Inscriptions in naksh or kufic and these sometimes give a date. They are distinguished by a decoration which is usually partly painted and partly in lowish relief or engraving; those where the decoration is in high-relief are more probably Spanish. The Sicilian ones are mostly to be assigned to the twelfth century, the Spanish ones to a rather earlier date. Peacocks play an important role in the decoration and stags and hares in foliage are also usual, as well as riders who carry hawks on their arms. The themes of the decorations are in fact closely similar to those of the mosaics which adorn the so-called Norman stans in the Palatine Palace at Palermo. Though Byzantine in technique, these are in a basically Persian style, and would seem to owe a debt to Sassanian art rather than to subsequent developments in Islamic times. The heritage may well have passed by way of Byzantium, for there was a room in the imperial palace at Constantinople known as the 'Persian House' which was probably decorated in a very similar manner.

The Islamic element also made itself felt in the secular architecture of Sicily, notably in several small palaces of which one called La Ziza, at Palermo, is the most important. They were set up for the Norman rulers, but whereas the decorations that these kings sponsored in the churches were wholly Byzantine in character and were done mainly

157 Woven silk bearing confronted peacocks and a kufic inscription. Together with fragments in the Victoria and Albert Museum and in Toulouse Cathedral, it is one of the finest pieces of Spanish textile weaving. Twelfth century

156 The Coronation Mantle of the Holy Roman Emperors, made for Roger II of Sicily in 1134. It is actually an embroidery, but the disposition of the design suggests the inspiration of a woven stuff
158 Front and back views of an ivory casket originally from the Cathedral in Bari. The decoration is painted—a characteristic of Sicilian work. The figures may be compared with those on the ceiling of the Palatine chapel at Palermo (Ill. 84). Twelfth century

159 Ivory casket of the thirteenth century. The decoration is similar to that which appeared on such metalwork of the period

160 Ivory casket of the eleventh century with decoration in relief. It is not always easy to distinguish between Spanish and Sicilian ivories, but in general those with a deeply carved decoration may be assigned to Spain and those with painted decoration to Sicily.
by craftsmen from Constantinople, the palaces, with their small, high rooms, arranged around a central square, must have been Islamic in inspiration. Links with Africa were maintained even after the arrival of the Normans; the ceiling of the Palatine chapel, though dated to 1154, is a wholly Egyptian work (see p. 84) and Muslim craftsmen were probably similarly employed elsewhere alongside the Byzantine ones—the Coronation Mantle, with its kufic inscription, affords firm proof of this. But the hey-day of Islamic art in Sicily was short-lived, and little of real consequence was done once the Norman kings were firmly established soon after the middle of the eleventh century.

The Seljuks of Rum

We have already seen how, in the eleventh century, the Seljuk Turks moved westwards from Central Asia under their leader Tügrül Beg and established themselves in Persia and Mesopotamia. Their advance westwards was pushed forward by Tügrül’s son Alp Arslan until, in 1071, it was met by the Byzantine forces under the Emperor Nicephorus Phocas and, contrary, in Byzantine eyes, to all expectations, the Byzantines were roundly defeated in the notorious battle of Manzikert. Within a very short time the Seljuks had penetrated as far as Nicæa (İzmir), only fifty miles as the crow flies from Constantinople, and although they were driven out from this city in 1097, their hold on eastern and central Asia Minor was firmly established and was indeed gradually extended, so that by the early twelfth century most of Asia Minor was a Seljuk state. They remained in control for more than two centuries in spite of Mongol attacks in 1242, until eventually the centralized power disintegrated in the early fourteenth century. Firm government was again re-established by another Turkish tribe, the Ottoman or Osmanlı, around the middle of the fourteenth century. During the age we know as the Seljuk, however, chieftains of other groups achieved semi or more or less complete independence in a number of areas; the most important of them were the Danijmends at Sivas. Generally speaking, however, the whole area enjoyed a period of firm, sound rule and considerable economic prosperity, and saw the development of a new and very distinctive art, which is usually known as that of the western Seljuks, or the Seljuks of Rum.

