

**APPLICATION OF KUFIC CALLIGRAPHY IN
THE DESIGN OF MALAYSIAN MOSQUE QIBLA
WALL**

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by

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AD	Anno Domini
AH	After <i>Hijra</i>
AS	<i>Alih Alsalam</i>
CAD	Computer-Aided Design
PBUH	Peace Be Upon Him
RA	<i>Radeyallāhu 'Anhu</i>
USM	Universiti Sains Malaysia

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APPENDIX A CHECKLIST FILLED ON SITE

APLIKASI KALIGRAFI KUFIC DALAM REKA BENTUK DINDING QIBLA MASJID MALAYSIA

ABSTRAK

Reka bentuk masjid tidak hanya dilihat dari luarannya, tetapi harus juga dipertimbangkan penggunaan ruang dalaman yang lebih terkesan. Hampir semua masjid yang dibina di seluruh dunia dimana Mihrab adalah dinding kiblat berperanan penting dalam mengarahkan operasi sujud ke arah Ka'bah di Mekah, beserta sebuah ruang kecil untuk mengimamkan para jemaah. Oleh itu penerapan kaligrafi Kufik terhadap reka bentuk dinding kiblat di masjid Malaysia menjadi fokus utama kajian ini untuk mengklasifikasikan jenis-jenis kaligrafi Kufik yang kurang diberi perhatian terhadap hiasan kaligrafi masjid-masjid di Malaysia. Lebih-lebih lagi, kajian penyelidikan yang memfokuskan pada penggunaan kaligrafi Kufik yang dianggap bernilai suci terhadap reka bentuk masjid. Kajian ini juga menggunakan beberapa kaedah pengumpulan data seperti kaedah kualitatif untuk menjawab persoalan dalam kajian ini. Suatu tinjauan pengamatan dilakukan pada tahap tinjauan dan analisis bangunan di lokasi. Lawatan turut dilakukan dari zon ke zon antara Oktober 2017 dan Januari 2018 untuk mengumpulkan data di setiap 15 masjid yang dijumpai secara rawak di sekitar Kuala Lumpur, Pulau Pinang dan Melaka. Tesis ini juga merupakan sumbangan yang signifikan terhadap subjek Senibina Islam di Malaysia. Selanjutnya, kajian ini akan memberi inspirasi kepada seniman Muslim lain di Malaysia untuk menggunakan kaligrafi Kufik dalam karya mereka.

APPLICATION OF KUFIC CALLIGRAPHY IN THE DESIGN OF MALAYSIAN MOSQUE QIBLA WALL

ABSTRACT

Mosque design should not be viewed solely from the outside form, but it should also be considered for the efficient use of its interior. In almost all mosques constructed around the globe, Mihrab, which lies within the Qibla wall, has essential tasks in orienting the Muslim operations of prostration in the mosques towards the Ka'ba in Mecca while at the same time offering the Imam the room itself in congregations. Thus, the application of Kufic calligraphy in the design of Malaysian Qibla wall in mosques is the main focus in this study to classify the types of Kufic calligraphy since there was a lack of attention given to calligraphy ornamentation in Malaysian mosques. Specifically, there is a lack of research papers that focuses on the usage of Kufic calligraphy in the design of mosques in Malaysia. This study was carried out by employing a qualitative method as well as an observational survey method to collect data. An observational survey was carried out through onsite building surveys and analysis. Visits were made from zone to zone between October 2017 and January 2018 to collect the data from 15 mosques that were randomly selected in Kuala Lumpur, Pulau Pinang and Melaka, to obtain the information regarding this study. This thesis is a significant contribution to the subject of Islamic architecture in Malaysia. Furthermore, this study would inspire other Muslim artists in Malaysia to use the Kufic calligraphy in their work.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

In the world's Islamic architecture, the mosque is the most famous and recognizable monument. Therefore the mosque and its components should be studied in great detail because they provide extensive knowledge about Muslims' economic, social and religious needs worldwide (Othman 2015). Contemporary mosque in Malaysia focuses on the design of the mosque's interior using traditional floral motifs made from local plants such as rice plants and lotus. Despite the richness of these ornamentations, however, there was a lack of attention given to calligraphy ornamentation in Malaysian mosques (Saber, E. Endut, et al. 2015). In any mosque architecture, the Mihrab and the Qibla wall are the two components in praying hall that are significant for prayer and prostration. To avoid misjudging the functions, all aspects of the shape of Mihrab on the wall of Qibla should be taken into account. The interior beauty of the mosque is also noticeable in these designs and styles (Othman 2015). This research was conducted to find out the application of Kufic calligraphy in the design of the Qibla wall in Malaysian mosques. The researcher was committed to identifying the uses and the types of the application of Kufic calligraphy and compare it with Naskh calligraphy, and also to identify the visual of Mihrab. This chapter will explain the statement of the problem, research questions, research objectives, significance of the study, research scope. In the statement of the problem, the researcher tries to find the previous literature related to the research topic. The research questions consist of the research guideline while conducting this research. For the objectives of the research will be the main research objectives. Next, for the significance of the study, is to identify the use of the application of Kufic calligraphy

in the design of Malaysian mosque Qibla wall. The research scope is 15 selected Malaysian mosques, which are located in Malaysia, specifically in Pulau Pinang, Kuala Lumpur and Melaka. Definition of key terms explains more about Kufic calligraphy, Qibla wall and Mihrab.

