

# Islamic Art

## Chapter 8

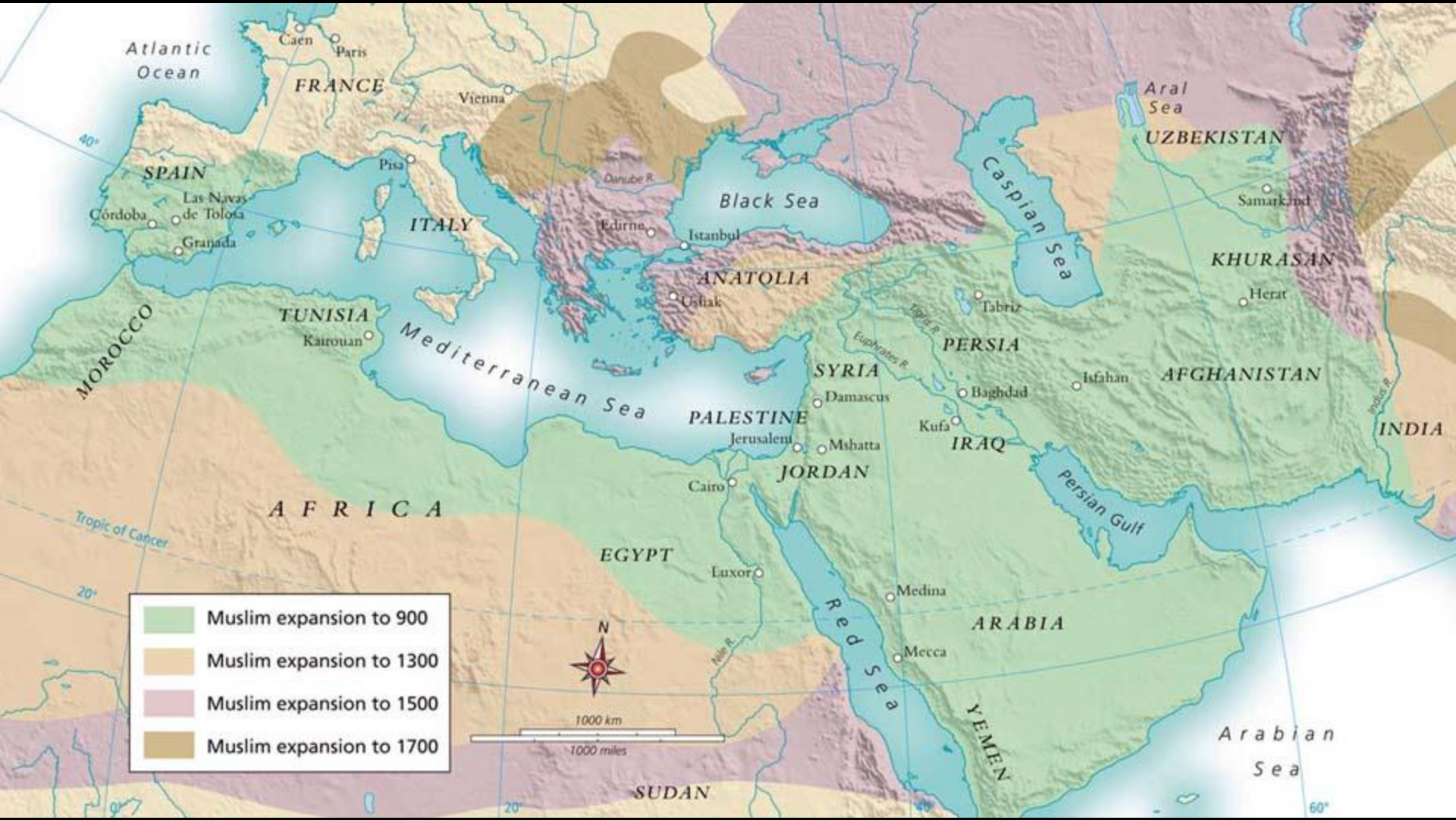
# Theme Card

## 5 pillars to 5 concepts

- The life of Muhammad
- Islamic sacred space—The Mosque;
- Muslim textiles
- decoration patterns in Islamic art—  
tesselations to arabesque
- the art of calligraphy and the Quran.

# Characteristics of Islamic Art

- Draw from the Islam faith as well as the diverse cultures that make it up
- Unlike Christian... it is **aniconic or non-figurative**
- Lots of geometric patterns & **arabesques-scrolling vines designs**
- Expanding patterns suggest timelessness

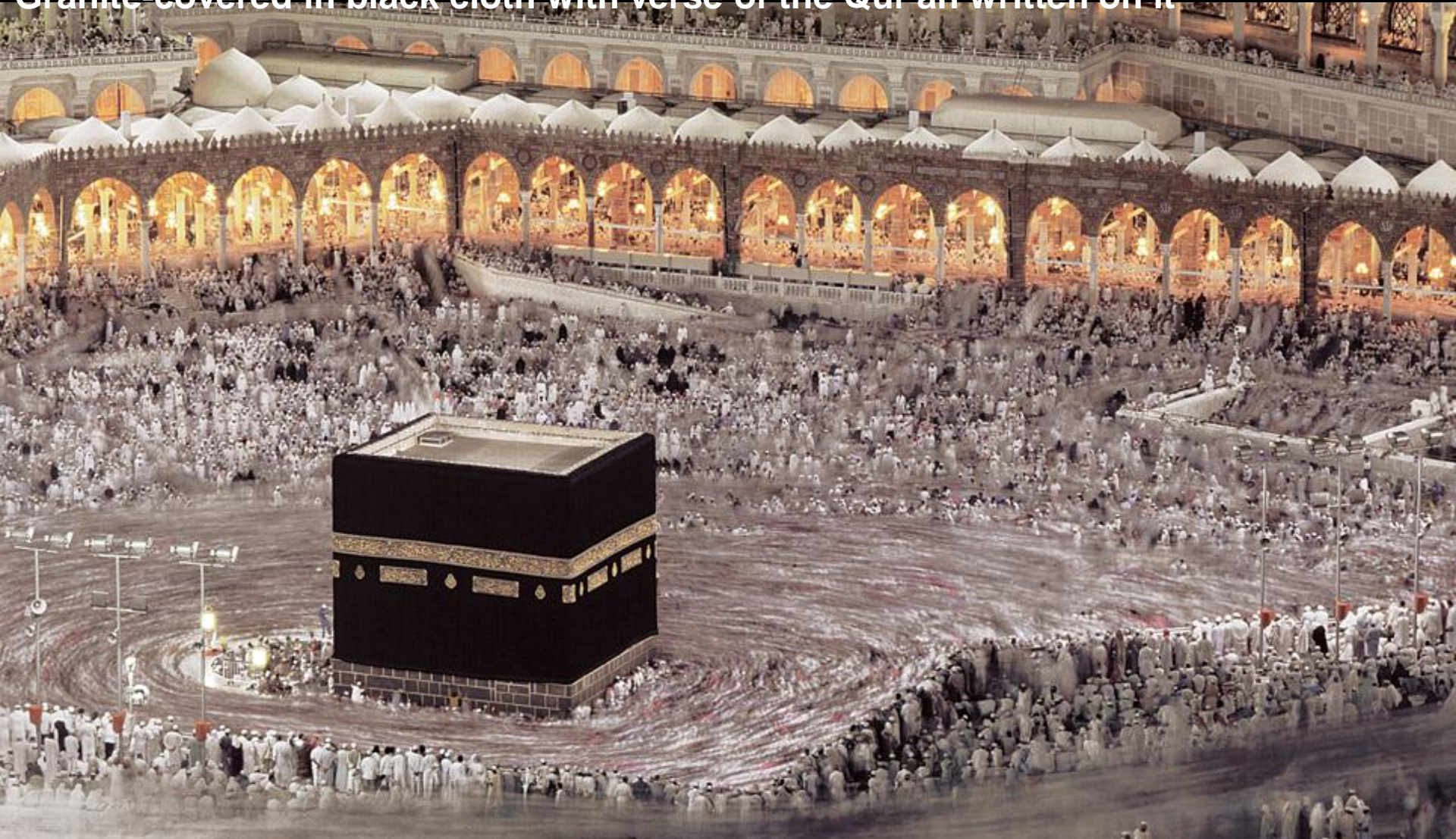




## **Title: The Kaaba, Mecca**

The Ka'aba (literally "the cube" in Arabic) is an ancient stone structure that was built and re-built by prophets as a house of monotheistic worship. It is located inside the Grand Mosque in Mecca, Saudi Arabia. The Ka'aba is considered the center of the Muslim world, and is a unifying focal point for Islamic worship

