raised above the others in frank imitation of the pishchak in front of an iwan, is surmounted by the stubs of two flamed towers, which were undoubtedly erected on the model of mosques further west.

In 1290 the Muriizi dynasty, the descendants of Quh al-Din Aybak, was succeeded by the Khaliji. The outstanding figure of the second line of Delhi sultans is 'Ala al-Din Muhammad (r. 1296–1316), who considered himself a second Alexander and dreamed of assembling a vast empire. He repeatedly repulsed Mongol invasions from the north and annexed central and south India, using the stupendous booty collected there for grandiose schemes at home. In 1303, as a defense against Mongol incursions, he established a new encampment at Siri, on the plain about four kilometers north-east of the old center [131]. This foundation inaugurated the tradition of the lateral expansion of Delhi that would continue until the seventeenth century. Delhi's history is thus often told as a tale of seven cities (or eight if one includes New Delhi, inaugurated as capital of British India in 1911). The walls of Siri enclosed an irregular oval; they are said to have had seven gates, but major destruction in the sixteenth century has left few remains. Under 'Ala al-Din and his son the area near the residence of the Chisti saint, Nizam al-Din Awlai (1256–1325), began to be developed. Nizam al-Din's prayers were said to have protected the city from Mongol attack. A congregational mosque was built there, and after the saint's death the area, known as Nizamuddin, became a shrine center, following a pattern common in other regions of the Islamic world in the fourteenth century.

Between 1295 and 1315, 'Ala al-Din attempted to expand the Qutbas al-Islam Mosque, which had already been expanded once by Iltumish in 1210–20. The new mosque was to measure some 252 by 135 meters, and the arched screen in front of the new prayer hall was intended to be twice as long as the two previous screens combined. In the courtyard of the mosque, work was begun on a second tower, whose base is twice the diameter of the Qibla Minar and which was intended to be a stupendous 141 meters high. The patron's death prevented this vast project from being completed, but it can be reconstructed from the foundations laid. Of the four major gates planned for the north, east, and south sides of the mosque, only that on the south, the 'Ala'i Darwaza [192], was erected. The 'Ala'i Darwaza (Gate of 'Ala [al-Din]; 1312) is a square building measuring 10.5 meters to a side internally. It stands outside the enclosure wall of the mosque, in much the same relationship to it as the tomb of Iltumish to the west, and serves to mark the transition between the low-lying exterior and the high interior of the mosque. The walls of the gatehouse are 3.2 meters thick and support a shallow dome carried on squinches. The unusual thickness of the walls and shallowness of the dome show the builders' unfamiliarity with the tradition of erecting small domed structures that had existed for centuries in Iran and Afghanistan.

The building is faced with red sandstone inlaid with contrasting bands of white marble, all richly carved with arabesques and inscriptions in shallow relief. Lofy pointed arches with a slight return at the springing open on the three outer sides of the gateway; a moulding of exceptional beauty decorates the spandrels of the arches, that the arches are flanked by two stories of reveals, all are blind except for the inner pair on the lower story, which contain grilles opening to the interior. Many of these features, such as the contrasting colors of mosaic, the spearhead corbels, and the pierced stone screens, later became hallmarks of Indo-Islamic architecture.

After 'Ala al-Din's death the Khaliqi line fell into desuetude and was replaced by the Tughlaq (1320–1414), the third line of Delhi sultans. Descended from Ghazi Malik Tughlq, a Turco-Indian commander who had been governor of Multan for the Khaliji since 1305, the Tughlaqs established the strongest and most creative state in the history of the Delhi sultanate. They were great patrons of literature, learning, and Islamic institutions. Responsible for three of Delhi's cities – Tughlaqabad, Jahangahan, and Firuzabad – the Tughlaqs produced a rich and varied architecture in Delhi and in Multan in the Punjab. Materials and techniques of building were standardized and royal involvement was systematized through a bureaucracy of architects and engineers. The significant number of Tughlaq buildings surviving allows a dynamic style to be defined for the first time in Indian Islamic architecture.  