1.2 Background

Mosques, as a sign of Islamic architecture, must play a significant part in reflecting Allah the Almighty's superiority. There are many methods to make it successful, and one of them is through the high quality of aesthetic value (Othman and Zainal-Abidin 2011). The aesthetic value in Islamic art and architecture is portrayed by the greatest degree of motifs and ornamentation. Contemporary mosque developers usually concentrated on the magnificent looks of the mosque's exterior and left the users to manipulate the interior space (Othman and Zainal-Abidin 2011). Mosques also play a significant role in social life and in teaching Muslims Islamic faith (Saber et al. 2016).

Additionally, in any mosque architecture, a praying hall is the most important space in the mosque; also, it is the sacred area as is sometimes assumed (Kassim, Abdullah, and Taib 2014a). More often the prayer hall is huge and open where the congregants will perform their congregational prayers either during every day five-time prayers, Friday prayers or festivity prayers (Othman, Inangda, and Ahmad 2008). Next, the first element that can be found in the praying hall is the Qibla wall. It represents the wall in which the Mihrab is located and which points to Mecca. Mihrab is an architectural element, most often found in mosques, corners and schools. It is the cavity in the Qibla wall, usually a semi-circular niche in the middle of the Qibla (Othman 2015). The Mihrab is also called the room, the high place, the highest place

in the mosque, the holiest place, and also called the Qibla (Alfi 1998). The first use of hollow cones was likely under the era of Omar bin Abdul Aziz when the renovation of the building of the Prophet's Mosque, which took place during his days on Medina (Waziri 1999). Figure 1.1 shows an example of Mihrab found at the Mosque of Al Nasir Mohammad Ibn Qalawun. The using of the colourful decorated marble wall with engraved Mihrab and the use of the wooden platform (Mimbar) shows a creative combination of an idea.

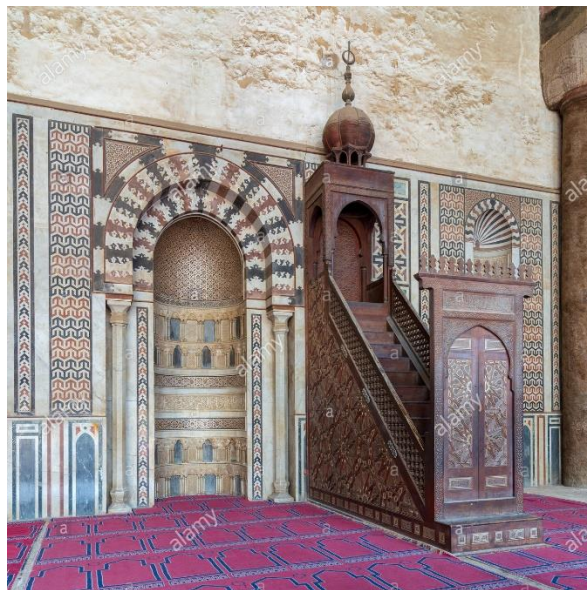


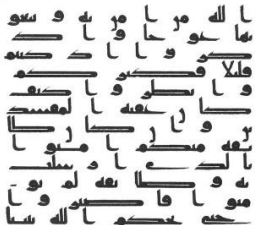


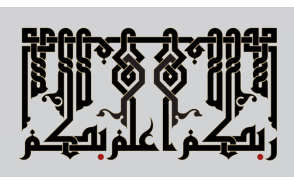
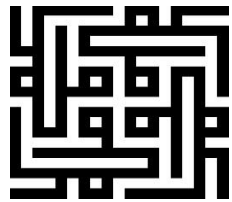
Figure 1.1 Colorful decorated marble wall with engraved Mihrab and wooden platform (Mimbar) at the Mosque of Al Nasir Mohammad Ibn Qalawun.

