

THE MOSQUE

HISTORY, ARCHITECTURAL DEVELOPMENT
& REGIONAL DIVERSITY

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ISMAIL SERAGELDIN • WHEELER M. THACKSTON

with 378 illustrations, 170 in color



THAMES AND HUDSON

Page 1

The bismillah as part of a 'maze' designed and written in Kufic script by the Ottoman calligrapher Ahmet Qarahisari (died 1555). The accompanying text is a quotation from the Qur'an (112:1-4): 'Say, He is the one God, the eternal God, He begets none, neither is He begotten, and none is equal to Him.'

Frontispiece, page 2

The Ka'ba at Mecca as the centre of the Islamic world: frontispiece from an atlas of 1551 showing the orientation of Muslim countries in relation to Mecca, the vital determining factor in establishing the direction of prayer.

Pages 11, 71, 241

Carved ornament incorporating the name Allah within an interlaced star motif, from the north minaret of the Mosque of al-Hakim (990-1013), Cairo.

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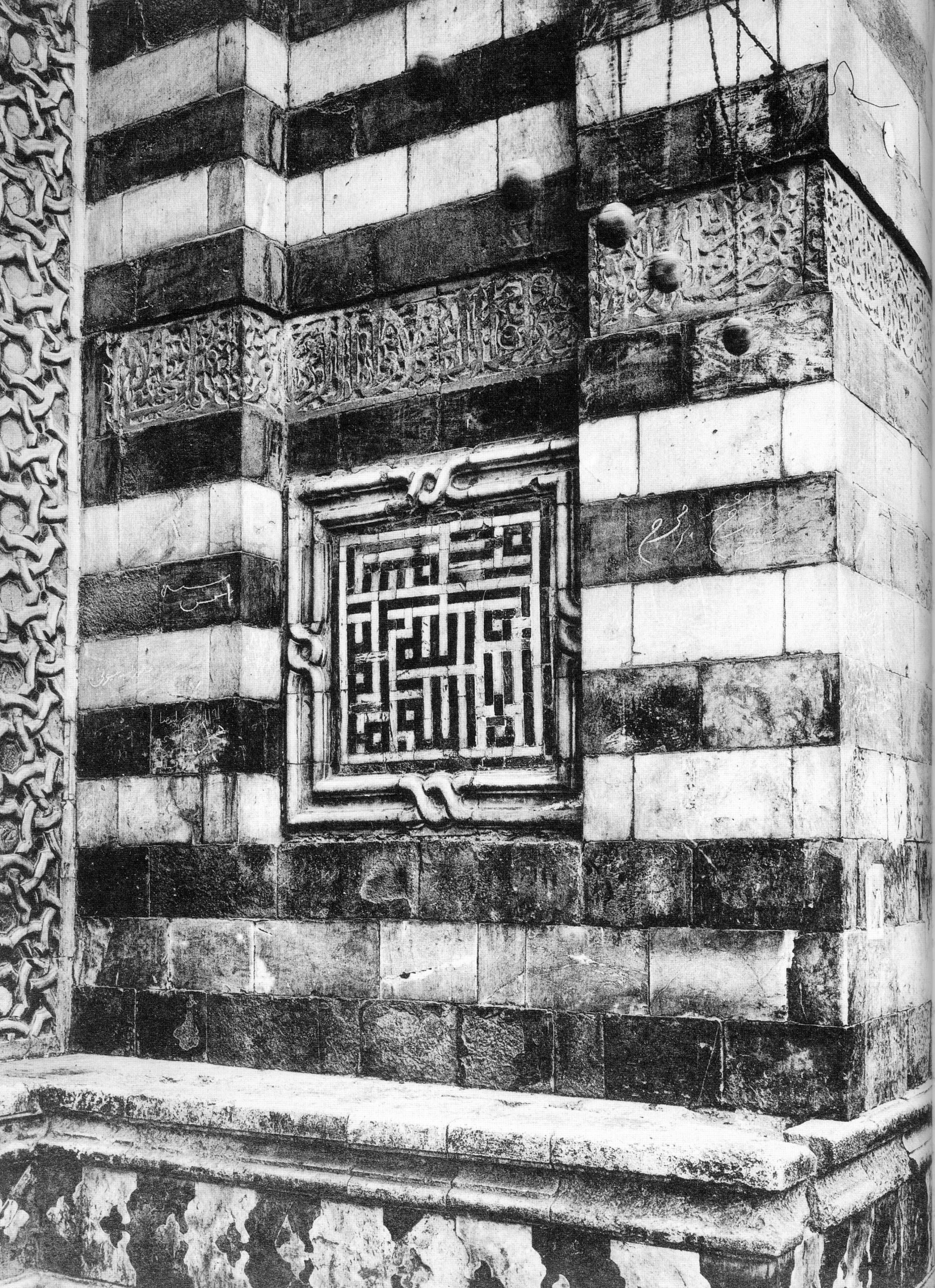
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THE ROLE OF CALLIGRAPHY

WHEELER M. THACKSTON

DEPICTION of the human form as 'graven image' has been a subject of debate throughout Islamic history. Although injunctions against any such depiction may have been honoured more in the breach than in the observance, as a mere glance at the history of Islamic – and particularly Persian – painting and manuscript illustration will show, it is apparent that within the confines of the mosque and other sacred and semi-sacred places – shrines, tombs, *madrasas* and the like – the strong prejudice against representation of animate forms, inherited not only from the Semitic (and partially the Judaeo-Christian Hellenistic) civilization of the Near East proper but also from Zoroastrian Iran, has been maintained.