**Granite-covered in black cloth with verse of the Qur'an written on it**





**Title:** Aerial view of Haram Al-Sharif, Jerusalem

**The Dome of the Rock is not a mosque, but a Muslim shrine. Like the Ka'ba in Mecca, it is built over a sacred stone. This stone is believed to be the place from which the Prophet Muhammad ascended into heaven during his Night Journey to heaven.**





**Title:** Cutaway drawing of the Dome of the Rock

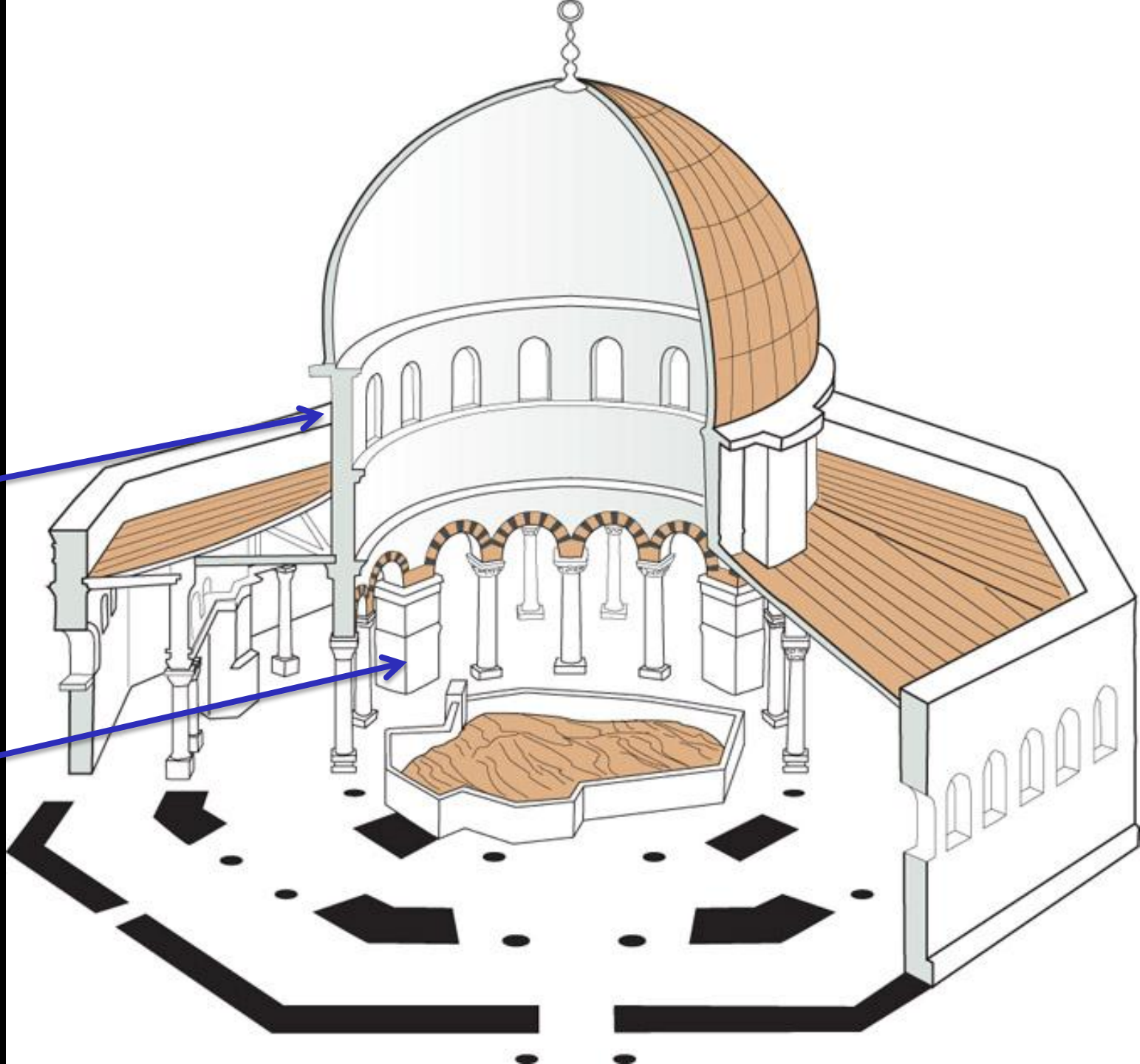
**Octagon with in an octagon**

**Golden dome**

**Dome sits on a tall **drum**-pierced with windows**

**Sits on an arcade of alternating **piers** and columns**

**Ambulatories**



**Title:** Dome of the Rock, Jerusalem (interior)

**Marble veneer and mosaics cover the inside, In a frieze the view must walk clockwise then counterclockwise to read inscription, pure light shines down onto the lower rock**





