of Trustees

Prepared by:

Dr. Abdel Razeq Matani

Expert on Islamic Archeology and Architecture



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February 2023

About this survey

- This report is a summary of a damage survey and a situation assessment of the El-Jazzar Compound and Mosque, commissioned by the mosque's Islamic Waqf Board of Trustees, and conducted over the course of about a year (2022-2023).
- This survey is a preliminary step ahead of the general development and planning of the compound, as part of the El-Jazzar Islamic Waqf Board of Trustee's vision, which aims to preserve the entire compound and create a long-term action plan involving tourism and heritage for the compound.
- The survey is a program that providing policymaking guidance and recommendations for preserving the compound, given by experts in the field. It will propose stages and lists of priorities, including the selection of short-term objectives that can be implemented in the near future, based on the priorities set by this program.

The goals of this survey are as follows:

- Gathering multidisciplinary (i.e. historical, archaeological, archival and artistic) data that will form the foundation of the survey.
- Assessing the current state of the various elements of the compound and suggesting recommendations and intervention options, building a general work plan, and determining the stages of the work that is to be done, based on the priority list determined in the survey, in conjunction with the board of trustees and based on the recommendation of subject matter experts.
- Given the high risk level of some of the elements of the compound, as presented in this survey, it is highly urgent that these damages are handled.
- The minaret's uniqueness and complexity necessitates particularly prudent and professional handling.
- The findings of this survey serve as a recommendation and guidance ahead of the determination of an intervention policy. Before the various damages are dealt with, a detailed work plan must be prepared, which should include precise and updated measurements, in consultation with the necessary professional teams and subject matter experts, in order to determine the best possible intervention for preserving the structure and its significant value.

The Prayer Hall: Overview

The prayer hall is the main structure in the El-Jazzar compound. It's built in the classic Ottoman style typical of large mosques built in major cities and provincial capitals. The structure has a tall minaret, and its scale is awe-inspiring. Nearly every element in the prayer hall is ornately and uniquely decorated, including the entrance to the prayer hall (the acsadra), which is decorated with special qashan (a type of tile) and marble cladding with colorful geometric motifs. The interior of the hall, and the qibla (southern) wall are clad with colorful granite panels, interspersed with blue tiles (qashan).

The *mihrab* (prayer niche) is located in the middle of the south wall, opposite the main entrance to the prayer hall, and it is ornately designed and ornamented with granite panels of various shades and sizes. The minbar, also made of ornate granite panels, is located to the west of the mihrab.

The prayer hall area can be divided into two parts:

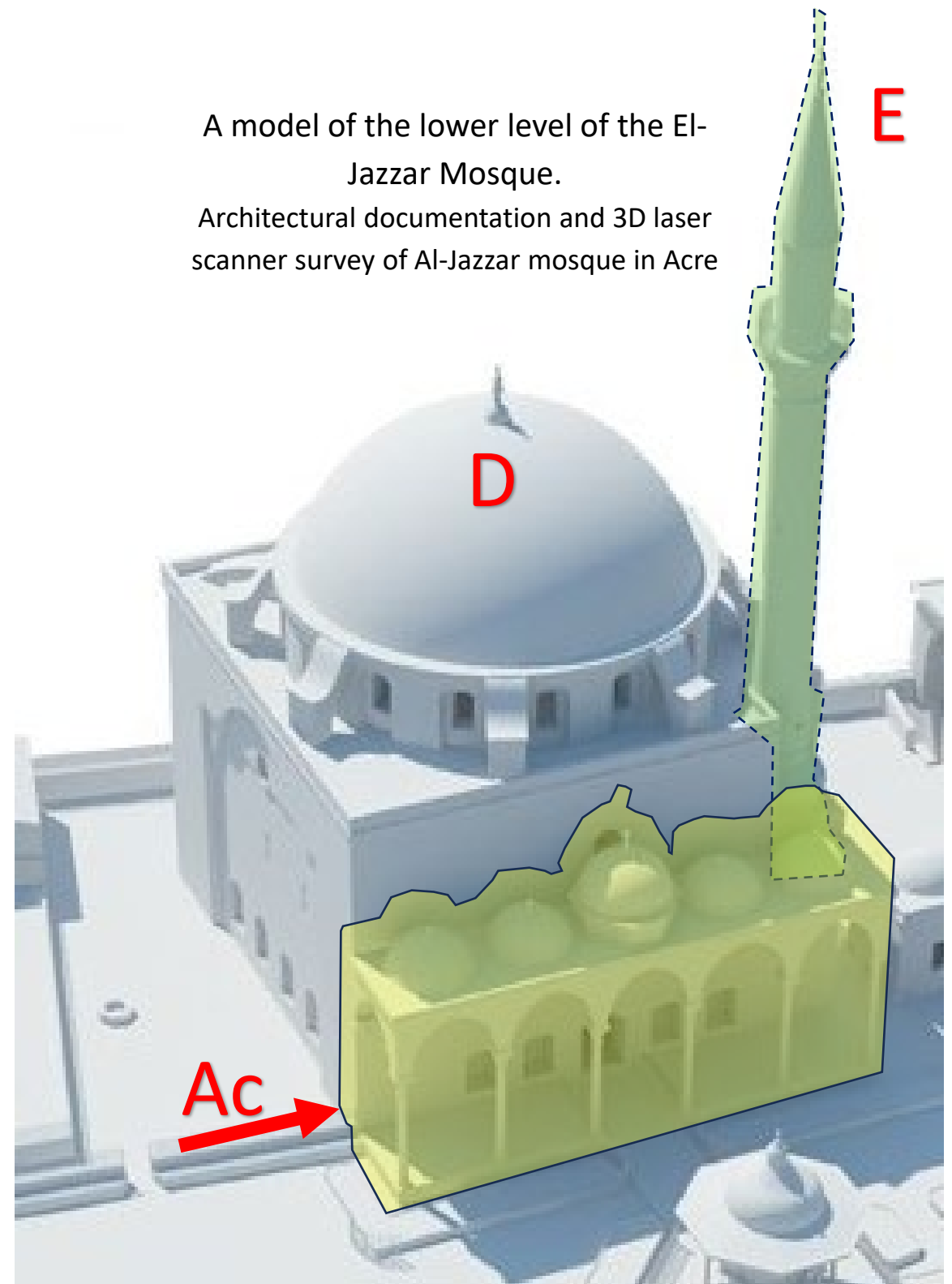
The Acsadra (Ac).

The Prayer Hall (D).

The mosque has one minaret (Al-Madhana - E), located in the northwestern corner of the prayer hall.

A model of the lower level of the El-Jazzar Mosque.

Architectural documentation and 3D laser scanner survey of Al-Jazzar mosque in Acre



Engineering-Construction flaws

The columns

Severe weathering was documented in the massive marble pillars that adorn the acsadra and support the five domes at the entrance, including:

- Very severe damage to the bases of the pillars, including many cracks and fractures; The bases' bands are partially made of a number of parts and items that were combined, which weakens the bases. This is especially concerning, considering that they support the massive marble columns. A heavy load presses down on them, causing major damage to the bases.
- The connection between the marble columns and their bases and capitals is weak. Usually, the base and the capital are connected to the shaft of the column using metal nails, or interlocking stone "teeth".
- Weathering and rust in the metal tension cables at the top of the columns, which attach the columns to each other and to the prayer hall.
- Rust in the metal bands connecting the shaft of the column with the base and the capital. In this type of construction, steel is typically heated, in order to fill the space between the shaft of the column, the capital and the base, and ensure that the column stands properly. In these cases, the rust in the bands could lead to weathering of the material connecting the shaft with the base or the capital.
- Broken marble tiles in the floor of the acsadra, which the columns are placed on.