Even in non-religious contexts, painters and illustrators, who have consistently represented human and animal subjects, have always felt that they were engaged in something that was at best 'suspect' and disapproved of, if not actually forbidden, and writers on the subject have resorted to unimpeachable precedent to justify such representation. A sixteenth-century writer, Dost-Muhammad of Gawashwan, justifies illumination and decoration by the precedent of Ali ibn Abi-Talib:

It is etched on the minds of the masters of the arcane that the garden of painting and illumination is an orchard of perfect adornment; and the arrangement and embellishment of Korans, which bespeak the glorification of the Word of the Necessarily Exalted, are connected to the pen and bound to the design and drawing of the masters of this noble craft.

It has been recorded that the first person to adorn with painting and illumination the writing of the Word that is necessarily welcomed was the Prince of the Faithful and Leader of the Pious, the Conquering Lion of God . . . Ali ibn Abi-Talib, and the gates of this commodity were opened to this group by the key of that majesty's pen. A few leaves (*barg*), known in the parlance of painters as *islami*, were invented by him.¹

And in an attempt to justify portraiture and the representation of human form, Dost-Muhammad resorts to the tradition that attributes the beginning of portraiture to the prophet Daniel:

If, by the externality of the religious law, the masters of depiction hang their head in shame, nonetheless what is gained from the writings of the great is that this craft originated with the prophet Daniel.

It has been related that after the Prophet [Muhammad]'s death, some of his Companions went to Byzantium with the purpose of presenting Islam. In that realm they met an emperor named Hercule. After many strange and wonderful things happened, [the emperor] inquired after the Prophet and asked of his deeds and acts. Thereupon he had brought a chest, which he opened. In it there appeared to those present a marvellous portrait that astonished the group. Since the onlookers were so gratified and pleased by seeing the portrait, the Companions were asked, 'Do you recognize this person?'

'No,' said the Companions, 'never have our eyes feasted upon such beauty, and never has the gate of illumination from the origin of this likeness opened to us.'

'This,' said Hercule, 'is the portrait of Adam, the Father of Humanity.' And thus he continued to show portraits until he produced one with a miraculous visage as luminous as the sun, whose regal being took Adam from the dust of nonexistence and garbed him with a cloak of purity. The admiration that the former portrait had elicited from the onlookers was nullified by the sight of this blessed face, and the perplexity with which they had been struck by the first portrait's beauty ceased with the contemplation of the sun-like beauty of the latter. . . . When the Companions saw that portrait, teardrops streamed like stars from their eyes, and a longing for the Prophet was reborn in their hearts. Seeing their sadness, agitation and tears, Hercule sought the reason from them.

'This,' they said, 'is a portrait of our blessed Prophet. Where are these portraits from, for we know that they conform to the actual countenances of the prophets?'

'Adam besought the Divine Court to see the prophets among his offspring,' said Hercule. 'Therefore the Creator of All Things sent a chest containing several thousand compartments, in each of which was a piece of silk on which was a portrait of one of the prophets. Inasmuch as that chest came as a witness, it was called the Chest of Testimony. After attaining his desire Adam placed the chest in his treasure house, which was near the setting place of the sun. Dhu'l-Qarnayn² carried it away and gave it away and gave it to the prophet Daniel, who copied [the portraits] with his miraculous brush.'

From that time forward the continuity of portraiture has continued beneath the azure dome of the sky, and the likeness that was painted by Daniel was meticulously preserved by the ruler of Byzantium in his treasury until the time of the death of the Best of Mankind [Muhammad]. Therefore, portraiture is not without justification, and the portraitist's conscience need not be pricked by the thorn of despair.³

Facing page

The Muslim shahada or creed decorating the portal of the Mosque of al-Muayyad Shaykh (1415-22), Cairo.



(Left) The interior of the Ulu Cami (Great Mosque; 1396–1400), Bursa, showing extensive use of bold calligraphic decoration on piers.

(Opposite) The entrance to the Islamic Center, Washington, D.C., decorated with a Qur'anic inscription (24:36, the Sura al-Nur). The text, in neo-Kufic script, reads: 'In houses which Allah has permitted to be raised to honour, for celebration, in them His name: in them He is glorified.'

Regardless of the source of the prejudice against figural representation, it was unmistakably there, even if early Muslim notables had little or no compunction about decorating their palaces with scenes filled with human and animal forms,⁴ and medieval Muslims, particularly in the Iranian cultural sphere, certainly never shrank from the portrayal of such forms in miniature painting. However, when it came to the mosque, it was a different story altogether. From the earliest times the written word was used as the major, and sometimes the sole, type of mosque ornamentation, with a total absence of figural decoration, for the written word was never subject to prejudice of any kind; and in Islam, where the Qur'an is considered the actual, literal Word of God, copying quotations from it in the most beautiful fashion possible has always been considered meritorious.