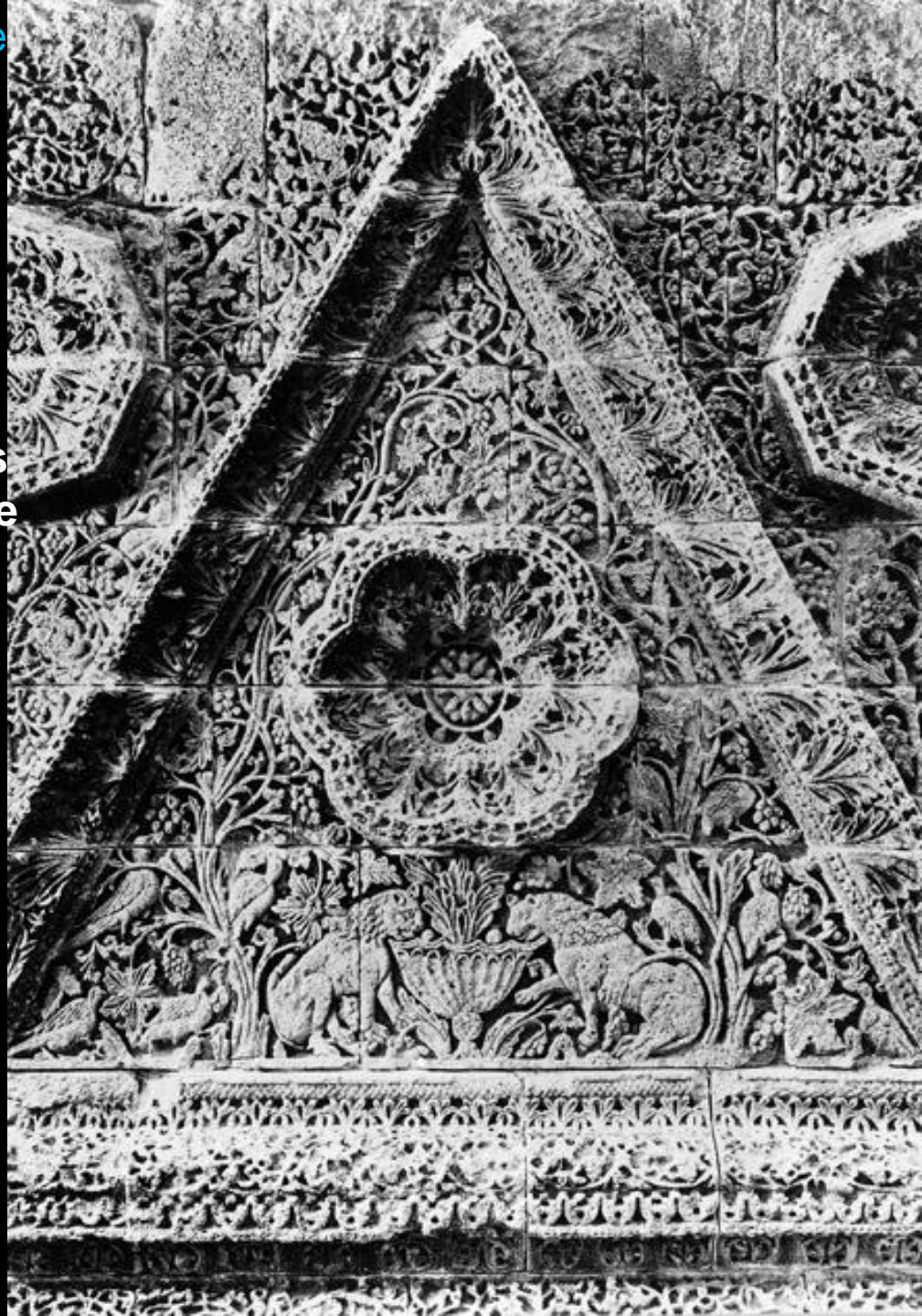
**Title:** Frieze, detail of façade of the palace at Mshatta

**Zig-Zag molding with triangular components**

**Triangular rosette carved in high relief**

**Intricate carvings in low relief of scrolls with animals and birds, urns and candle sticks**

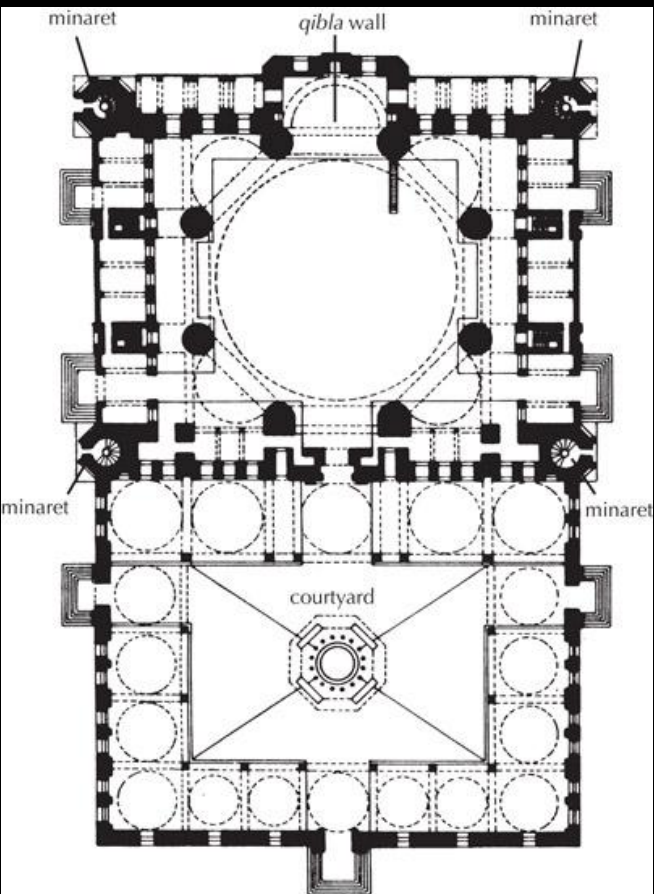
**2 lions drink from urns from which the tree of life grows**



Minaret- tower from which the criers call

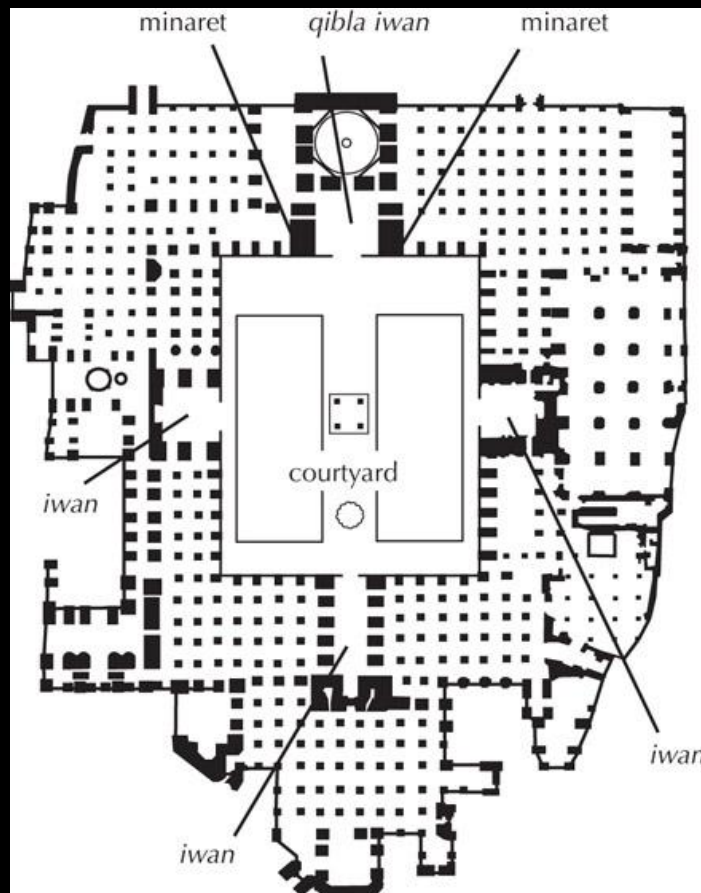
Qibla wall- Mecca facing wall      Mihrab- niche of the qibla

Masquara- enclosure for dignitary      iwan-large vaulted chamber

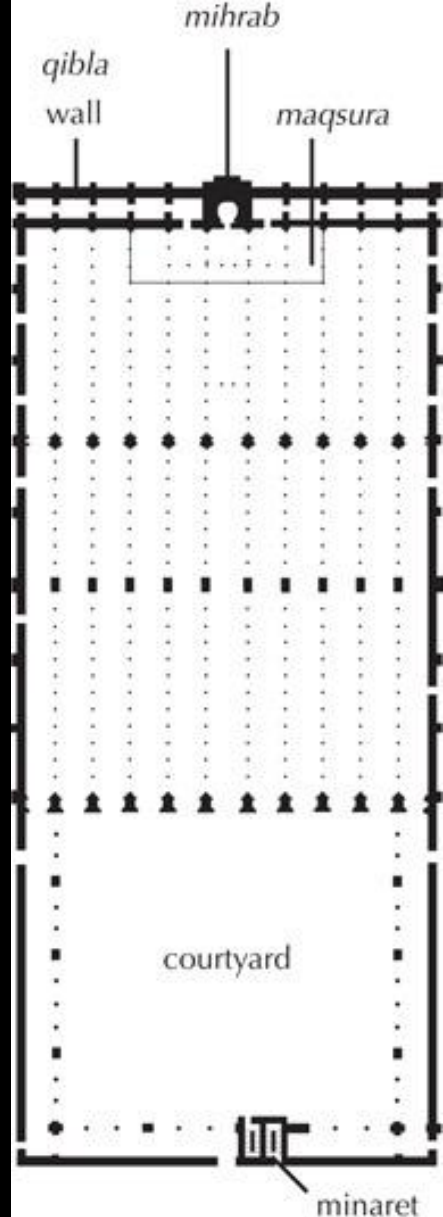


centrally-planned mosque  
Sultan Selim Mosque, Edirne

(Plans are not to scale)



