

A Reflection on the Culture and Tradition of Islam on Art and Architecture

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Abstract

The culture of each society and religion is identified through its manifestations such as language, art, and architecture. Art and architecture as a matter of human life reflect the culture or tradition in every society interacting closely with structural, historical, political, economic, and social features of that society. Islam, therefore, has its style of art and architecture that draws something creative that reflects its thought and practice. It also serves as a channel for communication that makes Islam share its religious ideas and thoughts with other people. In this paper, therefore, the writer looks at Islamic art and architecture. In doing so, the researcher explains what Islamic art and architecture are all about and states some kinds of arts and architectural work in Islam with pictures shown on the appendix page of this paper. The history of Islamic art is also considered in this study. The basic issues the study discovers among others are that Islamic art is not of a specific religion, time, place, or of a single medium. Islamic religious art differs from Christian religious art as it sees the depiction of the human form as idolatry, and thereby a sin against Allah, forbidden in the Qur'an. The writer concludes that art and architecture are forms of preserving the culture and tradition of a community and a religion. It reflects society or a religious belief, cultural values, and so on. Art and architecture are used to share religious ideas and thoughts with other people, hence their relevance in making one has more understanding about Islam. The study uses a qualitative method of research where secondary sources from books, journals and the internet are accessed and used in the work.

Keywords: Islam, architecture, Arts, Religion.

Introduction

“Art” according to Joseph Margolis (2020) is a diverse range of human activities in creating visual, auditory, or performing artifacts (artworks), expressing the author's imaginative, conceptual ideas, or technical skill, intended to be appreciated for their beauty or emotional power. Architecture on the other hand, according to Robert Hershberger (2021) comes from the Latin word *architecture*, and from the Greek *arkhitekton* meaning "chief creator". It is, therefore, defined as both the process and the product of planning, designing, and constructing buildings and other physical structures. According to Simon Unwin (2020), the types of architecture are established not by architects but by society, according to the needs of its different institutions. Society sets the goals and assigns to the architect the job of finding the means of achieving them, be it a school, a health centre, a religious building, among others.

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It is important to note that art and architecture are created only to fulfill the specifications of an individual or group. So the types of art and architecture depend upon social formations and may be classified according to the role of the patron in the community. Art and architecture, therefore, play an important part in Islam, with its various and different influences and categories from poetry to decorative patterns in mosques, which have evolved through time and are still meaningful. The main importance of Islamic art and architecture lies in its Arabic cultures and heritage, it symbolizes Islam and in addition to that, it is considered to be a unique method of expression that illustrates the Arabic history and background and the stages and rules that it went through.

In this paper, therefore, the writer looks at Islamic art and architecture. The study then considers all Islamic arts such as calligraphy, painting, decorative arts and other applied arts. It further looks at Islamic architecture like the mosques, *madrasahs* (religious schools) and tombs, and palaces.

The meaning and kinds of Islamic art:

According to Bosch Gulnar (2019), Islam is the religious faith preached by the Arab prophet, Mohammed. After his death in A.D. 632, Islam spread far beyond its place of origin in the Arabian Peninsula. The followers of Mohammed, called Muslims, conquered the rest of the Middle East, as well as North Africa, Spain, central Asia, and north and central India. Most of the conquered people accepted the Islamic religion. As Islam spread, a distinctive style of Islamic art gradually developed. It was used mainly for religious architecture, book illustrations, and the decoration of pottery, metal ware, and other useful objects. Islamic art was influenced by the artistic styles of the conquered regions. These styles included late Roman, Byzantine, and Persian art. The development of Islamic art was also influenced by two religious restrictions. Mohammed warned artists not to imitate God, the creator of all life, by making images of living things. Most religious art, therefore, consisted of ornamental designs that did not represent people or animals. The second restriction discouraged the use of costly materials. Islamic artists, therefore, worked mainly with brass, clay, and wood. They learned to decorate objects made of these less expensive materials so skillfully that they looked as beautiful as silver or gold (Gulnar 2019).