By the teaching of him to whom honor is incumbent, the tutor of the garden of nobility, sweet-tongued preacher in the realm of the imamate . . . guided by the inscription of the register of the city of knowledge, of which Ali is the gate, . . . everyone is commanded to strive to attain this noble and honorable craft [calligraphy] when he said, 'Have beautiful writing, for it is among the keys to sustenance.'⁵

In general, Qur'anic texts are selected for inscriptions in mosques, but quotations from the *hadith* and other pious phrases are also found, and whereas inscriptions are always in some sense appropriate to the

locations in which they are found, relatively few passages consistently occur in a specific location.

The treatment of writing as decoration has varied from as simple as possible, with no extraneous ornamentation of the writing, to the indescribably ornate. A good early example of utter, stark simplicity is the Great Mosque at Sousse, Tunisia (850), which has a single unornamented band of Qur'anic Arabic in Kufic script running around the courtyard. In later times perhaps nowhere has calligraphic starkness been used to such effect as in the Eski Cami, Edirne, where an entire bay is filled by the single word *Allah* ('God'). It is as stark and striking – and as modern-looking – as anything one is likely to find. The elaborate mosque is typified by the Friday Mosque (Bibi Khanim) in Samarqand, which is completely covered inside and out with writing in brickwork and on tiled surfaces. (No surface of the Masjid-i Shah in Isfahan is left unornamented, but most of the ornamentation is intricate floral tilework, not writing.) Another, but very different, type of ornate writing can be seen on the interior walls of the Ulu Cami in Bursa (completed in 1400), which are covered with masterful, and sometimes rather playful, specimens of Ottoman calligraphy, particularly of the *aynali* ('mirror image') type which was popular in later centuries.

The Qur'an, or any part thereof, in and on a mosque provides the viewer with a message and focus of meditation. It may incidentally be



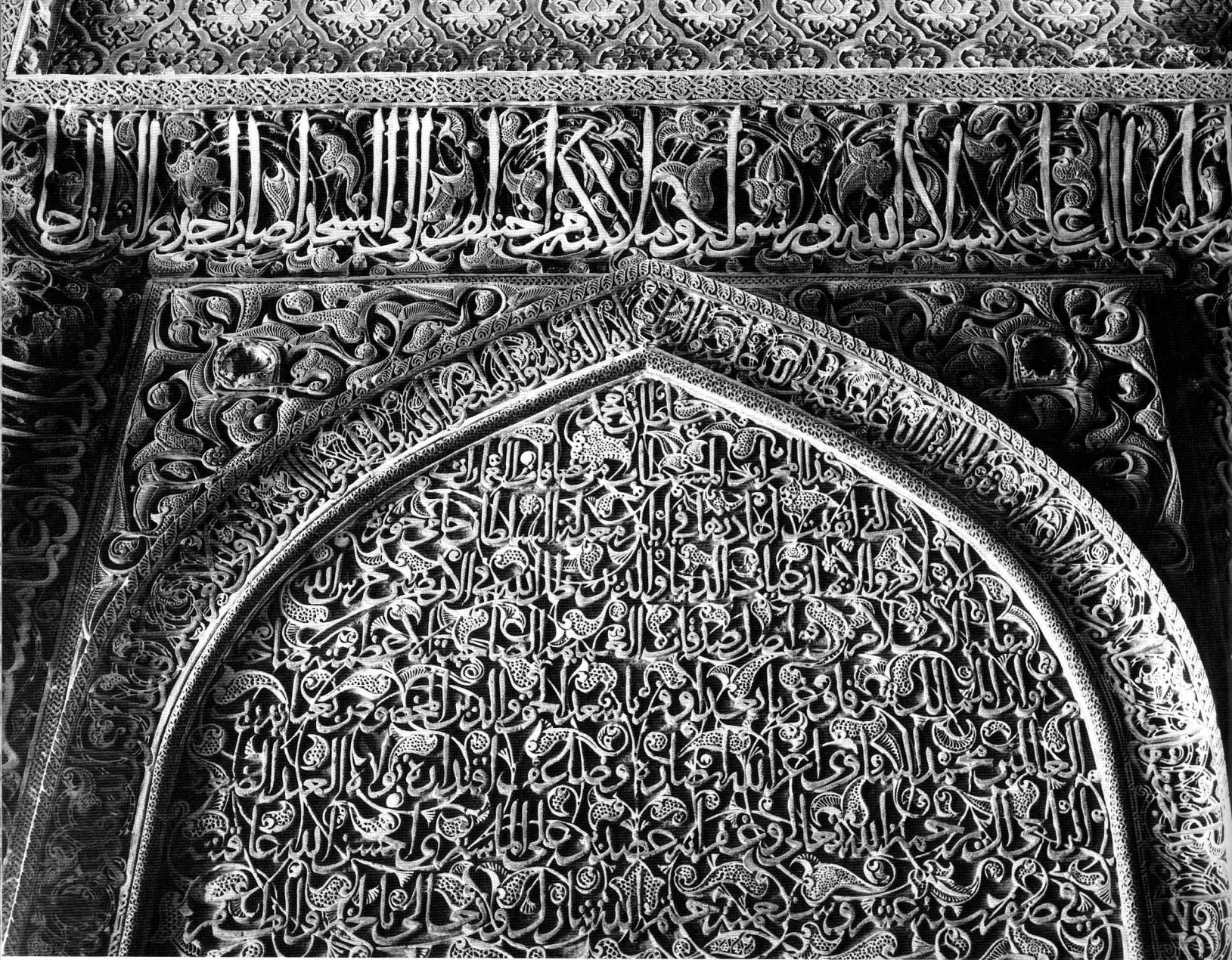
ornamental or decorative, but a Qur'anic inscription has value in and of itself. Like the recitation of the Qur'an, an act of piety that has merit in and of itself and is completely divorced from any questions of understanding the lexicon and grammar of Arabic, the mere existence of a Qur'anic inscription is equivalent to a Christian icon: it serves as a visible representation of supernatural reality. In the case of quotations from the Qur'an, God's word is revealed in the guise of human speech. In view of this, it should not come as a surprise that much of the inscriptional material found in a mosque or any other religious building is not – and, from the builder's or designer's point of view, need not be – readable. Here we say 'readable' and not 'legible', for almost all inscriptions are 'legible' in the sense that they are capable of being read – or deciphered – eventually if not immediately. In no sense, however, are they all immediately readable: some are placed in obscured areas; others are too high and too far away to be read; others are so intertwined and convoluted that it is beyond the ability of the average person to puzzle them out.