four-iwan mosque  
Congregational Mosque, Isfahan



hypostyle mosque  
Great Mosque, Cordoba,  
after extension by  
al-Hakam II



**Title:** Prayer Hall, Great Mosque, Cordoba, Spain  
**Date:** Begun 785–86

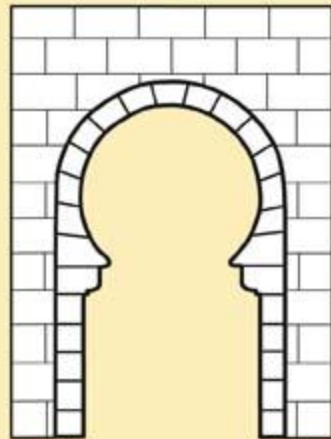
**Recycled columns from a wealthy roman province**

**2 tiers of arches**

**Increases interior space as well as air flow**

**Horse shoe arch**  
**-rounded arch that**  
**Curves passed its**  
**Supports**

**Alternating red**  
**Brick and white**  
**stone**



horseshoe arch





**Title:** Dome in front of the Mihrab,  
Great Mosque  
**Date:** 965

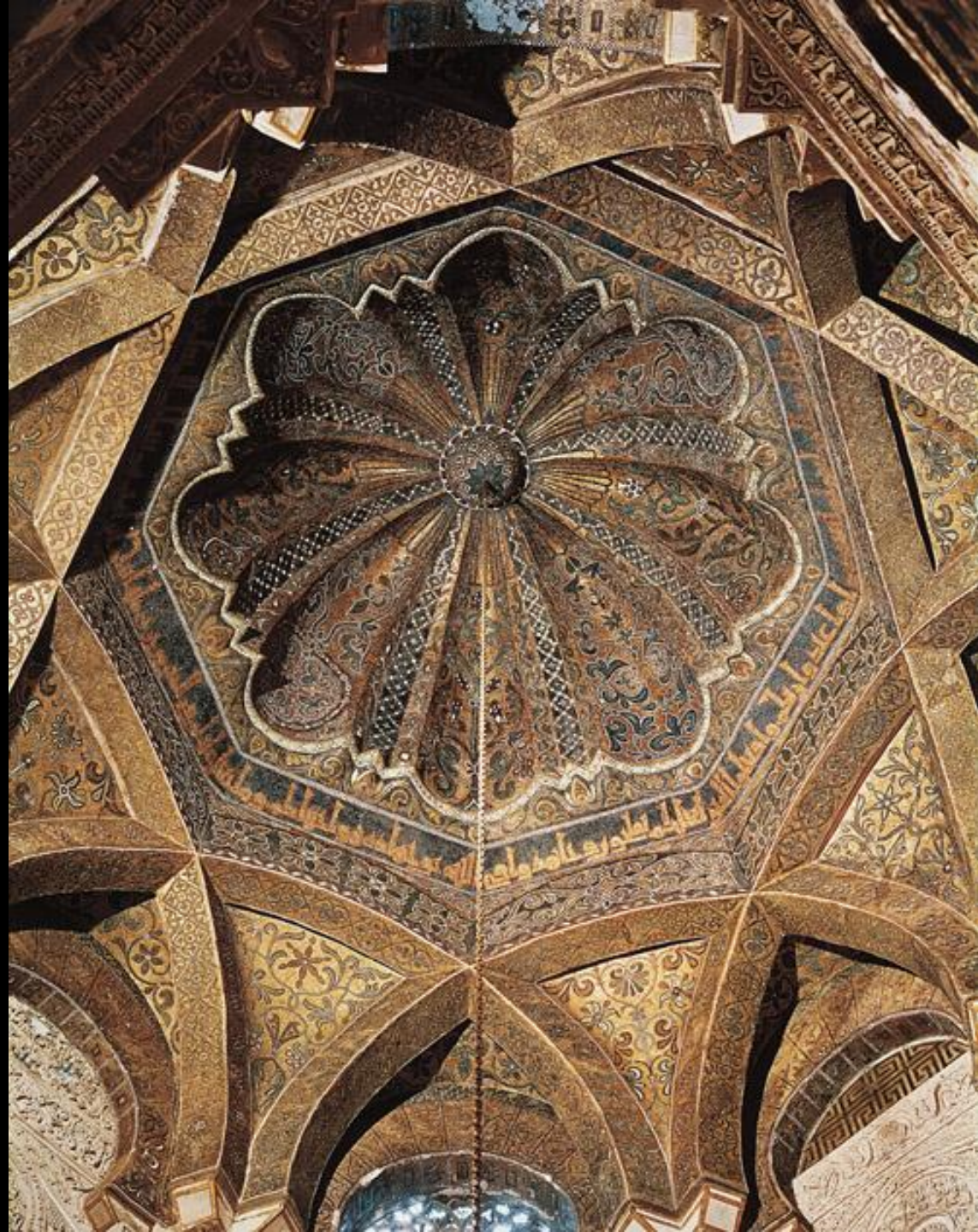
**Dome held by a web of  
intersecting arches**

**No supporting piers**

**Lavish patterns and mosaics  
with the inscriptions, geometric  
motifs, and stylized vegetation**

**Light hangs from center of the  
dome**

**Unique floral shape**



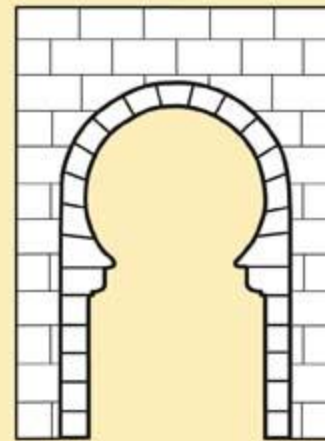


# Title: Elements of Architecture: Arches and Muqarnas

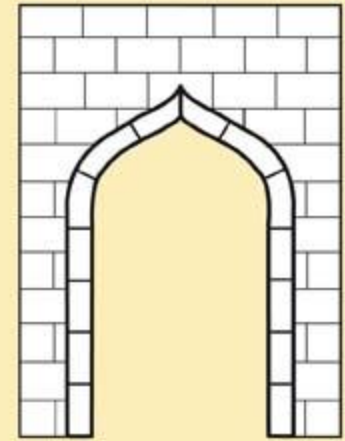
## Horseshoe arch

Pointed arch- arch which come to a point instead of a curve top

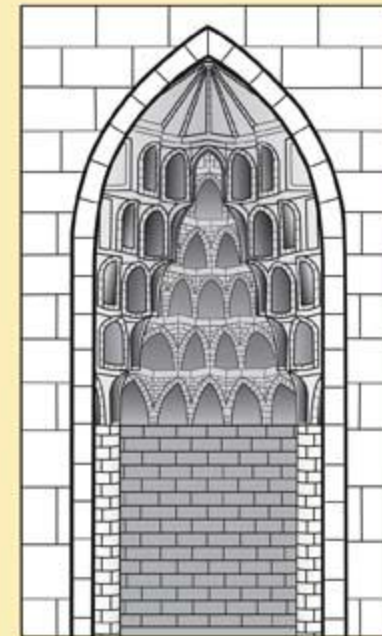
Muqarnas-is a squinch, interlocking load bearing niche shaped vaults, very ornamental