Islamic art is, therefore, a modern concept created by art historians in the 19th century to facilitate categorization and study of the material first produced under the Islamic peoples that emerged from Arabia in the seventh century. Today, the term Islamic art describes all of the arts that were produced in the lands where Islam was the dominant religion or the religion of those who ruled. Unlike the terms Christian art, Jewish art, and Buddhist art—which refer only to the religious art of these faiths - the term Islamic art is not used merely to describe religious art or architecture but applies to all art forms produced in the Islamic world (Ettinghausen *et al.*, 2003).

Thus, the term Islamic art refers not only to works created by Muslim artists, artisans, and architects or for Muslim patrons. It encompasses works created by Muslim artists for patrons of any faith, including - Christians, Jews, or Hindus - and the works created by Jews, Christians, and others, living in Islamic lands, for patrons, Muslim and otherwise. Islamic art encompasses the visual arts produced in the Islamic world. Islamic art is difficult to characterize because it covers a wide range of lands, periods, and genres, including Islamic architecture, Islamic calligraphy, Islamic miniature, Islamic glass, Islamic pottery, and textile arts such as carpets and embroidery (Marilyn, Richard and Oleg). In this research, therefore, some kinds of Islamic arts will be identified and explained thus:

Calligraphy

Calligraphy is a visual art related to writing. It is the design and execution of lettering with a broad tip instrument, brush, or other writing instruments. A contemporary calligraphic practice can be defined as the art of giving form to signs in an expressive, harmonious, and skillful manner. Calligraphy is a very important art form in the Islamic world. The Qur'an, written in elegant scripts, represents Allah's or God's divine word, which Muhammad received directly from Allah during his visions. Quranic verses, executed in calligraphy, are found in many different forms of art and architecture. Likewise, poetry can be found on everything from ceramic bowls to the walls of houses. The use of Islamic calligraphy in architecture extended significantly outside of Islamic territories; one notable example is the use of Chinese calligraphy of Arabic verses from the Qur'an in the Great Mosque of Xi'an. Other inscriptions include verses of poetry, and inscriptions recording ownership or donation. Two of the main scripts involved the symbolic *Kufic* and *Naskh* scripts, which can be found adorning and enhancing the visual appeal of the walls and domes of buildings, the sides of *minbars*, and metalwork. Islamic calligraphy in the form of painting or sculptures is sometimes referred to as Quranic art (Bloom 2009).

Painting

Painting is the practice of applying paint, pigment, colour or other medium to a solid surface (support base). The medium is commonly applied to the base with a brush, but other implements such as knives, sponges, and airbrushes, can be used. The final work is also called a painting.

According to Creswell, Keppel Archibald, in Islam, even though there has been a tradition of wall-paintings, especially in the Persianate world, the best-surviving and highest developed form of painting in the Islamic world is the miniature in illuminated manuscripts, or later as a single page for inclusion in a *muraqqa* or bound album of miniatures and calligraphy. The tradition of the Persian miniature has been dominant since about the 13th century, strongly influencing the Ottoman miniature of Turkey and the Mughal miniature in India. Miniatures were especially an art of the court, and because they were not seen in public, it has been argued that constraints on the depiction of the human figure were much more relaxed, and

indeed miniatures often contain great numbers of small figures, and from the 16th-century portraits of single ones. Although surviving early examples are now uncommon, human figurative art was a continuous tradition in Islamic lands in secular contexts, notably several of the Umayyad Desert Castles (c. 660-750), and during the Abbasid Caliphate (c. 749-1258) (277).

Rugs and Carpets

Cambridge Dictionary and Merriam-Webster's Dictionary defines rug as "a piece of thick heavy fabric that usually has a nap or pile and is used as a floor covering"; "a shaped piece of thick cloth for covering part of a floor" respectively. A carpet on the other hand is a thick, woven floor covering. Most carpets cover the whole floor in a room, as opposed to a rug, which only covers a small section. Analyzing art in Islam, John Esposito (2002) says, no Islamic artistic product has become better known outside the Islamic world than the pile carpet, more commonly referred to as the Oriental carpet (Oriental rug). Their versatility is utilized in everyday Islamic and Muslim life, from floor coverings to architectural enrichment, from cushions to bolsters to bags and sacks of all shapes and sizes, and to religious objects (such as a prayer rug, which would provide a clean place to pray). They have been a major export to other areas since the late Middle Ages, used to cover not only floors but tables, for long a widespread European practice that is now common only in the Netherlands. Carpet weaving is a rich and deeply embedded tradition in Islamic societies, and the practice is seen in large city factories as well as in rural communities and nomadic encampments. In earlier periods, special establishments and workshops were in existence that functioned directly under court patronage.