Their art owed a clear debt to the East, especially with regard to the plans of mosques and madrasas and the motifs which were used to decorate sculptures, pottery and mosaics. But the architecture though related to that of Persia was also very distinct. Buildings were almost invariably built in stone instead of brick, and craftsmen took
Covered berths for ships at Alanya, Turkey, built in 1228 for one of the Seljuk sultans. Nearly all the Muslim rulers were great patrons of religious works, but secular monuments are rare outside Turkey, and nowhere else is an example of naval architecture known over certain techniques and learnt something with regard to style from the Byzantine world, first in the way of a direct inheritance from the captured and subjected territories, and later, when once Seljuk power was firmly established, by way of day-to-day trade and exchange. The two states seem to have coexisted on terms of reasonable friendliness and equality, in spite of the differences of faith; there were times indeed when the Byzantines preferred to maintain good relations with the Seljuks rather than with their fellow-Christians, the Crusaders. The very fact that this highland people, who had never seen the sea, built docks and covered berths for ships at Alanya (III. 161) attests the change that had been brought about in their make-up as a result of their contacts with an old-established Mediterranean power. But as one looks at the Seljuk buildings, it is their truly original character that most strikes one, and it is only after some probing that the debt that they owe to inspiration from elsewhere becomes apparent.

Han at Term, eastern Turkey. Twelfth century. The Seljuks and allied princes endowed Turkey with a number of magnificent hans, set at intervals of a day's journey apart along the more important trade routes.

Though every part of the Islamic world was responsible for the production of works of art of virtually every type, there seem, as we look back today, to be certain especially outstanding arts that we can associate with particular areas or ages - glass with Syria, pottery and miniatures with Persia, or metalwork with northern Mesopotamia, for example - and if we were to follow up this line of thought it would certainly be architecture and architectural decoration that we would associate with the Seljuks of Rum. All over Asia Minor there survive to this day a mass of mosques and madrassas in a very distinctive style and boasting decorations either in carved stone or tile-work which are among the finest in all Islam; and there is one type of building that stands out especially, namely, the han or caravanserai (III. 162). These were set up at regular intervals along all the more essential trade routes, and are important not only because of the quality of the architecture and sculpture, but also because the Seljuks were the first to develop fine buildings planned...
especially for this purpose. Most of these hans are of considerable size, some are almost palaces, and they stood a day’s journey, that is, about 30 kilometres, apart. A particularly impressive series survives along the road from Konya to Kayseri to this day. The one nearest to Konya shows the Syrian influence in its architecture, and in the use of stones of two colours for the voussoirs of the arches. In the best of the others, like Sultan Han near Sivas, the structure is all of dark grey stone and the decoration, usually confined to the entrance, is elaborately carved.

There are numerous variants in the details of the sculptured decorations, but in general the plan of the hans is the same: an outer wall enclosing a rectangular area, with a single entrance at the middle of one of the narrow ends (III. 163). Inside there were vaulted chambers on either side of the entrance and along the longer sides; at the opposite end to the entrance there was a great central hall, usually with a circular opening in the middle of its roof. A mosque was invariably included, small in size, but elaborately carved and decorated. It either stood alone in the centre of the court, or was situated at an upper level above the entrance. The finest of them is probably that occupying the centre of the court of a great han near Sivas, one of the largest and most spectacular of the series (Ill. 164).