horseshoe arch



pointed arch



*muqarnas*

**Title:** Page from the Qur'an (Surah II: 286 and Title Surah III) in kufic script

**Medium:** Black ink pigments, and gold on vellum

**Size:** 8<sup>3</sup>/<sub>8</sub> X 11<sup>1</sup>/<sub>8</sub>" (21.8 X 29.2 cm)

**Date:** 9th century

**Calligraphy on vellum**

Page from  
Qur'an

Early ones only  
have 3-5 lines  
per page

Red shapes are  
punctuation  
marks

Brown ink  
Flat horizontals  
are elongated

Heading in gold  
and embellished

Large letters for  
sharing book





**Title:** Bowl with kufic border

**Medium:** Earthenware with slip, pigment, and lead glaze

**Size:** diameter 14½" (37 cm)

**Date:** 9th–10th century

White glaze mimic  
Chinese porcelain

Kufic writing as  
decoration

Black glaze on white  
slip

“Knowledge, the  
beginning of it is  
bitter to taste, but the  
end is sweeter than  
honey”

Letters elongated to  
fill the bowl's rim





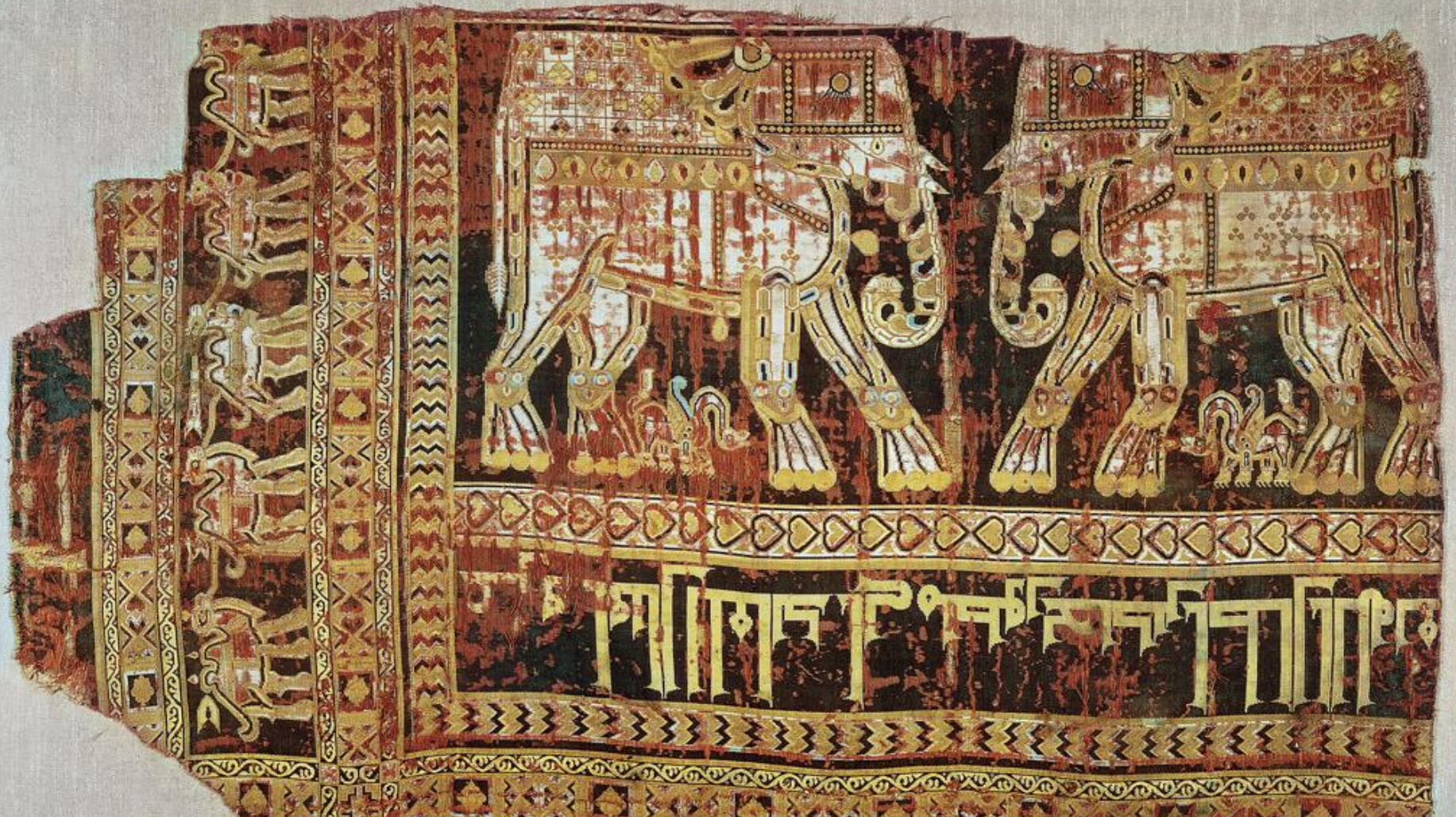
**Title:** Textile with elephants and camels (known today as the Shroud of Saint Josse)

**Medium:** Dyed silk

**Size:** largest fragment 20½ X 37" (94 X 52 cm)

**Date:** Before 961

Silk luxury item, made and personalized with a blessing in Kufic for a Commander  
Animals? Upside down?





**Title:** Court of the Lions, Palace of the Lions, Alhambra, Granada

**Date:** 1354–91

**Source/Museum:** Spain

Alhambra was a paradise on Earth

12 stone lions surround a fountain in a courtyard, originally a garden,

Miradors-projecting room with courtyard on windows on 3 sides

Colonnaded arcade with double columns, holding horseshoe and pointed arches





**Title:** *Muqarnas*  
Dome, Hall of the  
Abencerrajes, Palace  
of the Lions, Alhambra  
**Date:** Built between  
1354–91