Restoration of the columns will include:

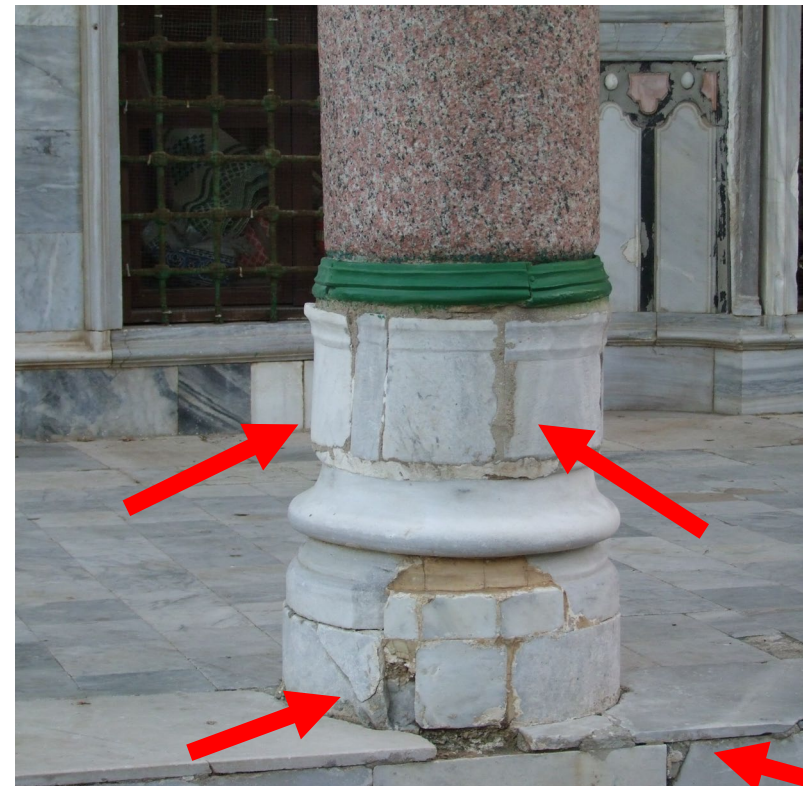
- **Repairing the floor:** The durability of the floor will need to be assessed. These assessment will be done after safety measures are taken, preferably after the acsadra is strengthened and given support.
- **Replacing the broken and cracked column bases**
- (Column 1's base was previously replaced)
- **Repairing the cracks in the column shafts,** and as artistic restoration, including polishing and handling light weathering in the columns
(the rare and unique marble columns require special treatment)
- **Repairing and replacing rusty metal anchors**
- **Restoration of the domes** (more information presented later in the presentation)

Damage to the columns must be repaired urgently. The work to be done in this section is very complex and special, and it must be done very cautiously, while putting in place strict safety measures and installing scaffolding and special supports to support the domes. A detailed work plan should be creat, and a team of experts should be created, to repair the columns and assess the existing alternatives, with an emphasis on preserving the shafts of the columns, due to their uniqueness.

Column 5

- This column was heavily damaged, and it is at a very high risk

- Severe cracks in the base of the column
- A fracture at the center of the column. The column has two parts, which were connected. A metal band was placed around the connection. It isn't clear whether nails were embedded into the shaft of the pillar, which was apparently designed to strengthen the connection.
- Weathering and abrasion within the pillar, and flaking of the surface layer.
- Rust in the metal anchors holding the pillar



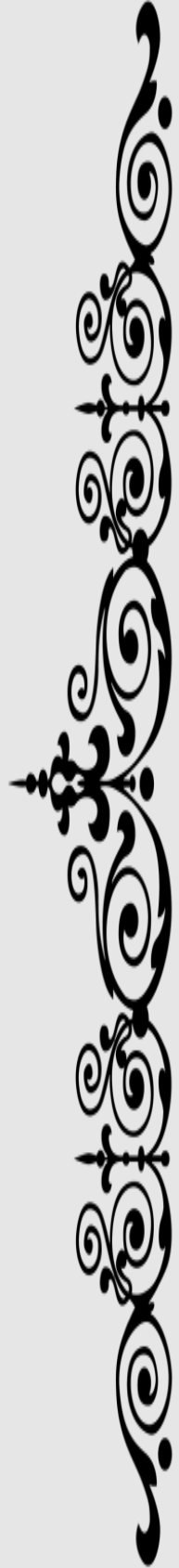
Column 6

This column was heavily damaged, and it is at a very high risk

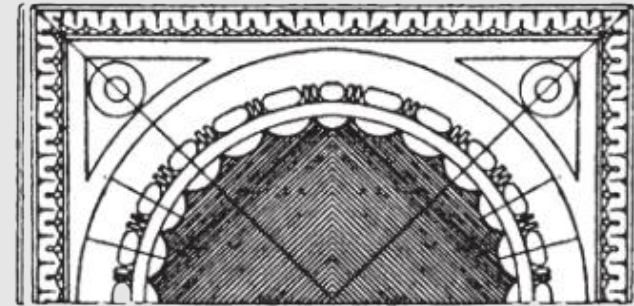
- Very severe cracks and a fracture in the base.
- Weathering and abrasion within the pillar, and flaking of the surface layer.
- Rust in the metal anchors holding the pillar



D. Aesthetic and artistic flaws



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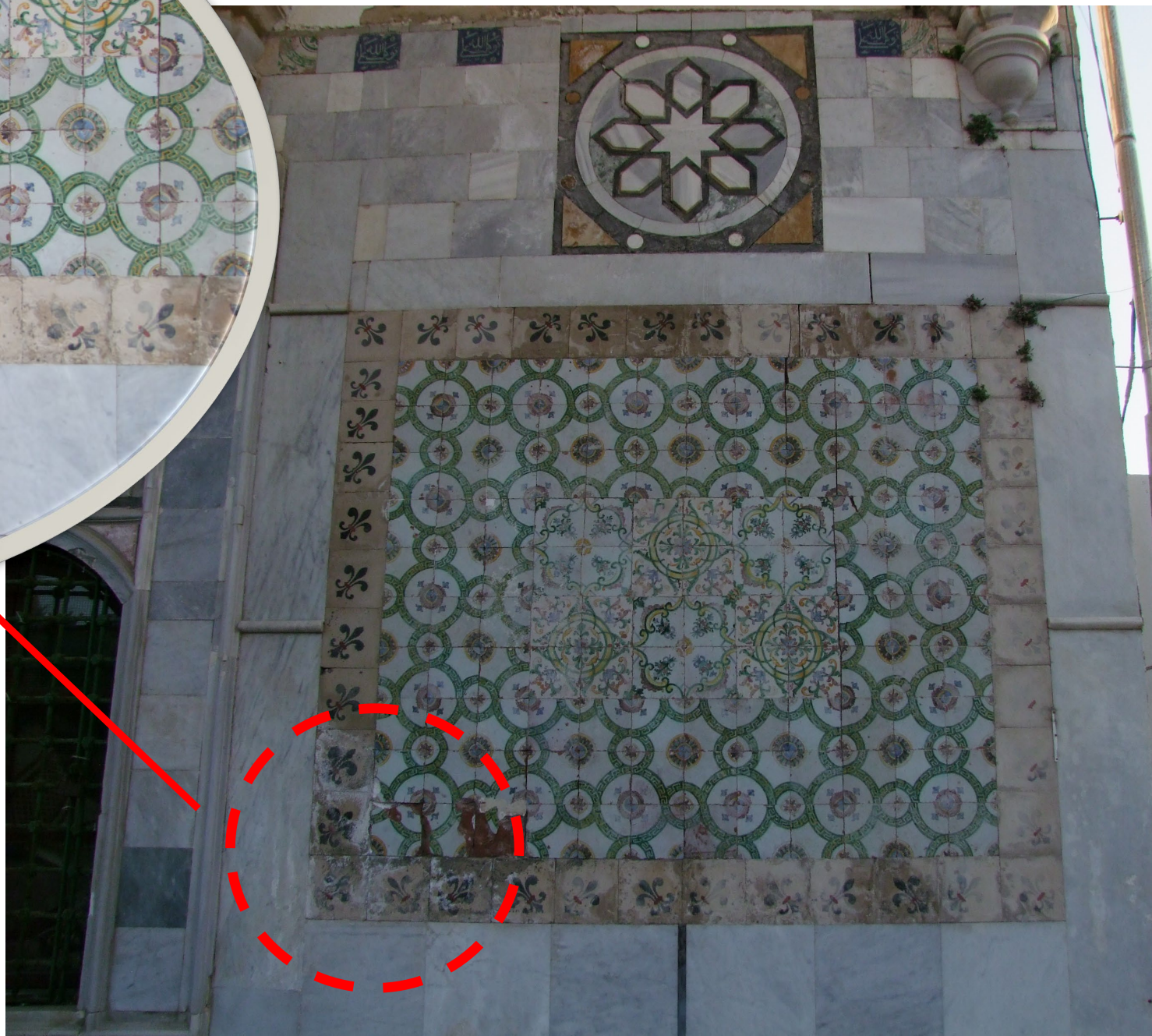