The earliest example of Tughlaq architecture is not, however, in Delhi but in Multan, now in Pakistan. It is the tomb of the Sufi saint Rukn-î 'Alam at Multan (1320), which was built by Ghazi Malik Tughlq when he was provincial governor there [194]. The octagonal lower story (27.4 meters in diameter and 15.5 meters high) has battered walls and tapering turrets at the angles. An octagonal second story with perpendicular walls supports a large dome, 35.1 meters high including the finial. The region of Multan and Sind had strong links to Afghanistan and eastern Iran, and its distinctive architectural style, like theirs, used bricks and glazed tile, with the addition of wood for roofs and tile beams. The tomb of Rukn-î 'Alam is built of brick, like such earlier buildings in the region as the so-called tomb of Khalid b. Wallid built by the Ghurid governor 'Ali b. Karmak in the last quarter of the twelfth century at nearby Kubishtzkal.86 Bands of timbers run through the brickwork of the lower octagonal layer, and the exterior and interior are decorated with cut and molded bricks, which are left unglazed or glazed with light and dark blue and white. Although an octagonal second story is traditional in Multan, the octagonal lower story of Rukn-î 'Alam is unusual, for three earlier tombs in Multan, those of
Shaykh Bahā' al-Dīn Zakariya (d. 1262), Shadna Shahid (d. 1270), and Shah Shams Sabzavārī (d. 1276), all have square lower stories. The wooden mahārā is the only one of its kind to survive in India.

Like the congregational mosque, the monumental tomb was a new form in India introduced by Muslims. The Muslim practice of immersion of the dead was significantly different from the ritual cremation normally practiced in India. While pious Muslims might cite the disapproval of the Prophet Muhammad for any monumentalization of graves, by the thirteenth century the construction of tombs over the graves of important and holy individuals had become a standard practice throughout the lands of Islam. The most widespread type was a square or octagonal structure supporting a dome, and the numerous examples surviving in Iran and Afghanistan undoubtedly provided models for the first Muslim tombs in India.14

Ghāzi Malik Tughlaq (r. 1320–51), who assumed the regnal name Ghiyath al-Dīn (Vivifier of the Faith), took large numbers of Hindus into government and military service, with a marked effect on Tughlaq culture. He ordered the construction of Tughlaqabad, which encompassed a royal quarter housing the court, army, and administration. Unlike Sirī, which was close to Qub al-Dīn’s original foundation of Delhi, Tughlaqabad was located seven kilometers east of the first city, in a massive fortified enclosure surrounded by a shallow lake fed by drainage from the surrounding plain. Covering a roughly trapezoidal area of 200 hectares, Tughlaqabad was enclosed within battered stone walls reinforced with mighty semicircular bastions and breached by thirteen gates. The south-west quadrant was occupied by the palace, and the eastern sector contained an even more strongly fortified citadel. A causeway led from the main enclosure to another containing the founder’s tomb and madrasas.

Set in an irregular court with cells along the interior of the enclosure walls, the mausoleum of Ghiyath al-Dīn [195] has a square lower story with walls battered 2° from the vertical, a rather short octagonal drum, and a prominent hemispheric dome surmounted by an ornate bulbous finial. Measuring sixteen meters on a side, the tomb is constructed of rubble faced with red sandstone and white marble. In the middle of all but the west, or qibla, sides are recessed arches with a slight ogee curve at the apex. They have spearhead vousoirs and are outlined in white marble. While the battering of the walls and prominent dome capped by a finial are features which seem to have been brought from Multan, where the patron had been governed, the articulation of the façades and the details of decoration show a conscious imitation of the ‘Alī’s Darvazā, perhaps to give monumental expression to the Tughlaq’s succession to the Khāliji line. In one respect, however, the building differs from its Mu’tazī and Khāliji antecedents whereas earlier buildings, such as the tomb of Itutmish, were lavishly decorated with inscriptions, the tomb of Ghiyath al-Dīn completely lacks epigraphs. The first generation of Muslim builders in India had replaced the exuberant figural decoration of Hindu and Jain architecture with equally exuberant geometric, vegetal, and epigraphic ornament stylistically derived from Ghurid architecture in Afghanistan. A taste for more restrained surface ornament developed under the Tughlaq, where the surface was articulated by such architectural elements as doors and windows.