Ceramics

Ceramics according to Cambridge Dictionary are objects produced by shaping pieces of clay that are then hardened by baking, or the skill of making such objects. In Shirley Blair and Bloom Jonathan's (2003) historical survey of Islamic art. Islamic art has very notable achievements in ceramics, both in pottery and tiles for walls, which in the absence of wall-paintings were taken to heights unmatched by other cultures. Early pottery is often unglazed, but tin-opacified glazing was one of the earliest new technologies developed by Islamic potters. The first Islamic opaque glazes can be found as blue-painted ware in Basra, dating to around the 8th century. Another significant contribution was the development of stone-paste ceramics, originating from 9th century Iraq. The first industrial complex for glass and pottery production was built in Raqqa, Syria, in the 8th century. Other centers for innovative pottery in the Islamic world included Fustat (from 975 to 1075), Damascus (from 1100 to around 1600) and Tabriz (from 1470 to 1550). Lusterwares with iridescent colours may have continued pre-Islamic Roman and Byzantine techniques, but were either invented or considerably developed on pottery and glass in Persia and Syria from the 9th century onwards.

Islamic pottery was often influenced by Chinese ceramics, whose achievements were greatly admired and emulated. This was especially the case in the periods after the Mongol invasions and those of the Timurids. Techniques, shapes and decorative motifs were all affected. Until the Early Modern period Western ceramics had very little influence, but Islamic pottery was very sought after in Europe and often copied. An example of this is the albarello, a type of maiolica earthenware jar originally designed to hold apothecaries' ointments and dry drugs. The development of this type of pharmacy jar had its roots in the Islamic Middle East. Hispano-Moresque examples were exported to Italy, stimulating the earliest Italian examples, from 15th century Florence (Blair and Bloom 2003).

History of Islamic Art

This research deems it fit to briefly give a historical background of art in Islam. This will give a clear picture of what Islamic art is all about. The history is captioned as presented by an anonymous source on the internet. It is discussed under the following periods:

Umayyad Art (661-750)

Umayyad art is noted for its religious and civic architecture, such as "The Dome of the Rock" in Jerusalem which was built by Abd al-Malik in 691, and the "Great Mosque of Damascus" (finished 715) (Flood 2001).

Abbasid Art (750-1258)

The Abbasid dynasty shifted the capital from Damascus to Baghdad - founded by al-Mansur in 762, the first major city entirely built by Muslims. The city became the new Islamic hub and symbolized the convergence of Eastern and Western art forms: Eastern inspiration from Iran, the Eurasian steppes, India and China; Western influence from Classical Antiquity and Byzantine Europe. Later, Samarra took over as the capital. Abbasid architecture was noted for the desert Fortress of Al-Ukhaidir (c.775) 120 miles south of Baghdad, the Great Mosque of Samarra, the Mosque of Ibn Tulun in Cairo, Abu Dalaf in Iraq, the Great Mosque in Tunis, and the Great Mosque in Kairouan, Tunisia. Other arts developed under the Abbasids included textile silk art, wall painting and ancient pottery, notably the invention of lustreware (painting on the surface of the glaze with a metallic pigment or lustre). The latter technique was unique to Baghdad potters and ceramicists. Also, calligraphic decorations first began to appear on pottery during this period (Algeriani & Mohadi 2019).