Source from <https://www.alamy.com/colorful-decorated-marble-wall-with-engraved-Mihrab-Mihrab-and-wooden-platform-minbar-at-the-mosque-of-al-nasir-mohammad-ibn-qalawun-image227525299.html>

Nowadays, mosques are decorated with ornaments and carvings have become a widespread and common phenomenon (Shaikh Ali 2003). Countries such as Malaysia would use traditional motifs from local plants such as rice plants and lotus. However, nowadays in Malaysia's modern mosques there is some adaptation of Middle Eastern motifs and geometric patterns (Othman and Zainal-Abidin 2011). In general, the motif applied to the ornamented surface of the praying hall in Malaysia is obtained

from a floral, geometric form as well as calligraphy from a Quranic verse or Prophet's hadith. The Quranic verse is the Arabic calligraphy which refers to the different types of fonts such as Thuluth, Diwani, Persian, Naskh, which result from a difference in the shape of the font and its rhythms, through the value of the artistic and aesthetic lines (Dessouki 2014). One of the most famous types of calligraphy is the Kufic calligraphy called “Kufi” relative to the city of Kufa in Iraq, built during the time of the Caliph Umar ibn al-Khattab (R.A.), it was derived by the people of Al-Hira and Anbar from the Nabataean calligraphy and called Al-hairi or Anbari and then called the Kufi. It led the Muslim conquerors to spread their religion and their laws and writings in Kufi. All written copies of the Quran before the fourth century AH were in Kufi and it became the writing decorated with the forms of plant leaves painted in gold and varied methods in writing. The Kufic calligraphy became one of the most important decorative elements in urban buildings (Alabbasi 1984). Table 1.1 shows the types of Kufic calligraphy.

Table 1.1 Types of Kufic calligraphy.

No.	Kufic Calligraphy Types	Sample	DeCalligraphyion
1	Early Kufic Calligraphy (Simple Kufic)		Is one of the oldest Kufic Calligraphy known since the first century AH, which is not followed by the flowering or bloom or complexity.
2	Leafy Kufic Calligraphy		It is the type of Kufic calligraphy that leaves thin edges of its edges of the characters, and the ends of which are decorated with floral leaves that extend to the bodies of the letters themselves.
3	Ornamented Kufic Calligraphy		It is the type of the Kufic calligraphy that occupies the entire area, fill the void with leaves of trees, and stems of the spiral plant, which forms the background of the written text.
4	Knotted Kufic Calligraphy		It is a kind of writing decoration, takes the shape of the knot in the overlap of letters, and depends on the elongation of the high letters to form the decoration.
5	Square Kufic Calligraphy		It is the one with the square, and the geometrical shape is visible in it, where the angles are located, and it seems to be the basis of the decoration using bricks.

Lastly, (Forsgren 2002) mentioned that in general, the most ornate decoration in a mosque is found around the prayer Mihrab, literally a "place of struggle," where people struggle for overcoming of earthly things through prayer. It's also known as

Mihrab. The Mihrab is located on the Qibla, or wall facing Mecca, as an indication of how Muslims should be facing during prayer.

1.3 Research Problem

Mosques are one of Muslims ' most significant cultural and architectural proof of deep and pure faith and of Islam's strength and greatness (Othman and Zainal-Abidin 2011). Malaysian researchers conduct extensive research on mosque architecture. In Malaysia, (Ahmad 1999) submitted an architectural classification of the mosque. He carried out a remarkable study of the physical appearance and constructions of the classification of Malaysian mosques. But, Ahmad's classification is mainly based on the physical or external appearance of the mosques that do not affect the interior space arrangements as well as the internal elements of the mosque.

Mosque plays a key role in reflecting Allah the Almighty's superiority (Othman and Zainal-Abidin 2011). In addition to being one of the most significant cultural and architectural proof constructed by Muslims expressing their profound faith and the purity of their faith and the strength of Islam and its magnificence, the researchers discovered that the development of many of the interior designs of the historic mosques expressed an aesthetic value. One of the ways to achieve that aesthetic value is through decorative elements, including ornamentation. By using the ornamentation in the praying hall, it welcomes anyone who enters the mosque, and it will create Tawhid and remember Allah (Norzalifa 2003; Omer 2002).

Contemporary mosques in Malaysia focus on the design of the mosque's interior using traditional floral motifs made from local plants such as rice plants and lotus without taking into consideration the ornamentation of Arabic calligraphy (Othman and Zainal-Abidin 2011). In countless research, (Saber, E. H. Endut, et al.

2015) claims that the floral and geometry patterns were discussed qualitatively. Despite the richness of this ornamentation, however, there was a lack of attention given to calligraphy ornamentation in Malaysian mosques.

Islamic calligraphy has been widely used in architecture, particularly in mosques and other religious building's interior and exterior decorations (Dilmi 2014). Calligraphy has an aesthetic significance as well as the message of al-Quran and hadiths that convey precision (Othman and Zainal-Abidin 2011). The two main calligraphies that were developed for Arabic writing were the Kufic and Naksh calligraphies. (Othman and Zainal-Abidin 2011), stated that there are many more calligraphic styles used in the Arab countries such as Diwani, Riq'a, Ta'liq and Nasta'liq but only Kufic, Naskh and Thuluth are the ones mostly used in decorating mosque walls of Malaysia. Their research covered a wide scope however not much has been discussed in detail regarding the application of Kufic calligraphy in the design of Qibla wall on Malaysian mosques.