Ghiyath al-Dīn’s successor, Muḥammad b. Tughlaq (r. 1325–29), was also a great builder; he built and then abandoned a subsidiary fort (Adilabad) next to Tughlaqabad, transferred the capital to Dhul-Tuba in central India, and walled the suburbs that had grown up between the first city of Delhi and Sirī and called it Jahangir. His successor, Firuz Shah (r. 1331–88), had the longest rule of the line, probably because he left matters of state in the hands of his capable viceroy. He is said to have designed many buildings himself. In 1356, to protect the Punjab against attacks from the north-west, he founded the city of Hisar-i-Firuz, now Hisar in Haryana state.15 In 1359, to control the Ganges river and counteract the importance of the Hindu holy city of Varanasi (Benares), he founded the city of Jaunpur. In 1354 in his capital, Delhi, he had begun construction of the city of Firuzabad about ten kilometers north of Jahangir along the old course of the Yamuna. Now largely covered and quarried for its materials to build the later city of Shahjahanabad, all that remains is the citadel, known as Firuz Shah Kotla, which contains the ruins of a palace complex, a congregational mosque, and the adjacent Lat Pyramid.

The Lat Pyramid, a three-storied stepped pyramid, fourteen meters high, of vaulted cells around a solid core, was built in the typical Tughlaq rubble masonry covered with plaster and whitewash. Staircases at the corners led to the upper level on which stood an open colonnade 4.9 meters high enclosing an Ashokan third century B.C.) sandstone pillar (lat) thirteen meters high. The pillar had been taken in 1367 from its original site near Ambala in the Murrar District, 162 kilometers north of Delhi, transported down the Yamuna, and erected on the site. Contemporary sources refer to the structure as the muraq (marker) of the congregational mosque, and the pillar itself was called the muraq-i zarin (“golden marker”), either because of the color of its stone, its gilded paint, or its polished surface.16 The biography of Firuz Shah states that it was a visible statement of Muslim convictions: “Carved on the [pilgrim] staff was an image of the polytheists and infidels for so many thousands of years, through the efforts of Sultan Firuz Shah and by the grace of God, it became the marker of a place of worship for the faithful.”17 Although the Lat Pyramid is conceptually related to Qub al-Dīn Aybak’s placement of a Gupta-period fourth-century A.D.) iron pillar from a temple of Vishnu in the court of the Qawwāl at-Islam Mosque, it differs from it in form.18 It is the first Muslim building in north India to depart from basic canons of Islamic architecture. Although Firuz Shah commissioned many madrasas, only one survives, that founded in 1352 along the eastern and southern sides of the great tank known as Hazir Khana in Delhi [196]. The largest and most complete madrasa of this period to have survived anywhere, it was partly constructed over an earlier foundation by ‘Alī al-Dīn Khalji, and the tank was the gathering place for musicians, according to the Moroccan globe-trotter Ibn Battuta, who visited Delhi in 1353.19 The complex comprises two long blocks perched on the sides of the tank and riveted together by the founder’s tomb, a domed square. The interior of the tomb is decorated
in the Iranian mode with painted and carved stuccos. Each of the madrasa’s two stories comprises interconnecting blocks of long, narrow pillared halls and domed chambers. Cells on the lower story presumably served as residential quarters, while the more open rooms on the upper story were used for assembly and teaching. Several pavilions, domed tombs, and other structures stand in the spacious and carefully planted gardens between the madrasas and outer walls. The unusual layout of the complex and its reliance on pillared halls distinguishes it from madrasas elsewhere in the Islamic lands, where a court with vaulted iwans and chambers had quickly become the ubiquitous plan for this type of building.\(^{[156, 157]}\)