Umayyad Art in Spain

Parallel with the Abbasids in Iraq, descendants of the earlier Umayyad dynasty ruled Spain, with Cordoba becoming the second most important cultural centre of the Muslim world after Baghdad. Umayyad art and architecture in Spain were exemplified by the creation of the Great Mosque of Cordoba. In particular, this region was noted for its fusion of classical Roman and Islamic architectural designs, and the general development of a Hispano-Islamic idiom in

painting, relief sculpture, metal sculpture in the round, and decorative arts like ceramics (Dodds 1992).

Fatimid Art in Egypt (909-1171)

Under the Fatimids, Egypt took the lead in the cultural life of western Islam. In the arts, this dynasty was noted for architectural structures like the al-Azhar Mosque and the al-Hakim Mosque of Cairo; ceramic art in the form of pottery decorated with figurative painting and ivory carving as well as relief sculpture and the emergence of the "infinite pattern" of abstract ornamentation. Fatimid art is particularly famous for applying designs to every kind of surface (Brett 2017).

Seljuk Art in Iran and Anatolia (Turkey)

The struggle for power in Iran and the north of India, involving the Tahirids, Samanids, and Ghaznavids, was won by the Seljuk in the middle of the 11th century. In Islamic art, this dynasty was noted above all for its architecture and building designs, exemplified by the Masjidi Jami in Isfahan, built by Malik Shah. Fundamental forms of architectural design are developed and permanently formulated for later periods. The most important was the court mosque and the madrasah, as well as forms for tomb towers and mausoleums. Figurative representation, along the lines of a Central Asian iconography, was also greatly expanded across the visual arts. The Seljuks also excelled at stone-carving, used in architectural ornamentation, as well as painted tiles and faience mosaics (Blessing 2014).

Mongol Art (c.1220-1360)

Despite the initial devastation caused by the Mongol armies, Islamic art of Western Asia was greatly enriched by direct contact with the culture of the Far East, represented by the Mongols. Notable works of Islamic architecture which have survived from this period include the tomb of Oljeitu (1304-17) in Soltaniyeh, and Masjid-i Jami Mosque of Taj al-din Ali Shah, in Tabriz, the Mongol capital. Also, the history of painting, miniatures and the art of the Persian book illumination was born during this era; the latter exemplified by the *Manafi al-Hayawan* (Usefulness of Animals) manuscript (1297), Firdusi's *Shah-nameh* (Book of Kings) manuscript (c.1380) and the *Jami al-tawarikh* by Rashid al-Din. New techniques appeared in ceramic pottery, like the *lajvardina* (a variant of lustre-ware). Chinese influence is evident in all forms of visual arts. The Mongol period provided a lasting repertoire of decorative forms and ideas to the Islamic artists of the Timurid and Safavid periods in Iran, and to Ayyubid and Mamluk Syria and Egypt (May 2007).

Mamluk Art in Syria and Egypt (1250-1517)

Many monumental stone works of Islamic architecture were created during this period include the Madrasah-Mausoleum of Sultan Hasan, Cairo (1356-63), the Madrasah-Mausoleum of Sultan Kalaun, Cairo (1284-5), and KaytBey's Madrasah-Mausoleum (c. 1460-70). Exteriors, as well as interiors, became richly decorated in a variety of media -

plaster, relief carving, and decorative painting. Enameled glass and metalwork were also greatly developed (c. 1250-1400). For example, the superb metal basin of Mamluk silver metalwork known as the "*Baptistere de Saint Louis*" (Syria, 1290-1310), is one of the greatest masterpieces of its type in Islamic art. Decorated on the outside with a central frieze of figures and two corresponding friezes of animals, it is also ornamented with elaborate hunting scenes on the inside. In general, the Mamluk era is remembered as the golden age of medieval near Eastern Islamic culture (May 2007).

Nasrid Art in Spain (1232-1492)

The Nasrid dynasty, centred on their court in Granada, created a culture that attained a level of magnificence without parallel in Muslim Spain, recreating the glories of the first great Islamic period under Umayyad rule. Nasrid architecture led the way, exemplified by the Alhambra Palace in Granada (c. 1333-91) (Dodds 1992). In this building the fundamental elements of Islamic architecture and architectural design found their highest expression: for instance, the illusion of a building floating above ground. In decorative art, lustre-painting was greatly developed, as was textile weaving in gold brocade and embroidery (Dodds 1992).