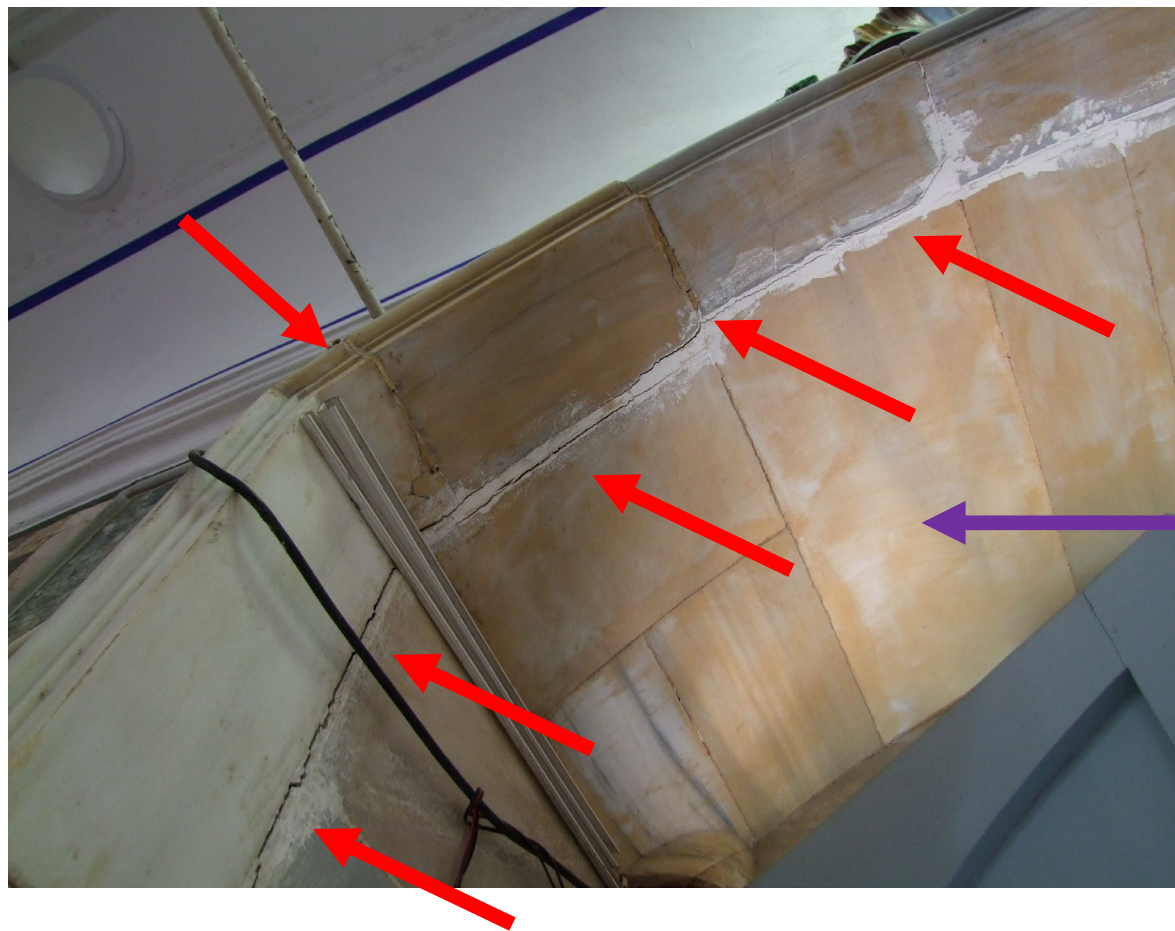
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Weathering in the *qashan* panel in Vault 1 (V1)





**Damage to the
lintel
Above the entranceway**



Technical Annex 2: Foundations and Lower Level

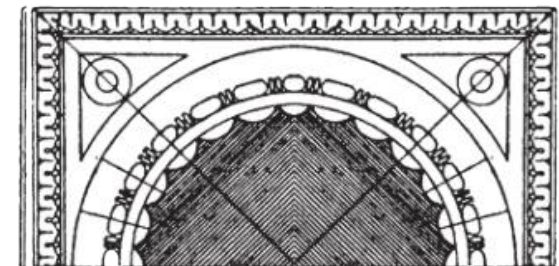
A - Underground cistern

B - Shops

C - The compound's external facades

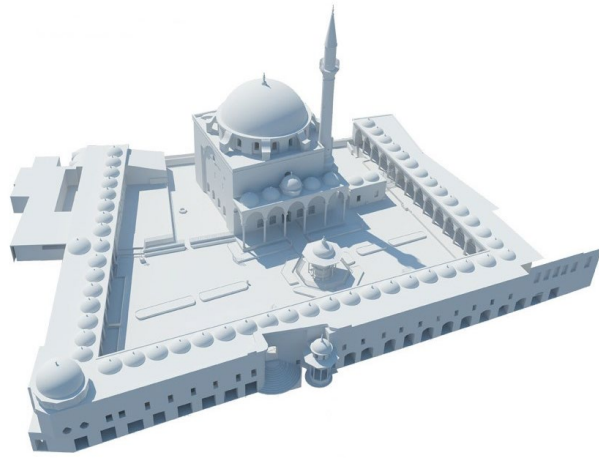


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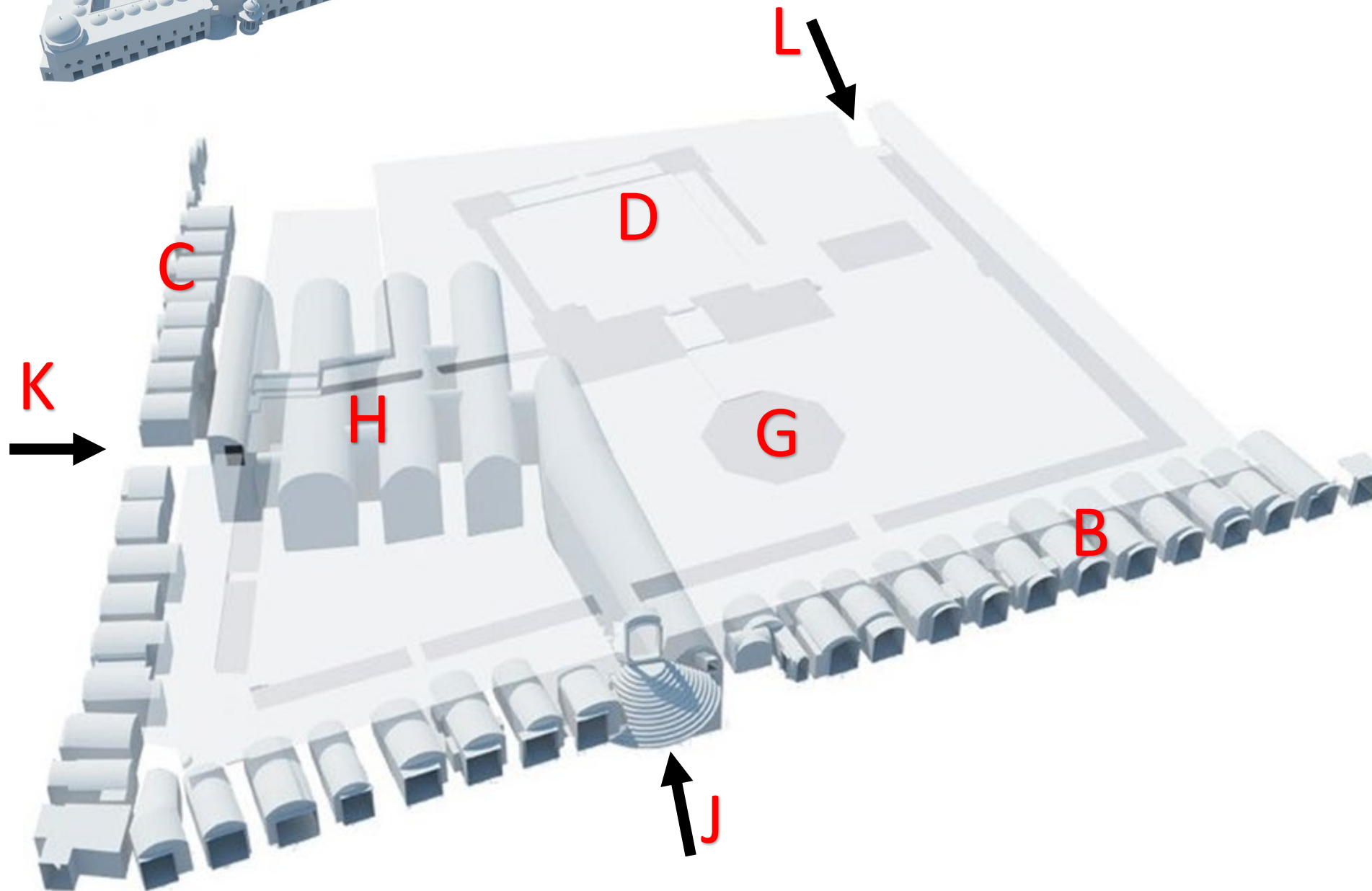


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The foundations and the lower level



As commonly done in mosques built in the classic Ottoman style, El-Jazzar Mosque is built atop elevated foundations, resulting in an enormous ramp, which contains the shops under the mosque and the immense underground cistern.