For instance, on the wall of the shrine complex of Khwaja Abdullah Ansari in Herat (built c. 1425), the pleasing rectangular geometric patterns will, after a good deal of scrutiny, reveal themselves as saying 'Subhana 'llahi 'l'azimi wabihamdih' ('Glory be to God, and by praise of Him'), but no one would suppose that an ordinary visitor to the shrine might stop to decipher the inscription, while the surrounding

inscription, 'qul kullun ya'malu 'ala shakilatih' (Sura 17:84: 'Say, Every one acteth after his own manner'),⁶ is both legible and readable. The mosque in the Islamic Center on Massachusetts Avenue, Washington, D.C., has a neo-Kufic inscription across the front entrance that is all but indecipherable; few, if any, pay much heed to it.

Here also should be treated the question of familiarity. In the pre-modern period it would have been assumed that anyone who was literate enough to care to read what was inscribed on a mosque wall would have memorized the entire Qur'an during the course of his elementary education, and recognition of a single word or phrase would have instantly evoked the memory of the rest of the passage quoted. And even if not everyone remembered the entire Qur'an, most of the texts used as mosque inscriptions were oft-repeated passages with which almost everyone would have been familiar.

Early mosques were restricted, of course, to the angular lettering later known as Kufic, since it was the only style of Arabic script in general use during the early Muslim period. During the Abbasid caliphate, with the development of round hands and the definition of calligraphic proportions leading to the canonization of the classic round scripts in the tenth and eleventh centuries, *thuluth* became more and more the calligraphic style *par excellence* for Qur'anic inscriptions and epigraphy, particularly in monumental settings. Angular Kufic with its myriad variations was always retained, but over time it became more and more




The mihrab of Öljaytü (1310) in the Friday Mosque, Isfahan, features an ornate carved stucco panel which includes sayings of Ali.

ornamental – and simultaneously less and less readable – with the incorporation of foliage, floriation and knotting into the letters. Of the classic scripts, *muhaqqaq* was rarely used in inscriptions and was generally reserved for copying large-scale Qur’ans; *tawqi* is the script of stucco inscriptions, occasionally being used elsewhere in epigraphy for donor’s attributions etc. to contrast with monumental *thuluth*. *Taliq*, reserved primarily for chancery documents, and later *nastaliq* both seem to have been considered inappropriate for Qur’anic mosque inscriptions, although non-Qur’anic – and usually non-Arabic – *nastaliq* inscriptions certainly occur, as in the Masjid-i Shah in Isfahan.

Thuluth inscriptions are very often run in white letters on a dark-blue background in what appears to be a band consisting of two registers, one above the other, with a horizontal line formed from super-elongated reversed *yas* separating the two. In actuality the two ‘registers’ are one, with successive words, or even parts of words, moving up and down and back and forth across the horizontal line as the inscription as a

whole slowly progresses from right to left.⁷ Another technique, used extensively during the Timurid and Safavid periods, was to create a band of lettering in the form of a register – or multiple intertwined registers – of monumental *thuluth* with exaggerated, elongated verticals, usually in white on a dark-blue ground, while across the top of the band, and through the verticals, was run a band of small Kufic in a contrasting colour, such as ochre or umber.⁸ Although the *thuluth* inscriptions are always readable, it is not seldom that the intertwining of the registers renders reading difficult, to say the least. In almost no case, however, is the Kufic band readable, for in elevated locations the lettering is always too small and obscure to be read from ground-level. Even when the Kufic can be seen, it can only be deciphered with difficulty since it lacks the diacritical apparatus necessary for easy reading. The purpose of the Kufic band is not, therefore, to convey a text, but to serve a compositional function by tying the tops of the *thuluth* verticals together and uniting it with the band as a whole. Indeed, the result was such a felicitous combination that the technique was used for centuries in Iranian mosques and religious buildings of all descriptions.

There is an enormous variety in the texts chosen for mosques, and the texts are almost always appropriate to the locations in which they occur.

Mashq 

Square Kufic 

Eastern Kufic 

Thuluth 

Naskhi 

Muhaqqaq 

Rihani



Taliq



Mashq – an early script, first developed at Mecca and Medina during the first century of the Muslim era.