Tughlaq architecture is the first Islamic architecture in India to attempt to integrate such indigenous elements as pillars, beams, and brackets, and such techniques as the control of temperature by water, with features identified with Islamic architecture elsewhere, such as arches, vaults, and domes. The exuberant carved surface decoration of earlier times was abandoned in favor of a greater interest in the massing of architectural form and its emphasis by a juxtaposition of surfaces and restrained use of color. The relatively large number of surviving buildings of various types — mosques, tombs, a madrasa, reservoirs, and fortifications—shows that patrons and builders were ready to experiment with new forms and combinations of them. This rich period of creativity came to an end following the death of Firuz Shah in 1388. A decade of internecine warfare between the competing claimants to the Tughlaq’s invasion of northern India and sack of Delhi in 1398, although weakening Tughlaq rulers held on for another sixteen years.

After the Timurid sack of Delhi and the dissolution of the Tughlaq’s, the patronage of monumental architecture was restricted under the fourth and fifth Delhi sultanes. The city enjoyed little prestige under the Sayyids (1414–1451) but was revived under the Lodis (1451–1526), when several mosques and domed tombs were erected. Construction of the large congregational mosque that had been popular in the earlier subcontinents was abandoned in favor of a new, smaller type of mosque, comprising a single aisle of three or five domed bays aligned along the qibla wall. The first example of this is the Gurudwara Mosque, built by Sikandar Lod in 1449 as a cenotaph to his father the Bagh-I Jund, now the burial ground and now the Lodhi Gardens. This new type of mosque hearkens back to early Sultani models and displays a renewed interest in the monumental façade, which was often marked by a pirkāh and decorated with inlaid colored stones and inscriptions. These Lodih buildings provided inspiration for later patrons, notably the Mughals in the sixteenth century.\(^{[158]}\)

The most impressive architectural patronage in the late fourteenth and fifteenth centuries took place in the other Muslim states of India, with distinctive regional styles, developed with greater or lesser dependence on the architectural precedents of the Delhi region. Muhammad b. Tughlaq had commissioned large portions of the Suhrawardi madrasa at Delhi, which had been temporarily moved to the newly founded site of Daulatabad, but as his authority waned, independent sultanes were founded there. The most enduring was that of the Bahmanid sultanate (r. 1429–1529) on the table-land in the northern Deccan. The founder of the dynasty, Husayn Ganga, who assumed the regnal name Bahman Shah, moved the capital south from Daulatabad to Gulbarga (now in Karnataka state). The Bahmanid aggressions in combination with the two main Hindu kingdoms of the southern Deccan, Warangal and Vijayanagar, made them renowned throughout the Muslim world as warriors for the faith, and they were the first power in the subcontinent to exchange ambassadors with the Ottomans. The Bahmanid had a well-organized administrative system and recruited skilled personnel among Turks, Persians, and Arabs. Their court became an important center of learning and culture, and a distinct style of architecture emerged.\(^{[159]}\)

The most important building to survive in Gulbarga is the congregational mosque, built, according to an inscription by Rafi b. Shahs b. Mansur al-Qazwini in 1367 during the reign of Muhammad I.\(^{[140]}\) The building, which measures 153 by 53 meters, is a rare example of a mosque with no courtyard (107, 108). It is a covered rectangle with large domes in each of the four corners and a dome covering the equatorial line of nine bays of the transepts. Transverse-vaulted aisles connect the corner domes and enclose on three sides the central hypostyle hall covered with seventy-five domes. The aisles have unusually wide spurs and low impost; this arch pattern was repeated in other buildings at Gulbarga. The use of transverse vaulting parallels its use in such fourteenth-century Iranian buildings as the congregational mosque at Aqbarqah, but the low imposts and distinct profile of the arches are quite different. This unusual vaulting may be explained by the Iranian origin of the patron and perhaps by the presence of Iranian builders in the region. The tombs of the Bahmanid sultans at Gulbarga reflect the impact of the Tughlaq style, whether via new lost buildings of Daulatabad or Delhi, in their battered walls and low domes. After conquering Warangal in 1457, Ahmad