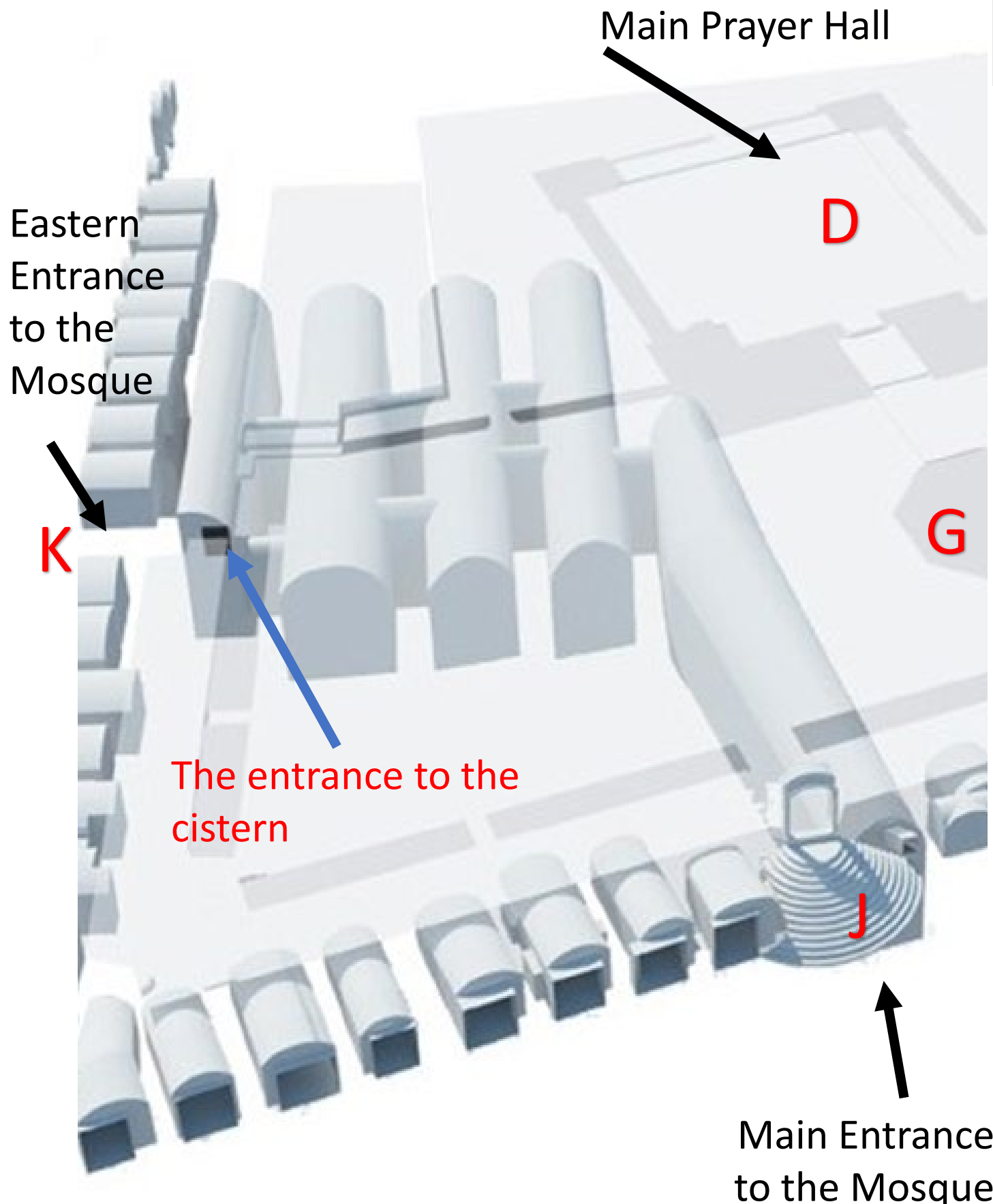


- A. Western Wing
- B. Northern Wing
- C. Eastern Wing
- D. Main Prayer Hall
- E. Minaret
- F. El-Jazzar's Mausoleum (*turba*)
- G. Al-Shadhwan
- H. Location of the underground cistern
- I. Al-Sabil
- J. Main Entrance
- K. Eastern Entrance
- L. Southern Entrance

Model of the lower level of El-Jazzar Mosque.

Architectural Documentation and 3D laser scanner survey of Al-Jazzar mosque in Acre

The underground cistern (H)



An underground cistern in the northeastern part of the courtyard of the mosque. The water was channeled into the cistern through an aquaduct that supplied water from the el-Kabri area, supplementing the rainwater that had drained into the cistern from the openings in the courtyard of the complex. The water was used for drinking and for ritual ablution. They were channeled to the *mutawadda* at the heart of the compound, and to the *sabil*, adjacent to the complex's main entrance. The entrance to the cistern is close to the compound's eastern entrance. The cistern is reached through a small door. After entering, a stairwell leads down to the base of the cistern. The cistern is comprised of four central pointed barrel-vaults, in addition to the vault at the entrance, and a small vault that drained the water entering the cistern.

In the past, the cistern was a tourist site. Metal and wooden paths were installed, but today, it is closed to the public because of the restoration work that needs to be done there.



Reservoir 1

Entrance and drainage

- Piles of trash and filler material in the reservoir
- The opening of the upper pit is boarded off with wooden and metal boards, covered in a layer of cement.
- Severe weathering of the stones in the ceiling and above the opening of the upper pit, in the walls of the reservoir, and in the wall separating Reservoir 1 from Reservoir 2
- Damage and detachment of the original layer of plaster from the walls
- Severe dampness in the ceiling and walls



