81 Andalusi ornamental Thuluth inscription woven in silk, with enlarged detail (below) to show the long verticals ending in barbed beads. The whole inscription reads 'Allahumma la illaha illa 'Ala, 'Glory to our Lord, the Sultan', repeated, while the detail shows 'Glory to our Lord'. Granada, late 14th century

82 Modern Maghribi inscribed on a wooden tablet. The text is the name of the Prophet Muhammad and, in smaller script: 'Muhammad is the Messenger of God, may God's blessing and peace be upon him.' Rabat, late 19th century

83 Standard of the Almohad Caliph Abû Ya’qûb Yusuf II, captured in 1212 at the battle of Las Navas de Tolosa, which marked the turn of the tide against Islam in Spain. The calligraphic panels are Qur'anic texts (the vertical ones are to be read from the back of the cloth), mainly from Sūrat al-‘Iṣra’. 'You believe in Allah and His Prophet and fight for His cause with your wealth and your lives; that would be best for you, if only you knew it. He will forgive you your sins and admit you to gardens with running streams, and house you in pleasant mansions in the gardens of Eden.'
Highly stylised knotted Kufic, carved in stucco-work on a wall of the royal palace of the Alhambra, Granada. It can be read with difficulty as 'Glory to God'. The central Quranic inscription, from Sūrat al-İnām, 'The Be' (XXI, 55), is in ornamental Andalusian Naskhi, and translates, 'All blessings are from God', 14th century.

Andalusian Thuluth on wall tiles from the Bu-Taimiyah Madrasah in Meknes, which was completed by Abū 'Umar Fāris (d. 1558), the eleventh ruler of the Marinid dynasty. This detail of the inscription reads al-大唐 h-i-ilāh allāh. 'Praise be to God who . . . '. The script is densely structured and its forms have been adapted to harmonise with the arabesque pattern.
TA'LĪQ, NASTA'LĪQ AND SHIKASTEH

During the 16th century in Persia an extremely important calligraphic development took place with the formation of Ta'liq (hanging) script from Rig' and Ta'wqi'. From Ta'liq, an even lighter and more elegant form evolved, known as Nasta'līq, and derived from both Ta'liq and Nasta'līq was Shikasteh (broken form), which is characterized by an exaggerated density in the superstructured letters.

86 Calligraphic page in Nasta'līq script set in clouds and bearing the date A.D. 1277 (1861). The text is Islamic prayers and invocations, and praise of the Prophet Muhammad and his family.

87 Page in densely structured Shikasteh written by Nawab Murid Khan in India, probably during the 17th century.

88 Detail from a decorated calligraphic page of Persian verse in elegant Ta'liq, written by Mir 'Imad al-Din 'Asyqi in the early 17th century.
Ornamental Nasta’liq on a ground decorated with floral designs. The text is in praise of Imam ‘Ali, the fourth Orthodox Caliph (successor to the Prophet), whose assassination in 661 brought about schism in Islam. His Shi‘ah, or followers, declared him the First Imam, and the Shi‘ah sect still has a great following today, particularly in Persia and Iraq.

Elegant Nasta’liq signature on the famous Ardabil carpet, probably the largest and most beautiful carpet in the world. The text may be translated freely as: “I have no earthly refuge, but only Heaven. I have no place but this to rest my head. The work of the servant of the court, Mu’inuddin Kashani a.d. 946 [1539]. The carpet was produced during the reign of the Safavid Shah Tahmasp, probably for the Holy Shrine at Ardabil, Persia.

Composite page of Persian text in large ornamental Ta’liq, and small Nasta’liq by Shihab Muhammad al-Shu’aybi, Persia, early 18th century.

Persian verses in Ta’liq on the rim and the body of a late 18th-century lustre vase. The band at the base of the neck is Arabic written in ornamental Naskhi.