Square Kufic – developed at Kufa, this script had by the ninth century become more ornamented and was the most influential in Islamic calligraphy generally.

Eastern Kufic – a more delicate version developed in the late tenth century, notable for extended vertical upstrokes.

Thuluth – fully developed by the ninth century, this script became the most popular for ornamental inscriptions.

Nashki – being relatively easy to read and to write, this became the most frequently used script for writing Qur'ans after it was redesigned in the tenth century.

Muhaqqaq – another popular script for writing Qur'ans, featuring shallow sub-linear curves with a pronounced flow from right to left.

Rihani – combines characteristics of Thuluth and Naskhi, the diacritical marks always being written with a finer pen than that used for characters.

Taliq – this 'hanging' script, developed by Persian calligraphers in the ninth century, continued to be used for monumental purposes even after a more refined variant – *Nastaliq* – was introduced in the fifteenth century and became the most generally used script for Persian documents.

There seems, however, to have been little marked preference for a particular text for a particular location. Yet the combination of texts chosen for any one building may well represent a programmatic selection to convey a specific agenda on the part of the patron, designer or builder. A good example of agenda in the selection of Qur'anic inscriptions is found on the Buland Darwaza, the huge ceremonial gateway into the mosque complex at Fatehpur Sikri built by the Mughal Emperor Akbar c. 1575. Carved in very low relief, the *thuluth* inscription consists of Suras 39:73–75, 41:53–54 and 41:30–31. The first section includes the phrases 'And the gates thereof shall be ready set open' and 'Praise be unto God, who hath . . . made us to inherit the earth'; and across the top of the gateway is 'Hereafter we will show them our signs in the regions of the earth' (41:53) – all particularly appropriate for a monumental gateway that was most likely built in celebration of a major military victory.

The selection of epigraphic texts may also represent a sectarian agenda. The inclusion of sayings by Ali in stucco on Öljaytū's *mihrab* (1310) in the Friday Mosque, Isfahan – not to mention the list of the Twelve Imams of the Shia also incorporated into the *mihrab* – marks the mosque as Shiite in sympathy if not in actual allegiance,⁹ just as the

roundels with the names of the first four Caliphs, often found in Ottoman mosques, mark them as Sunni.¹⁰ The formula used on the drum of the Madrasa-i Sultani in the Chahar Bagh in Isfahan (1706–14), *Allahumma salli ʿala Muhammadin wa ali Muhammadin wa sallim* ('O God, pray for Muhammad and for the family of Muhammad and grant [them] peace'), proclaims the building as unmistakably Shiite. Inscriptions that include references to the 'people of the house' (11:73, 33:33) should generally be interpreted as Shiite in sentiment. On the other hand, the ubiquitous formula *la ilaha illa ʿAllah, muhammadun rasulu ʿAllah* ('There is no god but God, Muhammad is the messenger of God') is by its very nature entirely neutral and is found on Sunni and Shiite mosques alike.

An exception to the general lack of preference for a specific text to suit a specific location is the *mihrab*. Many *mihrabs* contain one of two Qur'anic quotations containing the word *mihrab*, either 3:37 ('when-ever Zacharias went into the *mihrab*')¹¹ or 3:39 ('while he stood praying in the *mihrab*'). Other popular inscriptions for *mihrabs* are the Qur'anic imperatives to perform prayer, e.g. 11:114 ('Pray regularly morning and evening; and in the former part of the night'), as in the Congregational Mosque at Bistam, Iran (1302).



Examples of mosque lamps incorporating calligraphic ornament: (above) a bronze lamp, probably dating from the tenth–eleventh century, with pierced decoration; (right) a glass lamp of the late thirteenth century, from Syria, bearing bold decoration on the neck (including text from the Sura al-Nur) and body (in praise of the Sultan).

Mosque lamps with inscriptions other than the donor attribution almost always have the ‘Light Verse’ (24:35) or some part thereof:¹² God is the light of heaven and earth: the similitude of his light is as a niche in a wall, wherein a lamp is placed, and the lamp enclosed in a case of glass; the glass appears as it were a shining star. It is lighted with the oil of a blessed tree, an olive neither of the east, nor of the west; it wanteth little but that the oil thereof would give light, although no fire touched it. This is light added unto light: God will direct unto his light whom he pleaseth. God propoundeth parables unto men; for God knoweth all things.

Phrases from the same verse are also appropriately inscribed on the stained-glass windows on the *qibla* wall of the Süleymaniye Mosque in Istanbul.

Passages appropriate to domes abound in the Qur’an, one such being 35:41 (‘God sustaineth the heavens and the earth, lest they fail’), which is inscribed, to name but one example, on the main dome of the Süleymaniye.