Right: General view of the reservoir

Above: The ceiling of the reservoir and the upper pit



Northern Wing B External facade

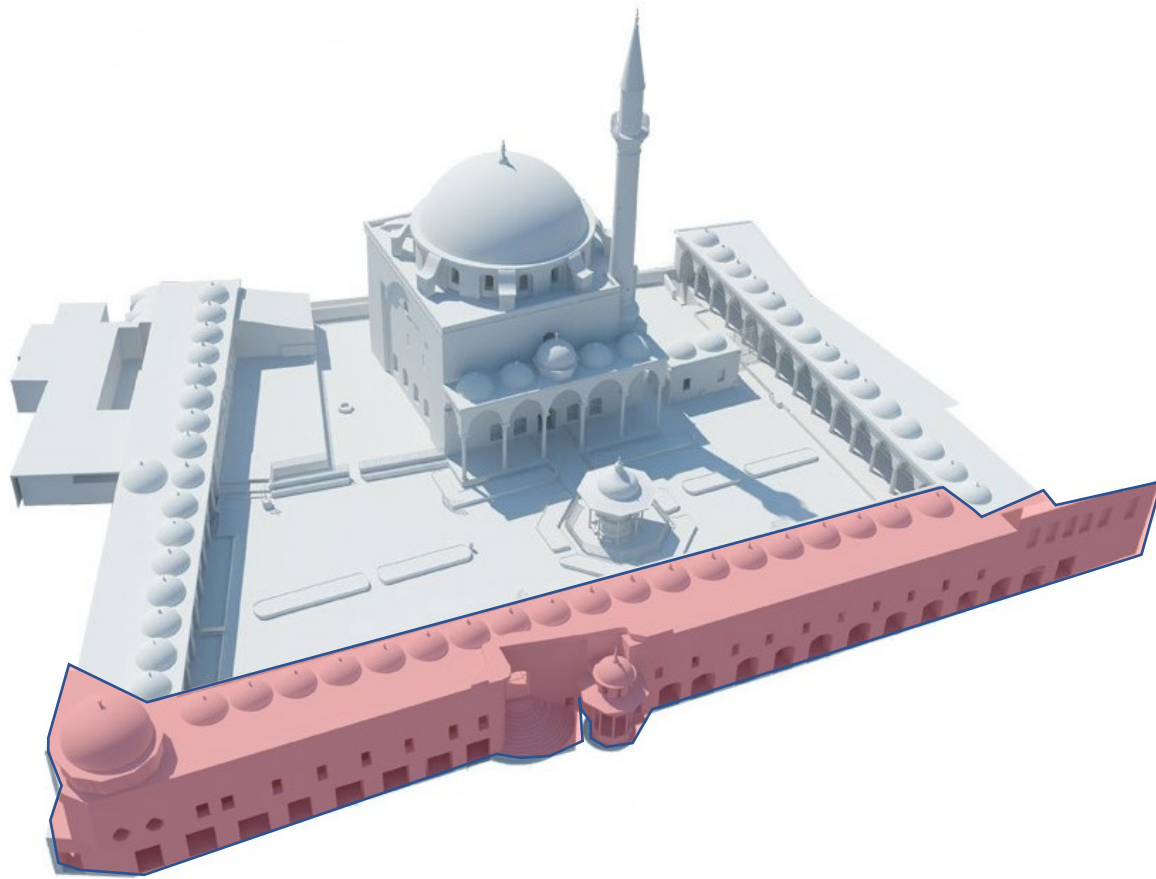
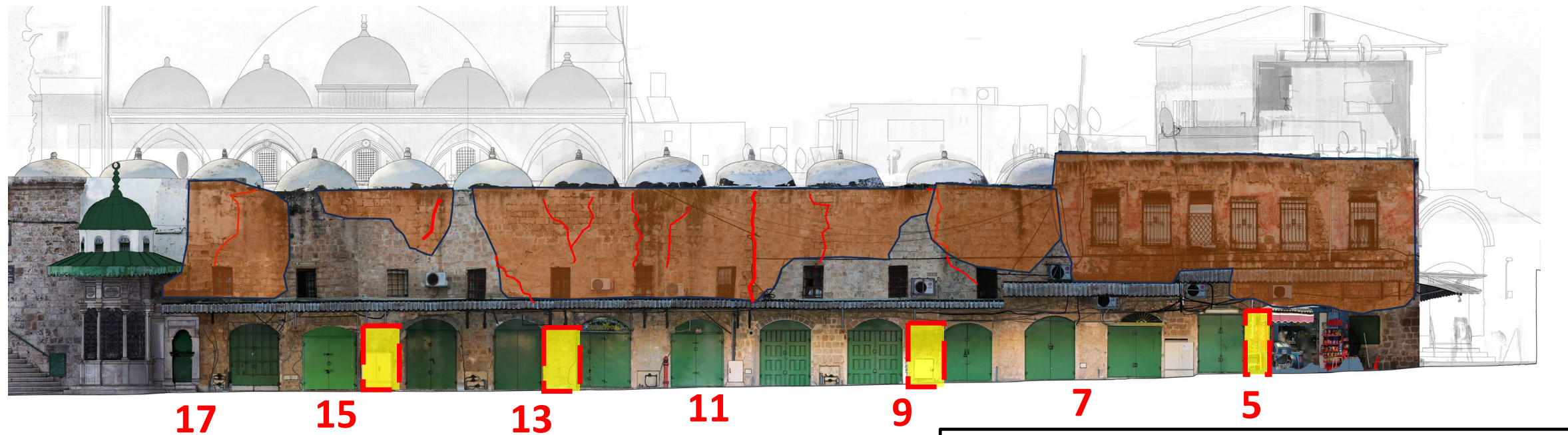


Figure 5-44: The shops on the lower level and the compound's northern façade

Architectural Documentation and 3D laser scanner survey of Al-Jazzar mosque in Acre





Damage to the northern facade – B – The external facade, western area

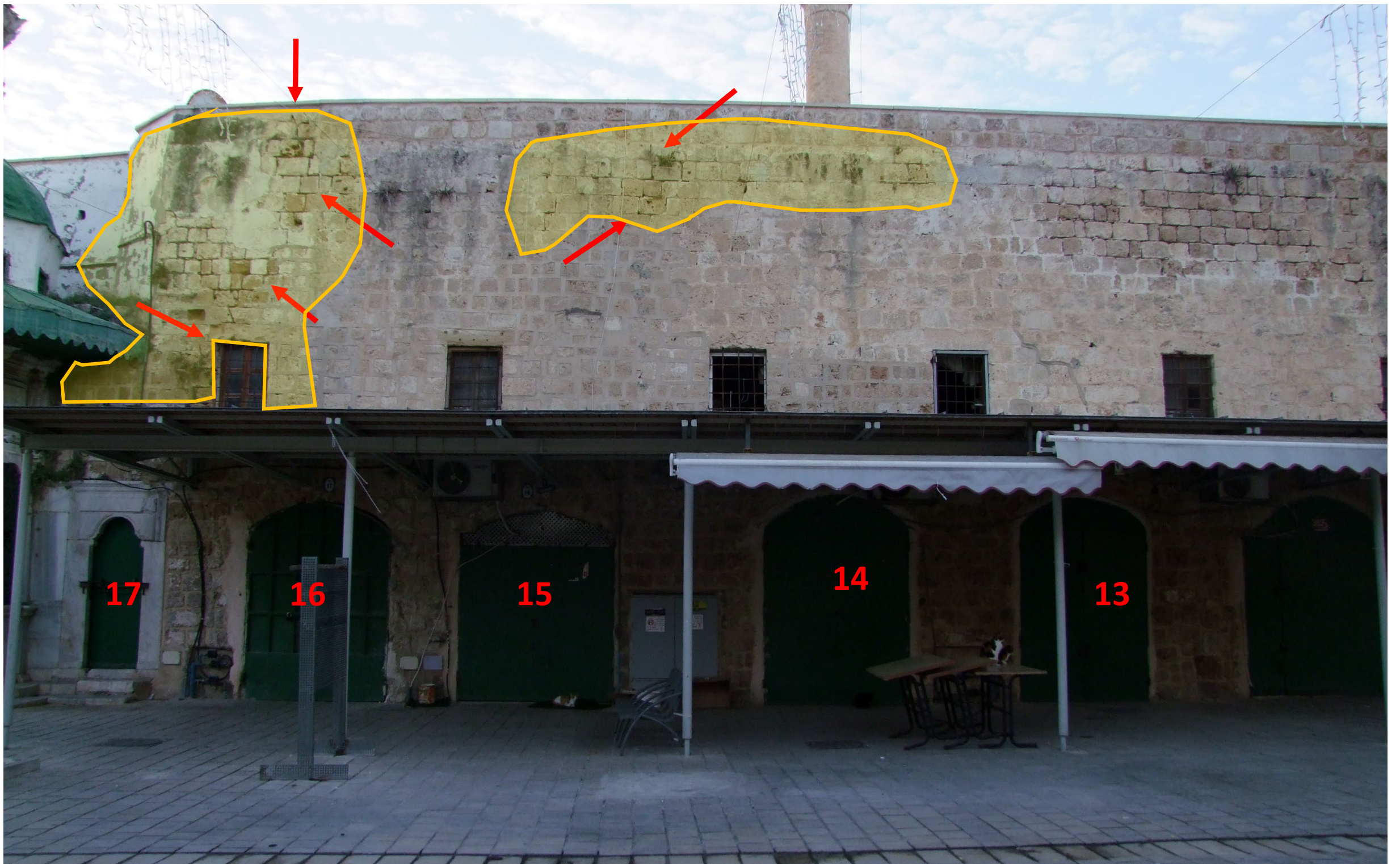


Above:: Damage to the northern wall of the compound, according to the 2017 survey.

Above:: Damage to the northern wall of the compound, according to the 2023 ATIK survey.