The Kufic calligraphy is the first calligraphy to be used to write the parchment rolls of the Holy Quran. In the seventh century A.D, Kufic calligraphy was formed at Kufa, Mesopotamia (Iraq). The Kufic calligraphy is broad, daring and squat with ninety-degree angles. The line of this calligraphy is vertical, horizontal and straight. Kufic calligraphy was used on stones and the walls of mosques and metals because of its characteristics (Diringer 1985). Hence, one of the major calligraphy styles that is mainly discussed in this study is Kufic calligraphy. Muslim conquerors used this script to spread their religion and their laws and produce all written copies of the Quran before the fourth century A.H. It became the writing decorated with the forms of plant leaves painted in gold and developed into varied methods in writing. Kufic calligraphy

became one of the most important decorative elements in urban buildings (Alabbasi 1984). Therefore additional research should be made to study the use of Kufic calligraphy and compare it to Naskh calligraphy. Since Kufic and Naskh are the major styles that developed the Islamic calligraphy, it would be important to compare them with each other in the Malaysian context.

However, the researcher faced the issue of finding other references and information regarding Kufic calligraphy in Malaysian mosques. The information and research study on the use of Kufic calligraphy in the design of mosques is not in depth. Moreover, the study about Kufic calligraphy should be carried out more actively to provide a better reference for researchers in the coming future. The knowledge regarding calligraphy could be an interesting subject to inspire the new generation.

Furthermore, studies had mentioned that Mihrab and Qibla walls are the two components of essential prayer and adoration in any mosque architecture. All the aspects of the shape of Mihrab on the Qibla wall should be taken into account to avoid misjudging their functions. Throughout these designs and styles, the interior elegance of the mosque is also evident (Othman 2015). Since the Qibla wall is the most important part in the praying hall, it is necessary to decorate correctly, because otherwise the user's concentration is disturbed inside the hall. It should assist in creating the impression of serenity and tranquillity before praying. Therefore, further investigations should be made to study the appearance of the Qibla wall containing the Mihrab in Malaysian mosques.

The Mihrab, the main element in the mosque, demonstrates the inner beauty of the mosques that should not be wrongly understood (Othman 2015). The mosque and Mihrab role should be merged with social needs, especially the beauty with the

existence of motifs and ornamentation (Omer 2005). Mihrab has taken an extremely significant role in Islam and also Islamic architecture. Mihrab is a Mihrab that exists or attached and positioned at the centre of the Qibla. The existence for both Mihrab and Qibla wall in the mosque is compulsory to be clearly explained and defined. Besides, the worshipper, believers or followers are all agreeing that the Mihrab and Qibla should be prioritised and both of these elements have to be the first thing to be considered in the mosques as it is a functional aid or indication for the prayers (Ashraf 2006).

1.4 Research Questions

This research was conducted to find out the application of Kufic calligraphy in the design of Malaysian mosque Qibla wall. Therefore, this research is to answer the following research questions:

- 1- What are the types of Kufic calligraphy in the design of Malaysian mosque Qibla wall?
- 2- What are the differences between Kufic calligraphy and Naskh calligraphy?
- 3- What are the visual types of Mihrab used in the design of Malaysian mosque Qibla wall?

1.5 Research Objectives

This research is undertaken to achieve the following objectives:

- 1- To classify the types of Kufic calligraphy in the design of Malaysian mosque Qibla wall.
- 2- To compare the differences between Kufic calligraphy and Naskh calligraphy.
- 3- To identify the visual types of Mihrab used in the design of Malaysian mosque Qibla wall.

1.6 Significance of the Study

The significance of the study is to identify the use of the application of Kufic calligraphy in the design of Malaysian mosque Qibla wall. The study will identify the uses and the types of the application of Kufic calligraphy and compare it with Naskh calligraphy, also to identify the visual of Mihrab in the design of Malaysian mosque Qibla wall. The completion of the study will help to understand the use of the application of Kufic calligraphy in the design of Malaysian mosque Qibla wall. The data and information that has been collected could be used to provide ideas to help the interior designer and the architect to manage their designs regarding the interiors of the mosques that will be implemented in the future. By fulfilling the aims that were stated in the research objectives, this study will help other researchers who may be focusing on understanding the application of Kufic calligraphy in the design of Malaysian mosque Qibla wall.

1.7 Research Scope

This research is specific to the 15 randomly selected mosques in Malaysia. So, the research scope focuses on the mosques which are respectively located in Pulau Pinang, Kuala Lumpur and Melaka. The researcher also highlights the types of the application of Kufic calligraphy and compares it with Naskh calligraphy, also to identify the visual of Mihrab in the design of the selected mosques. Furthermore, the researcher goes through each of the 15 case studies in detail within Chapter 4.