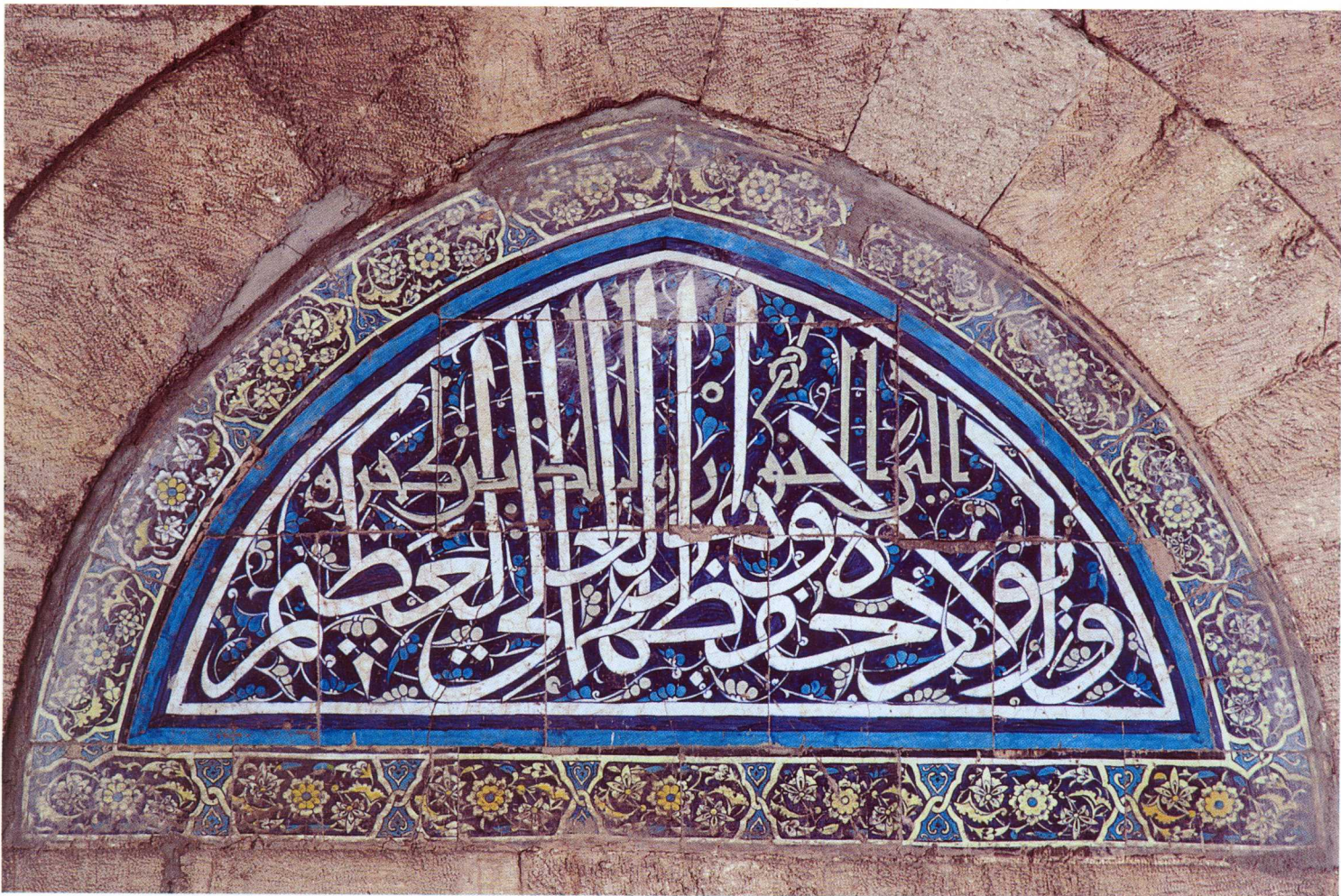


Calligraphy is considered one of the greatest Islamic art forms and inscriptions are used extensively in mosques, especially to glorify the name of God and quote passages from the Qur'an. This tile panel, intended for installation in a mosque, was produced in Fez, Morocco; it proclaims the name Allah in bold decorative Arabic script.



(Left) Hagia Sophia, Istanbul, Turkey, was originally a Byzantine church built in the sixth century; after the Ottoman conquest in 1453 it served as a mosque for over four centuries. A series of large calligraphic discs, installed in 1847–9, decorate the interior; they incorporate the names of the Prophet and other early leaders.

(Below) Tile panel above a window in the portico of the Fatih Mosque (1463–70), Istanbul; the Kufic inscription includes part of the 'Throne Verse' (Qur'an 2:255).