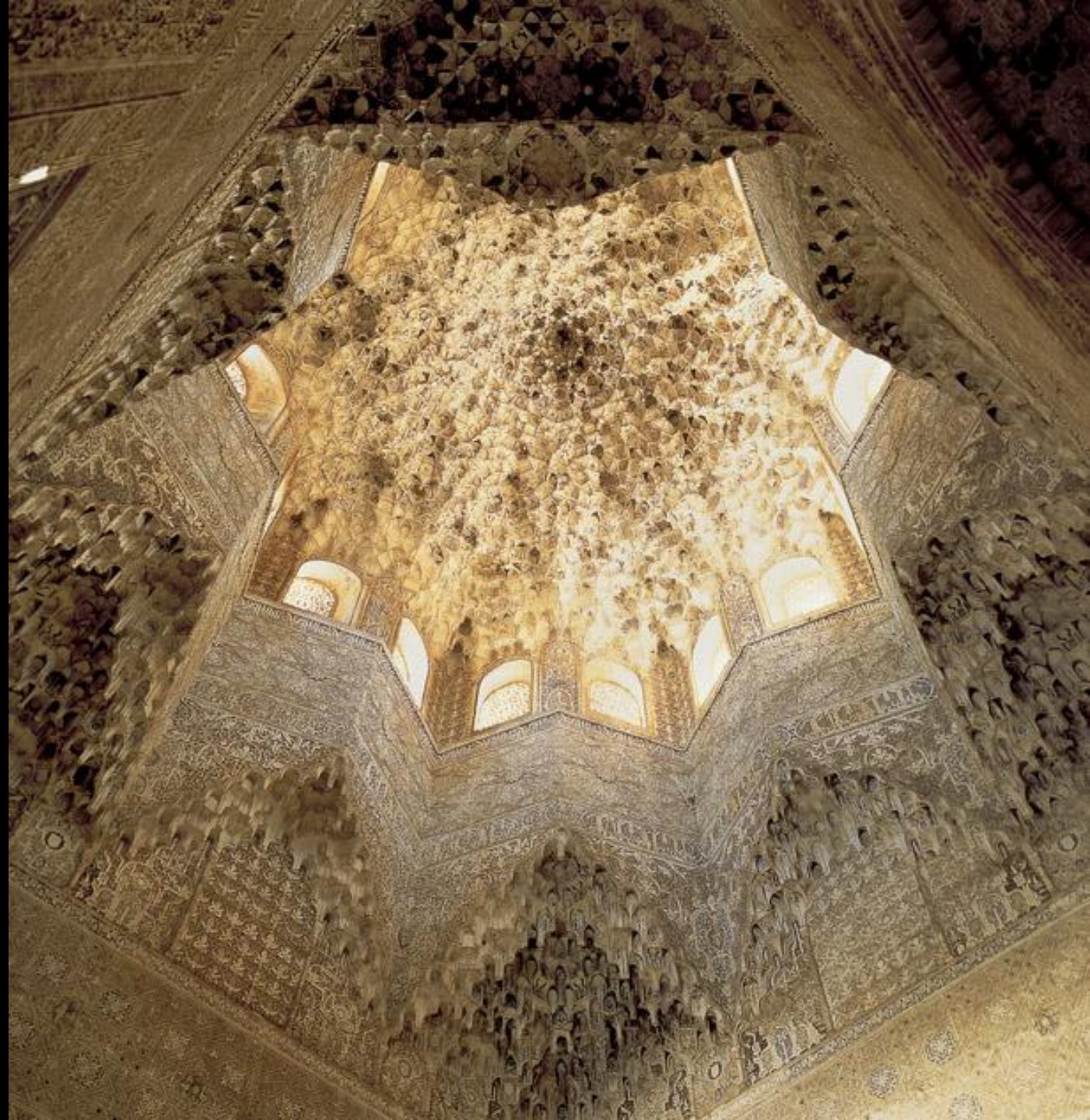
**2 stories was  
designed as winter  
music room**

**Star shaped vault  
created with  
muqarnas**

**Reminiscent of lace**

**Arched windows  
allow for light to  
enter space**

**Created good  
acoustics**







**Title:** Courtyard,  
Masjid-I Jami,  
Isfahan Iran

**Date:** 11th–18th  
century 14th-century  
iwān vault, 17th-  
century minarets

**In modern Iran**

**Was originally a  
hypostyle mosque  
but was refitted  
with 2 domes, then  
four **iwāns- large  
vaulted chamber  
with monumental  
arched opening****

**Now a 4 iwān  
mosque**

**Blue tile work**

**Pointed arches,  
gateway flanked by  
2 minarets**



**Title:** Tile Mosaic *Mihrab*, from the Madrasa Imami, Isfahan

**Medium:** Glazed and cut tiles

**Size:** 11'3" X 7'6" (3.43 X 2.29 m)

**Date:** Founded 1354

2 types of language Kufic on inner and cursive muhaqqaq on outer

Outer tells of the duties of the believer and heavenly rewards, inner is 5 pillars of Islam

Originally from a **madrasas- school for advance study (university)** now at the MET

Contrasting color scheme

11 ft tall and would have been on the qibla or Mecca facing wall

Mosaic, painstaking?





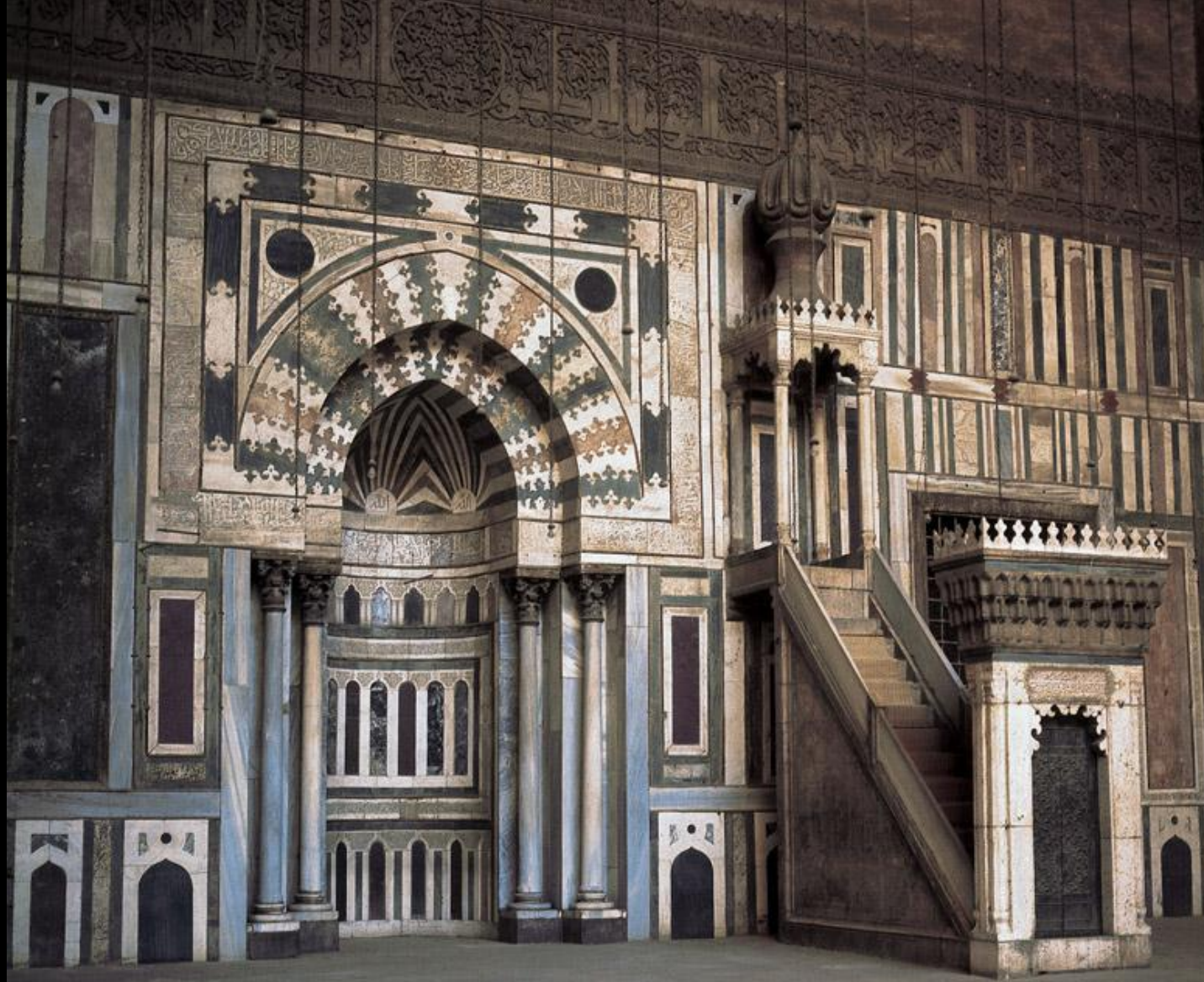
**Title:** *Qibla wall with mihrab and minbar*,  
Sultan Hasan  
Madrasa-Mausoleum-  
Mosque Complex  
**Date:** 1356–63