1.8 Organization of the Thesis

This chapter has explained a background study of the application of Kufic calligraphy in the design of Malaysian mosque Qibla wall. It gives guidance to the study through the research problem, research question, research objectives and significance of the study. It highlights the scope of the study. Moreover, Chapter 2 explains the literature review in more detail regarding Kufic calligraphy, Qibla wall and Mihrab. Also discusses further information on the application of Kufic calligraphy in the design of Malaysian mosque Qibla wall. Researcher gathered useful information provided by the past researchers to support this study.

Furthermore, Chapter 3 describes the research methodology, including research design, research process, instruments and site observation. Qualitative method will be applied throughout the process of this research study. Besides, the site observation shows the details and information collected from the selected 15 mosques. The researcher described the findings among the case studies in next chapter. The collected data will be analysed in detail in order to answer the research questions and fill the gap in this thesis on what is the extent of the application of Kufic calligraphy in the design of Malaysian mosque Qibla wall.

In Chapter 4, the researcher analysed the collected data throughout the selected 15 Malaysian mosques. As mentioned, the findings of this study will be done by using qualitative method. Next, the findings are described in detail through the study. The findings are based on answering the research questions and achieving research objectives.

Lastly, Chapter 5 gives a summary of this thesis as well as discusses on the conclusion, research contribution, limitation of the study and recommendation for future research.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses further information on the application of Kufic calligraphy in the design of Malaysian mosque Qibla wall. Therefore, the previous studies will be explained in more detail regarding Kufic calligraphy, Qibla wall and Mihrab.

2.2 Ornamentation of Mosque

Ornamental meaning in Islamic art is a type of surface decoration as described by (Hattstein 2015). Plants, figure, or calligraphy depict it. While, (Mitrache 2012) states that an anthropological constant, used by almost all cultures as an inherent component of creative creations, is characterised as an element that has been added to a job of art to improve its aesthetic characteristics and to improve the depth and readability of its symbolic connotations. All forms of ornamentation occur in Islamic art, the calligraphic form predominates, and the figural forms are of less importance (Hattstein 2015), this was because of the ban on Islamic decoration in its figural form. This happened due to prohibition of the figural form in Islamic decoration. Therefore in Islamic architecture, most of the motifs are derived only from vegetal or floral, geometric shapes and calligraphy taken from a Quran verse or hadith from the prophet. While motifs represent a theme or visual picture and is repeatedly employed in work, as mentioned by (Forsgren 2002).

There are several functions in the ornamentation of Islamic architecture listed by (Grube 1978), Functions include the impact of the structure's weightlessness and the creation of joints and space-free restrictions. While (Seralgedin 1996) view

ornamentation as a glue in the connection between the Muslims and their design and architecture. Nonetheless, the famous scholars found it agreeable to the inspiration and particularly to the Islamic arts of the decorations that offer the feeling of the inside of an area with the articulation and decoration of the interior. Man is considered a reflection of the Almighty's inherent beauty, beauty in Islamic art and culture (Othman and Zainal-Abidin 2011).

In addition to the varied artistic influences included in the architectural declaration of buildings, the ornamentations in Islamic art and architecture also complement the architectural declaration. Ornamentation has also been noted in Islamic art and architecture, given its purpose and impacts the users (Kassim, Abdullah, and Taib 2014b). In the interior of the mosque, the ornamentation in the praying hall is important. It was achieved during this time to improve Islam's magnificence. One of the highest intentions of the mosque is to generate the impression that Allah is remembered. This objective is nice to assist the users of the mosque to prepare for the prayers (Kassim et al. 2014b).

2.3 Arabic Calligraphy

Arabic calligraphy is the supreme art that has converted the al-Quran phrases into a visual artwork. Calligraphy is joined letters and became the simplest form of Naskh calligraphy, then “plasticised” so that they could be angulated. As in the oldest Kufic calligraphy, stretched, prolonged, bent, thickened, overlapped, and complicated as in the Thuluth calligraphy. Many Quran verses are displayed in mosques, religious schools, scholars and houses in simple classic styles like the Kufic and Naskhi types. There are other kinds of calligraphy like Diwani, Riga and Thuluth (al Jarah 2017). There are many more calligraphy styles used in the Arab countries such as Riq’a, Ta’liq

and Nasta'liq but the Kufic, Naskh and Thuluth are the ones mostly used calligraphy styles in decorating mosque walls of Malaysia (Othman 2015).

Sometimes Arabic calligraphy is produced of sculpted wood as a screen and stucco on the wall in 3- dimensional arabesques, which supplement the geometrical structure (Othman 2015). In his academic studies, (Mahmood 1981) discovered that Islamic calligraphy is not some pieces of art that need to be looked at, read and left. They are telling stories of art that need to be understood and remembered because Muslims have taken it from al-Quran the most common words for Arabic calligraphy in the centuries on mosques walls. Calligraphy is full of aesthetic value and a message which expresses the accurate significance of al-Quran and hadiths. Last but not least, Kufic, Naskh and Thuluth are the most common styles of calligraphy in decorating the mosques in Malaysia (Othman and Zainal-Abidin 2011). In Malaysia, the insides and outsides of mosques also have wonderful instances of Islamic calligraphy, with native calligraphers sometimes employed side by side with foreign calligraphers to confirm the best effects. In Malaysia, this art mainly exists in mosques, religious schools and some rich people houses (al Jarah 2017).

