

1 Introduction

The Alhambra is a complex of fortifications and palaces outside Granada, Spain, built from 1238 into the early 17th century, whereby the era of Islamic architecture there, as in the rest of Spain, ended in 1492 with the completion of the Reconquista. It is one of the world's best known architectural monuments and famous for its elaborate ornamentation in the Islamic style, often based on plane tessellations and periodic tilings, which have inspired many architects, designers and artists, notably M.C. Escher, the incomparable modern master of this metier. Beginning in 1842, Owen Jones began publishing the monumental work *Plans, Elevations, Sections and Details of the Alhambra*, based on work he had done together with Jules Goury, who died of cholera during their stay at the Alhambra. Published in installments, this work has the distinction of being the first *significant* one to use the process of chromolithography for color reproduction [16]. Figure 1 shows Plate XLIX, No. 85, Mosaic in the Divan, Court of the Fishpond, from Goury and Jones, Vol. 2 [10]. It shows a single rapport of the pattern, so the latter is clearly unusually complex.

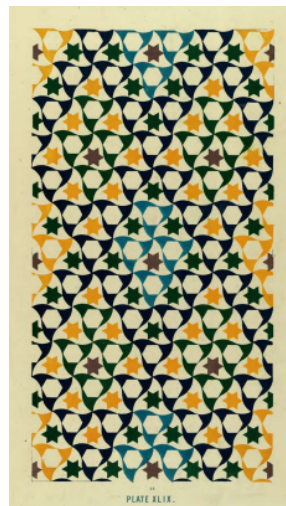


Figure 1