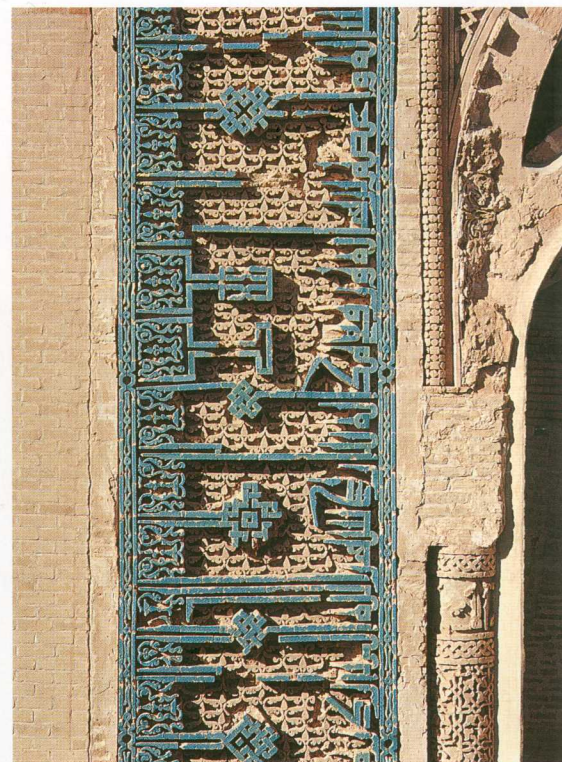
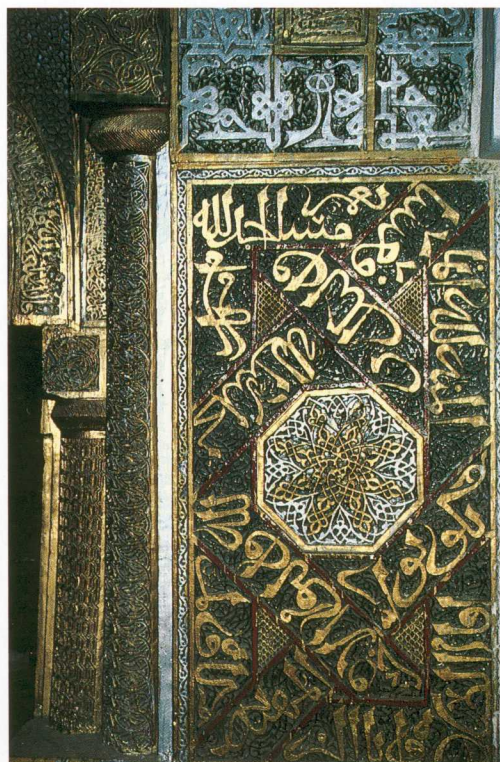


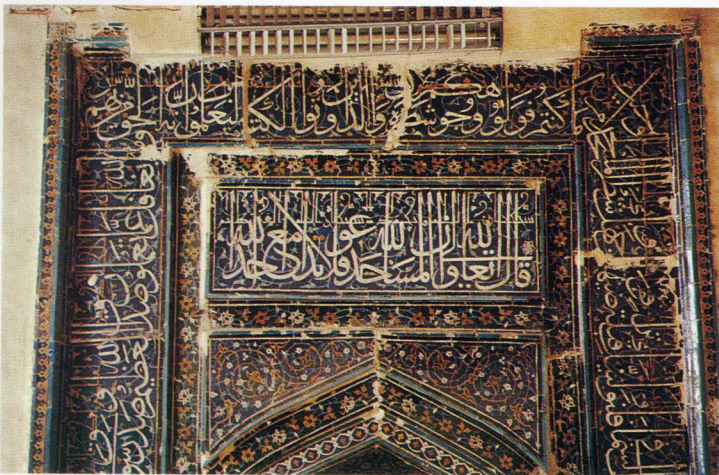
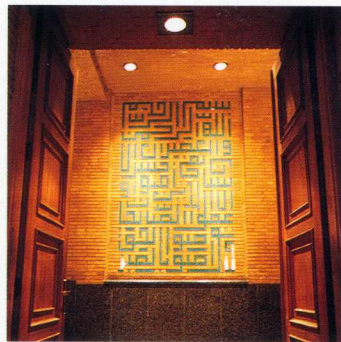
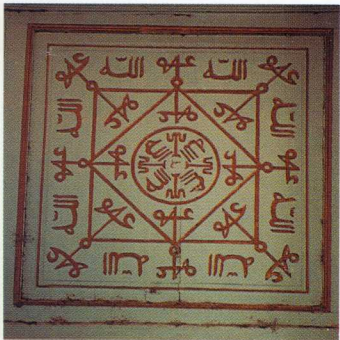


(Above) The use of cursive nastaliq script is found in many Mughal buildings. An inscription, written in Persian in a wall panel below one of a pair of windows in the Mosque of Wazir Khan, Lahore, Pakistan, 1634, extols belief in the Prophet Muhammad and warns of the terrible fate that awaits non-believers.

(Centre) The decorative band around the mihrab of the Mosque of Al-Bakiriyya, San'a, Yemen (1598), contains passages quoted from the Qur'an.

(Right) Detail of Kufic inscription carved in stone in the portal of the Masjid-i Juma, Herat, Afghanistan (built 1201–3, with later additions until 1500).





Another extremely popular verse, the 'Throne Verse' (2:255), also a favourite as a talismanic text, is found ubiquitously:

God! there is no god but he; the living, the self-subsisting: neither slumber nor sleep seizeth him; to him belongeth whatsoever is in heaven, and on earth. Who is he that can intercede with him, but through his good pleasure: He knoweth that which is past, and that which is to come unto them, and they shall not comprehend any thing of his knowledge, but so far as he pleaseth. His throne is extended over heaven and earth, and the preservation of both is no burden unto him. He is the high, the mighty.

