132. Mamluk Thuluth decoration on a candlestick made for the household of the Mamluk Sultan Qalawun (1279–90). The inscription reads: "The royal prince, the great Emir, the conqueror, the campaigner in holy wars, the just . . ."

133. Kufic script on a jug from Persia, early 13th century, probably reading Nūḥuḏa b. Ṣuḥa, 'We praise Him and worship Him.'

134. The tip of a Persian battle standard engraved with Nastaʿlīq script giving the names of the Twelve Imams of the Shiʿa sect on the palm, and Shiʿa prayers on the fingers. 18th century
135. Glass mosque lamp with Mamlik Thuluth blazon on the neck, reading 'Glory to our Lord the Sultan', and between them, text from Surat al-Nur, 'Light' (XXIV), which translates: 'God is the light of the heavens and the earth, the likeness of His light is as a niche wherein there is a lamp encased by glass, the glass appearing as it were a shining star.' The main panel, on the body, is in 'Uthmānic script and reads as the blazon. Syria, probably late 13th century.

136. Ceramic mosque lamp with Thuluth inscription, from Turkey, 1549. The part of the middle band which is visible translates: 'God is the patron of success'.

137. Tomb cover with Kufic Thuluth inscriptions, the Throne Verse (II, 255) on the top, Qadilah (layings of the Prophet) on the side. Bursa, Turkey. 15th century.
138 The great calligraphic medallions suspended inside the mosque of Hagia Sophia in Istanbul. The medallion on the left bears the name of the second Orthodox Caliph, 'Umar al-Farūq, and continues: 'May God the exalted be pleased with him', while the medallion on the right reads: 'Muhammad, may peace be upon him'.

139 Glazed tile calligraphy decorating the dome and walls of the 'Tomb of the Prince', the mausoleum in Samarkand where Samarqan is buried, dating from 1463. The wide band of ornamental Kufic beneath the dome consists mainly of the words al-sayrī b-Lilī. 'Mortality is for God'. The walls bear the names Allah, Muhammad and 'Ali, in square Kufic.
The tradition of calligraphy is continued to the present day in the cloth which covers the Ka'bah, the 'sacred house of God'. This special cloth, called Khairat, is renewed each year. It is traditionally decorated with panels and bands in Jali Thuluth in gold and silver, with the words of the Shahadah, the Muslim creed, faintly outlined in the weave of the fabric itself. The cloth is traditionally provided by Egypt. Each year the superseded cloth is cut up and the pieces are distributed to Muslim dignitaries. The detail (above) in Jali Thuluth is the Basmalah followed by a Quranic verse from Surat Al 'Imran, 'The Family of 'Imran' (3:95), which translates: 'Say: God speaks the truth, so follow the religion of Abraham, the true faith, for he was not one of the polytheists'.
Islamic calligraphy and Western art

The impact of Arab-Islamic art on the artistic traditions of the Christian world in the Middle Ages was considerable. There was much sustained contact between the two cultures, and through these contacts, particularly across Spain and Sicily and during the Crusades, the West became fascinated by the exotic quality of Islamic art. This interest was often reflected in the imitation of style, motif and technique, and extended to architectural decorative design, textiles, ceramics, metalwork, glass, ivories and other objects of art.

Robes and halberds in countless Renaissance paintings are decorated with pseudo-Arabic calligraphy, and this is especially evident in paintings representing the Virgin and Child.

141 Stylised Kufic on the back of a marble chair in S. Pietro di Castello in Venice. It is claimed that this chair was used by St Peter in Antioch, which is unlikely, for although it emulates a Muslim tombstone, both the stylised Kufic script and the other decorative motifs suggest a European provenance, probably Sicily or even Venice.

142 Plate reputed to have belonged to an Archbishop of Ravenna, Pietro Crisologo, and to have been used in the celebration of Mass, with stylized ornamental Kufic inscription which may read: *Naṣṣūna Allāh lamūni nuʿbal –* ‘We praise God when we eat.’ Italy, probably late 11th century.

143 Cross found in Ballyveelin Bog, Youghal, Co. Cork, with a crude rendering in Kufic script of the words *Allaahu Akbar –* ‘In the Name of God’. Probably 9th century.

144 Gold Dinar of Offa, King of Mercia (757–96), an imitation of an Abbasid Dinar. The Arabic Kufic inscriptions read (top): *Li Allāh dīl Līlih Wāsiṭah dīl ashūrī lih.* ‘There is no god but God. He has no partners’; (below): ‘Muhammad is the Prophet of God’, with the words Offa Aurum between, and a date in corrupt Kufic which may read 213 (i.e. 729).