2.4 Naskh Calligraphy

This elegant calligraphy is the most commonly used to reproduce the Quran since it is easy to write and read. Naskh implies' duplicate because it was used to copy al-Quran, rewrite the hadith and other religious books. To make al-Quran readable by Muslims who do not speak Arabic, the diacritical signs will be added, and its beauty and elegance will be improved (Obeid 2005). Figure 2.1 shows Al-Fatihah surah written in Naskh calligraphy.

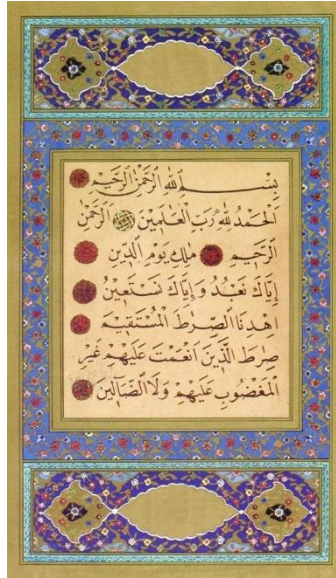


Figure 2.1 Al-Fatihah surah written in Naskh Calligraphy

Source from

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Naskh_\(Calligraphy\)#/media/File:FirstSurahKoran.jpg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Naskh_(Calligraphy)#/media/File:FirstSurahKoran.jpg)

2.5 Thuluth Calligraphy

This calligraphy is often difficult to read and complicated for someone who has no understanding of Arabic words. This calligraphy frequently links Arabic letters and intersects and cursives most of the time. The beauty of this calligraphy is used to embellish most of the mosque walls. Thuluth is famous for its decorative quality. This calligraphy is used on the Kiswa of Kaaba in Mecca (Hamzah 2007). Figure 2.2 shows a simple Islamic prayer in the Thuluth calligraphy.



Figure 2.2 A simple Islamic prayer in the Thuluth calligraphy. Translation: the grasping of God brings the knowledge of His comfort.

Source from https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thuluth#/media/File:Arabic_prayer_-_Thuluth_Calligraphy.jpg

2.6 Kufic Calligraphy

The term "Kufic" came from the term "Kufa" which represents the place it was developed (Imamuddin 1983). This calligraphic form is an angular one that only reached perfection at the end of the 8th century. For three hundred years until the 12th century, this oldest calligraphy has been used to produce al-Quran. As for other Islamic art components, Kufic calligraphy has also been altered over the centuries to fulfil various cultural tastes of the universe. Figure 2.3 shows the earliest Kufic calligraphy, 8th or 9th century (Surah 48: 27–28) Quran.

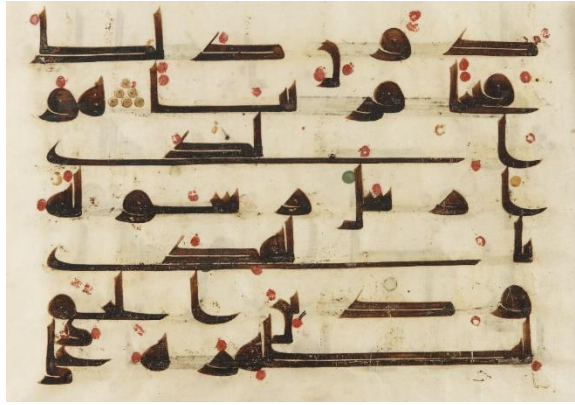


Figure 2.3 Earliest Kufic calligraphy, 8th or 9th century (Surah 48: 27–28) Quran.

Source from

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kufic#/media/File:Folio_from_a_Koran_\(8th-9th_century\).jpg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kufic#/media/File:Folio_from_a_Koran_(8th-9th_century).jpg)

2.7 Types of Kufic Calligraphy

The Kufi calligraphy was the oldest in the Arab countries, and they took great care of it (Kurdi 1982), which led them to invent different types of Kufic calligraphy, including the following:

2.7.1 Early Kufic Calligraphy (Simple Kufic)

This is one of the oldest scripts known since the 1st century A.H., which is not followed by the flowering or bloom or complexity, the writing of the pure and remained the preferred style in the writings of the memorial. However, the master of this kind are not devoid of a decorative character, it is quiet and calm and draws its decorative beauty of the suitability of characters, balance and consistency. This type of Kufic calligraphy overcome the characters with hardness and drought and tends to squat and prostrate (Hasan 1981). It was widely used in the Arab and Islamic world and was used until the end of the 3rd century A.H. or 9th century A.D. (Gomaa 1969). Examples of it are found in the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem, and Tuluni mosque in Egypt (Habash 1980).