**Mosque, Madrasa,  
mausoleum  
complex**

**Iwan were used as  
classroom**

**Architectural  
elements?**

**Something odd?**







**Title:** Mosque of Sultan Selim, Edirne

**Date:** 1568–75

**Minarets-** fluted walls and needle nosed spires 295 high, 12.5ft in diameter

**Royal mosques** were allowed more than 2 minarets

**Dome** in 102 ft in diameter, larger than Hagia Sophia, mosque and masdrasa, hospital, burial ground, and charity kitchen, starts square and shifts to octagon





## **Interior**

**Open expanse under the vast dome**

**Dome appears to be floating on light**

**Double and triple arches**

**Through arches you can see the meeting of the squared walls**

**Lavish decorations on dome ceiling, decorated arches alter colors**

**Title:** Griffin  
**Medium:** Bronze  
**Size:** height 42 $\frac{1}{8}$ " (107 cm)  
**Date:** 11th century

**Griffin no Girffin**

**Bronze**

**Ornate and large bronze ornament  
Probably a water spout**

**Incised carvings of feathers,  
scales, and trappings**

**Thighs have animals in medallions  
with kufic lettering**

**Balance and detail**

**Almost 4 feet tall**

**Was spolia of war probably  
Egyptian but stolen by the Pisans**







**Artist:** Shazi  
**Title:** Pen Box  
**Medium:** Brass with inlaid silver, copper, and black organic material  
**Size:** height 2", length 12<sup>5</sup>/<sub>8</sub>", width 2<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>" (5 X 31.4 X 6.4 cm)  
**Date:** 1210–11

**Educated leaders showed their class by getting personalized goods**  
**Brass box inlaid with silver inscriptions of honor and blessings**  
**Scrolls as wells as animal figures lace through the kufic lettering**  
**Belonged to chief vizier who died 10 years later in an invasion**

**Title:** Mamluk glass oil lamp

**Medium:** Glass, polychrome enamel, and gold

**Size:** height 12" (30.5 cm)

**Date:** c. 1355

**Made with sand and ash**

**Adapted early glass practices to new forms**

**They were innovated in the application of enameled decorations of gold and other colors**

**Many floral motifs weave their way up and around the body and neck of the base**

**Registers invert the gold and purple to create separation and contrast**





**Title:** *The Macy Jug*

**Medium:** Composite body glazed, painted fritware and incised (glaze partially stained with cobalt), with pierced outer shell

**Size:** 6 <sup>5</sup>/<sub>8</sub> X 7 <sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub>" (16.8 X 19.7 cm)

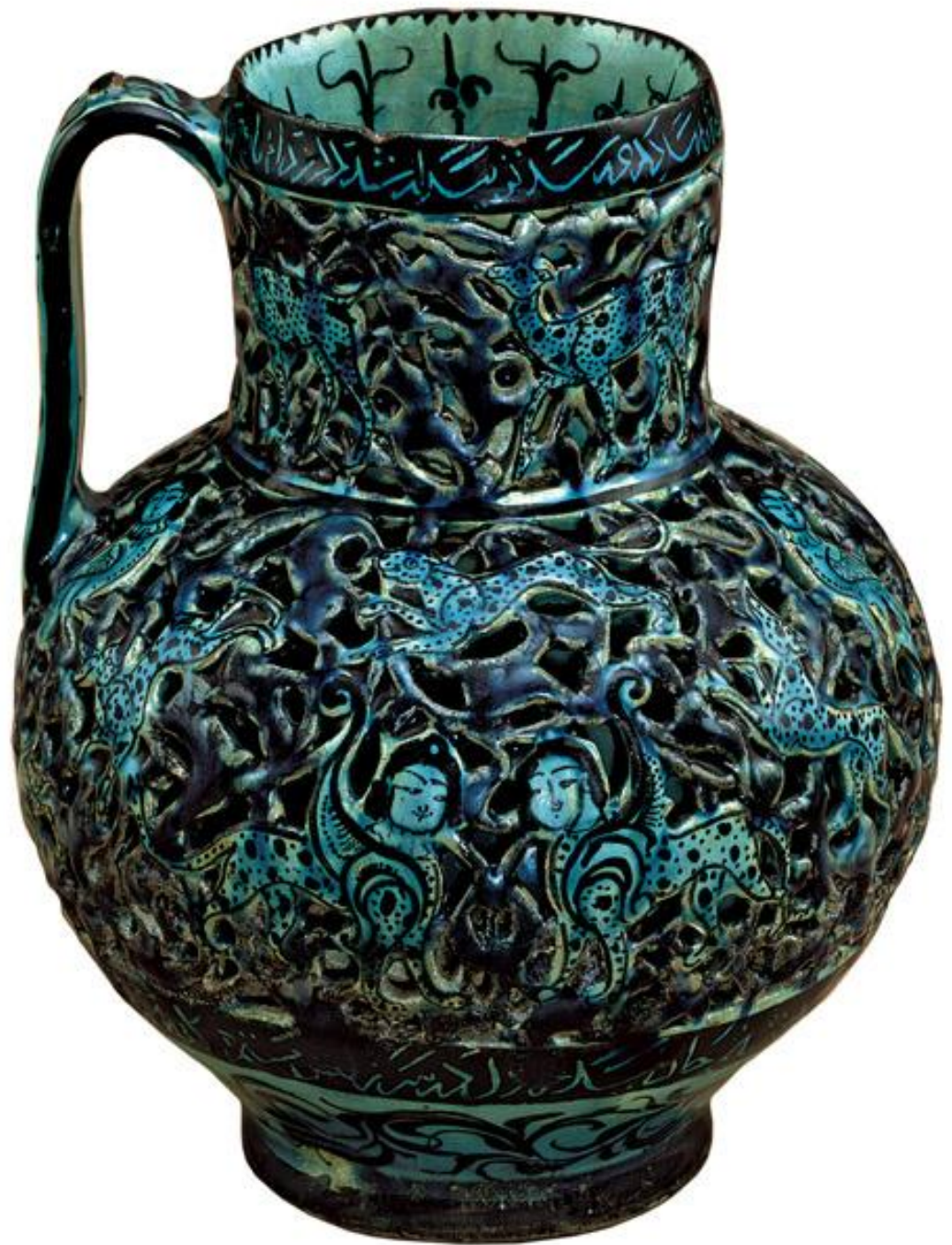
**Date:** 1215–16

**Painted under glazed bowls and jugs were decorated with curving vines and leaving**

**Double walled effect  
Turquoise over black**

**Animals and mythical creatures walk freely through the tangle of vines**

**Luster, a transparent glaze with a metallic sheen was applied over the colored areas**

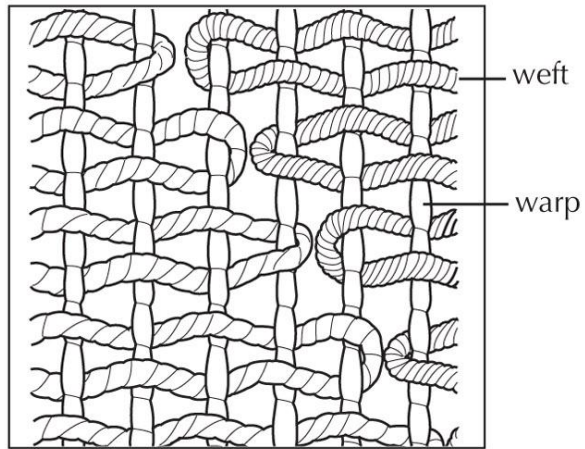




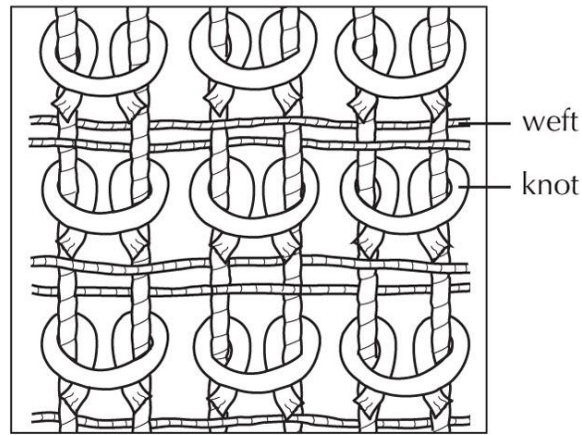
**Title:** Two women weaving, Canakkale province, Turkey