Architectural Documentation and 3D laser scanner survey of Al-Jazaar mosque in Acre

	Stone weathering, according to the 2017 survey
	Worsening of the stone weathering, according to the 2023 survey
	Wall cracks
	Areas in which openings were made between the shops







Technical Annex 3: Art conservation

A. Al-Shadhuran

B. Al-Sabil

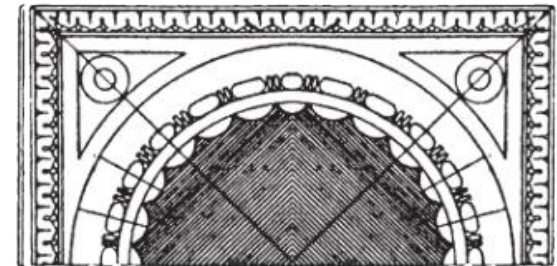
C. Entrance gate

D. Al-Mizwala (sundial)

E. Al-Turba



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Artistic and aesthetic faults

El-Jazzar Mosque is a magnificent masterpiece, considered one of the most beautiful mosques in Israel and in the entire region. Aside from the impressive size and scale of the mosque, unique adornments and ornaments were added to the structure. Aside from their function, the various elements of the mosque were uniquely ornamented and designed, and are considered works of art: The main entrance is adorned with ablaques and a beautiful inscription, the wall at the entrance to the prayer hall (the *acsadra*) is adorned with marble cladding and special *qashan* tiles with geometric motifs and various shades of color. The interior of the hall, and the *qibla* (southern) wall are clad with colorful granite panels, interspersed with blue tiles (*qashan*).

The *mihrab* (prayer niche) is located in the middle of the wall, opposite the main entrance to the prayer hall, and it is ornately designed and ornamented with granite panels of various shades and sizes. The *minbar*, also made of ornate granite panels, is located to the west of the *mihrab*. Al-Shaduran and al-Sabil also merited to have a unique design, with marble and metal marquetry.

Aside from the physical and construction faults in the various elements of the mosque, aesthetic/artistic faults and damages were documented in the ornaments and adornments in the various elements, such as surface deposits, stains, patina, film, disaggregation, and alveolization in the marble and in the *qashan* panels (tiles).

This annex is meant to be a survey and record of the artistic damage and hazards in the various elements of the mosque. **Intervention** in these elements must be prudent, and it must be carried out by experts and professionals trained in this type of work, so that the artistic value of these elements can be preserved, and so that they can be given the proper treatment.

Comparing the survey's findings with previous surveys and records reveals that the state of the various elements has worsened and deteriorated, and that irreparable damage has been caused to the various elements. This necessitates urgent intervention, to preserve these ornaments and adornments.

The elements included in this section are:

- A. Al-Shadhuran
- B. Al-Sabil
- C. The main entrance gate
- D. Al-Mizwala (the sundial)
- E. Al-Turba

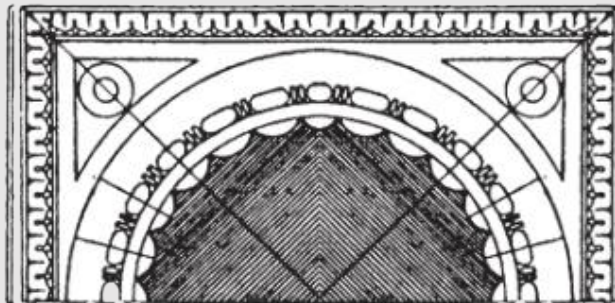
Note: An entire annex will be dedicated to a survey of the main prayer hall.

Please note that very severe constructional issues were surveyed in Al-Shadhuran and Al-Sabil, which endanger these structures and necessitate urgent intervention. These issues include cracks and erosion in the columns of Al-Shadhuran and their capitals, and cracks in Al-Sabil's structure

A. Al-Shadhuran



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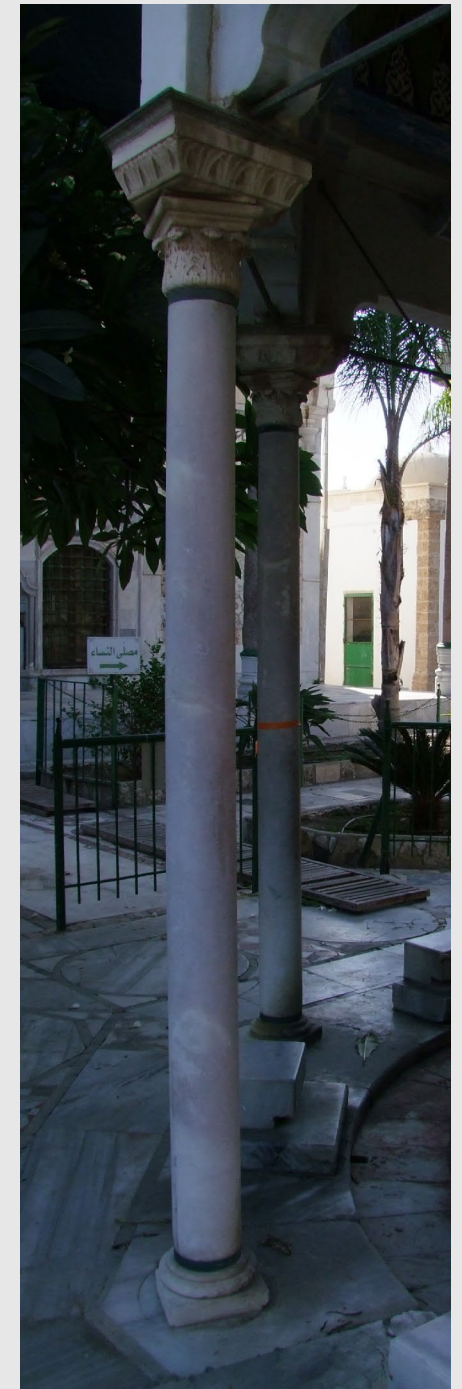
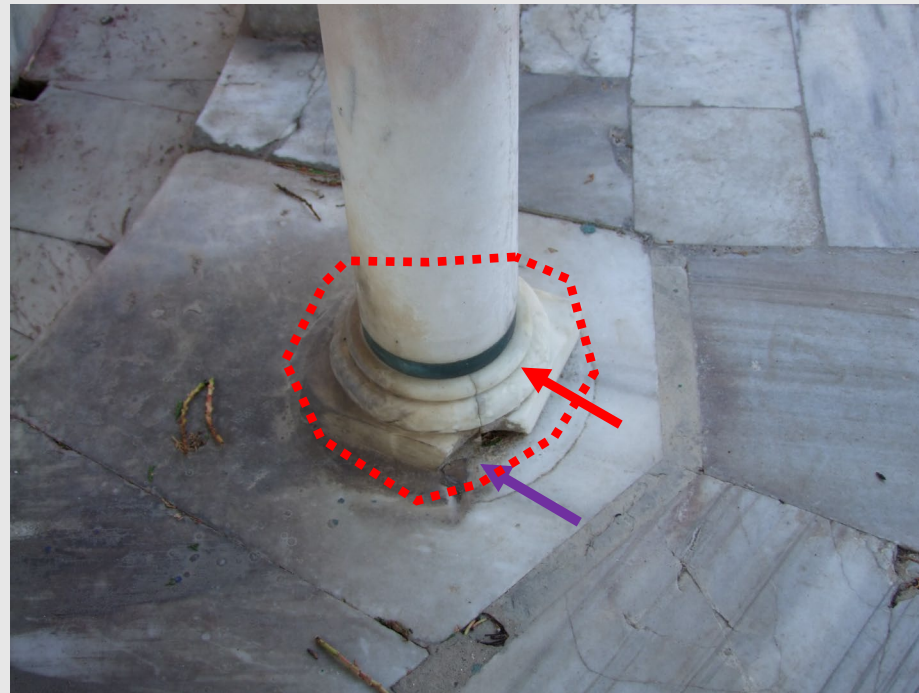
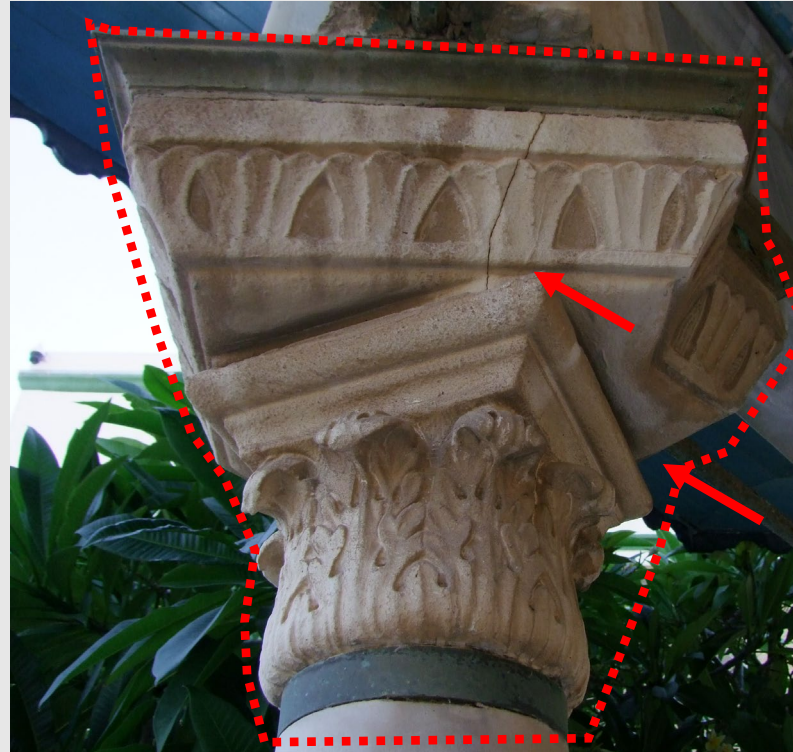