Figure 2.4 shows Kufic calligraphy from an early Quran manuscript, 8th-9th century. (Surah 7: 86–87).

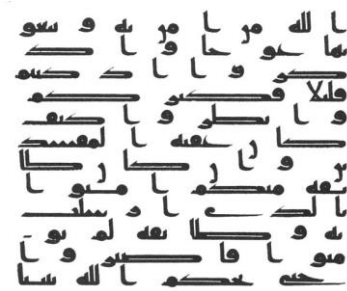


Figure 2.4 Kufic Calligraphy from an early Quran manuscript, 8th-9th century. (Surah 7: 86–87).

Source from

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kufic#/media/File:Kufic_Quran,_Sura_7,_verses_86-87.jpg

2.7.2 Floriated Kufic Calligraphy

It is the type of Kufic calligraphy that has thin edges of the characters, and the ends of which are decorated with floral leaves that extend to the bodies of the letters themselves. This has given it an aesthetic value. This type of calligraphy has spread throughout the Islamic world and noted from the extrapolation of the written texts of Kufic calligraphy that this type of Floriated Kufic calligraphy has evolved from the triangle Kufic calligraphy (Hasan 1981). This type was known in Egypt in the second to mid 3rd century A.H. and reached the height of the beauty in the days of the Fatimids era, as it was also known in Iraq, Syria and Iran, where it played an important role in the decoration of writing (Habash 1980). Figure 2.5 shows the Kufic calligraphy in the form of plants leaves.



Figure 2.5 Kufic calligraphy in the form of plant leaves (Hussain 2017).

2.7.3 Ornamented Kufic Calligraphy

It is the type of the Kufic calligraphy that occupies the entire area, fill the void with leaves of trees, and stems of the spiral plant, which forms the background of the written text, and it is a branch of the former type known as Floriated Kufic calligraphy (Habash 1980). Figure 2.6 shows the example of Ornamented Kufic calligraphy.



Figure 2.6 Ornamented Kufic calligraphy.

Source from <https://islamicarchives.wordpress.com/arabic-calligraphy/>

2.7.4 Knotted Kufic Calligraphy

It is a writing decoration, takes the shape of the knot in the overlap of letters, and depends on the elongation of the high letters to form the decoration, and this type is literally the complexity of the elements of linear and decorative elements. It was accompanied by the emergence of securitization and geometric decoration, and used in the 5th and 6th centuries A.H. It was known in the east and west of the Islamic world at the same time, and it received special attention in Persia and used it in its inCalligraphyions before others because of its prominent decorative nature (Habash 1980). Figure 2.7 shows the pattern of the Knotted Kufic calligraphy.

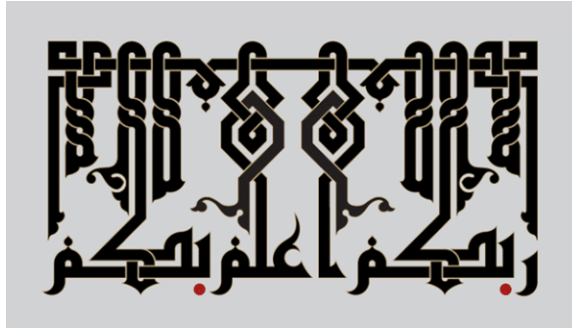


Figure 2.7 Knotted Kufic calligraphy.

Source from <http://www.arabic-calligraphy.com/arabic-calligraphy-styles/kufi/>

2.7.5 Square Kufic Calligraphy

Another type is known as the Square Kufic. It is the one with the square, and the geometrical shape is visible in it, where the angles are located, and it seems to be the basis of the decoration using bricks. The bricks are placed in horizontal and vertical positions. These shapes are geometric shapes. Therefore, this type of lines can be observed on the buildings widely because of the compatibility of the building blocks. The historians of art who have looked at the origin of this type of calligraphy indicate that the place where the man was guided to create in Iraq and the idea of decoration in different bricks (Gomaa 1969). Square Kufic calligraphy has been popular in the Abbasid era and has played a prominent role in the decoration of buildings and has given us wonderful pictures of this line. Pictures of the artistic beauty and the splendour of the output (Hussain 2017). Square Kufic is the most popular calligraphy found in the building walls, especially at the praying hall (Afifi 1990). Figure 2.8 shows an example of a geometric or Square Kufic calligraphy. It shows four instances of the name Muhammad (in black) and four times Ali (in white), which is often used as a tilework pattern in Islamic architecture.