I moved the capital east to the more central site of Bidar. There such features as domes raised on tall drums, glazed tilework, and the four-iwan plan show the increased role of architectural models from contemporary Iran and Central Asia under the Timurids (see Chapter 4). Although indigenous architectural traditions seem to have played little role in the evolution of the Bahmanid style, they were stronger elsewhere in the subcontinent, where the new styles of Islamic architecture combined local traditions with the style of the Delhi sultane and ideas from the Islamic lands to the west. The Islamic architecture of Bengal is primarily a continuation of the indigenous tradition of brick construction, although stone spolia from Hindu buildings were also used. As in Iraq, where the Tigris and Euphrates rivers have deposited the silt and clay from which brick is made, the Ganges and Brahmaputra rivers, which empty into the Bay of Bengal, have left rich deposits of silt and clay in Bengal. Bengal had been part of the Delhi sultane, but its rich resources and distance from the capital tempted its governors to declare their independence, and already by 1287 parts of it were virtually independent. The Ilkhan Shahi dynasty (1345–1487, with an interruption 1445–1477) united all Bengal under one crown, with capitals at Gaur (Lakhnawati) and Pandua, now in the Indian state of West Bengal. Commerce in textiles and foodstuffs was encouraged, and the arts and sciences flourished. Sikandar Shah (r. 1358–86) moved the capital from Gaur to the old course of the Ganges, to Pandua, thirty-two kilometers to the north-east, after the river shifted its course.\(^{[160]}\)

The Adina Mosque there (1374–75) is one of largest mosques in India, measuring 155 by 87 meters. It consists of a series of hypostyle halls arranged around a courtyard; that on the qibla side is five bays deep, while those on the other three sides are three bays deep. The courtyard façade is a screen of eighteen arcades supported on piers and surmounted by a parapet. In the center of the prayer hall was a massive iwan-like barrel-vaulted hall (119) leading from the court to the mihrab and minbar. Now roofless and shattered, the vault was framed by a screen some eighteen meters high, undoubtedly modeled on the Iranian pirkāh. Stone spolia from the temples of Lakhnawati were used for the lower parts of the building, but brick was used above the impost for the arches and the three hundred and seventy brick domes. The bays of the prayer hall terminate in mihrabs in the qibla wall, except where wall has been pierced rid of domes, and the minbar to the north of the mihrab is a raised platform (Pers. takhīl) which occupies six bays in the back three aisles. It was originally screened and surmounted by eighteen arches arranged in three bay bays. The higher that arches were lower and thinner than the prayer halls. At the level of the platform the qibla wall has three mihrabs, superbly carved of basalt, and two doors. This type of platform is found in several large congregational mosques of the subcontinent, and the same phenomenon was argued that it was for ladies of the court; but it is more likely that it was an elevated magāzūni. The two doorways are more impressive than the three. The Bahmanid mosque on the west wall just north of the iwan, and outside the mosque behind the area of the platform is a square structure with an L-shaped ramp to the north. This was probably the original royal entrance to the mosque, but after the death of the patron, Sikandar Shah, it was converted into his tomb on the model of Ilutmish’s tomb in the Qiwat al-Turash at Delhi. Although the size and plan of the Adina Mosque are atypical of other Bengalian mosques, which are much more modest in scale, the multiplicity of mihrabs is a distinct feature that had appeared as early as the mosque of Zahir Khan Ghaazi in Delhi (1298), which has five. The grandioser quality of the Adina Mosque and the similarities to buildings in Islamic lands further west can be explained by the ambiguous patron, who, in the foundation inscription, called himself “the most perfect of the sultans of Arab and Persia.”\(^{[161]}\)

