124. Brocade woven with Thuluth script in four of its different forms, the most stylized being in the shape of medallions. The most prominent band is the Shahadah: “There is no God but God, and Muhammad is the Messenger of God” – repeated in bold. Jali Thuluth. Syria, Ottoman period, probably 18th century.

125. Tomb-cover with inscriptions in Maghribi, ornamental Thuluth and square Kufic, arranged in panels of various shapes. The text is mainly Quranic and benedictory. Morocco, 18th century.
127 Tombstone of Muḥammad ibn Dāddi Muḥammad, of which virtually the entire surface consists of different types of script. The outermost band contains ornamental foliated Kufic Qurʾān, Sūrat al-ʾIkhlāṣ, ‘Unity’ (Q. 112, 1-4). The next band in ornamental Thuluth verging on Riṣā ḥ is a dated funerary dedication. The inner frame and the niche itself contain angular Kufic inscriptions. The maze set above the arch is the Shahadah, also in square Kufic, Persia, dated 1352

126 Plaited, knotted and foliated Kufic, surrounded by a border of Thuluth verging on Riṣā ḥ, carved on a wooden Qurʾān-stand. The Kufic is the word ‘Allah’, the Thuluth is the Throne Verse (II. 253). Turkey, c. 13th century
Calligraphy as primary motif

The primacy of the word in Islam is reflected in the virtually universal application of calligraphy. Writing is given pride of place on all kinds of objects – objects of everyday use as well as entire wall surfaces, mosque furniture, the interiors and exteriors of mosques, tombs, and al-Ka‘bah, the most famous sanctuary of Islam.

128 Plate decorated in Nishapur style with Eastern Kufic, highly stylized, which reads: ‘The pursuit of knowledge is bitter to the taste at first, but at the end is sweeter than honey.’ The word as-Salih, ‘saint’, is used here as a space-filler at the end of the inscription. Samarqand, late 10th century

129 Faited and ornamental Kufic script combined with Andalusi Timblicit covering a wall of the Alhambra, Granada. Some of the script has been deliberately manipulated to form arches and mirror images. The most legible phrase reads: al-lāzī bi-l-Lāh – ‘Glory belongs to God’. Probably 13th century
130 Silk pall found in a tomb near Tiberias, Persia, early 11th century. The small circle of Kufic script is intended to be placed over the heart, and reads: "May God keep my heart steadfast in His religion . . ."

131 Thuluth on a silk tomb cover, with Quranic verses and other writings. One of the phrases links the cloth with the Ottoman Sultan Sulayman I (1520-66), for it reads: "Muçâti, al-Sülûmî, Sultan Sulayman, Our lord Sultan Sulayman"