Timurid Period (c. 1360-1500)

In Iran, the Mongol rule was succeeded by that of Timur (Tamerlane) who came from south of Samarkand. Timurid architecture is exemplified by the mosques of Kernan (c. 1349) and Yezd (c.1375), the Great Mosque of Samarkand (Bibi Khanum mosque) begun around 1400, the Gur-i Amir, Timur's mausoleum in Samarkand (1405), and the Blue Mosque in Tabriz (1465). Architectural decoration employed polychrome faience to the greatest effect. In the other visual arts, Timurid painting introduced the concept of using the entire pictorial area, while illuminated manuscripts were produced in the "Imperial Timurid style". Notable schools of Timurid painting sprang up in Shiraz, Herat and elsewhere. Herat produced a series of magnificently painted manuscripts, as well as a corresponding set of developments in the Islamic arts of calligraphy and book-binding. Stained glass art was also developed. In general, Timurid art may be seen as a refinement, even sublimation, of the basic ideas of eastern Islamic art (Dodds 1992).

Ottoman Art (c. 1400-1900)

The Ottoman conquest of Constantinople which was once the centre of Byzantium and the Eastern Roman Empire, the city once again became a focal point for western Islamic art and culture. Ottoman architecture is noted above all for the domed mosque. An early form was the UluCami mosque, Bursa (c. 1400); later Ottoman buildings by Islamic architects include the Sulaymaniyeh Cami Mosque of Sultan Sulayman (begun 1550) and the SelimiyehCami mosque, Edirne (1567-74) - both designed by Sinan, the most celebrated of all Ottoman architects - the mosque of Sultan Ahmet I (known as "the Blue Mosque") (1603-17), and the Sultan Ahmet Cami mosque (1609-16). Advances in architectural decoration included a new style of floral polychrome designs in ceramic tile work and pottery (plus the discovery of the

bright red pigment used in ceramics, known as *Iznik red*), while in painting, Ottoman artists developed a new canon of colour, composition and iconography. One of the most famous of Ottoman crafts was the knotted rug, which - in its use, form and decoration - embodied most of the salient elements of Muslim culture. Also, Ottoman calligraphers developed *Diwani* script, a new cursive style of Arabic calligraphy. Invented by Housam Roumi, it became highly popular under Suleyman I the Magnificent (1520-66). In general, an important aspect of Ottoman art is its play on contrasts: between tectonic qualities and the dissolution of materials, between realistic forms with fine detail and “infinite pattern” abstraction (Levey 1975).

Safavid Art in Iran (c.1502-1736)

During the late 16th century, the Safavid capital was established at Isfahan, in the heart of ancient Persia, where it became the centre of eastern Muslim art and culture for almost two centuries. Isfahan Safavid architecture is exemplified by the domed mosque of Shaykh Lutfullah (1603-18) and the Great Mosque of Shah Abbas (1612-20) (Masjid-i Shah). Advances in Safavid painting - including, brightly coloured stylized imagery as well as a high realist style of figurative drawing - came predominantly from the schools of Tabriz, Herat, Bukhara and Kasvin (Eigner *et al.*, 2010). In the decorative arts, Safavid artists excelled in all areas of the book - like gilding, illumination, calligraphy and lacquer-painted leather bookbinding. Also in carpet design, the Safavid period saw the replacement of Turkish abstract patterns by new floral and figurative designs. Also, advances were made in ceramic art, due in part to the influence of Chinese porcelain, during the era of Ming Dynasty Art (c. 1368-1644). Persian Safavid art is noted for its architecture, its decorative design work (eg. knotted rugs, silk-weaving) and its figurative painting. The latter, in particular, gave rise to a richness and variety almost unparalleled in Islamic art, and led to the emergence of individual artists and the creation of personal styles (Eigner *et al.*, 2010).

