

Worksheet for Heba Mostafa’s “The Dome of the Rock: Original Mosaics”
by Sascha Crasnow
(to be used with [video linked here](#))



Key Takeaways:

1. What are individual pieces of mosaic called?
2. What colors and materials are in the Dome of the Rock mosaics? What imagery is depicted?
3. Where are these mosaics thought to have originally been installed? Why is this important?

4. What is the significance of the *Haram-al-Sharif* in Islamic traditions?

5. A 15th-century account of the mosaics remarks on the presence of winged figures in the original mosaics, a motif visible still in the interior design. What are some interpretations of these images that scholars have put forth?

6. What are some of the reasons that Dr. Mostafa suggests for why the exterior of the *Haram-al-Sharif* would have been covered in colorful mosaics?

Contextualizing the Work

Dr. Mostafa closes her presentation by discussing how the aesthetics of the mosaics help to connect the *Haram-al-Sharif* to the Ka'ba in Mecca. What reasons do you think there might be for the outer mosaics being replaced 8 to 9 centuries later? In your answer, consider exploring questions of patronage, political-religious power, cultural heritage and preservation, etc.