The largest of these hans, such as that near Sivas or the Sultan Han on the Konya-Kayseri road, provided food and even entertainment in the form of a band of musicians, for the visitors; in the smaller ones lodging and stabling only were available. But there was always security. One wonders sometimes why the Romans and Byzantines, who valued their roads and routes of communication so highly, never seem to have built caravanserais. Perhaps it is an indication of the security of the age. Under the Pax Romana of earlier times protection was not required, so the buildings were less solid, less defensive in character; in the Seljuk age, when the country was more disturbed, a fortress-like structure which was virtually unassailable except to prolonged attack, may well have been a prerequisite for trade. But the care and expense lavished throughout the twelfth and the thirteenth centuries on the construction of the hans, many of which stand miles away from any other habitation, does indicate the economic prosperity of the age and the lavishness of the patronage of the various sultans.
The entrance of the larger mosques and madrasas were very similar to those of the hans; that is to say, they consisted of tall doorways topped by pointed arches and very lavishly decorated with carvings. There was, however, a good deal of variation in style from area to area. At Konya script and interlacing patterns usually played an important role in the ornament (ill. 165), but large-scale patterns sometimes based on floral designs and sometimes on geometric ones formed the basis of the compositions which the script or interlacings adorned. At Sivas (ill. 167), under the patronage of the independent family which ruled there, the designs tended to be rather more classical and severe. At Divriği (ill. 166), further to the east, much of the work was in high-relief, the intervening surfaces being adorned with intricate patterns in low-relief. At Erzurum there was greater reticence and the interior court of the great Çifte Minare Madrasa (ill. 168) is plain except for a low-relief frieze bordering the arches and a similar decoration on two of the columns. This is indeed probably one of the most dignified of all the buildings in the Seljuk style in Anatolia.
Apart from the great decorated entrances which served for hans, mosques and madrasas alike, the Seljuks of Rum were responsible for considerable developments in two other forms of architecture, the minaret and the gumbat or tomb (III. 169, 170). We have already seen with what importance these tomb structures were regarded by the eastern branch of the Seljuks in Persia; they were no less numerous in Anatolia, and a long series of examples exist all over the country. The star-shaped plan which produced such lovely results in Persia (see p. 61) was, however, discarded, and the more westerly ones were nearly always circular or polygonal on plan and were of stone rather than brick. There was usually an entrance to the upper chamber fairly high up on one side. An exception to the usual scheme, but a very impressive one, exists at Tercan in eastern Anatolia where the gumbat itself is enclosed by a massive circular wall, with an elaborately carved doorway (III. 171).

Though the mosques and madrasas, like the hans, were usually of stone, a few, like that at Beyşehir (III. 172), were partly of wood, while the minarets were more often built of brick. Perhaps structures in this material were found to be more resistant to earthquake shock. The bricks were usually set so as to produce an intricate geometric pattern on the surface; sometimes, as in the Çifte Minare at Erzerum, glazed tiles of black and blue were used in addition to the simple unglazed bricks. In this case their colour formed a delightful contrast with the brownish-red brick above and the dark grey stone of the main entrance façade below. Usually, however, the tile decoration was reserved for interiors. Minarets were usually single, but there were a few buildings where minarets were used in pairs to flank the entrance to the mosques, an outstanding example with twin minarets being the Çifte Minare Madrasa at Sivas (III. 172).
The finest examples of tile-work are to be found at Konya, the main capital of the whole Seljuk area. It would seem that it was here that the manufacture of glazed pottery was centred, and it was here certainly that the art of setting the tiles reached its highest perfection. The colours were limited to blue, white and black, and the tiles were set like great mosaic cubes to form intricate angular patterns. The large-scale designs on the doorways and the pendentives of the domes where star shapes, geometric interlace, script, and key patterns were favoured, are particularly effective (III. 173). Many of the motifs, especially the key patterns, savour strongly of the Far East; more so indeed than the carved decorations of the exteriors, where the angular Chinese-looking key pattern was less in favour. Sometimes the same tiles were used on a smaller scale to adorn mihrabs (III. 174), and they were set into the small stalactite niches of which the Seljuk craftsmen were so fond. These niches were usual both as an element of the stone sculpture and in plaster and woodwork.

174 (opposite) Detail of mosaic tile-work in the Sîrâkî Madrasa, Konya, 1241. The technique of cutting tiles to make up formal patterns was brought by the Seljuks from Persia. The actual ornament is often of a Central Asian or even Chinese character.
The same over-all type of sculpture that we see on a large scale on the stone façades was also used on a smaller scale for woodwork: pulpits, doors, koran stands and so forth were all adorned in this way, and much of the work was not only of great technical skill but also of great beauty (Ill. 177). Some of the pulpits are still to be found in the mosques for which they were originally made; others are now in museums, notably the Ethnographical Museum at Ankara and the Museum at Konya, where the majority of the smaller Seljuk works of art have now been concentrated. Usually the star patterns which were so much favoured in the tile-work formed the basis of the designs, while the detail was filled in with rather effective inconsequence, as we see on a pair of doors at Konya (Ill. 176). Complicated geometric patterns seem to have intrigued and delighted the Seljuk artists, and as time went on the tendency towards complication increased.