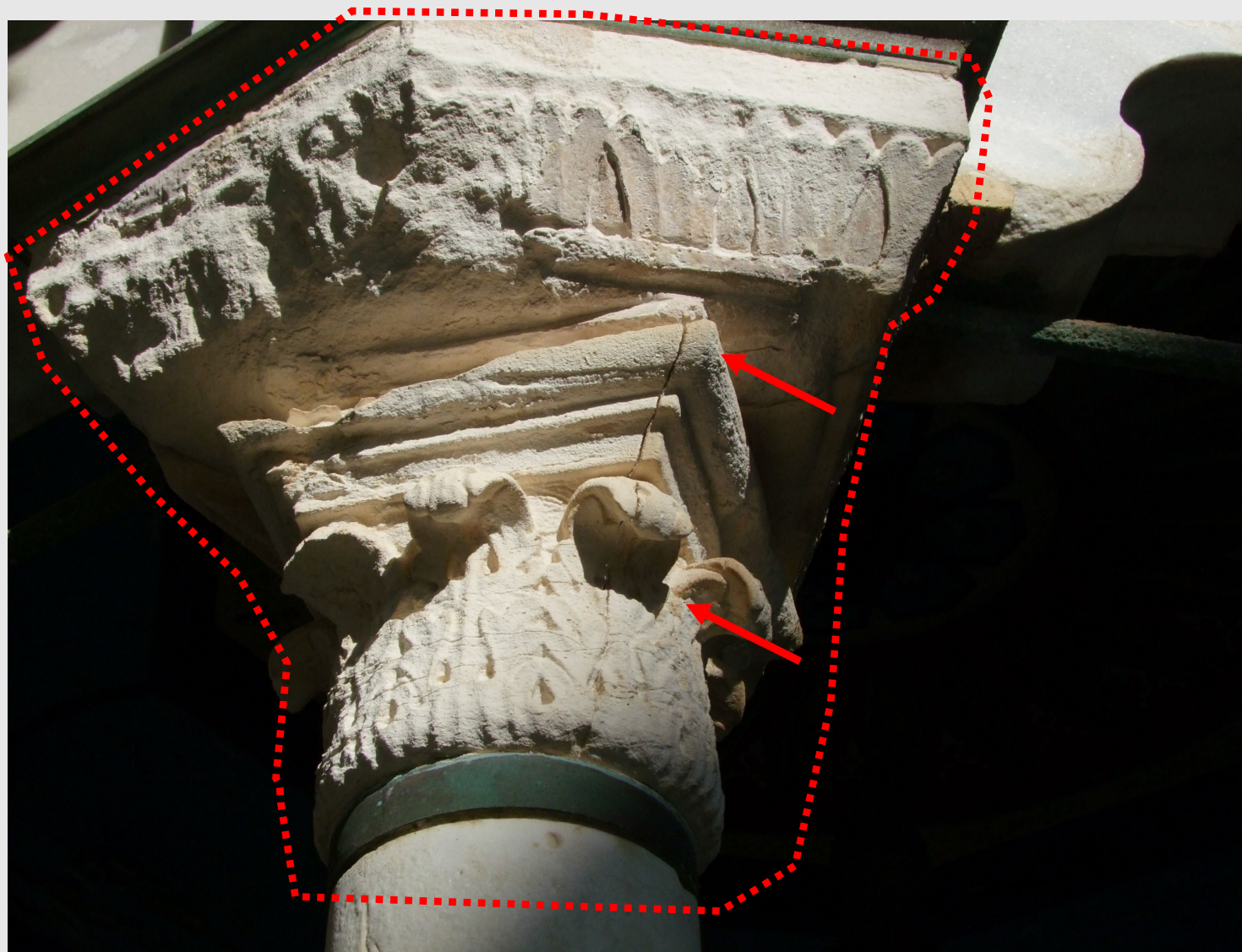
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Column 2

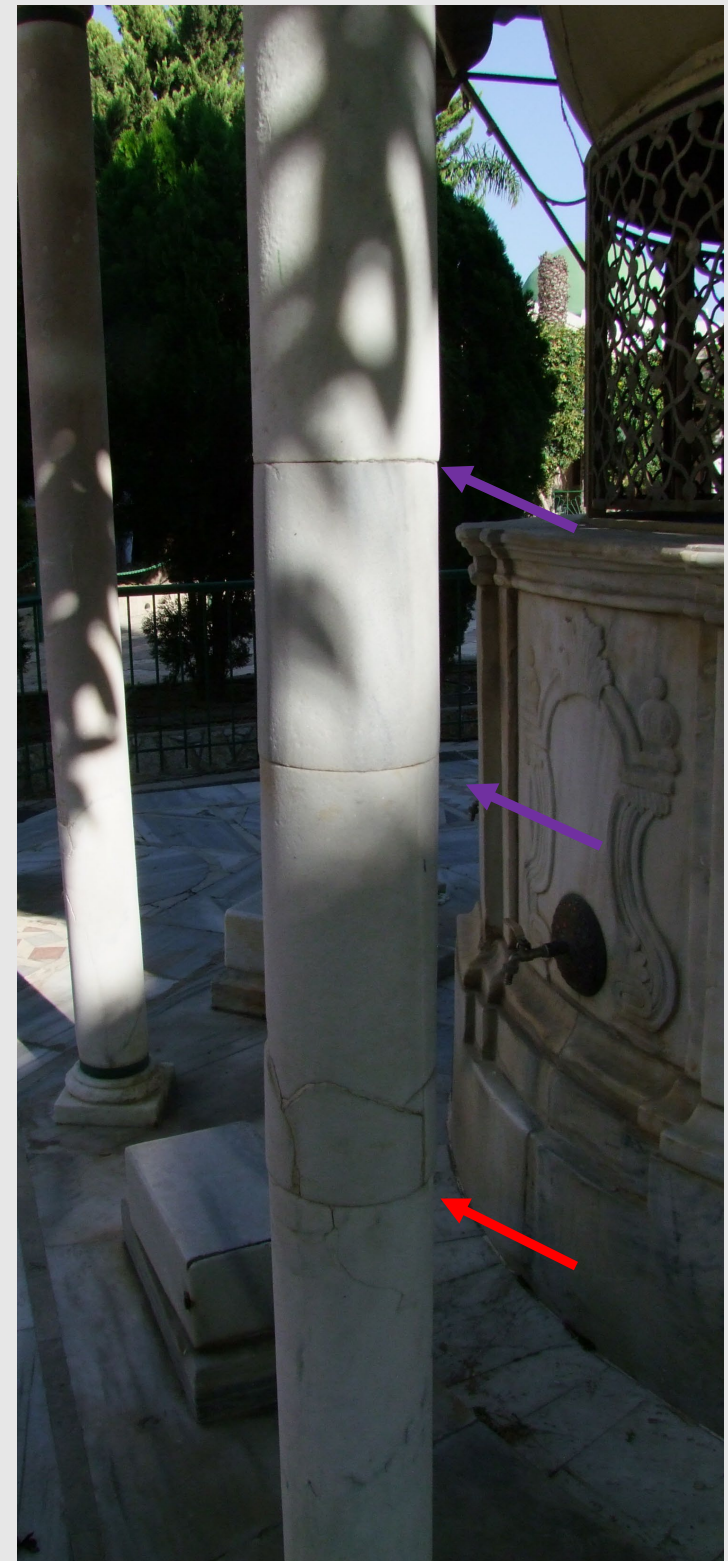
- Light pulverization and erosion in the shaft
- Severe erosion and cracks in the pillar's capital
- Cracks in the base of the pillar, fractures and missing pieces in the base of the pillar
- Rust in the metal rings attaching the pillar
- Surface deposits and patina in the marble slabs above the pillar