Mughal Islamic Art in India :

India fell under the rule of the Mughal emperors (Akbar, Jahangir and Shah Jahan) in the late 16th-century, giving rise to a unified Indian-Islamic culture. Mughal achievements in architecture include the domed Tomb of Humayun in Delhi (1565); the palace complex of Fatehpur Sikri (c. 1575) built during the reign of Akbar; the mausoleum of Itmad al-Daula, Agra (1622-28); the great Red Fort complex near Agra (17th century) its Delhi Gate (1635) and its Pearl Mosque (1648); and the sublime Taj Mahal (1632-54), the famous tomb built by Emperor Shah Jahan to commemorate his favourite wife Mumtaz Mahal (Eigner *et al.*, 2010). The greatest Mughal stone masons were employed on the project. When they had finished, it is said that Jahan ordered the amputation of the chief mason's hand to prevent replication of such exquisite work (Eigner *et al.*, 2010). Influenced by Persian, Hindu painters and European painters, Mughal artists developed new forms of manuscript illumination, as exemplified by the sumptuous *Dastan-i Amir Hamzanameh*, 1575), the largest known Islamic manuscript, illustrated with full-page (Eigner *et al.*, 2010).

Islamic Architecture :

Islamic architecture is the range of architectural styles of building associated with Islam. It encompasses both secular and religious styles from the early history of Islam to the present day. The religious buildings are known as mosques, where Muslims worship, are among the most important examples of Islamic architecture. Other kinds of buildings include *madrasahs*, or religious schools; tombs; and palaces.

Mosques

The first mosques were simple buildings made of wood and clay. Then, as the world of Islam grew in size and power, large mosques of cut stone and brick were built. Because no Islamic building tradition yet existed, these early mosques were modeled after Christian churches. The oldest existing mosque, the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem, was built in 691. It has many features of Byzantine Christian churches, including Grecian-style columns and mosaic decorations (Gulnar 2019).

Muslim architects soon began to develop a new type of religious building, designed specifically for Islamic worship. An early example of the new design is the Great Mosque in Damascus, which began about 705. It is entered through a rectangular court with covered passageways on three sides. In the court is a fountain for washing before prayer. The fourth wall of the court is closest to Mecca, the holy city of Islam. All Muslims face in the direction of Mecca when they pray. The wall is marked by a small, arched prayer niche. Over the aisle leading to this niche is a dome. A tower, or minaret, is used to call the faithful to prayer (Gulnar 2019). Gulnar (2019) further says other architects developed variations on this basic style. Some mosques have domes over each end of the aisle leading to the prayer niche. Other mosques have a large central dome. Some domes are ridged on the outside and resemble large melons. Inside, the ceilings of domes are often covered with decorative points that resemble honeycombs, scales, or stalactites (icicle-like formations found in caves). Many mosques, especially those in Spain, North Africa, and Persia, are covered with tiles. In the 1500s and 1600s mosques became more complex, with many domes and minarets. The Sultan Ahmed Mosque (also called the Blue Mosque), in Istanbul, Turkey, is a typical example.

Madrasahs and tombs

According to Gulnar, Madrasahs, also known as religious schools, were often built next to mosques. They are four-sided structures built around a central court. Each side has a large arched hall that opens onto the courtyard. Students attended lectures in the large halls and lived in smaller rooms within the structure. Sometimes the tomb of a ruler was part of a complex of buildings that also included a mosque and a madrasah. The tomb-mosque of Sultan Hasan, built in the mid-1300s in Cairo, Egypt, is such a complex. It is laid out like a cross, with four halls opening off a large square court.

Another well-known tomb is that of the Tatar warrior Tamerlane, which was built in the city of Samarkand about 1400. This building has a melon-shaped dome covered with brilliant blue

and gold tiles. The tiles are made of glazed earthenware cut into various sizes and arranged in elaborate patterns. Perhaps the most famous Islamic tomb of all is the Taj Mahal in Agra, India. It was built in the 1600s by the ruler Shah Jahan as a tomb for his wife. The Taj Mahal is so renowned that its very name calls up images of almost unreal splendor and beauty. An article on the Taj Mahal can be found in this encyclopedia (Hillenbrand 1999).