Similar of the wsire mum if found at the mosques of Jaunpur, a city on the Hindu–Muslim frontier and now in the state of Uttar Pradesh in northern India. The city became the center of a powerful Muslim state wedged between the dominions of Delhi and Bengal. The Sharqi sultans of Jaunpur (1345–1475) known as the “Shiraz of Hind” for its culture and learning. The Alta Mosque (1408) was built by Ibrahim Sharqi on the founda-
tions of and with stones taken from a Hindu temple dedicated to Atala Devi, although the mosque is unusual among contemporary and later Indian examples in not being raised on a plinth. The mosque consists of a square enclosure (78.7 meters on a side), with hypostyle halls three bays deep surrounding the central court. Monumental entrances on the north, south, and east sides are flanked on the exterior by rows of shops and lead via domed bays (except on the east) to the court. The west or qibla side has a screen with a central pylon (206). Battened towers 22.9 meters high frame a large arch recess pierced with windows and fringed with stylized spearheads. Behind stands a large dome (diameter 16.8 meters), and on either side smaller versions of the central unit ease the transition from the roof of the hypostyle prayer hall to the summit of the dome. The mosque is designed to be seen from particular spots, especially the court, in this it conforms to contemporary aesthetics in the rest of the Islamic world (e.g. the Mosque of Bibi Khanum at Samarkand [40]), but this approach to design was still foreign to the indigenous traditions, where buildings were meant to be viewed from the exterior and designed in the round. When viewed from the exterior, particularly from the rear, the masses of the Atala Mosque are often ungainly.44 Such features as the battered elevation of the towers and the spearhead molding are clearly derived from Khaliṣi and Tughluq buildings in Delhi, but the mosque presents a somewhat retardataire aspect in the juxtaposition of domed chambers and hypostyle halls for the prayer hall. The overall conception is distinctly local and would be repeated on a larger scale at the congregational mosque built there by Husayn Shah (r. 1458–79).

The most distinctive regional style of architecture was developed in Gujarat in western India. This region, with a rich heritage of Hindu and Jain buildings, became independent under the Tughluq governor Zalaz Khan, who founded a sultanate in 1407, assuming the regnal name Muzaffar Shah. His grandson Ahmad I (r. 1441–42) consolidated the realm and moved the capital to the old Hindu town of Aaval, which he renamed Ahmadabad. He inaugurated an era of unparalleled architectural activity, when at least fifty mosques were erected in the capital alone. The finest is the congregational mosque (1423–4). It consists of a large flagged court (75 by 66 meters), lined with a single arcade on three sides. On the fourth, or qibla, side is an exquisitely carved façade (104), with large central arch flanked by the bases of towers (now destroyed) and smaller arches, which effect a visual transition between the height of the hall and the central arch. The façade is intensely sculptural: the horizontal bands of the tower shafts contrast with the verticality of the towers, the richly carved masses of masonry contrast with the shadowy voids behind, and the massive masonry contrasts with the slender shafts of the hypostyle prayer hall behind. The prayer hall (64 by 29 meters) contains over three hundred closely set slender columns, which support fifteen large domes surrounded by clusters of smaller ones. The large dome immediately behind the central arch is the tallest, rising to a height of three stories, while those behind the smaller arches are two stories high. The arches are linked on the interior by an ingenious system of mezzanines. This harmonious composition, which successfully integrates trabeate and arced construction and combines the volumetrics of Islamic architecture with the sculptural quality of Indian architecture, is far more successful than the rather awkward arrangement of the Atala Mosque in Jaipur.