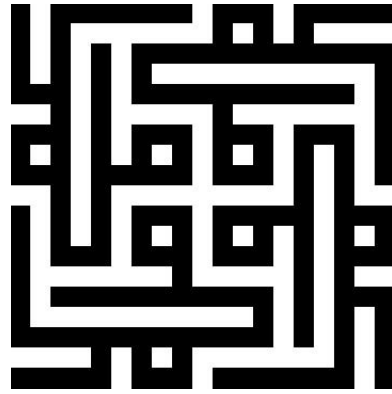


Figure 2.8 Example of geometric or Square Kufic calligraphy, showing four instances of the name Muhammad (in black) and four times Ali (in white); often used as a tilework pattern in Islamic architecture.

Source from https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kufic#/media/File:Kufic_Muhammad.jpg

2.8 Effect of Ornamentation in the Mosque on Worshippers

According to (Faruqi 1986), the magnificent and complex structure found on every region's art objects and in every century of Islamic history fulfils a particular and significant function that is reminiscent of Tawhid, aesthetic, structural, structure and space transforming. As the praying hall is a sacred space for Muslims, it should be a space that can generate a sense of the Creator's remembrance. The presence of Allah the Almighty must be sensed, in other words with ornament, particularly in the mosques. The emotions come from the effort to be closer to Allah (Norzalifa 2003). Masjid (Arabic name for mosque) decoration aims, from a theological point of view, to create a feeling of divine presence and simplicity by concentrating upon harmony and balance without consideration for excess or grandeur. The significance of the motif in mosque architecture was explored in (Othman and Zainal-Abidin 2011) study by mentioning that the mosque inside should portray something very sacred and peaceful. The aesthetic qualities give the atmosphere of welcome to Islamic believers. The achievement of beauty with motives and ornamentation can attract believers to Allah the Almighty with faith and complete submission. As (Norzalifa 2003) stated in her

Master's thesis, the decoration in the Malaysian arts is designed to meet the spiritual requirement, to symbolise the personal status and aesthetic value of the person, activities and occasions.

The aesthetic is one of the effects of applying the decorative motif within the mosque. The mosque interior should show the quality of something very sacred and peaceful, as mentioned by (Othman 2011). The quality of aesthetics provides a welcoming atmosphere to the faithful of Islam. The aesthetic values of ornamentation assist people to be attracted to the mosque. Aesthetic quality provides an atmosphere that draws Islamic believers into its space (Omer 2002; Othman 2011). The majestic physical look of structures is an attraction for visitors to beauty without denying it (Othman and Zainal-Abidin 2011). Another beauty and embellishment effect of the ornamentation as stated by (Faruqi 1986), this effect can be successfully performed through the decoration as patterns are mainly appealing to the eye on the decoration object. Some traditional geometric patterns, such as mandalas, may have powerful symbolic and emotional significance. According to (Kassim et al. 2014a), one of the things that attract worshippers in the mosque is the tranquillity of interior decoration.

Islamic ornamentation is a very important aspect which combines architecture and religion, making Islamic art and architecture serene, understandable, organised and extremely spiritual (Norzalifa 2003). In addition to structural items such as the arch and the column, which transform themselves into surface motifs and designs with the minor arts, a confusing visual application is made of certain methods and materials used to imitate others (Jones 1984). (Faruqi 1986) Claimed that the ornamental role is to transfigure the constructions by hiding their fundamental form or reducing their effect on the viewer. The structural information should also be disguised with transfiguration

materials overlays. The aim is the same, whether architectural or used, in order that significant masses be denied, and a less palpable truth substituted for them, whose forms alter even when examined. This happens by a repetition of individual columns, arches, honey-comb cells and in particular of multiple decorative forms: floral, geometrical and calligraphy (Hillenbrand 1994).

Decorations are a constitutive component, not an accident, and a complement to structure in Islamic architecture assist with an extra but not essential art of exaggeration (Omer 2005). There are several features used for decorating Islamic architecture. The task of creating non-tectonic values, of dissolving all these aspects, appears to be the structure, the balance of loads and stresses that the real mechanics of construction emphasise in other architectural traditions. The effects of infinite space, non-substantial nature, walls, pillars and vaults are well known by the different means by which weightlessness is produced (Grube 1978). They were developing a sort of decoration whose main aim was to provide a complex and complicated overlay of structures and items, covering the structural core (often a material distinct) of the same kind as exterior skin and 'mantle' (Jones 1984). Decorated in Islamic architecture, the surface of the building is both physical and visual, and its independence provides it at least equal significance to its architectural forms (Jones 1984). The Islamic art idea of decoration, autonomous of shape, matter and scale, is flexible, transforming the entire space environment according to (Othman and Zainal-Abidin 2011).

The decoration is not restricted to the surface covering in Islamic architecture but also contributes for transforming the space. The tendency is to the liquid surface: a design makes the shift from one plane to the next imperceptibly. The lines in a primary façade grid convert the ornamental component in the contour of a form as is done with