Palaces

In Robert Hillenbrand's (1999) historical survey of Islamic architecture, the early Muslim rulers, or caliphs, were used to desert life; they did not like living in crowded cities. They built palaces in the desert where they could go to relax and hunt. The palaces looked like Roman fortresses, for they were built of stone and surrounded by walls with big towers. The throne rooms, prayer rooms, baths, and living quarters were decorated with murals and mosaics. In the 700's the capital of the Muslim world moved from Damascus, Syria, to Baghdad, Mesopotamia (Iraq). The architecture of palaces changed as a result of the move. Domed palaces were built of brick covered with thick layers of stucco, and the interiors were decorated with stucco reliefs. In the Jawsaq Palace, built about 850 in Samarra, Mesopotamia, the stucco ornament was of three distinct styles. One type showed deeply carved vine forms and another added patterns to the surface of the main design. The third style used more abstract patterns, as in the metalwork of Central Asian nomads. These three styles contributed to the development of arabesque decoration, which became typical of Muslim art all over the world.

Of later palaces, the Alhambra at Granada, Spain, built in the 1300s, is the best known. Its many rooms are built around three open courts. The Court of the Myrtles features a long rectangular pool flanked by hedges. In the center of the inner Court of the Lions stands a fountain supported by twelve lions. The lower part of the palace walls is decorated with colored tiles set in geometric patterns. Painted and gilded plaster designs cover the upper part of the walls. Arabic inscriptions in the midst of the ornament say that there is no conqueror but Allah (Hillenbrand 1999).

Conclusion

This study focuses on Islamic art and architecture. By so doing, it, first of all, looks at Islamic art which is explained as arts that were produced in the lands where Islam was the dominant religion and is not used merely to describe religious art or architecture but applies to all art forms produced in the Islamic world. The paper further looks at the history and some kinds of art in the Islamic world such as calligraphy, painting, rugs and carpets, and ceramics. In the other section of the paper, the researcher considers Islamic architecture which is explained as the range of architectural styles of building associated with Islam. It encompasses both secular and religious styles from the early history of Islam to the present day. Looking at Islamic architecture, the paper sees mosques, where Muslims worship as the most important

examples of Islamic architecture. Other kinds of buildings include madrasahs, or religious schools, tombs, and palaces.

The major key points one must not forget about Islamic art and architecture are:

1. Islamic art is not an art of a specific religion, time, place, or of a single medium. Instead, it spans some 1400 years, covers many lands and populations, and includes a range of artistic fields including architecture, calligraphy, painting, glass, ceramics, and textiles, among others.
2. Islamic religious art differs from Christian religious art in that it is non-figural because many Muslims believe that the depiction of the human form is idolatry, and thereby a sin against God, forbidden in the Qur'an. Calligraphy and architectural elements are given important religious significance in Islamic art.
3. Islamic art developed from many sources: Roman, early Christian art, and Byzantine styles; Sassanian art of pre-Islamic Persia; Central Asian styles brought by various nomadic incursions, and Chinese influences appear on Islamic painting, pottery, and textiles.

In conclusion, the writer asserts what is mentioned in the introduction that art and architecture in a culture or society are places of historical and cultural importance. They represent the livelihood of people, tradition, culture, civilization, and originality. They symbolize the craftsmanship of a community's ancestors and how people used to make art and architecture in the early days. An internet anonymous source says art and architecture talk about culture and society. When one looks at the paintings made in caves and rocks by the ancient people, it gives someone an idea about the culture of a people. So, art is a form of preserving culture. It reflects a society's beliefs, cultural values, and so on (Santyaningtyas Noor 2016).

More so, art and architecture is a natural behavior. Just like language is a natural behavior of expressing oneself, so is art. When children are young, they draw to express themselves. They try to draw something creative that reflects their thought process. It is also a channel for communication. There are different types of language. One might not understand a particular language, but art which serves as a universal form of communication makes one understand it. With art and architecture, one can share someone's culture or religious ideas and thoughts with other people, hence the relevance of art and architecture in having more understanding about the Islamic religion.

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