The congregational mosque was only part of Ahmad Shah’s master plan for his capital, which covered an area of about five hundred hectares on the east bank of the Sabarmati river. On the other three sides the city was protected by walls with towers at regular intervals. The main processional way led from the east wall, passing along the north side of the congregational mosque, to the citadel, a square enclosure for the palaces overlooking the river. At the foot of the citadel lay the royal grounds (Mashriq-i Shahal),
the buildings erected are several gates, a congregational mosque, and several palaces and pleasure pavilions, which illustrate yet another facet of Indo-Islamic architecture. The Jahar Mahal ("Ship Palace"), for example, extends on two levels for about 115 meters between two lakes [203]. Its roof is punctuated with several pillared and domed pavilions to take advantage of the view and cooling breezes off the water, much as at the Howa Khana in Delhi [196]. Another palace on the Munja Talao included a special well with adjacent underground rooms to combat the summer heat. Everything was built of red ochre sandstone, and color was used extensively in tile revetments and polychrome inlay of marble and stone. [204]

THE ARTS IN THE SULTANATES

While the Muslim faith required new and distinctive kinds of buildings in India, there was no immediate reason to change the esthetic in most of the decorative arts produced in the sultanates, and traditional techniques and forms were continued. A superbly carved ivory chessman in the form of a nobleman riding in a howdah on the back of an elephant encircled by armed footmen is clearly the work of a Muslim, for it is inscribed in Arabic "the work of Yusuf al-Buhri," a Muslim name. Its iconography and style suggest an Indian provenance, but suggested dates have ranged from the eighth century to the fifteenth. [205] Virtually no object of metalwork has been identified as having been produced under the sultanates. The only medium besides architecture in which a distinctive tradition evolved was the art of the book, for copies of the Koran and other books were required by mosques and pious Muslims, and indigenous traditions were inadequate and unsuitable. Few manuscripts survive from the first two centuries of Muslim rule in India, probably because many were destroyed with Timur's sack of Delhi in 1398, and the first steps in the development of a distinctive tradition of Indian Islamic book production can be traced only under the independent sultanates.

A new style of calligraphy emerges in manuscripts of the Koran. Known for unknown reasons as khaf-i bihari ("the script from Bihari"), it is a stylized script like Maghrabi and has wedge-shaped letters, thick round bowls for endings, and wide spaces between words. The script is first documented in a small (24 by 17 cm) single-volume manuscript of the Koran which was completed on 21 July 1399 by Mahmud Sharban, described in the colophon as a resident of the fort of Galyur (modern Gwalior). [206] Each of the 550 folios has five lines of Arabic in an early Bihari script with a Persian interlinear translation in a smaller and rounder naskh. Chapter headings and double pages [207] marking the divisions into thirty sections (juz') are illuminated with hush floral and vegetal patterns in gold, black, red, brown, yellow, blue, and white. This colorful decoration, some of which may have been repainted between 1399 and the nineteenth century, when the manuscript was restored, enlivens the somewhat static and cumbersome script. The manuscript is the finest as well as earliest of a group of manuscripts produced in northern India with similar script and decoration.

In the fifteenth century Bihari script became standard in India for copying manuscripts of the Koran, and one dated 1483 shows the fully developed script, with sweeping horizontal curves [207], only incipient in the earlier example. [208] The manuscript belongs to a group of Koran manuscripts of medium size (it measures 47.6 by 31.1 cm.), written on rough paper which has been eaten by the acidic pigments of the illumination. Double pages at the beginning of the thirty juz' have four panels of illumination; the upper and lower panels project into the margin to flank large projecting ansae. The crude materials suggest that these manuscripts were produced not for royal patrons, but for the open market. [209]

A distinctive tradition of illustrated manuscripts, in which Indian motifs and themes were added to traditional Persian models, also emerged in fifteenth-century India. The style was first identified in the illustrations in a group of eight manuscripts dated between 1417 and 1440, as well as illustrations in other undated manuscripts and detached illustrated leaves. [210] The illustrations share such features of Timurid provincial work done in Shiraz as a high horizon, landscape with a scene of leaves and flowers, and coral-like hills (see Chapter 5), but they are drier and simpler, includ-