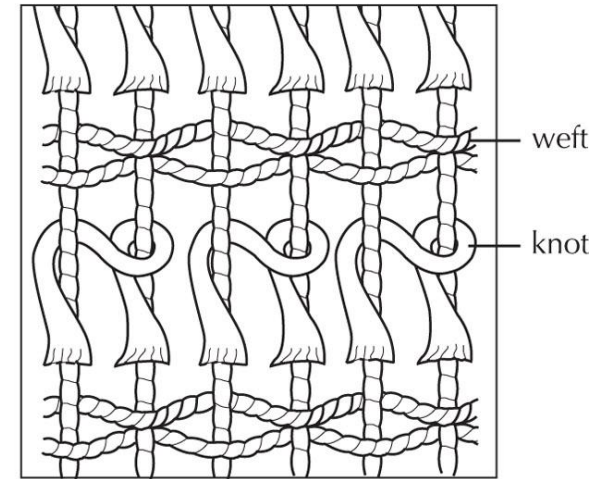




a. Kilim weaving pattern used in flat-weaving



b. Symmetrical knot, used extensively in Iran



c. Asymmetrical knot, used extensively in Turkey

**Title:** Banner of Las Navas de Tolosa  
**Medium:** Silk tapestry-weave with gilt parchment  
**Size:** 10'9 <sup>7</sup>/<sub>8</sub>" X 7'2 <sup>5</sup>/<sub>8</sub>" (3.3 X 2.2 m)  
**Date:** 1212–50

This banner was a trophy this is only the detail from the center

Calligraphy panels down the side

Eight pointed star pattern design in the center

Robe like ribbons in gold

Orbs of cream from the parts

Stylized vegetation fill the brackets around the center star





**Title:** Qur'an frontispiece  
(right half of two-page  
spread)  
**Medium:** Ink, pigments, and  
gold on paper  
**Size:** 24 X 18" (61 X 45.7  
cm)  
**Date:** c. 1368

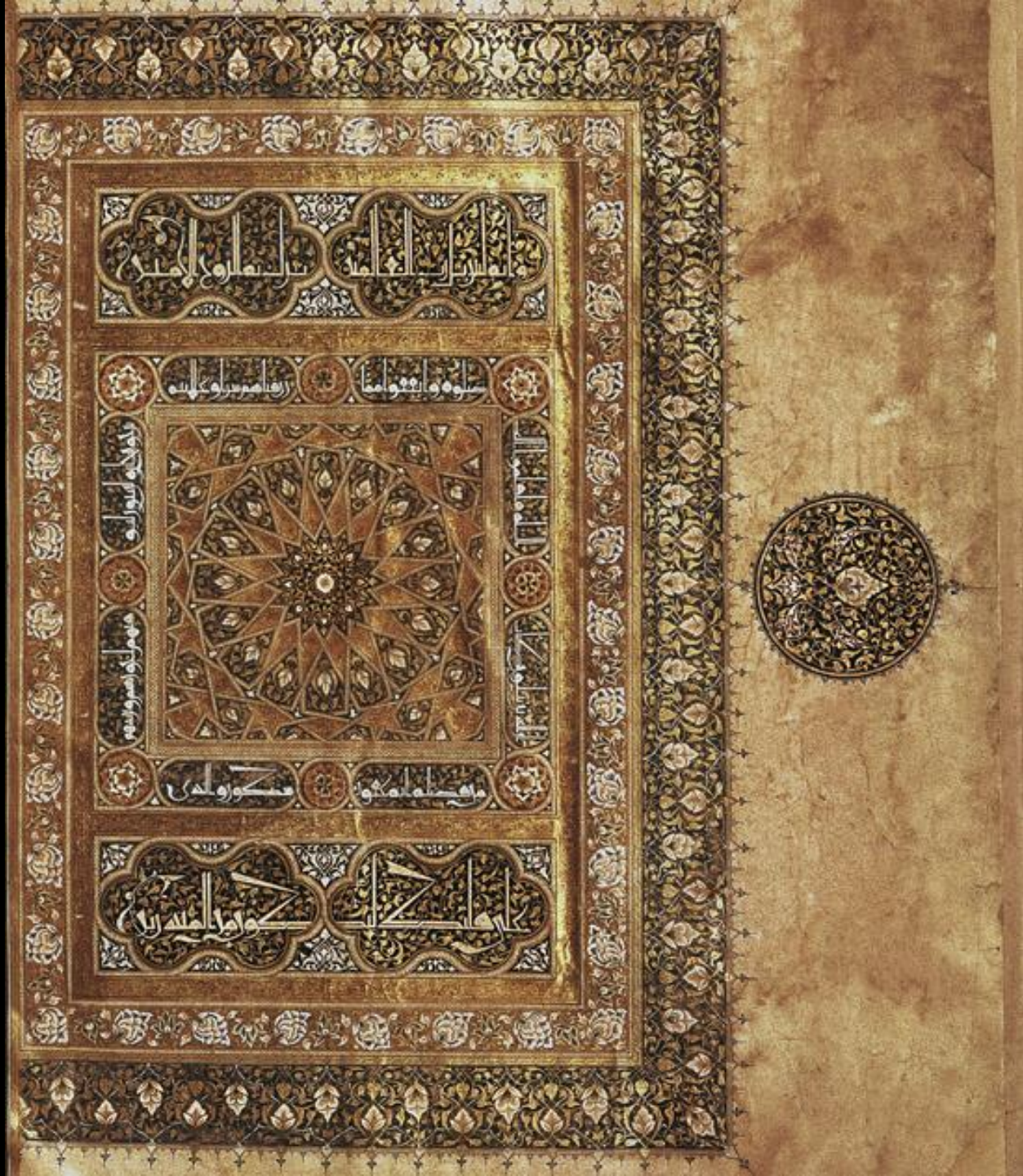
**Illuminators- manuscript  
illustrators**

Executed not figurative  
geometric designs for  
Qur'an

Stylized plants and flowers  
surround a starburst the  
radiates the word of God

Contrast between layers  
allow for the layering of  
designs

Illuminators and scribe  
collaborated





**Artist:** Kamal al-Din Bihzad  
**Title:** *The Caliph Harun Al-Rashid Visits the Turkish Bath*  
**Medium:** Ink and pigments on paper  
**Size:** approx. 7 X 6" (17.8 X 15.3 cm)  
**Date:** c. 1494

**Titled floors**

**High ceilings**

**Depicts life at a bath house, point  
arched windows and decorative motif  
add to the not quite right perspective**

**Abstract details and asymmetric design**

**Balance?**





**Title:** Illuminated *Tugra* of Sultan Suleyman

**Medium:** Ink, paint, and gold on paper

**Size:** removed from a firman and trimmed to 20½ X 25⅜" (52 X 64.5 cm)

**Date:** c. 1555–60

**Tugras symbolize authority of sultans or officials given the symbol**

**Often on coins and buildings**

**This one is oversized and  
Elaborate**



# Write

- In 7 minutes please explain both similarities and difference between Byzantine scared places and Islamic