Column 7

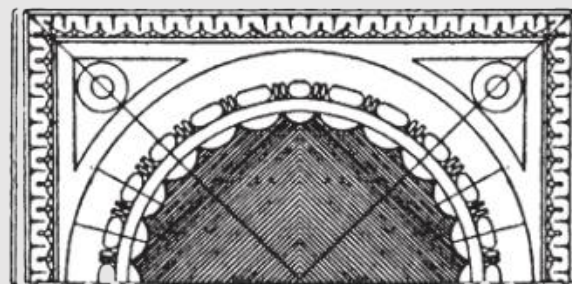
- Cracks, fractures and very serious erosion in the pillar's capital
- Severe fractures and erosion in the shaft
- Rust in the metal rings that attach the pillar
- Fractures and cracks in the marble slabs above the capital
- Surface deposits and patina in the marble slabs above the pillar



B. Al-Sabil



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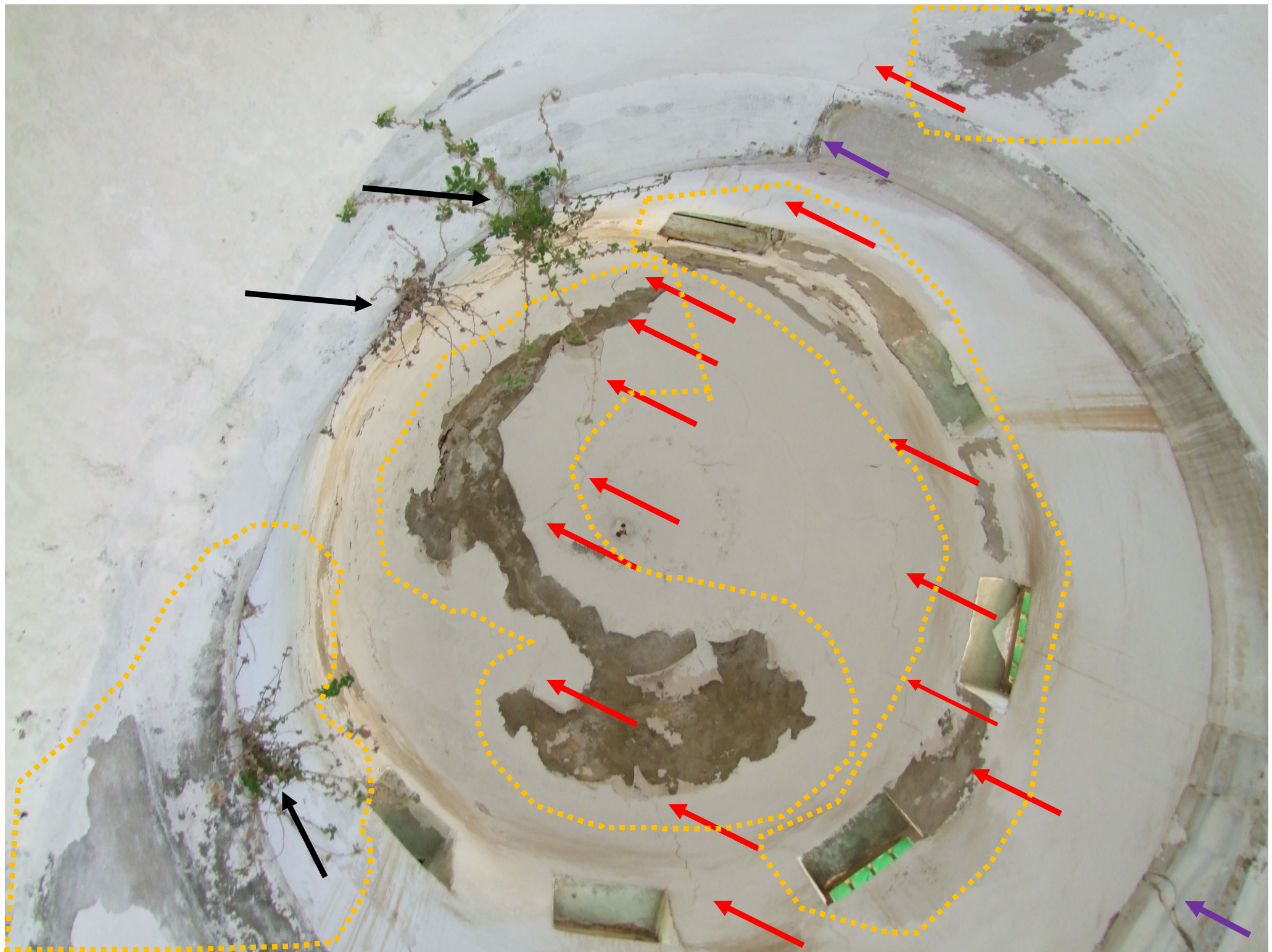






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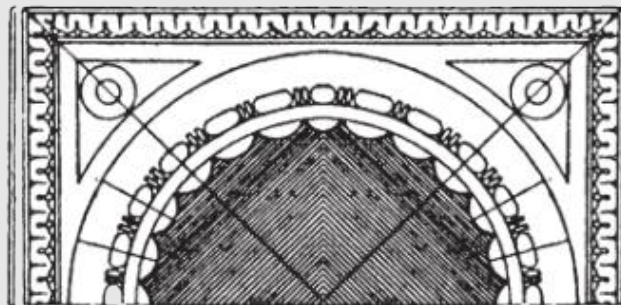


Damage to the interior of the dome							
	Encrustation		Dampness - plaster exfoliation		Fractures - marble		Cracks

E – Al-Turba
(the tomb of El-Jazzar Pasha)



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The tombs (Al-Turba) are in the northwestern part of the courtyard, to the west of the prayer hall structure. There are two granite-clad tombs in the complex. Ahmad Pasha El-Jazzar (d. 1804) and Suleiman Pasha (d. 1819) are buried in those tombs. Al-Turba was built a later stage by El-Jazzar's heir, Suleiman Pasha, in accordance with El-Jazzar's will, in which he stated that he wished to be buried in the complex. After Suleiman Pasha's death, he, too, was buried in the *Turba*, next to El-Jazzar.



Damage to El-Jazzar Pasha's grave

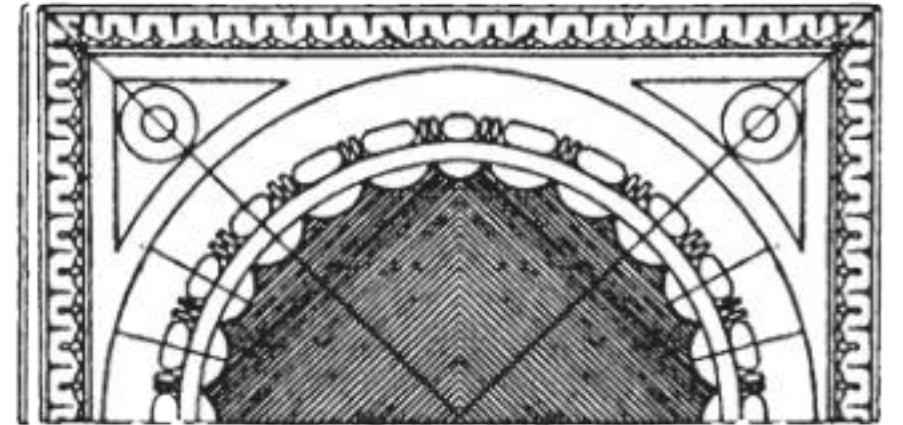
	Rust		Patina - surface deposits		Cracks/Fractures
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The Arcades and the Rooms on the Upper Level



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