Other Qur'anic texts of great popularity for inscriptions include: 3:18 ('God hath borne witness that there is no God but he; and the angels, and those who are endowed with wisdom profess the same'); 9:18 ('But he only shall visit the temples of God, who believeth in God and the last day, and is constant at prayer, and payeth the legal alms, and feareth God alone. These perhaps may become of the number of those who are rightly directed'); 9:33 ('It is he who hath sent his apostle with the direction, and true religion; that he may cause it to appear superior to every other religion; although the idolaters be averse thereto'); 11:7 ('And that the hour of judgment will surely come – there is no doubt thereof – and that God will raise again those who are in the graves'); 55:26–27 ('Every creature which liveth on the earth is subject to decay: But the glorious and honourable countenance of thy Lord shall remain for ever');¹³ and 112 ('Say, God is one God; The eternal God: He begetteth not, neither is he begotten: And there is not any one like unto him').¹⁴

Texts from the *hadith* also feature in mosque inscriptions, and those used almost always have to do with mosques. For instance, the text in stucco on the *mihrab* of the Friday Mosque in Urmiya, Iran (1277), is in translation 'The Prophet said, "Come forward to the prayer, and do not be among the negligent." And the Prophet said, "Be visitors in this world, and adopt mosques as your abodes"', which is entirely

appropriate to its location. Another *hadith* often seen particularly on mausoleums states 'The Prophet said, "Hasten to pray before [the time] passes, and hasten to repent before death"'. It is found, for example, on the Tūmān Ākā mausoleum at Shah-i Zinda in Samarqand (1405) and on a dome drum of the Bibi Khanim Mosque in Samarqand. The famous *mihrab* of Ölyaytü in Isfahan has the prophetic *hadith* which states that 'God builds a house in paradise for him who builds a mosque', as well as a quotation from Ali ibn Abi-Talib, *mani 'khtalafa ila 'lmasjidi* ('he who resorts to the mosque, ...').

Tomb mosques often have Sura 36 (*Ya Sin*), a favourite for funerals. An example is the Taj Mahal: across the four arches of the main building extends Sura 36 in its entirety. On the crypt cenotaph of Mumtaz Mahal is inscribed verse 3:185, so markedly appropriate for graves: 'Every soul shall taste of death, and ye shall have your reward on the day of resurrection; and he who shall be far removed from hell fire, and shall be admitted into paradise, shall be happy: but the present life is only a deceitful provision.'

In the iconography of painting, inscriptions are often used to identify a setting. A doorway with the inscription *Allahu wala sawah* ('God and none but him') and a portico with the Qur'anic inscription *wa'anna 'lmasajida lillahi fala tad u ma 'llahi ahadan* (72:18: 'Verily the places of worship are set apart unto God: wherefore invoke not any other therein together with God') immediately identify to the viewer that the building depicted is a mosque – even before the eye has been able to take in the action of the picture, all of which is entirely appropriate to a mosque setting.

Interestingly, two phrases found ubiquitously in painting, as well as in and on mosques, *almulku lillah* ('the kingdom is God's') and *ya mufattiha 'l-abwab* ('O opener of gates'), are not strictly speaking Qur'anic at all and do not even necessarily identify a building as religious. *Almulku lillah* is derived from a host of instances in the Qur'an where the phrase *lillahi mulku 'ssamawati wal'ard* ('God's is the kingdom of the heavens and earth') occurs. Another common variant, *almulku lillahi 'lwahidi 'lqahhar* ('the kingdom belongs to God, the One, the Almighty'), derives from Sura 40:16 ('Unto whom will the kingdom belong on that day? Unto the only, the almighty God'). *Ya mufattiha 'l-abwab* ('O opener of gates'), which is found, of course, over doors and gateways,¹⁵ is derived from an amalgamation of 7:40 ('Verily they who shall charge our signs with falsehood, . . . the gates of heaven shall not be opened unto them [*la tufattahu lahum abwabu 'ssama*], neither shall they enter into paradise until a camel pass through the eye of a needle'), 38:50 ('Gardens of perpetual abode, the gates whereof shall stand open unto them [*mufattahatan lahumu 'l-abwab*']), and 78:19 ('And the heaven shall be opened, and shall be full of gates [*wafuttihati 'ssama'u fakanat abwaban*]').

Throughout the vast extent of the Islamic world the written word as mosque ornament has traversed the full spectrum from the utterly simple to the unbelievably complex, but the written word has always remained, along with floral and geometric design, the only form of ornamentation considered appropriate for mosques, and the readability of an inscription is often, and justifiably, seen to be sacrificed to ornamentality.

Facing page

Calligraphic inscriptions in mosques occur not only in Arabic, Persian and Urdu, but also sometimes in the local vernacular.

(Top) Fragment of the restored tile mosaic work dating from the Umayyad period in the prayer-hall of the Al Aqsa Mosque, Jerusalem, 715.

(Centre left) A panel below the ceiling of the Masjid Jami Ayn Al Yagin'guri, Gresik, Java, Indonesia, repeats the names Allah and Muhammad around a central point; in this mosque, dating from 1556 (rebuilt in 1860), there are a number of such panels, in which the patterning was possibly influenced by the form of the Hindu mandala.

(Centre right) The name of God (Allah) in brick relief in the Al-Ghadir Mosque (1977–87), Tehran, Iran.

(Bottom left) Broad bands of Qur'anic text in thuluth script surround the *mihrab* of the Shrine of Qutham ibn Abbas (1370–1405), a cousin of the Prophet Muhammad, in the Shah-i Zindah mausoleum complex, Samarqand, Uzbekistan.

(Bottom right) A modern inscription in the prayer-hall of the Great Mosque, Xian, China (thirteenth–seventeenth century), identifies the building as *Qing Jin Si* (Mosque of True Purity).

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